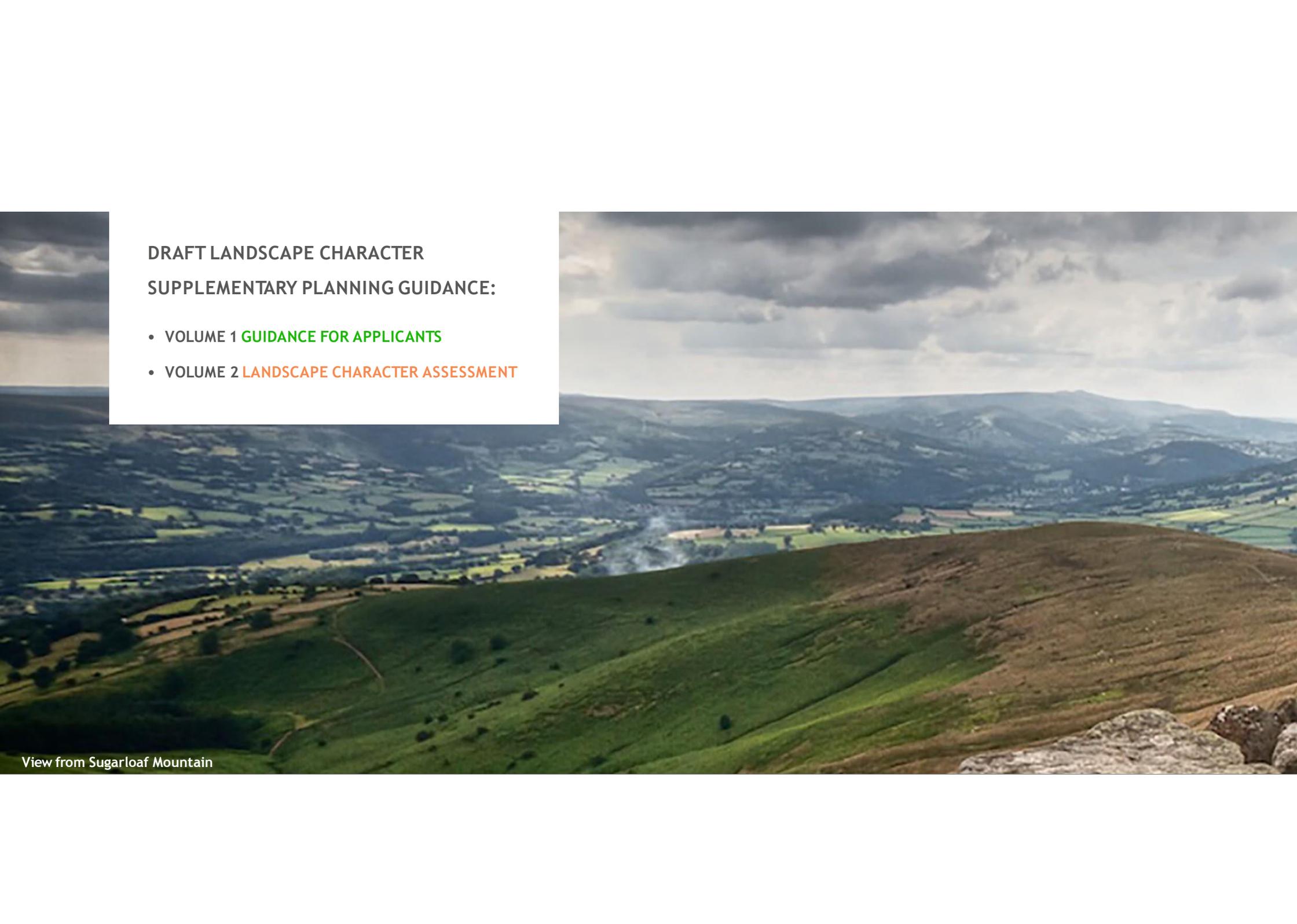




LANDSCAPE

Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance

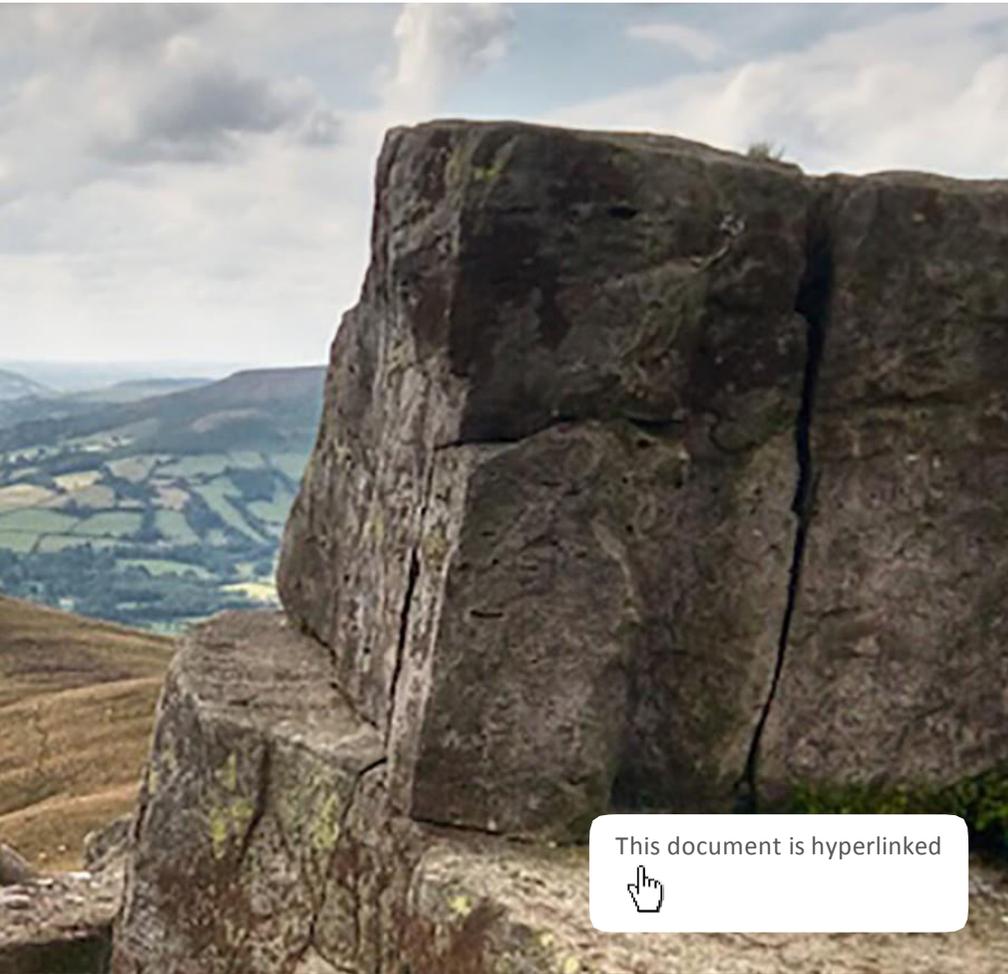
August 2019



DRAFT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE:

- VOLUME 1 **GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**
- VOLUME 2 **LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

View from Sugarloaf Mountain



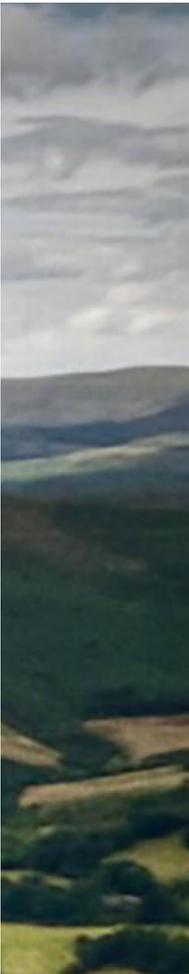
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CONTENTS

Key Messages

<u>1.0</u>	SETTING THE SCENE	1
<u>1.1</u>	LANDSCAPE PLANNING	9
<u>1.2</u>	LANDSCAPE & DEVELOPMENT	<u>21</u>
1.3	SOURCES OF GUIDANCE & ADVICE	41

Acknowledgements



Key Messages

- This draft Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) supports the implementation of relevant policies in the adopted Monmouthshire Local Development Plan 2011-2021, in particular policies S13 (Landscape, Green Infrastructure & the Natural Environment) and LC5 (Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character).
- Landscape character is the result of the interaction of natural and human influences as perceived by people. Landscapes can be rural or urban, and encompass land, inland water and marine areas.
- Landscape planning is concerned with managing outstanding places as well as everyday landscapes; it is also concerned with enhancement of degraded landscapes and shaping of new landscapes through the place-making and planning process.
- Development proposals must demonstrate how the design, scale, nature and selection of the site have responded to the local and wider landscape character context.
- The draft SPG provides guidance for applicants and planning officers on pre-application discussions, the application process and consideration of reserved matters and planning conditions relating to landscape.
- **This document (Volume 1) outlines the Council's expectations for how landscape character issues should be considered as part of the place-making and planning process.** It provides practical guidance and checklists for applicants, including signposts to sources of further guidance and advice. It also provides a planning checklist to assist the Council in the consideration of planning applications.
- **Volume 2 of the draft SPG sets out the Landscape Character Assessment of Monmouthshire.** This identifies and describes Landscape Types and Landscape Character Areas throughout the County, providing detailed information about their distinctive characteristics/qualities, sensitivities to change, potential green infrastructure opportunities to protect and enhance landscape character
- This draft Landscape Character SPG should be used in conjunction with the Green Infrastructure SPG adopted by the Council in April 2015.
- Following its adoption by the Council, the Landscape Character SPG will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and appeals.

Landscape Vision for Monmouthshire

The landscape is an integral element of the County’s green infrastructure network, sustaining a range of social, economic and environmental benefits. Investment in the positive management and enhancement of Monmouthshire’s landscapes for our communities underpins the County’s sustainable development and economy. Access to high quality landscapes and biodiverse green spaces contributes to social well-being and tourism in the County, providing spiritual enrichment and inspiration for everyone.

The natural, cultural and experiential qualities of the County’s landscapes are valued and cared for, helping maintain a strong sense of place. Good design responds to its local landscape and townscape context, strengthening the distinctive character and identity of Monmouthshire’s countryside and settlements.



Gwent Levels and the Severn Estuary



Black Mountains



Wye Valley



1.0

Setting the Scene



Introduction

The purpose of this draft Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is to support implementation of relevant policies in the adopted Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2021, in particular policies S13 (Landscape, Green Infrastructure & the Natural Environment) and LC5 (Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character).

In addition to providing certainty and clarity for applicants in the interpretation of policies S13 and LC5, the SPG is also relevant to implementation of other LDP policies where landscape issues may be a key consideration.

Whilst the Landscape Character Assessment (Volume 2) covers those parts of Monmouthshire within the Brecon Beacons National Park, the guidance for applicants contained in this document (Volume 1) do not apply to this area. Applications in this area of the County should refer to the relevant policies in the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority's Local Development Plan 2007-2022 (adopted December 2013) and Landscape and Development SPG (adopted October 2014).

The draft SPG will be adopted by the Council for use as Supplementary Planning Guidance and will therefore become a material consideration in relation to planning applications and appeals. It will help guide the Council and applicants through initial pre-application discussions, the application process and the consideration of reserved matters and planning conditions relating to landscape.

The draft is also set within the context of the replacement LDP and update of the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study 2010. It will be updated to reflect the adoption of future relevant policies.

Using this SPG

The SPG is designed to be used by all stakeholders with an interest in how landscape character is protected and enhanced through the place-making and planning process in Monmouthshire (see [Diagram 1.1](#)). This includes:

Applicants

The main audience for this SPG are those individuals and organisations seeking planning permission for development. The key principles for addressing landscape issues in the planning process are generally applicable at all scales of development.

Statutory decision makers and consultees

The SPG forms a point of reference for decision-makers within the Council and also consultees on planning applications.

Land owners/managers

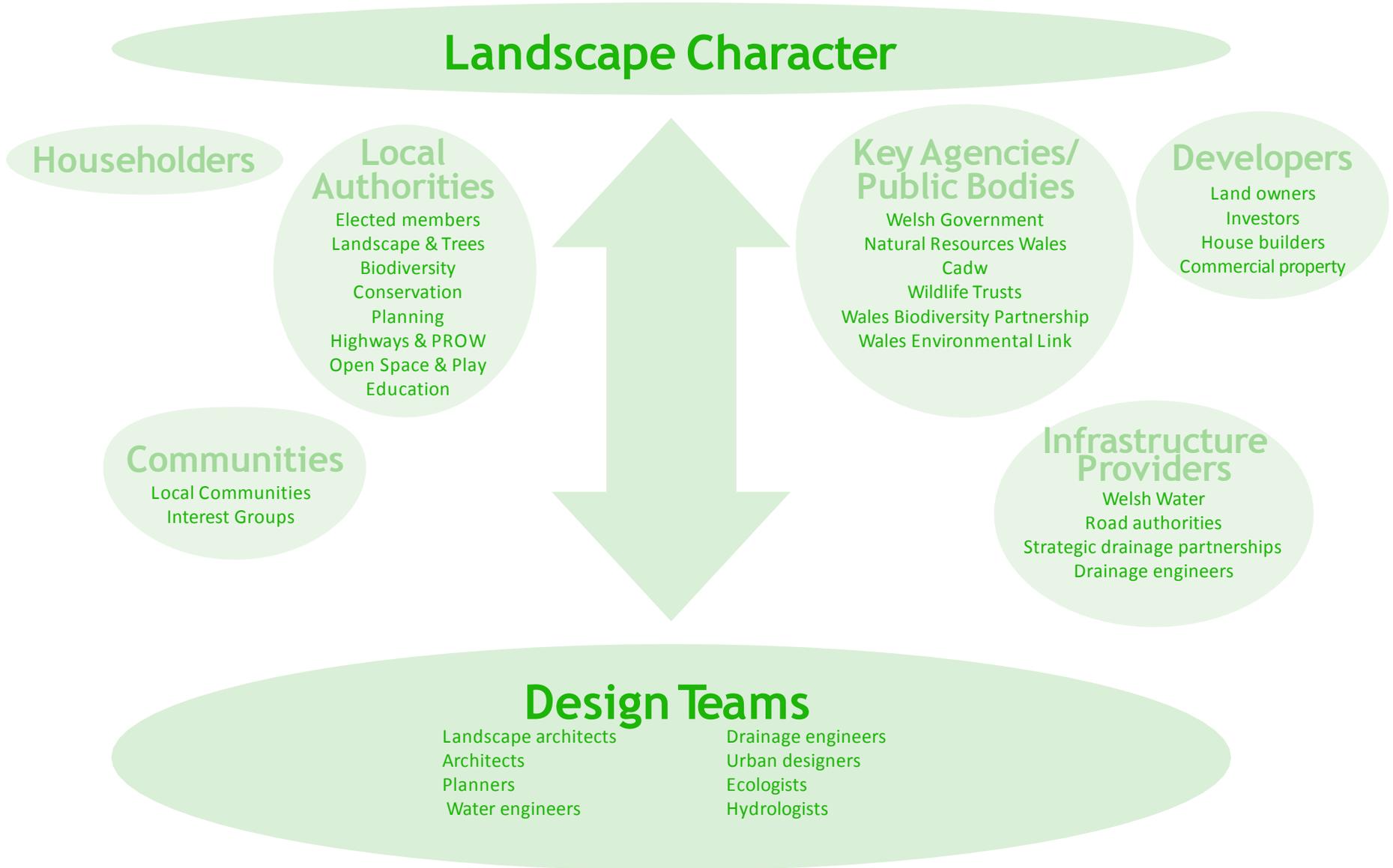
Landowners and managers across the County are encouraged to use the Landscape Character Assessment information to guide positive landscape management activity.

General public/community groups

This SPG also provides guidance for the general public and local community groups on how they should expect development in their areas to respond to landscape character.

The SPG has been adapted for adoption by MCC from the initial development of Volume 1 by Chris Blandford Associates and Volume 2 by TACP.

Diagram 1.1 Landscape Stakeholders





Piercefield, Chepstow

Structure of the SPG

The SPG comprises two volumes as shown in [Box 1.1](#)

Box 1.1 Structure of the Landscape Character SPG

Volume 1: Guidance for Applicants

- Supports interpretation and implementation of Policy LC5 by outlining the Council's expectations for how landscape issues should be considered as part of the place-making and planning process.
- Sets out the national and local policy framework for Landscape Planning and Landscape Character Assessment
- Provides practical guidance and checklists for applicants, including signposts to sources of further guidance and advice.
- Also provides a planning checklist to assist the Council in the consideration of planning applications.

Volume 2: Landscape Character Assessment

- Sets out the Landscape Character Assessment of Monmouthshire undertaken in 2015/2016.
- Identifies and describes 9 Landscape Types and 46 Landscape Character Areas throughout the County.
- Provides datasheets that set out detailed information and guidance about the distinctive characteristics/qualities, sensitivities to change and potential green infrastructure opportunities of each Landscape Character Area.

Appendices

- Contains datasets to support the understanding the distinctiveness, qualities and sensitivities of the County's landscapes.

The Monmouthshire Landscape

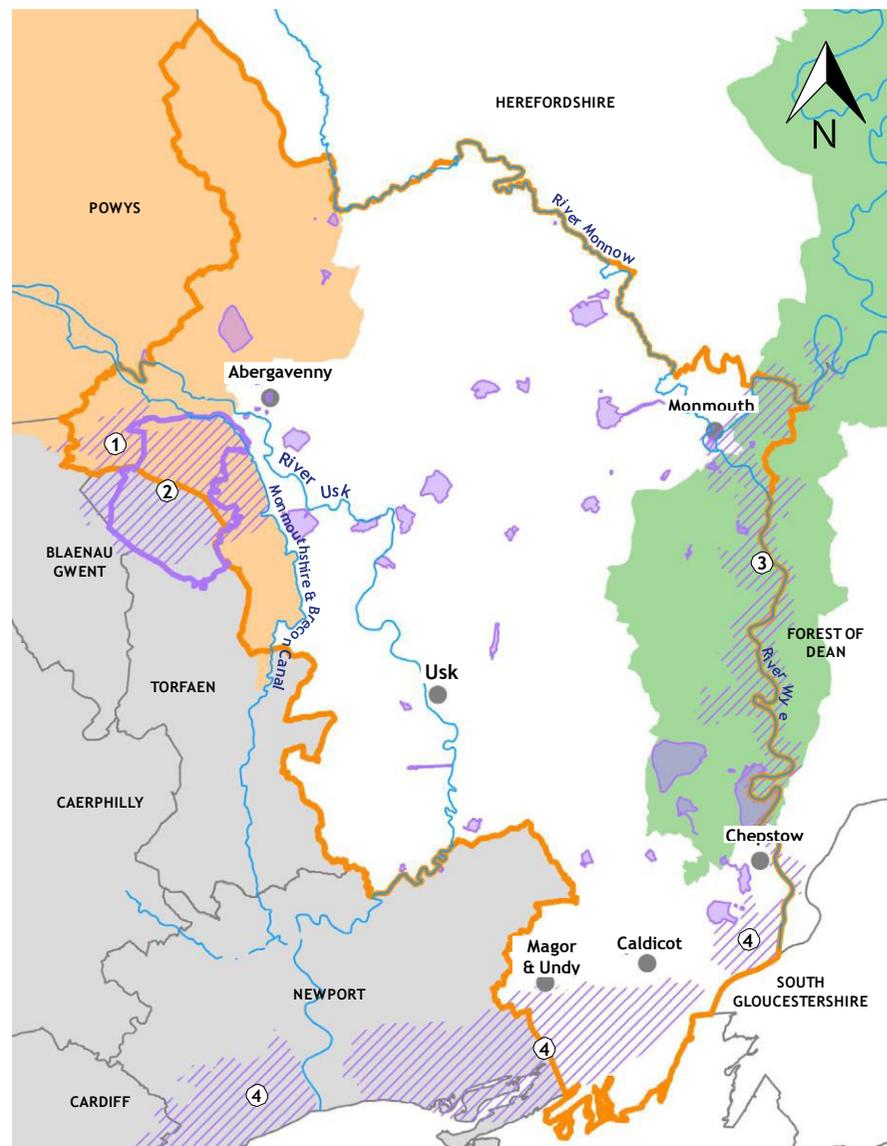
The County of Monmouthshire lies in South East Wales, between the major centres in South Wales and the South West of England and the Midlands. The County is predominately rural with agriculture and tourism forming the main industries. It covers an area of approximately 88,000 hectares and has an estimated population of 91,323 (2011 census), only around half of which lives in urban areas (mainly in the main settlements of Abergavenny, Monmouth, Usk and Chepstow, and the ‘Sevenside Settlements’ of Caldicot and Magor/Undy).

Key landscape assets in Monmouthshire are shown on [Diagram 1.2](#). For simplicity of interpretation, the diagram only illustrates some of the County’s key landscape assets relating to visual, sensory and historic aspects. Others include landscape habitats and geological aspects.

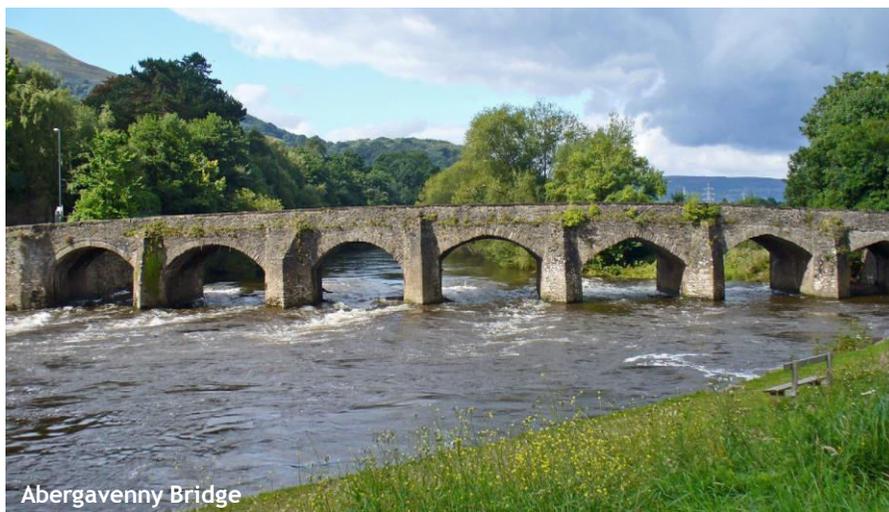
The varied landscape of the County of Monmouthshire is both the product of natural forces and the discernible impact of human activity over the last 10,000 years. As part of the border country it is particularly rich in historic features. No part of the region’s landscape has been unaffected by past human activity, which has left an enormous and valuable imprint on the present day. Prehistoric burial mounds and hill forts, Roman villas, deserted medieval villages and industrial monuments, for example, have been left by our ancestors and are familiar landscape features in a wide variety of locations and habitats. Very many more features, often indistinguishable above ground, but no less important, lie buried or only partly visible. Other marks on the landscape such as lanes and hedgerows often have historic significance.

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Monmouthshire County Boundary |  Registered Landscapes of Historic Interest |
|  Brecon Beacons National Park | 1. Clydach Gorge |
|  Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | 2. Blaenavon |
|  Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site | 3. Wye Valley |
| | 4. Gwent Levels |
| |  Registered Historic Parks & Gardens |
| |  Main Watercourses |

Diagram 1.2 Key Landscape Assets in Monmouthshire



The historic associations, texture, themes and character of the County's landscapes are the storehouses of information on past societies. All these features are of cultural value, vulnerable to land use change and irreplaceable. Many features and areas of historical and cultural value in Monmouthshire are recognised as important heritage assets by the designation of conservation areas, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered landscapes of outstanding historic interest and registered historic parks and gardens. Part of the Blaenavon Industrial Heritage World Heritage Site lies within Monmouthshire.



Abergavenny Bridge

Today, Monmouthshire is noted for its rural beauty and has a rich and diverse landscape stretching from the flat open coastline of the Gwent Levels in the south, to the exposed uplands of the Black Mountains within the Brecon Beacons National Park in the north and the picturesque river gorge of the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the east.



Wye Valley

Rivers and water bodies and their environs form some of the most attractive features of the Monmouthshire landscape. They are seen as transport corridors such as the Usk Valley and Clydach Gorge, and are visitor destinations such as the Wye Gorge, Llandegfedd Reservoir and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. The river valleys have high ecological value as well as being the foci of historical settlements. Pressures from development, increases in recreational use, changes in agricultural practice and climate change continue to impact on these attractive landscapes.



Severn Estuary

Key priorities for the future planning and management of Monmouthshire's landscapes are reflected in the Landscape Vision for Monmouthshire (see [Box 1.2](#)).



Trellech Forest

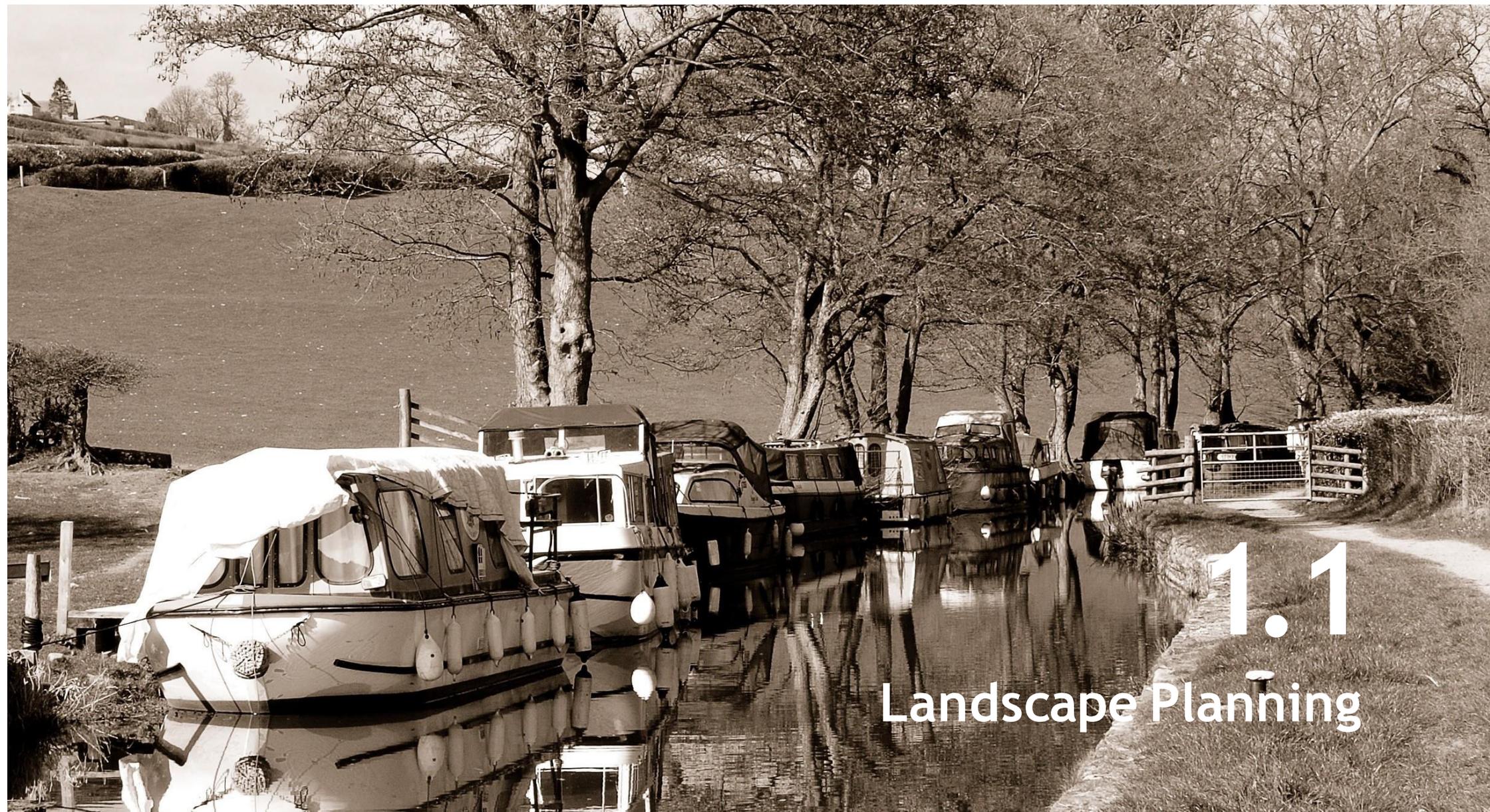
Box 1.2 Landscape Vision for Monmouthshire

The landscape is an integral element of the County's green infrastructure network, sustaining a range of social, economic and environmental benefits. Investment in the positive management and enhancement of Monmouthshire's landscapes for our communities underpins the County's sustainable development and economy. Access to high quality landscapes and biodiverse green spaces contributes to health, social well-being and tourism in the County, providing spiritual enrichment and inspiration for everyone.

The natural, cultural and experiential qualities of the County's landscapes are valued and cared for, helping maintain a strong sense of place. Good design responds to its local landscape and townscape context, strengthening the distinctive character and identity of Monmouthshire's countryside and settlements.



Black Mountains



1.1

Landscape Planning



Worcestershire & Brecon Canal

Why is Landscape Character Important?

The European Landscape Convention describes “landscape character” as the result of the interaction of natural and human factors as perceived and sensed by people. Landscapes can be rural or urban, and encompass land, inland water and marine areas. Landscape planning is concerned with protecting and conserving outstanding places, as well as everyday landscapes. It is also about enhancement of degraded landscapes together with the creation of new landscapes through the planning and place-making process. This holistic approach encompasses natural landscape aspects (e.g. geology, hydrology), cultural aspects (e.g. archaeology, settlement) and sensory aspects (e.g. sense of tranquillity or wildness).

Landscape character can be defined as the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that make one landscape different from another (rather than better or worse). In broad terms, we can easily recognise that the experience of an exposed upland moorland landscape is different from an enclosed wooded river gorge, which is different again from a lowland flat coastal landscape. Landscape character assessment defines what it is about these places that make them different by identifying and describing variations in landscape character, and highlighting the unique combinations of elements and features that make each landscape distinctive. Importantly for this SPG, landscape character assessment provides a tool that can assist in managing landscape change.

Research undertaken by Natural England demonstrates that well-looked after and highly-valued landscapes are essential to social well-being and an economically healthy society (Landscape: Beyond the View, NE 2012). By giving due consideration to landscape form and function, we can manage what is unique and of value whilst utilising its resource to ensure high-quality living for the well-being of current and future generations. Development which does not give due consideration to its local context will undoubtedly result in poor design that produces a negative and unappealing place; conversely, development that promotes good design principles by responding appropriately to its landscape setting will ultimately be more welcomed by local communities and its users.



Chepstow



Sugar Loaf Mountain



Black Mountains

Policy Context

A key mechanism for managing landscape change is through the planning system, which controls the nature and appearance of development within its landscape setting. The protection of landscapes from inappropriate or unsustainable development, together with its conservation and enhancement, is a key theme of national legislation and planning policy in Wales. The legislative and policy framework for consideration of landscape issues as part of the planning and place-making process within Monmouthshire is summarised below.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places a statutory duty on public bodies in Wales to carry out sustainable development. The Act puts in place seven 'Well-being' goals to help ensure that public bodies are all working towards the same vision of a sustainable Wales (see [Box 1.3](#))

The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 introduced a statutory purpose for the planning system in Wales that any statutory body carrying out a planning function must exercise those functions in accordance with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The planning system provides the legislative and policy framework to manage the use and development of land in the public interest in a way which is consistent with key sustainability principles and key policy objectives. In doing so, it can contribute positively to the achievement of the Well-being goals.

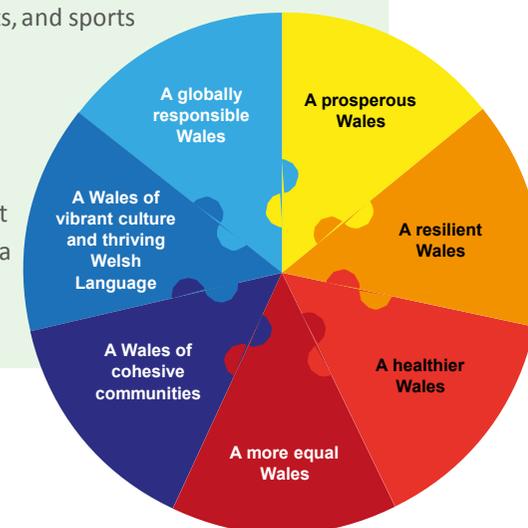
The planning system provides for a presumption in favour of sustainable development to ensure that social, economic and environmental issues are balanced and integrated, at the same time, by the decision-taker when preparing a development plan, and in taking decisions on individual planning applications.

The landscape principles set out in this SPG will assist the council in exercising its functions as the Local Planning Authority in relation to sustainable development.

Box 1.3 Well-being Goals

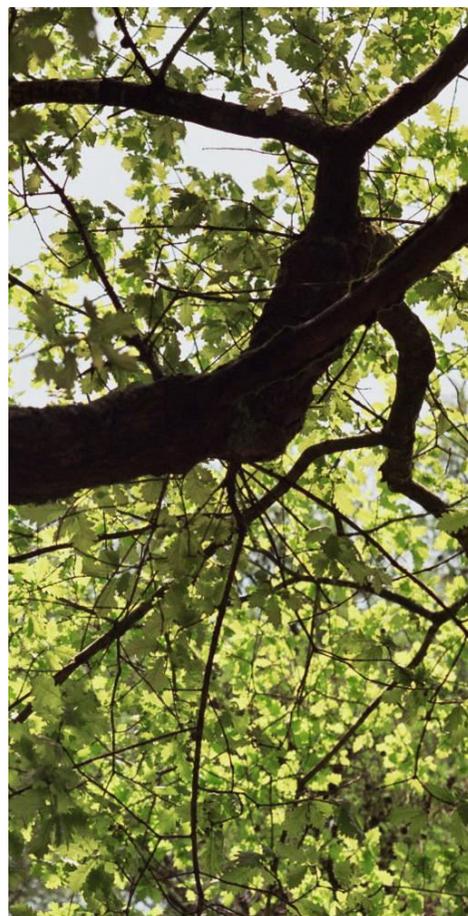
- **A Prosperous Wales** an innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.
- **A Resilient Wales** a nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example climate change).
- **A Healthier Wales** a society in which peoples physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.
- **A More Equal Wales** a society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).
- **A Wales of Cohesive Communities** attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.
- **A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language** a society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, and sports and recreation.
- **A Globally Responsive Wales** a nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



Environment (Wales) Act 2016

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 provides the legislative framework for managing Wales' natural resources and ecosystem services for the benefit of future generations. In particular, the Act sets out measures that promote a joined-up approach to managing natural resources and ecosystem services in a sustainable way; confirms Natural Resources Wales' functions and duties; and delivers improvements in efficiency of natural resource use.



Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10 December 2018) sets out the Welsh Government's national land use planning policies that should be taken into account when preparing development plans. In accordance with the European Landscape Convention (see [Box 1.4](#)), Chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places of PPW sets out the Welsh Government's objectives for the conservation and improvement of Wales' natural heritage, which includes promoting the conservation of landscape (6.3.3).

The PPW recognises that a key role of the planning system is to ensure that society's land requirements are met in ways which do not impose unnecessary constraints on development whilst ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard or enhance the environment. It also highlights that GI, conservation and development can often be fully integrated through careful planning and design (6.2.4). PPW stresses the importance of landscape considerations being taken into account at an early stage in the development management process (6.3.3).

Section 6.3 of PPW advises that landscape considerations must be taken into account in determining individual applications and contributing to the implementation of specific projects. The effect of a development proposal on the landscape of any area can be a material consideration.

Box 1.4 European Landscape Convention

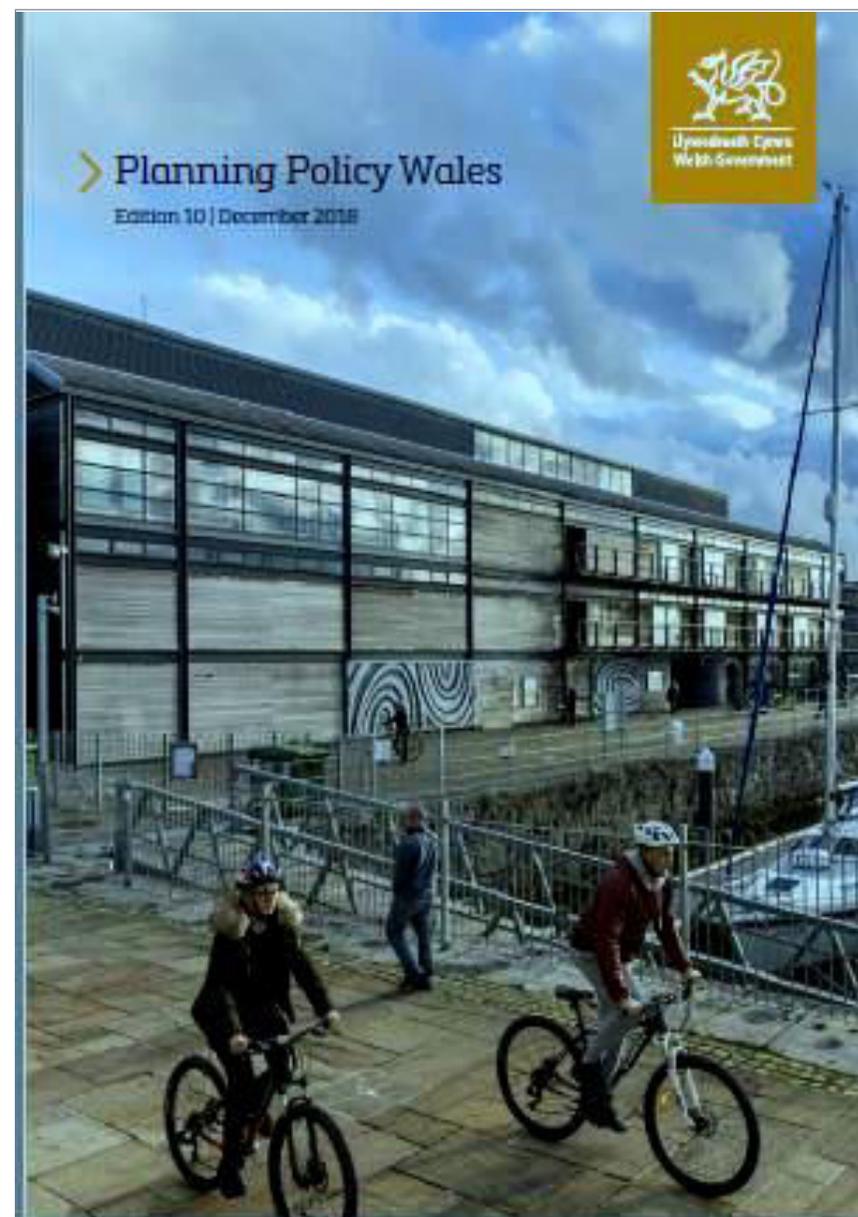
- The Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention came into force in the UK in March 2007. The Convention defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.
- The definition applies across the whole territory of member states and not only to areas which have been formally designated for protection. It includes urban and peri-urban landscapes as well as those in rural areas and on the coast, and 'everyday or degraded landscapes' as well as 'those that might be considered outstanding'.
- Member states undertake to integrate landscape into their regional and town planning policies. Additionally, the Convention stresses the importance of involving local communities in landscape protection, management and planning.

In such instances, and in the interests of achieving sustainable development, it is important to balance conservation objectives with the wider economic needs of local businesses and communities.

Where development does occur, PPW states that it is important to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard or enhance the environmental quality of land. Pre-application discussions between the developers, local planning authorities and statutory advisers such as Natural Resources Wales are recommended (6.3.3). When considering any development proposal, local planning authorities should consider its environmental impact, so as to avoid, wherever possible, adverse effects on the environment. Where other material considerations outweigh the potential adverse environmental effects, authorities should seek to minimise those effects and should, where possible, retain and, where practicable, enhance features of conservation importance (6.3.3).

In some cases, PPW advises that it will be necessary to refuse planning permission where adverse effects on landscape character cannot be avoided. However, local planning authorities must always consider whether environmental issues could be adequately addressed by modifying the development proposal or by attaching appropriate planning conditions or obligations. Where this is not possible and the adverse effect on the environment clearly outweighs other material considerations the development should be refused (6.3.4).

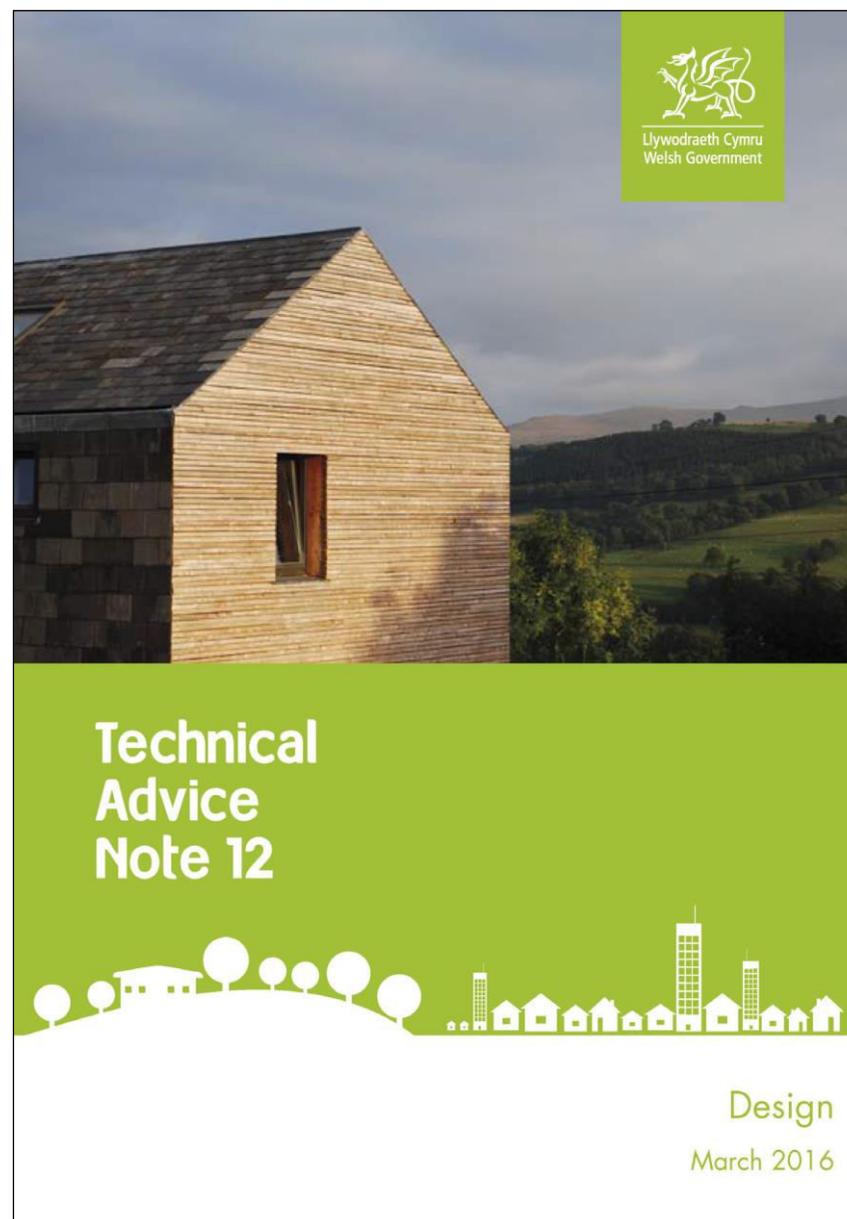
PPW confirms that LANDMAP is an important information resource upon which local planning authorities can draw in making the landscape assessments needed to inform local policy, guidance and decision-making in this field. The LANDMAP information system methodology describes and evaluates aspects of the landscape and provides the basis of a consistent Wales-wide approach to landscape assessment. PPW requires that LANDMAP assessments should be published to help inform supplementary planning guidance on landscape assessment covering, for example, local distinctiveness and design (6.3.19).



Technical Advice Note 12 Design

The PPW is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs). Of particular relevance to this SPG is TAN12 Design (2016), which provides guidance from the Welsh Government on how good design should be achieved through the place-making and planning process. TAN12 emphasises that the design of our villages, towns, cities and the urban and rural landscape is important in articulating our nation and our culture. Design is important to our quality of life and the quality of the nation's varied landscape and townscapes, helping to sustain a positive image for Wales (2.1).

The role of landscape in contributing to good design is recognised by TAN12 alongside sustainability, architecture, place-making, public realm and infrastructure (2.5). Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to grasp opportunities to enhance the character, quality and function of an area, should not be accepted, as these have detrimental effects on existing communities (2.6).





Monmouthshire Local Development Plan

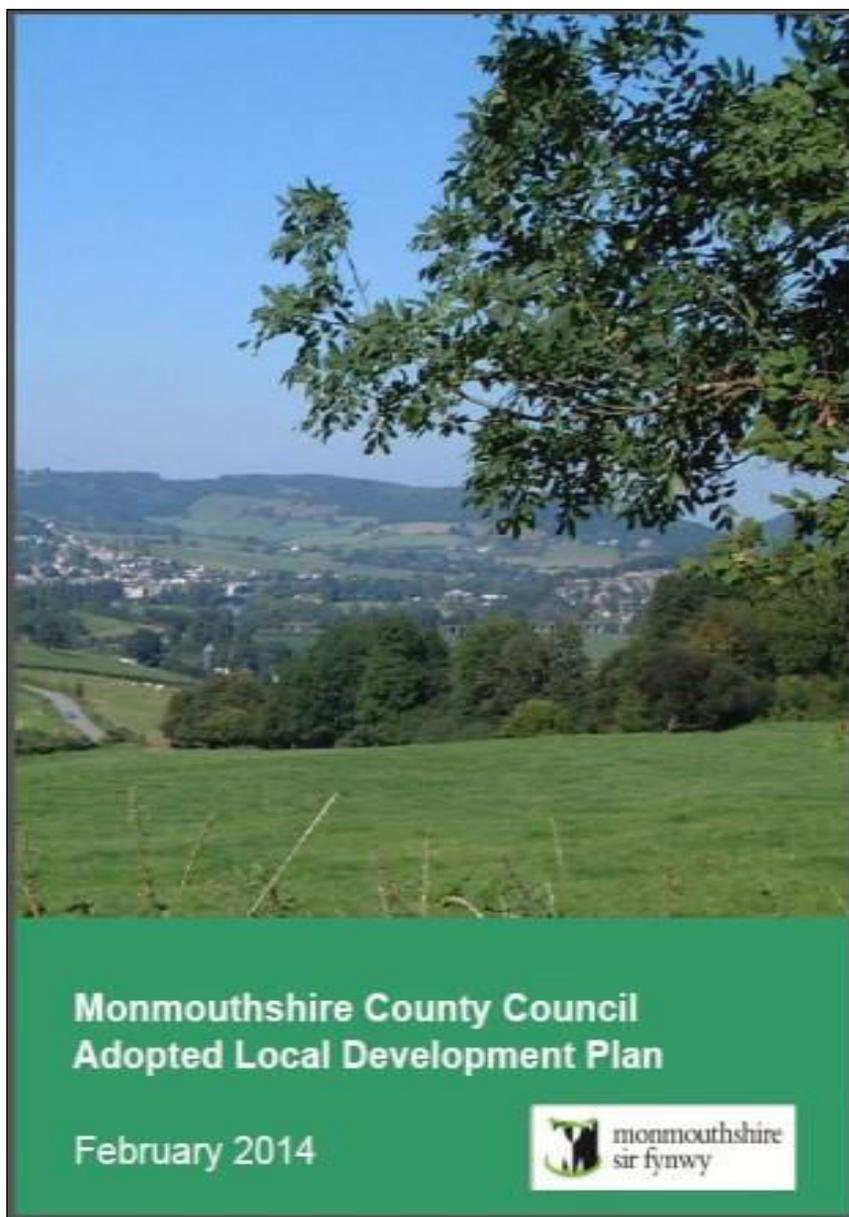
Monmouthshire benefits from areas of high landscape value, and is home to internationally and nationally designated landscapes. These landscapes provide significant environmental, economic and social benefits, which help to create a strong sense of place and provide a distinctive setting for sustainable development.

One of the key means by which the Council fulfils its statutory function as the local planning authority is through development management. In accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), all applications within Monmouthshire outside of the Brecon Beacons National Park are considered against the policies of the Monmouthshire LDP 2011-2021. The Monmouthshire LDP 2011-2021 was adopted by the Council in February 2014. This forms the development plan for Monmouthshire (excluding that part of the County within the National Park) and sets out the strategy, policies and land use allocations that will guide development and shape the future of the County's landscapes and environment up to 2021.

Note: Work has formally commenced on the replacement Local Development Plan. The Replacement LDP will cover the 2018-2033 period and this SPG will be updated to reflect any new adopted policy

Although landscape considerations are integrated throughout the LDP, the key policies which this SPG supplements and expands on are:

- S13 - Landscape, Green Infrastructure & the Natural Environment
- LC5 - Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character



Box 1.5 Strategic Policy S13

Landscape, Green Infrastructure & the Natural Environment

Development proposals must:

- 1 Maintain the character and quality of the landscape by:
 - (i) Identifying, protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing the distinctive landscape and historical, cultural, ecological and geological heritage, including natural and man-made elements associated with existing landscape character;
 - (ii) Protecting areas subject to international and national landscape designations;
 - (iii) Preserving local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting;
 - (iv) Respecting and conserving specific landscape features, such as hedges, trees and ponds;
 - (v) Protecting existing key landscape views and vistas.
- 2 Maintain, protect and enhance the integrity and connectivity of Monmouthshire's green infrastructure network.
- 3 Protect, positively manage and enhance biodiversity and geological interests, including designated and non-designated sites, and habitats and species of importance and the ecological connectivity between them.
- 4 Seek to integrate landscape elements, green infrastructure, biodiversity features and ecological connectivity features, to create multifunctional, interconnected spaces that offer opportunities for recreation and healthy activities such as walking and cycling.

Strategic Policy S13 seeks to maintain the character and quality of the landscape (see [Box 1.5](#)). It assists in meeting objective 8 of the LDP by protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and man-made elements of Monmouthshire's landscape, including landscape designations, other high quality landscapes and distinctive landscape features, for their own sake and to maximise benefits for the economy, tourism and social well-being.

Development Management Policy LC5 (see [Box 1.6](#)) implements Strategic Policy S13 by providing the policy framework for ensuring that development proposals protect and, where possible, positively enhance Monmouthshire's distinctive landscape character as defined by LANDMAP Landscape Character Assessment.

Policy LC5 requires that the Landscape Character Assessment (see **Volume 2**) should be consulted when considering submitting a planning application and used, together with LANDMAP data, as a basis for more detailed character assessments and, where appropriate, landscape and visual impact assessments. This information should be considered, along with other relevant SPG and evidence base studies produced by the Council that support the LDP (see [Diagram 1.3](#) and [Box 1.7](#)), to ensure that development proposals are informed by, and respond to, the distinctive landscape character, qualities and sensitivities of the area.

In addition to providing clarity for applicants in the interpretation of policies S13 and LC5, the Landscape Character SPG is also relevant to the implementation of other LDP policies where landscape issues may be a key consideration.

Box 1.6 Development Management Policy LC5 Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character

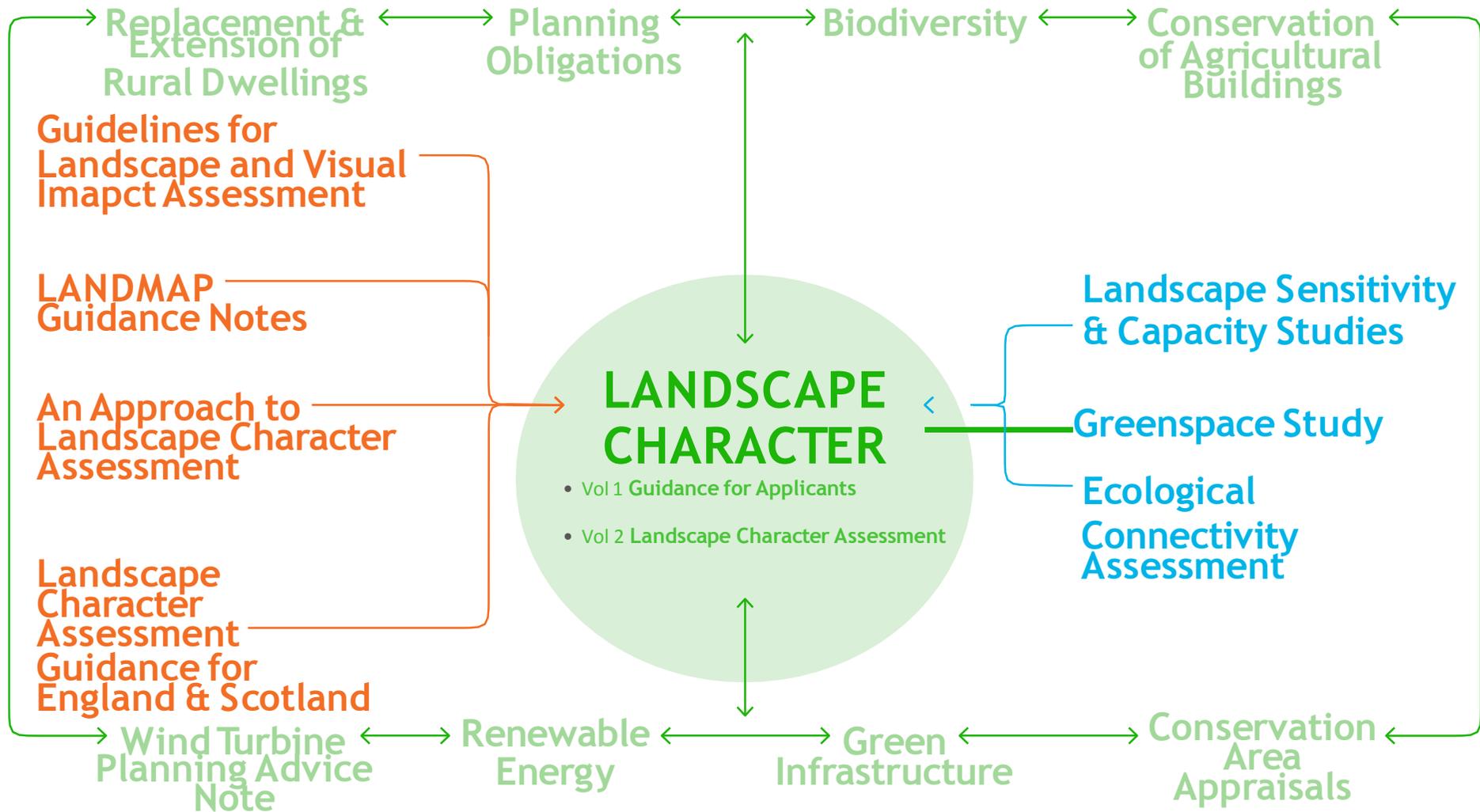
Development proposals that would impact upon landscape character, as defined by LANDMAP Landscape Character Assessment, must demonstrate through a landscape assessment how landscape character has influenced their design, scale, nature and site selection.

Development will be permitted provided it would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the special character or quality of Monmouthshire's landscape in terms of its visual, historic, geological, ecological or cultural aspects by:

- a Causing significant visual intrusion;
- b Causing significant adverse change in the character of the built or natural landscape;
- c Being insensitively and unsympathetically sited within the landscape;
- d Introducing or intensifying a use which is incompatible with its location;
- e Failing to harmonise with, or enhance the landform and landscape; and/or
- f Losing or failing to incorporate important traditional features, patterns, structures and layout of settlements and landscapes of both the built and natural environment.

Particular emphasis will be given to those landscapes identified through the LANDMAP Landscape Character Assessment as being of high and outstanding quality because of a certain landscape quality or combination of qualities.

Diagram 1.3 Links to Other Relevant SPG, Landscape Assessment Guidance & Evidence Base Studies



KEY SPG Landscape Assessment Guidance Evidence Base Study

Box 1.7 Other Relevant SPG, Landscape Assessment Guidance and Evidence Base Studies

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Green Infrastructure	The Council adopted a Green Infrastructure SPG in April 2015 (prepared by Chris Blandford Associates). The Green Infrastructure SPG supports implementation of Strategic Policy S13 and Development Management Policy G11 (Green Infrastructure).
Biodiversity	The Council intends to produce a Biodiversity SPG .
Conservation Area Appraisals	The Council has adopted a number of Conservation Area Appraisals
Conversion of Agricultural Buildings Design Guide	The Council adopted a Conversion of Agricultural Buildings Design Guide as SPG in April 2015
Renewable Energy	The Council adopted a Renewable Energy SPG in March 2016.
Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside and Extension of Rural Dwellings	The Council adopted SPG to support LDP Policies H5 and H6 on the replacement and extension of rural dwellings in April 2015
Wind Turbine Planning Advice Note	The Council has prepared Planning Guidelines for the Landscape and Visual Impact assessment of Wind Turbine Development as a Planning Advice Note in March 2016
Planning Obligations	The Council intends to produce a Planning Obligations SPG in connection with the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Sources of Landscape Character Assessment/Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Guidance See [Section 1.3](#) for details

Evidence Base Studies

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Studies (2009/2010)	These studies set out detailed assessments of sensitivity and capacity of local landscape character areas around main towns and villages, and for candidate strategic development sites.
Greenspace Study (2010)	Provides an analysis of accessible natural greenspace provision in relation to the County's main settlements.
Ecological Connectivity Assessment (2010)	Provides a landscape-scale assessment of habitat connectivity in and around key settlements/ sub-areas to inform habitat management and creation opportunities.

In particular, applicants should take into account the Council's adopted Green Infrastructure SPG alongside the guidance on landscape character in this SPG. Provision of well-planned and managed green infrastructure in support of new development enables the County's landscapes to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits.





1.2

Landscape & Development



Landscape Character Assessment

The Landscape Character Assessment of Monmouthshire undertaken by TACP in 2015/2016 provides an up-to-date landscape characterisation assessment (see [Box 1.8](#) for the whole County using the latest LANDMAP information (see [Volume 2 and supporting appendices](#)).

Box 1.8 Landscape Characterisation

Landscape characterisation is the process of identifying and describing variations in landscape character – the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse. Landscape characterisation involves identifying types and areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character at a scale appropriate to the purpose of the study.

Landscape Types are generic types of landscape that may occur in different areas, with broadly similar and distinctive patterns of geology, topography, drainage, vegetation, historic land use, settlement and field shapes. The 9 Landscape Types across the County identified and described in the Landscape Character Assessment are shown on [Diagram 1.4](#). Information about the key characteristics that need to be maintained or enhanced in order to reinforce the local distinctiveness of each Landscape Type are provided on the datasheets set out in [Volume 2](#) to help guide management of landscape change.



Monmouth

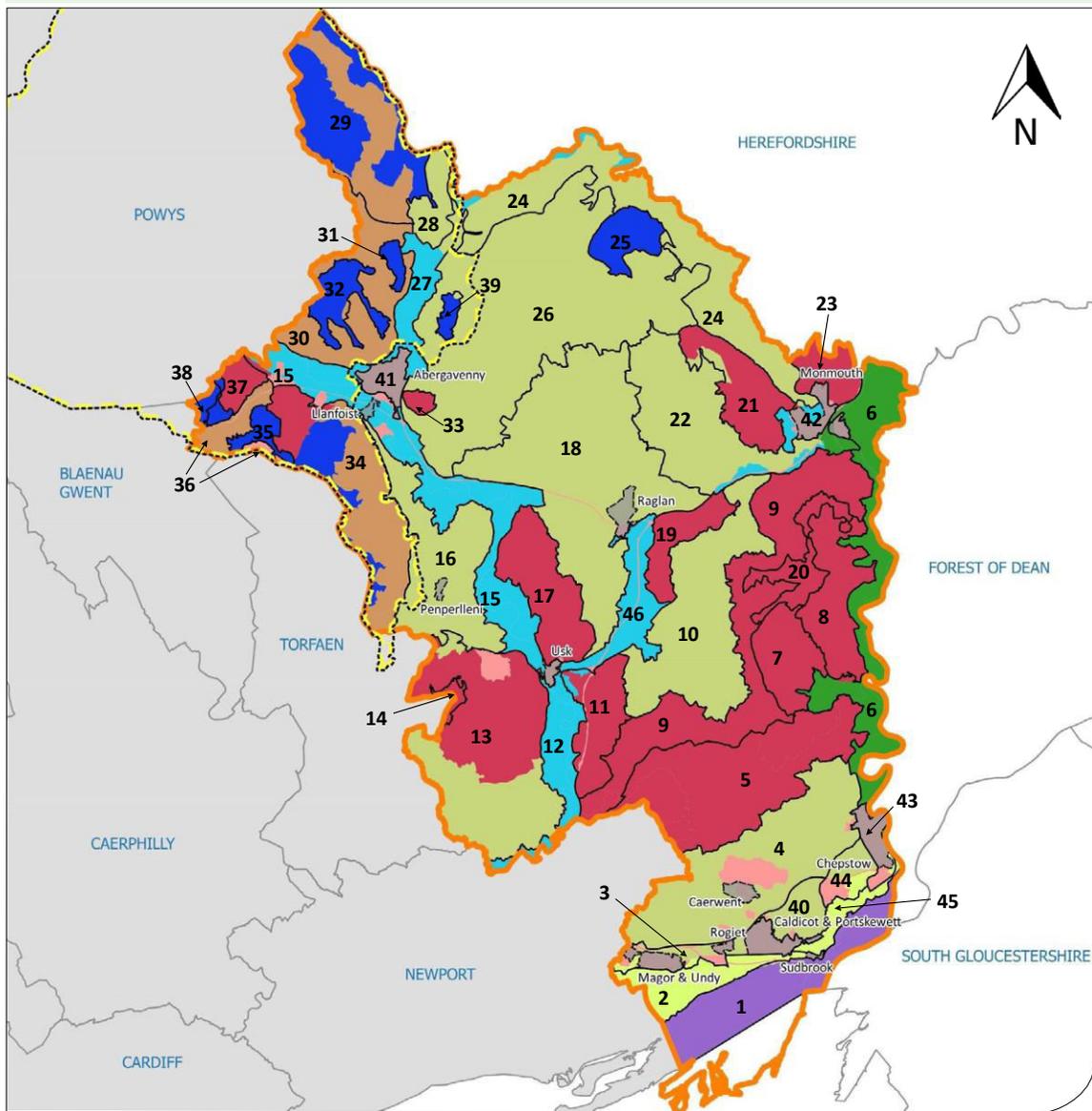


Chippenham Field, Monmouth



Wye Valley

Diagram 1.4 Landscape Types



**LANDSCAPE TYPES MONMOUTHSHIRE
(WITH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS)**

- Monmouthshire County Boundary
- 18 Landscape Character Areas (See Diagram 1.6)
- Main Towns & Settlements
- Brecon Beacons National Park

Landscape Types

- Exposed Upland /Plateau
- Upland Valleys
- Hills, Lower Plateau & Scarp Slopes
- Lowland Gorge
- Rolling Lowland
- Flat Lowland
- Flat Levels
- Coastal
- Built Land

The Landscape Types within the County are sub-divided into Landscape Character Areas. Landscape Character Areas are unique and discrete geographical areas of landscape that share generic characteristics with other areas of the same type, but have their own individual distinctive characteristics/qualities that give the area its particular identity and sense of place. The 46 Landscape Character Areas identified and described in the Landscape Character Assessment in **Volume 2** are shown on [Diagram 1.5](#).

Detailed information and guidance to help guide management of landscape change in ways that reinforce the local distinctiveness of each Landscape Character Area is provided on 'datasheets' as shown in [Box 1.9](#).

The datasheets included in **Volume 2** provide a comprehensive reference document for applicants, planning officers and others involved in the planning process, giving an easy to use summary of the key information and guidance to be taken into account by development proposals located within or adjacent to a particular Landscape Character Area. They also provide signposting to relevant planning policies and further information sources for each Landscape Character Area.

Box 1.9 Landscape Character Area Datasheets Information/Guidance

Each datasheet provides the following information:

Volume 2:

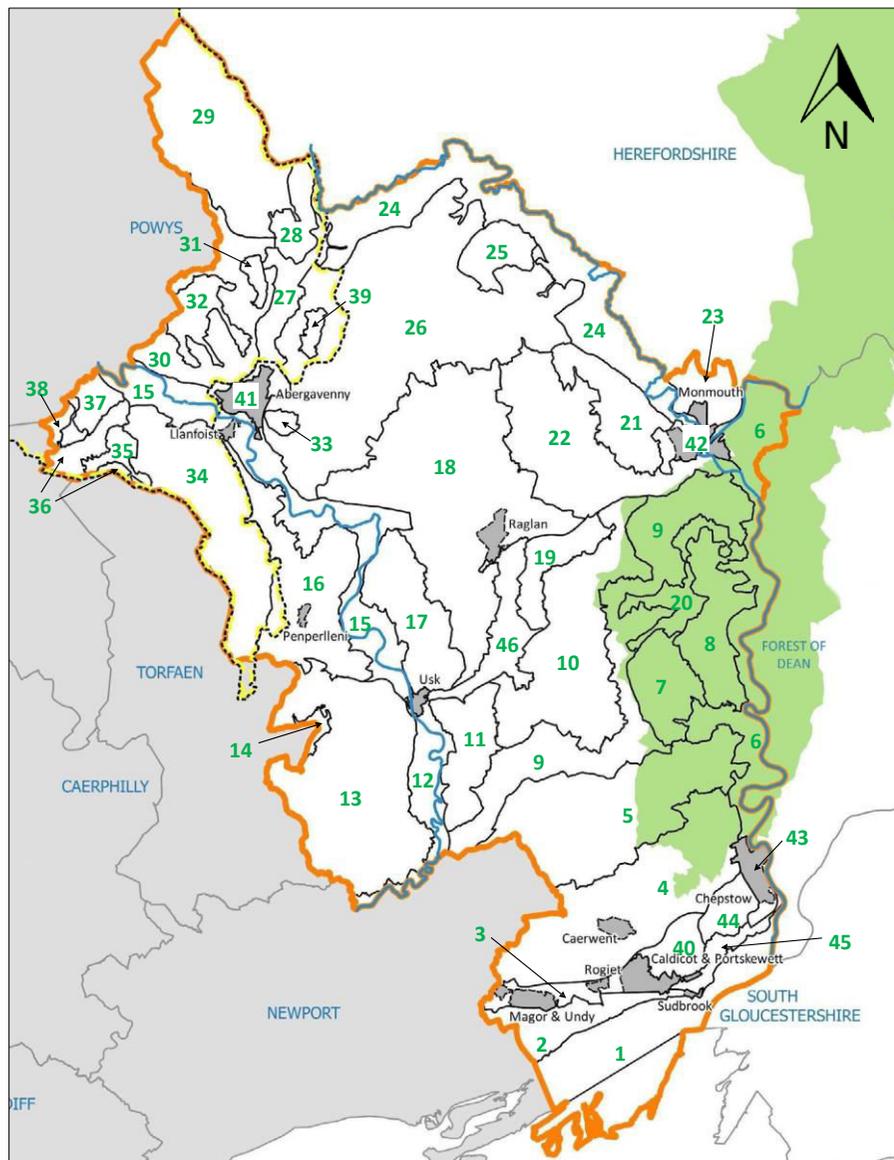
- Location plans and photographs illustrating characteristic features
- Summary characteristics
- Key qualities
- Constraints
- Key issues
- Potential future cumulative effects
- Green infrastructure opportunities



Diagram 1.5 Landscape Character Areas

- LCA 1 Severn Estuary
- LCA 2 Caldicot Levels
- LCA 3 Severnside Caerwent
- LCA 4 Hinterland Chepstow
- LCA 5 Parkland Wye Valley
- LCA 6 Trellech Grange
- LCA 7 Trellech Commons & Forest
- LCA 8 Devauden Escarpment
- LCA 9 Llangovan Foothills
- LCA 10 Llangeview
- LCA 11 Southern Usk Valley
- LCA 12 Western Hills
- LCA 13 Llandegfedd Reservoir
- LCA 14 Upper Usk Valley
- LCA 15 Llanover Lowland
- LCA 16 Gwehelog Valleys
- LCA 17 Raglan Hinterland
- LCA 18 Kingcoed Scarp Slopes
- LCA 19 Trellech Plateaux
- LCA 20 Kings Wood
- LCA 21 Trothy Valley
- LCA 22 Buckholt Woods
- LCA 23

-  Monmouthshire County Boundary
-  Landscape Character Areas
-  Main Towns & Settlements
-  Brecon Beacons National Park
-  Wye Valley AONB
-  Main Rivers: Wye, Usk and Monnow



- LCA 24 Monnow Valley
- LCA 25 Graig y Syffryn
- LCA 26 Northern Hills
- LCA 27 Penyclawdd Watershed
- LCA 28 Olchon Valley
- LCA 29 Black Mountains
- LCA 30 Sugar Loaf Scarp
- LCA 31 Bryn Arw
- LCA 32 Sugar Loaf
- LCA 33 Ysgyrd Fach
- LCA 34 Bloreng
- LCA 35 Gilwern Hill
- LCA 36 Clydach Gorge
- LCA 37 Maesygwartha
- LCA 38 Black Rock Slopes
- LCA 39 Skirrid Fawr
- LCA 40 Chepstow Hills
- LCA 41 Abergavenny
- LCA 42 Monmouth
- LCA 43 Chepstow
- LCA 44 Mathern Hinterland
- LCA 45 Mathern Levels
- LCA 46 Olway Valley

Planning & Design Guidelines

The Landscape Character Assessment is supported by Planning and Design Guidelines to be found within the SPG appendices. The Guidelines reflect PPW10 guidance on Placemaking in Action: Good Design Making Better Places which recognises that Landscape and Green infrastructure are an integral part of the design process (3.8). Key landscape topics related to development types typically coming forward within the plan area are indicated in **Box 1.10**. These are for use by applicants to help ensure that development proposals respond positively to the distinctiveness, qualities and sensitivities of the landscape. The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with **Volume 2** and the Green Infrastructure SPG. Together, these provide further guidance on what is likely to be appropriate in terms of development and design solutions for particular Landscape Character Areas.



Box 1.10 Planning & Design Guidelines: Landscape Topics

- Design Principles
- Towards Sustainable Development
- Supporting Biodiversity
- Respecting Historic Landscapes
- Water Management
- River Valleys
- Coastal Levels
- Rural Conversions, Extensions and Replacement Buildings
- Agricultural Buildings and Farm Access
- Rural Diversification
- Rural Settlements
- Housing and mixed Use Settlements
- Roads and Movement within Development
- Industrial and Commercial Sites
- Rural Roads
- Leisure and Tourism
- Telecommunications and Radio Masts
- Renewable Energy
- Hard Materials Palette

The Planning and Design Guidelines aim to illustrate good practice in design, site considerations and landscape-fit, and encourage an integrated approach to landscape, green infrastructure and the natural environment matters.

Design of new development should aim to improve the quality of the built environment and countryside in Monmouthshire and reinforce the County's sense of place.

The Guidelines provide a useful waymarker for considering appropriate design options and proposals for new development. Following the Guidelines can aid good design, but they are not a substitute for innovative thinking.

Landscape in the Place-Making and Design Process

The Welsh Government's Technical Advice Note on Design (TAN12, 2016) emphasises the importance of landscape in the place-making and design process. This is also reflected in LDP policies S13 and LC5, which emphasise that development proposals must maintain the character and quality of the landscape and demonstrate how their design has been influenced by its landscape character context.

Appraising the local context, characteristics and setting of an area in which a proposed development is located is an important starting point for exploring design principles and concepts. As illustrated in [Box 1.11](#), this typically includes appraisal of the area's natural and human history, the forms of settlements, buildings and spaces; its ecology and archaeology; its location and the routes and waterways that pass through it. Understanding the site and its immediate and wider context provides a basis for a meaningful and sustainable design response.

In line with national policy on good design provided in PPW, this SPG provides information that can be used in appraising the landscape setting and context for new development. In many cases, an appraisal of the local context will highlight distinctive patterns of development or landscape where the intention will be to sustain character. Appraisal is equally important in areas where patterns of development have failed to respond to context in the past; in these areas appraisal should point towards design solutions which reverse the trend and enhance the landscape or townscape setting of the site.

Box 1.11 Appraisal of Character in the Place-Making Process

Appraisal of a place's "character" involves attention to topography; historic street patterns; archaeological features; waterways; hierarchy of development and spaces; prevalent materials in buildings or floorscape; architecture and historic quality; landscape character, field patterns and land use patterns; distinctive views (in and out of the site); skylines and vistas; prevailing uses and plan forms; boundary treatments; local biodiversity; natural and cultural resources; and locally distinctive features and traditions - also known as vernacular elements.

Appraisal of the landscape should focus on its quality in terms of geology and geomorphology, vegetation and habitats, visual and sensory quality and historic and cultural quality.

Technical Advice Note on Design ([TAN12 2016](#)).

Opportunities for innovative design will depend on the existing context of development and the degree to which the historic, architectural, social or landscape characteristics of an area may demand or inhibit a particular design solution. Thorough appraisal of context can provide design pointers, which help to inspire an innovative design response, which meets present and future needs. A contextual approach should not necessarily prohibit contemporary design.

Given the largely rural nature of Monmouthshire, the Council considers that sustaining and enhancing local landscape character by responding to local context is a key objective of good design. The particular relevance and weight attached to landscape objectives in any given case may depend on local circumstances and the nature of the proposed development. Those involved in the place-making and design process should carefully consider how their proposed development meets landscape character design objectives.

Landscape Assessment, Design and the Planning Process

In accordance with LDP Policy LC5, development proposals that would impact upon landscape character must demonstrate through a landscape assessment how landscape character has influenced their design, scale, nature and site selection. This section provides guidance on the iterative landscape assessment, design and planning process (see [Diagram 1.6](#)).

It is not possible to be prescriptive about the nature of development proposals that might fall within the remit of Policy LC5 in terms of requiring a landscape/ townscape and visual impact assessment. As well as the scale of development, much depends upon the location and context of the proposal. Some guidance is provided in [Box 1.12](#).

Landscape requirements should be considered from the earliest phases of the masterplanning and design process. Ideally, this should happen as part of the initial thinking carried out by a developer to define needs, objectives and the key parameters for the development. Incorporating consideration of constraints and opportunities from the outset allows the developer to think about how the development can positively respond to its landscape setting.

It is to the advantage of the developer to treat the landscape aspects of development proposals seriously and take appropriate professional advice where necessary. This will enable a planning application to proceed more quickly and will increase the likelihood of a favourable decision.

Where the proposed development is of any significance (by virtue of its size, or prominence, or degree of impact on the locality), the Local Planning Authority will expect the developer to employ the services of a Chartered Landscape Architect with an appropriate professional qualification (see [Section 1.3](#) for a signpost to the Local Planning Authority's list of Chartered Landscape Architects).

Box 1.12 Requirement for Landscape Assessment under Policy LC5

It is very likely that development in the countryside that is defined as 'major' under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure Order) (Wales) 2012 would require a Landscape Assessment, i.e.:

- 'the number of dwelling houses to be provided is 10 or more or, where the number of dwelling houses is not known, the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more; or
- the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or
- the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.'

Such 'major' developments would also require the submission of a Design and Access Statement.

Developments of a smaller scale, however, might also fall within the remit of Policy LC5 and require a Landscape Assessment if they are:

- significant in the landscape, by virtue of their prominence or degree of impact on the locality, particularly in designated landscapes (see [Box 1.13](#));
- in a landscape of high or outstanding value for any one of the LANDMAP aspect areas;
- in a landscape identified as of medium and/or high sensitivity or low capacity for development in the Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Studies (2009 and 2010).

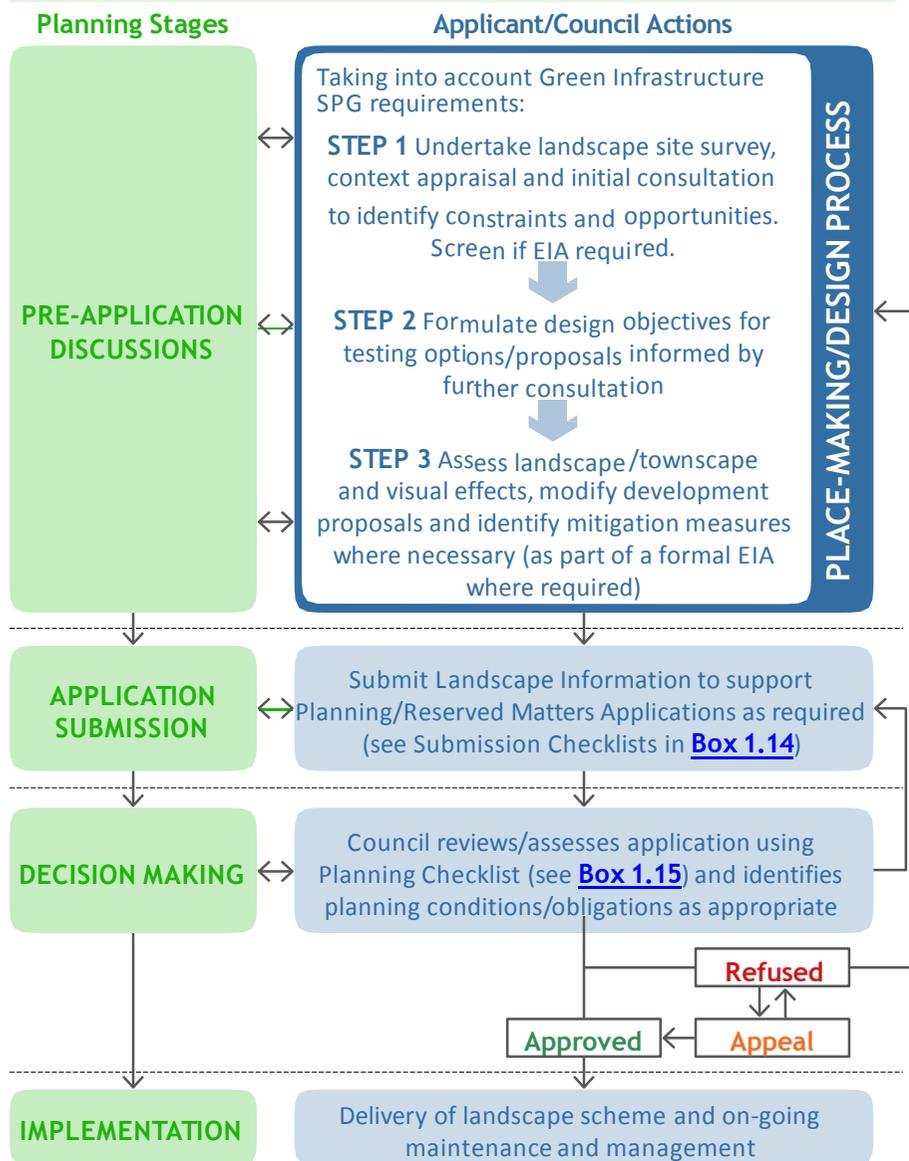
For further information about the planning process in Monmouthshire refer to the following website

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning/>

For Pre-Application advice and guidance visit:-

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning/before-an-application/>

Diagram 1.6 Landscape Assessment, Design and the Planning Process



By following the process set out in [Diagram 1.6](#), applicants can demonstrate to the Council that their development proposals give landscape character due consideration in accordance with Policy LC5. The process aims to ensure that all appropriate assessments and design information are submitted and clearly presented, thus avoiding unnecessary delays which are costly to both the developer and to the Local Planning Authority. This will ultimately also help to improve the quality of the landscape in areas undergoing change. Each application will be treated on its own merits by the Local Planning Authority.



Pre-Application Discussions Stage

The design phase is an iterative process involving a wide range of analysis, consultations, testing and refinements. It is important that sufficient time is spent studying and understanding how a place works before starting to design. An understanding of landscape character is fundamental to the design process and should form the starting point within any development scheme. In line with national and local policy requirements, developers should follow the key steps outlined below.

Applicants should also take into account the requirements of the Council's **Green infrastructure SPG** by using the Landscape Assessment Process to feed into the Green Infrastructure Assets and Opportunity Plan (Step 1) and inform the preparation of the Green Infrastructure Masterplan and Management Plans (Steps 2 and 3).

Step 1 Site Survey & Context Appraisal

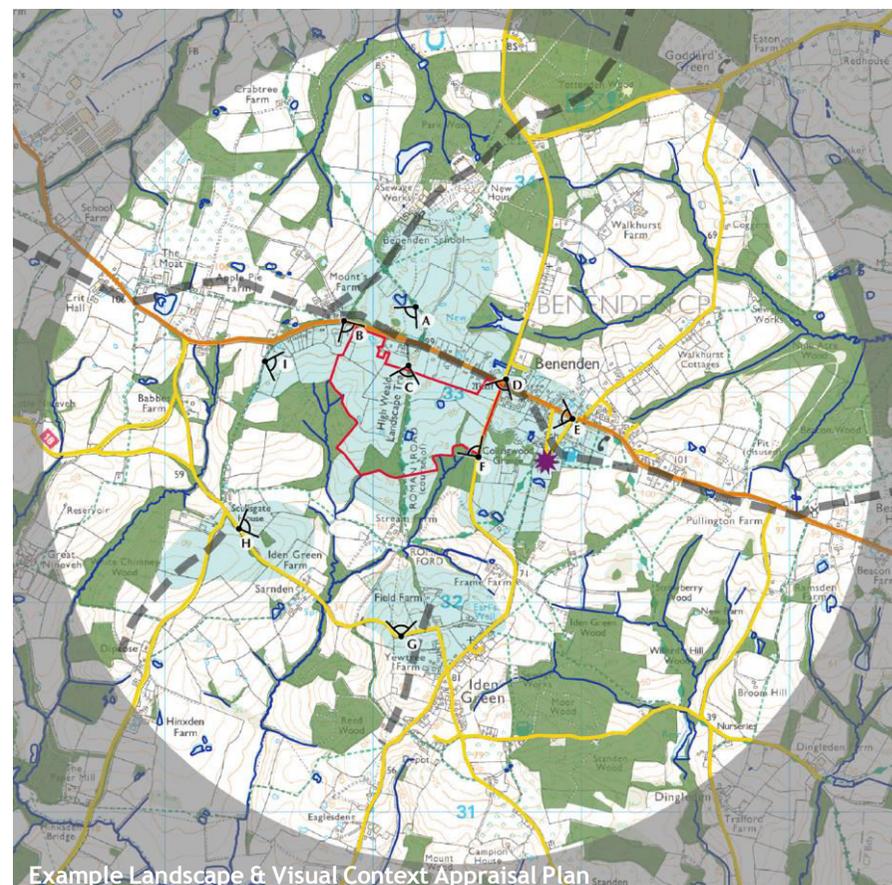
Initial discussions with the LPA will determine the scope of surveys required for a site and proposals. Developers should undertake a **landscape site survey and context appraisal** to identify constraints and opportunities for development. Applicants can also request a 'Screening Opinion' from the Council as to whether a formal Environmental Impact Assessment is required.

The survey and appraisal should be proportional to the scale of the proposal; smaller-scale developments will usually only require limited survey and appraisal, except where the site is environmentally sensitive; larger-scale developments involving more extensive and complex sites are more likely to require a greater level of detail, and may require appraisal of a larger contextual area.

Sources of best practice guidance for undertaking baseline landscape and visual studies can be found in [Section 1.3](#). The Council expects applicants to use the Landscape Character Area information included on the datasheets in **Volume 2** of this SPG to inform their site surveys and context appraisals.

For Pre-Application advice and guidance visit:-

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning/before-an-application/>



Example Landscape & Visual Context Appraisal Plan

Step 2 Design Objectives Formulation

The next step involves **formulating design objectives against which to generate and test design options and proposals, informed by further consultation** as appropriate.

Landscape design should be considered as an integral element of the vision for the site's overall layout and design. Importantly, well-designed and managed external spaces can make a significant contribution to creating a distinctive identity and sense of place for the development. Opportunities for retaining and incorporating existing landscape features through the evolution and testing of the site masterplan should be considered alongside options for the layout of street grids and blocks, movement routes, public spaces and soft landscaping areas.

In addition to considering impact on locally important views, proposals for the massing, heights, densities and orientations of buildings should also take into account the key **green infrastructure design considerations** set out in the Green Infrastructure SPG.

The Council expects applicants to use the guidance included on the Landscape Character Area datasheets in Volume 2, together with relevant Planning and Design Guidelines to inform their thinking about how the proposal reflects landscape character considerations in the design and place-making process.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
SPG THEMES



landscape setting & quality of place



habitat provision & connectivity



green space provision, connectivity & enjoyment



sustainable energy use



local food production



flood attenuation & water resource management

Step 3 Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment/Mitigation

The final step involves assessing potential landscape and visual effects, modifying development proposals to avoid adverse impacts and identifying mitigation measures where necessary.

Applicants are required to assess the impact of their development on the relevant Landscape Character Areas identified in the Monmouthshire Landscape Character Assessment that are likely to be directly or indirectly affected by the nature of the proposals. Where a detailed Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (or a Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment in urban contexts) is considered necessary, applicants are advised to consult best practice guidance provided in the Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (see [Section 1.3](#)).

PPW 10 6.3.20 makes it clear that LANDMAP should be used as the basis for informing Landscape Assessments. The Monmouthshire Landscape Character Assessment has been based upon a Level 3 LANDMAP assessment and therefore any Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment will be required to use the datasheets and LANDMAP aspect area information in **Volume 2 and appendices** of this SPG as baseline information. The more detailed Level 4 Landscape Character Assessment of the Gwent Levels within Monmouthshire should also be taken into account as a source of baseline information where relevant. LANDMAP aspect area information can be accessed on Natural Resources Wales website together with other supporting information such as LANDMAP guidance Notes 1-5, National Marine Character Areas and Shoreline Management Plans.

In addition, consideration should also be given to landscape assessment information and management plans for the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Brecon Beacons National Park, Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site and Landscapes of Outstanding and Special Historic Interest. Specific reference should also be made to the Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity studies.



Visualisation of Residential Development without Screening Mitigation



Visualisation of Residential Development with Screening Mitigation

The impacts of a development on the landscape can sometimes be suitably mitigated to create a development that blends in with its surroundings. Such mitigation measures should be incorporated within a development scheme at the outset, and pre-application discussion with Development Management Planning Officers is encouraged to discuss possible options. The Council will ensure that such mitigation and/or enhancement measures are secured by way of appropriate planning conditions and/or planning obligations, where necessary.

Applicants are encouraged to discuss any development scheme with the Council's planning department prior to the submission of a planning application. See [Section 1.3](#) for a signpost to details of the Local Planning Authority's pre-planning application advice service. It should be noted that specialist landscape advice can be provided where an applicant chooses a Level 1, 2 or 3 service; it is strongly recommended that an applicant elects to choose this approach to avoid the potential for delay or unexpected costs during the application process if landscape issues are then considered relevant.

Where a Level 3 service is chosen, the Council will identify key LDP policies, SPG, Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment requirements and other information that the developer should take account of. In particular officers can identify the degree to which the development proposal requires compliance with Policy LC5. Where larger schemes are proposed, wider consultation is desirable (and is likely to be a statutory requirement) and landscape advice should be sought particularly when located in or near designated landscapes or other landscapes of high and outstanding value (see [Box 1.13](#)).

Box 1.13 Landscape Designations

Primary designations/areas of landscape significance that may have implications for development:

- Areas of High and Outstanding Landscape Value defined by LANDMAP
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- National Park
- Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
- Registered Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest
- Conservation Areas
- Coastal Protection Zone
- Green Wedges

Other designations of landscape significance that may also have implications for development:

- Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings
- Common Land
- National trails and promoted routes
- European Wildlife Sites
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Nature Reserves
- Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation
- Tree Preservation Orders

The statutory requirements for carrying out pre-application consultation are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2016.

Application Submission Stage

Details of how to apply for planning permission and the application validation process can be found on the Council's website. In addition to the Welsh Government's national requirements, the Council identifies local information requirements for validation of planning applications. For outline and detailed planning applications and reserved matters applications where relevant, the Council's basic landscape information submission requirements are as set out below:

1. **A site survey and / or similar relevant or necessary assessments** informed by pre- application advice should be submitted with the application
2. **Outline landscape proposals should be included with applications for outline permission where site layout is shown** (to include site survey and analysis, a development brief where appropriate, landscape master plan, analysis of the setting and appropriateness of the development and maintenance/management - for larger, more complex schemes a full Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment supported by photomontages, a cumulative effects assessment and informed by a historic/cultural assessment, may also be required.)



Residential development in Rogiet

3. **Detailed landscape proposals should be included for full permission with relevant applications** (to include all the same information as for an outline application plus detailed plans for hard and soft landscape proposals and management plans where appropriate).
4. **A Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (or Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment) should be submitted** where necessary to comply with Policy LC5 (see [Box 1.12](#)). Where a full impact assessment is not considered necessary, but landscape impact issues may still be relevant, a Landscape Appraisal may be required. The extent of assessment/appraisal information required can be established through the Council's pre-application advice service.
5. **For major development (see [Box 1.12](#)), the application should be supplemented by a Design & Access Statement** (to include a site analysis, design principals, justification for the design solution to show how it responds in the wider context as well as the characteristics of the site - the format and level of detail will depend upon the scale and likely landscape or visual impact of the development). The statutory requirements for the submission of Design and Access Statements are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (Wales) (Amendment) Order) 2016.
6. **For proposals where a formal Environmental Impact Assessment is required, and landscape effects have been identified by the Council as a key issue, a detailed Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (or Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment) will be required** that satisfies the EIA Regulations.

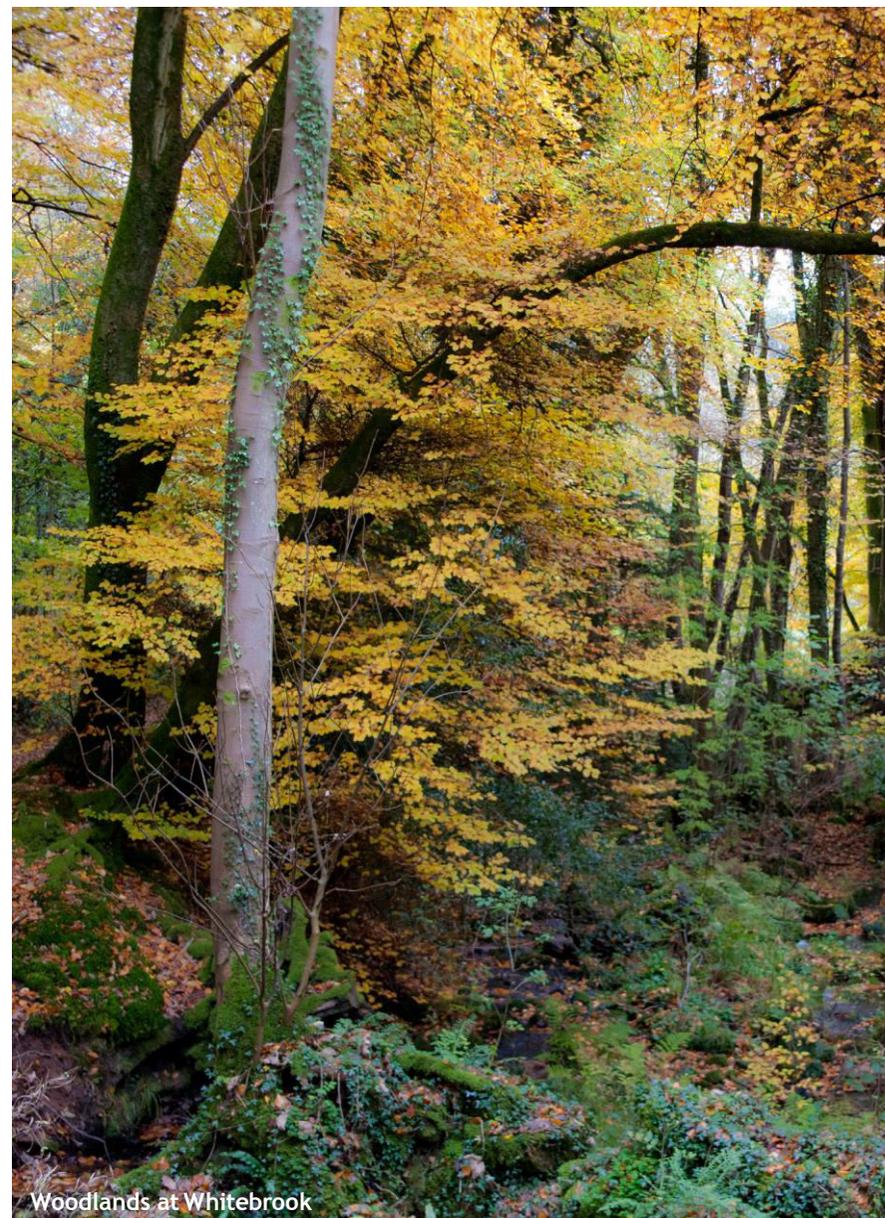
Where applications are for replacement dwellings in the open countryside or extension of rural dwellings, applicants should take into account the requirements of Policies H5 and H6 Replacement Dwellings and Rural Dwellings-SPG in respect of landscape considerations.

7. Presentation - it is the developer's responsibility to present clearly all the necessary information, and ensure that all plans are at an appropriate metric scale for maximum clarity of communication to enable the application to be processed and validated. It is recommended that:

- Location Maps should be provided at 1:1250 or 1:2500 scale
- Site Layouts should be provided at 1:500 and 1:200 scale
- Visual representations or 'visualisations' of development proposals should follow the Landscape Institute's technical guidance and advice notes (see [Section 1.3](#)).

Service information, sightlines and all relevant site layout details should be included on the same plan as the landscape submission. It is advised that the information provided by applicants should be readily understandable by members of the public and Council Members to allow the consultation and decision making process to be efficiently undertaken.

The checklists set out in [Box 1.14](#) identify the basic landscape survey and design information that may need to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, although the extent of the information requirements will depend on the scale of development in relation to the sensitivity of its location. Not every item will be relevant to every application particularly for smaller scale developments. Conversely, there may be some applications for which additional survey/design information will be required. Applicants are encouraged to discuss submission requirements with the Council's Development Management Officer and/or Landscape Officer at the earliest opportunity and to make use of the pre-application advice service.



Woodlands at Whitebrook

Box 1.14 Landscape Survey/Design Information Submission Checklists

Note: Surveys need to be proportionate to the application and further scoping advice can be provided at a preapplication stage

Site Survey and Analysis Checklist

- Site location (an Ordnance Survey plan with a north point)
- Landscape designations (see [Box 1.13](#))
- Views into and out of the site, visual receptors and landmark features
- Landscape character
- Settlement character and landscape settings
- Ecological designations and habitats (identified in consultation with the Local Planning Authority's Biodiversity Officer)
- Geology and soils
- Contours and site levels
- Climate/microclimate
- Drainage, natural and man-made
- Land use on site and adjacent sites
- Vegetation and natural features
- Historic and archaeological features
- A measured tree survey to identify species, height, girth, canopy spread and condition (undertaken in accordance with BS Standards and in consultation with the Local Planning Authority's Tree Officer)
- Services, above and below ground
- Public rights of way crossing the site (identified in consultation with the Local Planning Authority's PROW team) and easements, covenants, etc
- Location and type of site boundaries

Landscape Masterplan Checklist

- Landscape structure (main areas for hard and soft planting)
- Services (existing and proposed, including zones of restriction by statutory undertakers affecting planting)
- Location and orientation of buildings
- Land drainage (existing, proposed; streams, ponds, water features, SUDs)
- Roads, footpaths, cycleways, bridleways, other links to adjoining land
- Boundary treatment
- Open space
- Phasing and programming
- Contours and levels (existing, proposed; areas of cut and fill)
- Management concept (long-term design intentions)

Detailed Soft Landscape Proposals Checklist

- Topsoil/planting material (depth and specification)
- Irrigation/water points
- Site preparation
- Supports for trees/shrubs/climbers
- Planting specification (to include reference to species, sizes, spacing, height and girth)
- Grass/seeded areas (to include specification; local provenance is always preferable)
- Protective fencing measures (temporary/permanent; to existing features and to new planting)
- Mulch depth and specification
- Remedial surgery to existing trees to be identified

Detailed Hard Landscape Proposals Checklist

- Walls, fences, gates, rails, barriers and trelliswork
- Routing (depth, height, type, markers)
- Surfaces (soft, hard, drainage falls, steps, ramps)
- Sub-stations, junction boxes and similar structures
- Play equipment
- Telephone kiosks, post boxes and bus shelters
- Seating, litter bins, bollards, other street furniture
- Structures associated with building services (ventilation outlets/inlets, coolers, refuse stores)
- Lighting, signing and services above and below ground.

Landscape Management & Maintenance Plan Checklist

- Design concept (supplementary plans may be provided to illustrate management proposals)
- Framework for biodiversity management proposals
- Access requirements (public, private, emergency)
- Maintenance responsibilities (public, private)
- Maintenance regime (to address habitat management/creation, species, grass areas, native and non-native planting, woodland, water areas, SUDs)
- Management and maintenance periods (from 5-10 years dependant on scale/sensitivity of proposals to include robust replacement schedule)

Decision-Making Stage

In accordance with LDP Policy LC5, development must be designed to ensure it would not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the special character or quality of Monmouthshire's landscape in terms of its visual, historic, geological, ecological or cultural aspects.

The planning checklist in [Box 1.15](#) outlines some of the general landscape considerations the Council will use in reviewing and assessing planning/reserved matters applications, and in identifying the need for any relevant planning conditions and obligations where necessary.

Where detailed landscape proposals have not been agreed at the planning application stage (e.g. as is the case for outline applications), the Council is likely to make planning approval subject to detailed landscape conditions. While the details of such conditions will vary on a case-by-case basis, generally these may involve submission of detailed landscape plans (including hard and soft materials and built form where relevant, implementation procedures, lighting, earthworks, boundaries and management) for approval by the Council.

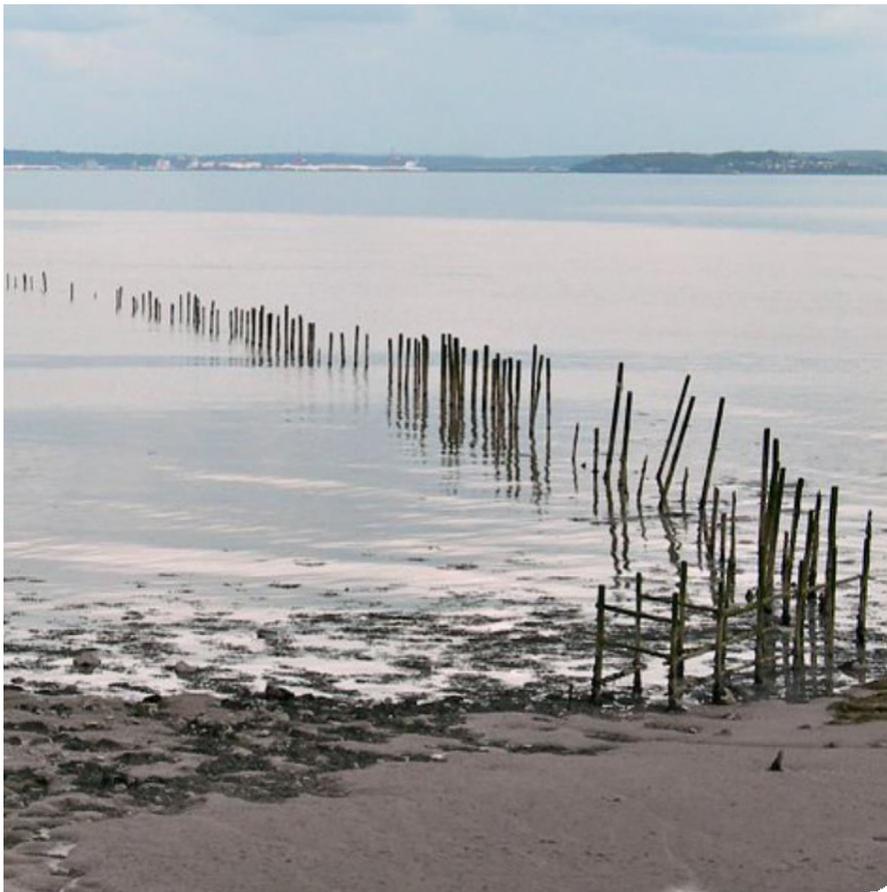
Where sufficient landscape mitigation cannot be provided, the Council is likely to consider seeking a developer contribution to secure appropriate landscape enhancements (e.g. reinstatement of hedgerows, planting of trees or provision of improved access/interpretation) to support an existing or proposed green infrastructure asset through a planning obligation.

If the planning submission does not demonstrate that landscape aspects of the proposed development have been fully considered, and satisfactorily incorporated into the site planning process and scheme design, then the Local Planning Authority may seek to negotiate changes to the scheme or may decide to refuse the application.

Where the application is refused, the applicant has the option of appealing the decision within 6 months. Details of the appeal process can be found on the Council's website. If landscape/green infrastructure is cited as a reason for refusal, it is advisable to engage the services of a Chartered Landscape Architect to assist with the appeal process (see [Section 1.3](#) for a signpost to the Council's list of Chartered Landscape Architects).

Implementation Stage

Following implementation of the built development and/or landscape scheme, the on-going management and maintenance of the landscape by the end user should be delivered in accordance with the approved plan. Where relevant, the Landscape Management & Maintenance Plan shall include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the Plan will be secured, including details of the management body responsible for delivery.



Box 1.15 Planning Checklist

- 1 Is the development sympathetic to the surrounding area (in terms of scale, size, form, density, location, layout, symmetry, quality and suitability of materials, aspect, microclimate and density of building/land use and the space between buildings)?
- 2 Are key landscape features (eg trees, hedgerows and other vegetation) safeguarded and adequately integrated into the development proposal?
- 3 Is there the potential to create new landscape features that blend in with the existing defined landscape character?
- 4 How will the new development form a built environment that enhances distinctive landscape character?
- 5 Does the proposal maintain characteristic land cover and respond to the natural contours and textures of the landscape?
- 6 How does the scheme encourage the creation/management of habitats?
- 7 Does the development cause significant harm to important views into, out of or across settlements and open countryside?
- 8 Will the proposal support improved land management?
- 9 Does the proposal compromise tranquillity through, for example, inappropriate lighting schemes or noise generating activities?
- 10 Does the proposal impact local geology, soils or drainage?
- 11 Is the proposal likely to have adverse cumulative landscape and visual effects in combination with other development in the area?
- 12 Do the landscape proposals satisfactorily integrate with the Green Infrastructure proposals for the development?



1.3

Sources of Guidance & Advice



Llanthony Priory

Landscape Character Assessment/Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment:

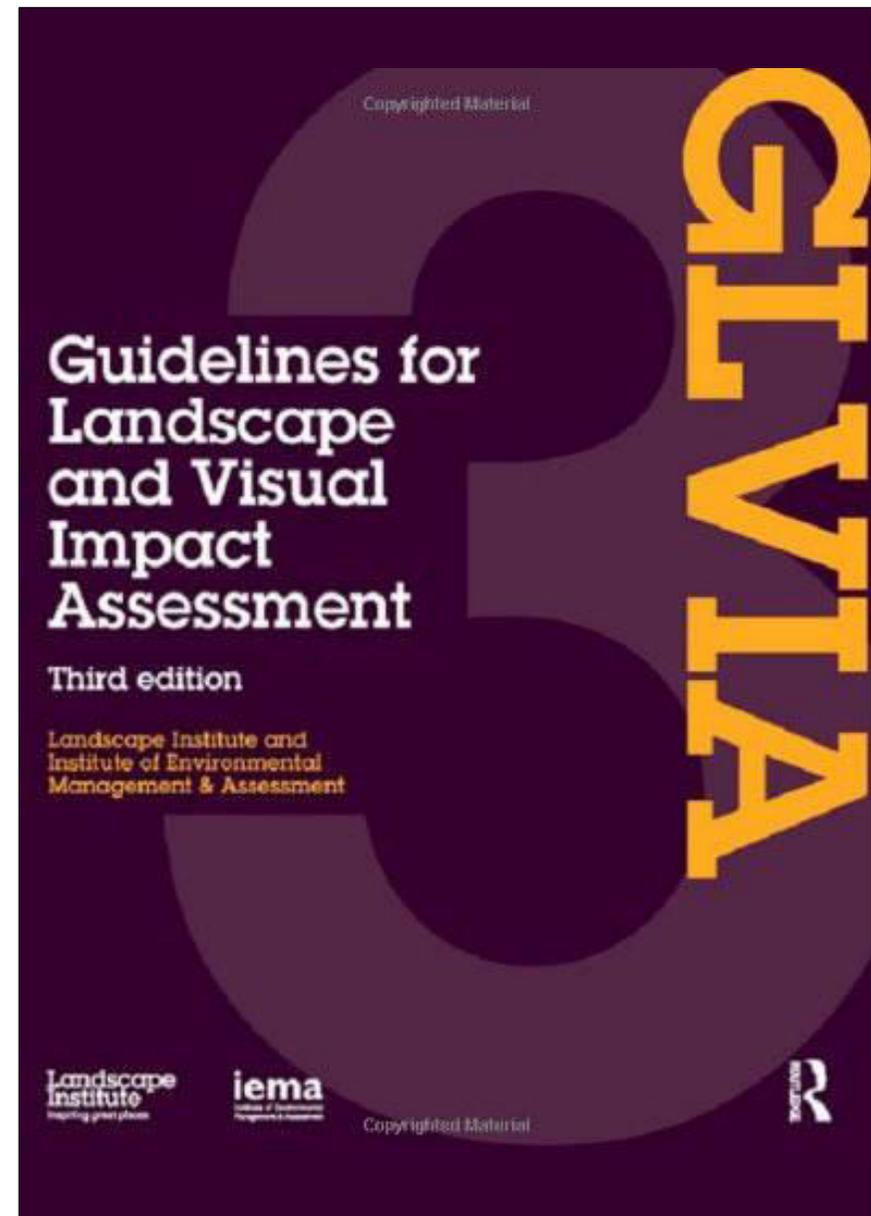
- [Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment \(2013\)](#) – the third edition (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment sets out good practice principles for undertaking landscape and visual impact assessments of development proposals.
- [Visual Representation of Development Proposals \(2017\)](#) Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/17 (31 March 2017).
- [Photography and Photomontage in Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment \(2011\)](#) Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11.
- [LANDMAP Guidance Notes](#) – provide technical guidance from NRW on all aspects of the LANDMAP information system methodology, which describes and evaluates aspects of the landscape and provides the basis of a consistent Wales-wide approach to landscape character assessment.
- [An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment \(2014\)](#) – sets out good practice principles for undertaking landscape character assessments published by Natural England.
- [Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England & Scotland \(2002\)](#) – sets out good practice principles for undertaking landscape character assessments published by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency.
- [Welsh Government Circular 11/99 Environmental Impact Assessment](#)

Monmouthshire CC Pre-Planning Application Advice Service:

www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning/pre-application-advice-service

Monmouthshire CC Chartered Landscape Consultants List:

www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/app/uploads/2013/06/chartered-landscape-consultants-list-20121.pdf



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Monmouthshire County Council Steering Group

Colette Bosley Principal Landscape and Countryside Officer

Andrew Nevill Senior Landscape and UD Officer

Rachel Lewis Policy Officer Manager

Amy Longford Heritage Manager

Landscape Character SPG Volume 1:

Initial draft [Chris Blandford Associates](#)

South East Studio The Old Crown High Street

Blackboys Uckfield East Sussex TN22 5JR

T 01825 891071

E mail@cbastudios.com W www.cbastu

Landscape Character SPG Volume 2:

Initial draft TACP

[10 Park Grove](#)

[Cardiff](#)

[CF10 3BN](#)

T:029 20228966 E:admin@tacp.co.uk

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David G Steadman

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David

David Meenagh

Angus Kirk

1.0 Setting the Scene

Lordspudcz

Page 3

Ben Salter

Page 5 (clockwise from left)

John Clift

David Evans

David Meenagh

Page 6 (left to right)

Eirlys Howard

Mark Hillary

1.1 Landscape Planning

Andrew Dennes

Page 9 (clockwise from top left)

Daniel Torrejon Martinez

Nick Sarebi

Nick Sarebi

Page 10

Diagram Extract from Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 The Essentials www.gov.wales

Page 11 (all)

Walt Jabsco

Page 13 (Bottom left)

Microsoft product screen shot(s) reprinted with permission from Microsoft Corporation

Page 14

Allan Hopkins

1.2 Landscape and Development

IDS.photos

Page 21 (clockwise from top left)

Keith Moseley

Keith Moseley

David Evans

Page 23 (top to bottom)

Florian Laguntzaile

Gordon Robertson

Page 25

Gavin-S

Page 28

Robin Drayton

Page 29

Chris Blandford Associates

Page 30 (top then left to right)

Chris Blandford Associates

IDS.photos

Monmouthshire County Council

Giorgio Galeotti

Arlington County

Barbara Agnew

NATT-at-NKM

Page 31 (all)

Chris Blandford Associates

Page 33

Monmouthshire County Council

Page 34

Charlie Llewellyn

Page 37

velodenz

1.3 Sources of Guidance & Advice

Ali Wade



monmouthshire
sir fynywy





LANDSCAPE

Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance
Landscape Types and datasheets

October 2019

Volume 2

Monmouthshire County Council

**LANDSCAPE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING
GUIDANCE**

VOLUME 2: LANDSCAPE TYPES AND DATASHEETS

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3	16-09-19	AN/ MCC	16-09-2019	AL	28.10.2019





2.0 PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

2.1 LANDSCAPE TYPES

2.2 LANDSCAPE DATASHEETS

- 2.2.1 Introduction
- 2.2.2 Using the Landscape Datasheets
- 2.2.3 Landscape Character Areas MAP
- 2.2.4 Summary of LANDMAP data
- 2.2.5 Key Issues—Icons
- 2.2.6 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity
- 2.2.7 Green Infrastructure
- 2.2.8 Topic Design Guidance
- 2.2.9 References

PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

The primary purpose of this SPG is clearly defined in Volume 1 Key Messages however it is summarized below for ease of reference ;

- To provide a clear and definitive up to date LCA assessment for the administrative area of Monmouthshire.
- To provide clear and practical guidance for applicants, agents and planning officers on all landscape matters when considering development proposals, including how to address landscape issues in each of the LCAs. This practical guidance is restricted to the Planning Boundary for Monmouthshire as defined in the Monmouthshire adopted LDP 2014 (i.e. excluding that part of the County within the Brecon Beacons National Park).

Monmouthshire's Landscape Assessment was originally completed in 2001, and since then has been used as a material consideration to help inform local planning decisions in conjunction with NRW's LANDMAP data. In order to bring the assessment and mapping up to date a review was carried out which sought to ;

- ◆ Reflect policy changes to the LDP (adopted 2015)
- ◆ Incorporate findings and information from supporting LDP studies
- ◆ Reflect quality assurance changes to aspect areas relating to NRW's LANDMAP data .
- ◆ Review of the number of LCAs as well as examining the cross boundary conformity of the LCAs with neighbouring local planning authorities.
- ◆ Reflect national best practice standards specifically the NECR "An approach to Landscape Character Assessment 2012 and NECR 105 " An approach to Seascape Assessment Natural England 2012.

LANDSCAPE TYPES AND CHARACTER AREAS

This Volume 2 of the Supplementary Planning Guidance provides a baseline description of the nine Landscape Types (LT's) and forty six Landscape Character Areas (LCA's) across Monmouthshire for developers, the community and planning officers.

Divided into two sections, **Landscape Type Guidance** and the **Landscape Datasheets**, provide guidance in considering the form, style and placement of development within the County of Monmouthshire, as well as addressing wider landscape management issues which are important to the landscape character of the area.

Due to the desire to use the study to help inform local planning decisions it was decided to focus the assessment on Landscape Character Areas which provide a more detailed assessment of character, key qualities, constraints, sensitivity and green infrastructure and landscape opportunities .

A much wider grain of information is available at a Wales wide level produced by NRW ;

1 The National Landscape Character Areas Study (which is effectively a level 1 LANDMAP assessment)

(<https://naturalresources.wales/planning-and-development/landmap/?lang=en>)

2 The National Marine Character Areas Study (informed by the National Seascape assessment for Wales Nov 2015)

(<https://www.naturalresources.wales/our-evidence-and-reports/marine-character-areas>)

LANDMAP

LANDMAP is a computer based landscape resource where landscape characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded and evaluated to produce a nationally consistent data set.

“It is a tool to help sustainable decision making and natural resource planning at a range of levels from local to national whilst ensuring transparency in decision making.” (NRW LANDMAP Website)

This information has been assessed across the whole of Wales for each of five aspect layers, the Geological Landscape, Landscape Habitats, Visual & Sensory, Historic Landscape and Cultural Landscape.

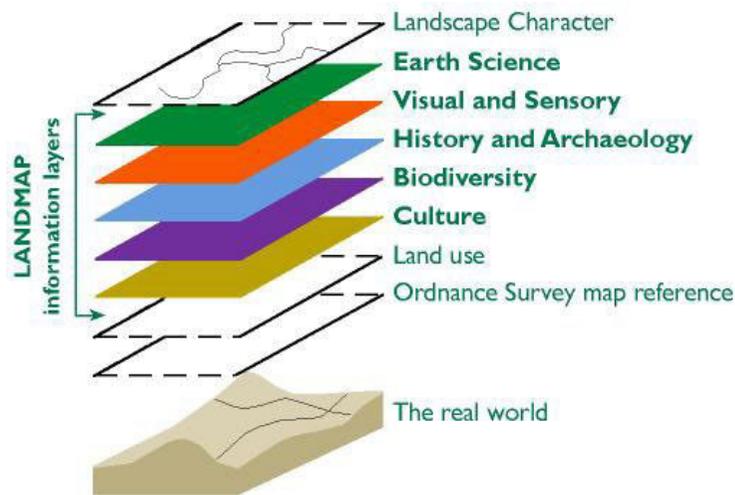


DIAGRAM 2.1.0 Landmap aspect areas

LANDMAP has been used to inform national policy and is the recognised approach to developing landscape assessment work in Wales as supported by Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8 2015 chapter 5.3.13). The datasets are subject to a quality control assessment and are updated on a 5 year rolling programme by NRW (<http://landmap-maps.naturalresources.wales/>).

LCA & LT METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for the review of the LT's and LCA's was based upon best practice guidelines set out in; the NECR 2012 *“An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment “*(Natural England 2012), *“Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland”* (Scottish National Heritage and Countryside Agency 2002) and informed by NRW's LANDMAP dataset , *“ LANDMAP Guidance Notes 1-6”* and *“National Seascape Assessment for Wales “* (Nov 2015).

The approach for producing the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) followed a series of key steps including a :

Desk Study

Data was manipulated and analysed using GIS. Draft LT's and LCA classifications were generated based upon all 5 current LANDMAP aspect area data together with the MCC 2001 Draft Landscape Assessment. This work was also informed by adjacent local authority studies and designations

Field Verification

The draft Landscape classifications were tested in the field and amendments incorporated into the LCA datasheets.

Client Consultation

At each stage client group consultation was sought and comments incorporated within the development of the guidance. Wider consultation with those nationally designated landscapes that sit within Monmouthshire's administrative boundary was sought from Brecon Beacons National Park and the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Review Outcomes

Following the above process all findings and comments were integrated into the final suite of studies Volume 1-2

2.1 LANDSCAPE TYPES

A key consideration in developing the SPG has been identifying the principles and characteristics that need to be maintained or enhanced in order to manage and enhance local distinctiveness. In order to facilitate this at a strategic scale the County has been divided into 9 Landscape Types. Within these areas the landscape has broadly similar characteristics.

These Landscape Types are based upon the LANDMAP level 2 aspect area information. Each type is based upon a combination of the five aspect areas; Earth Science, Visual and Sensory, History and Archaeology, Biodiversity and Cultural aspects as illustrated in diagram 2.1.0. Unlike LCA 's LT's can occur in several locations simultaneously and are useful for larger scale strategic decision making usually at a county, regional or national scale to help inform decision making involving cross border issues.

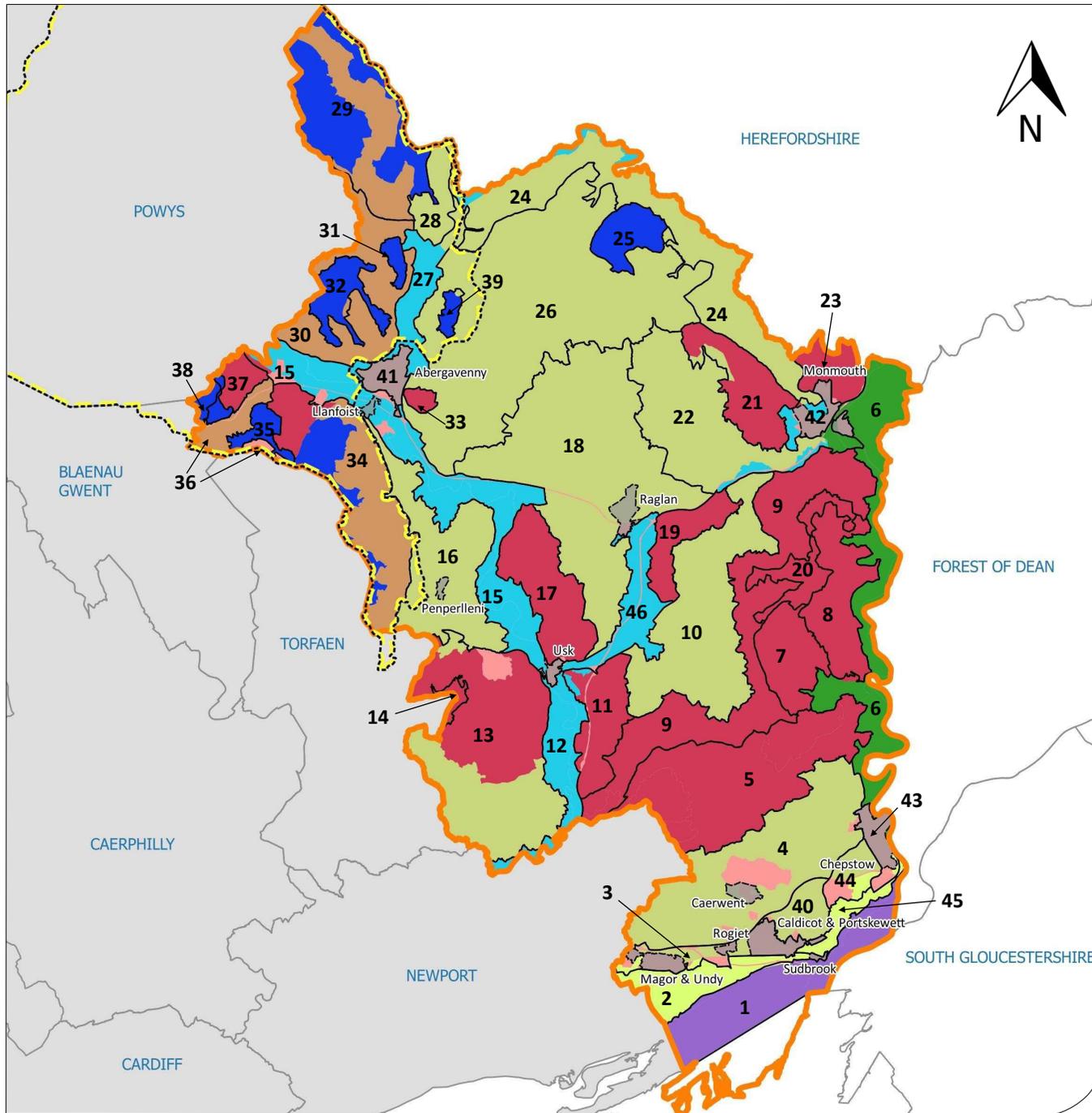
The guidance associated with each Landscape Type is given on the following sheets comprising;

- ◆ **Key characteristics**
- ◆ **Aims**
- ◆ **Photographs illustrating LT's**

The Built Environment guidance is covered by the specific **Landscape Character Area Datasheet** .

The following map of Monmouthshire indicates the various Landscape Types this is then followed by nine individual summary sheets for each of the Landscape Types as defined through the LANDMAP process.

2.1.1 LANDSCAPE TYPES



LANDSCAPE TYPES MONMOUTHSHIRE
(WITH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS)

- Monmouthshire County boundary
- 18 Landscape Character Areas (See Section 2.2.3)
- Main Towns & Rural Secondary Settlements
- Brecon Beacons National Park

Landscape Types

- Exposed Upland /Plateau
- Upland Valleys
- Hills, Lower Plateau & Scarp Slopes
- Lowland Gorge
- Rolling Lowland
- Flat Lowland
- Flat Levels
- Coastal
- Built Land

DIAGRAM 2.1.1 Landscape Types

LT01 COASTAL

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines Coastal as, *'Lowland Areas absolutely associated with the coast excluding open water and Flat lowland/levels.'* Within Monmouthshire this landscape type includes small areas of the coastal sea defences and coast path and all land lying between that and the low water line such as beaches, sand dunes and slacks, mudbanks and rocky outcrops.

It forms the coastal edge of the Severn Estuary and has considerable biodiversity interest with national and international nature conservation designations present.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ Inter-tidal zone—its isolated character, tranquillity and seclusion
- ◆ The nature conservation value of sandbanks, shingle and estuarine mudflats—national and international nature conservation designations—SSSI, SAC and Ramsar
- ◆ Relationship to coastal defences
- ◆ Extensive views from the Wales Coast Path, Distinctive element of the coastal landscape—dunes, saltmarshes, mudflats, sand banks and rugged rock outcrops.
- ◆ The dramatic views of the Severn Bridge and Second Severn Crossing and across the estuary

Aims:

- ◆ Avoid visual detracting of renewable energy schemes—introduction of strong vertical elements within an ostensibly horizontal landscape potentially visually damaging and is applicable both offshore and on the coastal/levels edge
- ◆ Manage potential effects of tidal lagoon schemes and relationship to visual qualities and wider environmental qualities of coastal landscape through adequate LVIA and biodiversity assessment
- ◆ Extensive and far reaching views from coastal edge—amenity value potentially under utilised

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT02 FLAT LEVELS

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines Flat Lowland/Levels as, 'Lowland areas that are predominantly flat (less than 3° slope); coastal and riverine levels, but also broad vales and valley bottoms.' Within Monmouthshire this overall classification has been split into the two separate components as there is a clear distinction between the landscape type and form of the Lowlands and Levels.

The Flat Levels of Monmouthshire form part of the wider Gwent Levels stretching between Chepstow and Cardiff. An area of reclaimed farmland lying on the edge of the Severn Estuary on considerable historic, cultural and biodiversity interest the area is under considerable threat from built and infrastructure development.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ The historic landscape character of reclaimed pasture with a variety of regular and irregular field patterns, reens and grips.
- ◆ The lines of pollarded willow and mature hedgerows.
- ◆ The biodiversity of reens rich in plant species and communities due to their management and lack of interference.
- ◆ The nature conservation value of wet meadows and semi-improved pastures.
- ◆ The extensive views to the backcloth of hills inland where these are unspoilt by Severnside settlement edge, and extensive views into the Severn Estuary to the south.
- ◆ The rectilinear character of lanes with right angle bends.
- ◆ The scattered linear and low density housing
- ◆ The ditch and grazing marsh quality of Magor Marsh

Aims:

- ◆ Improve the quality of some settlements and their settlement edge with greater integration with their surroundings.
- ◆ Protect and restore the unique landscape pattern and framework of reens and pollarded tree lines.
- ◆ Carefully consider visual impact of renewable energy schemes—introduction of strong vertical elements within an ostensibly horizontal landscape potentially visually damaging and is applicable both offshore and on the coastal/levels edge

- ◆ Limit industrial and settlement expansion to small carefully considered areas—potential for incremental expansion eroding character and degrading landscape quality.

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT03 FLAT LOWLAND

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines Flat Lowland/Levels as, 'Lowland areas that are predominantly flat (less than 3° slope); coastal and riverine levels, but also broad vales and valley bottoms.' Within Monmouthshire this overall classification has been split into the two separate components as there is a clear distinction between the landscape type and form of the Lowlands and Levels.

The Flat Lowlands of Monmouthshire comprise mainly of the flat river valley bottoms that make up the River Usk, Gavenny and Olway Brook valley floors. This land type often contains the main settlements transport links within the county with Abergavenny, Usk and Monmouth all associated with key river crossing points.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ Typically a river valley form—wide flat bottomed valleys open flat riparian landscape with mature individual field trees and parkland
- ◆ The floodplain of the river Usk which meanders in broad swathes across the flat valley floor creating spurs and ox-bow lakes
- ◆ Linear tree belts and lines of willow and alder along the river and stream courses.
- ◆ Wetland, unimproved and semi-improved grassland habitats
- ◆ In the tidal areas below Newbridge on Usk, occasionally inundated grassland supports regionally rare species.
- ◆ The sparsity of settlement and roads. Settlement being limited to small-scale nucleated villages located just above the edge of the floodplain with estates and large farmsteads on steeper slopes and small spurs above the flood plain.
- ◆ Alluvial flood plains—long history of exploitation and transportation from Roman times onwards potential wealth of buried archaeology

Aims:

- ◆ Improve tree cover and hedgerows continuity.
- ◆ Manage parkland trees including replacement where over mature, diseased or dying.
- ◆ Improve riverside access
- ◆ Enhance riverside habitats and protect vulnerable grassland habitats

- ◆ Open flat farmland with little settlement—potential for renewable energy development especially solar. Consider visual impacts from rising adjacent ground and potential accessibility issues, visual impacts of infrastructure in areas currently lacking in development.

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT04 ROLLING LOWLAND

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines Rolling Lowland as, *'Lowland Areas which are predominantly, rhythmically, gently sloped (3-10° slope), although less so than Lowland valleys. Rolling lowland generally differs from Hills, lower plateau & scarp slopes in that there is rarely a significant change in land use.'* In Monmouthshire these areas largely lie to the north of the county and adjacent to the Herefordshire border. The area is fairly sparsely settled with smaller villages and a predominantly archetypal traditional agricultural appearance.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ The gently rolling domesticated and tranquil mixed arable and pastoral lowland with its diverse and intimate character.
- ◆ Smaller irregular fields of permanent pasture enclosed by a strong structural network of thick hedges, hedgerow trees and treelines and small scale woodland blocks and orchards.
- ◆ The long views from local high points
- ◆ The tranquil character of the area away from the main traffic routes. With an intimate character of small winding lanes.
- ◆ The range of woodland including ancient woodlands and alder woodland.
- ◆ The distinctive small watercourses with associated riparian vegetation.
- ◆ The settlement pattern particularly the estates, small stone farm complexes, scattered houses and small nucleated villages.
- ◆ The historic landscape patterns created by Norman and Welshry control.

Aims:

- ◆ Improve the integration of larger farm complexes into the landscape through careful siting and screening
- ◆ Improve the landscape quality and nature conservation value of the extensive arable landscape through planting of small deciduous woodlands in field corners, woodland shelterbelts where appropriate, management of woodlands and provision of buffer strips adjacent to watercourses.

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT05 LOWLAND GORGE

This Landscape Type is not directly derived from LANDMAP classification as the Wye Valley Gorge to which it applies is unique within Monmouthshire and a distinctive clear valley form unlike other valley complexes found in the county. A relatively narrow, steep sided and typically heavily wooded valley containing the lower reaches of the River Wye the area is designated as an AONB reflecting its scenic qualities and distinctive landform. The area has rich industrial and ecclesiastical heritage with the Abbey at Tintern long associated with the management of the surrounding landscape.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ The special character of the Wye Valley from Monmouth to Chepstow with its particular characteristics defined by its landscape assessment guidelines and approved management plan.
- ◆ Views into and across the valley. Strongly defined views along the valley
- ◆ Steeply wooded valley slopes
- ◆ Rocky outcrops—important outcrops of carboniferous limestone
- ◆ Strong sense of place, multi-faceted historical, cultural heritage with ecclesiastical and industrial remains
- ◆ Range of natural habitats and protected species.
- ◆ Improve and enhance existing visitor facilities to a higher standard.
- ◆ Continuing pressure by tourism/visitors
- ◆ Linear settlement particularly along valley floor
- ◆ Pattern of mixed farming

Aims:

- ◆ Maintain a balance between tourism pressures and residential needs. Manage parking/traffic issues in ‘honeypot’ locations—Tintern Abbey
- ◆ Improve access and PROW links into and out of the valley to the west
- ◆ Improve riverside access and enhance habitats—control of Himalayan balsam and invasive plants.
- ◆ Limit further unsympathetic modern cul-de-sac and estate housing—strongly encourage traditional vernacular building styles.

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT06 HILLS, LOWER PLATEAU & SCARP SLOPES

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines Hills, Lower Plateau and Scarp Slopes as, *'the intermediate landform between Lowland and Upland, it rarely extends much lower than about 100m AOD or much higher than about 300m AOD.'*

Land use can vary from Upland-type grazing on semi improved pastures to more intensive farming depending on the topography. Woodland blocks and well vegetated field boundaries are a strong feature in this landscape type within Monmouthshire as seen within the Chepstow Parkland and Trellech Commons and Forest. As suggested this landscape type also includes scarp slopes a defining feature of mid-Monmouthshire in the form of the Devauden Escarpment giving far reaching and attractive views into much of the northern half of the county.

Much of the eastern part of this landscape type lies either in, or bordering the Wye Valley AONB.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ Exposed and windswept scarp slope of Devauden Escarpment with its heavy wooded landscape intermingled with scrub, bracken and enclaves of rough grassland on steep slopes. The hedgerows of the scarp including low intensively managed hedges and thick mature hedge lines on upper scarp slopes.
- ◆ The rural character of roads winding their way up steep valley sides.
- ◆ Views from the scarp over valleys and long panoramic views towards the floodplain of the Usk.
- ◆ The enclosed and sheltered landscape rising from the plateau land around Trellech with small blocks of ancient and semi-natural woodland and mixed deciduous coniferous blocks.
- ◆ The intricate network of narrow winding lanes around the Trellech plateau with remnant stone walls and mature hedges and tree lines.
- ◆ The historic pattern of small fields of permanent pasture and enclaves of unimproved and semi improved grassland associated with plateau medieval settlements.
- ◆ The unusual combination of woodland types including beech woodland with pedunculate oak on acid soils, upland ash and wet woodland.
- ◆ Grasslands including the traditionally managed unimproved neutral grasslands.

- ◆ Springs emerge along the lower slopes of the escarpment.
- ◆ Wetland and marshland and bogs associated with springs and streams.
- ◆ The dispersed linear pattern of medieval settlements and also the linear pattern of 16th Century squatters settlements.

Aims:

- ◆ Improve the quality of new built development to respond to the local vernacular.
- ◆ Improve public access via PROW, multi-use traffic free/low traffic routes encouraging access to Wye Valley AONB and central Monmouthshire
- ◆ Enhance and protect Sessile Oak acid woodlands and unimproved neutral grasslands

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT07 UPLAND VALLEYS

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines Upland Valleys as, *'areas that are predominantly greater than 50% valleyed with a valley floor to ridge height >50m approx.'* They can display a variety of vegetation cover from open upland to wooded or mosaic woodland and semi improved grassland. In Monmouthshire these areas largely lie within the Brecon Beacons National Park and comprise of the mid to upper slopes of The Sugar Loaf, Bloreng and Black Mountains.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ The tranquil character of farmland of undulating hills and valleys.
- ◆ The traditional patchwork of managed hedges, hedgebanks, hedgerow trees and their native species diversity.
- ◆ The character of the narrow winding lanes.
- ◆ The distant views of the Bloreng, Sugar Loaf, with Ysgryd Fawr and Fach in north and Severn Estuary in south.
- ◆ The characteristic settlement pattern of scattered vernacular farmsteads and their relationship with the surrounding landscape.
- ◆ The character of linear and nucleated settlements and their settings.
- ◆ The woodland and small copses of high nature conservation value.
- ◆ The small enclaves of unimproved and marshy grasslands in river valleys and neutral grassland
- ◆ The historic landscape character particularly the designed parks and gardens, castles, the estates, the monastic landscapes and their settings.

Aims:

- ◆ Improve integration into surrounding landscape particularly where modern buildings are constructed.
- ◆ Protect watercourses and their bordering treelines.
- ◆ Protect and enhance habitats especially unimproved, neutral and marshy grasslands under threat
- ◆ Respect the historic and cultural character of the landscape—include planned views and consider visual impacts.

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT08 EXPOSED UPLAND & PLATEAU

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines Exposed Upland and Plateau as, *'areas that are predominantly exposed; exposed does not necessarily equate to a lack of tree cover; exposed relates more to landform than land cover in this instance, in that it excludes upland areas which are sheltered by landform such as valleys.'*

In Monmouthshire these areas lie exclusively within the Brecon Beacons National Park and comprise the peaks of the Black Mountains, Sugar Loaf and Blorenge.

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ The remote and isolated character of the landscape.
- ◆ The character of a mosaic of upland farming of semi improved upland pasture with dry heath and scrub [Fridd habitat]. Rock outcrops and blocks of mixed deciduous and coniferous woodland in places.
- ◆ Carefully managed grazing where possible except in woodland areas.
- ◆ The wide panoramic views from the steep hillsides across the lower surrounding terrain and long views to the Severn Estuary.
- ◆ The diversity of woodland types including upland ash, wet woodland, lowland beech with yew and birch.
- ◆ Remnant boundary walls.
- ◆ The springs and fast flowing watercourses and associated vegetation.
- ◆ The sparse settlement pattern of small-scale traditional farmsteads linked with narrow tracks and lanes.
- ◆ The historic landscapes of surviving Neolithic/Bronze Age ritual and functional landscapes.
- ◆ Important industrial heritage evidence especially within the Brecon Beacons—rich historical and cultural relevance

Aims:

To maintain and enhance the key characteristics of the landscape type through : -

- ◆ Management to reduce bracken cover and encourage dry heath, unimproved pasture and other habitats of nature conservation value.
- ◆ Enhance and manage to promote upland heath and mire habitats supporting the LBAP

- ◆ Diversifying upland coniferous plantations with introduction of native broadleaf woodlands enhancing the existing upland ash, wet woodland and lowland beech with yew and birch
- ◆ Improve public access and interpretation to green space/woodland/ heritage sites especially those adjacent to open access land, settlements or sites of tourism interest through negotiation with land owners and managers

PHOTOGRAPHS



LT09 BUILT LAND

This Landscape Type is derived from the LANDMAP Level 2 classification of landform and defines built land as, *'Development areas which are predominantly (>50%) covered in manmade structures or hard-standing'*

In Monmouthshire these areas lie within village, dispersed settlement and urban communities. The areas of built land are the key towns and associated settlements of Abergavenny with Llanfoist, Chepstow with Pwllmeyric and Mathern, Magor with Undy, Monmouth, Rogiet, Caldicot and Portskewett, Tintern, Usk. In addition there are 35 smaller towns and villages within the county with interconnecting transport corridors

Key Characteristics:

- ◆ Built-up areas are defined as land which is 'irreversibly urban in character', meaning that they are characteristic of a village, town or city. They include areas of built-up land with a minimum of 20 hectares (200,000m²). Any areas with less than 200 metres between them are linked to become a single built-up area.
- ◆ Dry terrestrial habitats, predominately residential housing, industrial, retail, highways infrastructure, facilities interspersed with open and recreational space, gardens, parks and dispersed woodland groups, amenity and improved grassland.
- ◆ The historic cores of principle towns and villages with natural stone, brick, slate tiles, squares, natural stone surfaces, mature trees constrained and informed by river, landform, transport arteries.
- ◆ Concentrated new residential, office and commercial developments of a mosaic of modern materials and building styles usually on town fringes abutting rural land and marine landscapes

Aims:

To maintain and enhance the key characteristics of the landscape type through

- ◆ Encouraging an integrated approach to landscape, green infrastructure, the natural and built environment design and management
- ◆ Reducing wherever feasible the erosion of locally distinct rural character
- ◆ Creating development that respects rural settlement form and character and its landscape setting and reinforces local distinctiveness

- ◆ Retaining managing and enhancing habitats, nature conservation values, hedgerows, tree lines and connectivity, open water courses, ponds, verges, open spaces and parks within the rural and urban settlements and urban fringe settings.
- ◆ Ensuring vistas, settings and landscape features are retained and enhanced
- ◆ Improving public access to interconnected natural green space, interpretation and orientation, PROW, sustainable active travel networks, sites of tourism interest
- ◆ Ensuring that streets and spaces contribute to multifunctional improvements to the quality of the public realm, noise and pollution management

PHOTOGRAPHS



2.2 LANDSCAPE DATASHEETS

The Landscape Datasheets have been developed as part of the Landscape Supplementary Planning Guidance for Monmouthshire County Council, and have been further informed by the work of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit in order to provide cross boundary consistency.

LCA 's allow a more detailed study of the landscape with specific qualities and characteristics drawn out which are unique to that particular character area. They are used to help inform local decisions on planning and management and are informed by a LANDMAP level 3 assessment. Covering each of the Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) in Monmouthshire, they comprise 46 sets of 2-3 sheets each providing baseline information relating to;

- ◆ *Summary Characteristics and representative photographs*
- ◆ *Constraints and Qualities*
- ◆ *Potential Cumulative Effects*
- ◆ *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity*
- ◆ *Green Infrastructure Opportunities*

They aim to provide a first port-of-call, easy reference document for both applicants and planning officers, giving a summary of all the key environmental and landscape matters. They also provide further signposting to relevant planning policies and information sources for each LCA. This information, whilst not claiming to be exhaustive, should provide the initial information sources produced by and for Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) and will direct the applicant to where that and further, information can be found.

Appendices also includes more detailed supporting information relating to

- ◆ *Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity*
- ◆ *Summary High and Outstanding data for the LCA*

The aim is that these sheets should provide a consistent starting point for developers, statutory decision makers such as Natural Resources Wales

(NRW), the local authority (MCC), land owners and the general public. The sheets should summarise the key issues pertinent to that particular Landscape Character Area (LCA) and so allow appropriate designs for new development to be put forward. In parallel the datasheets also provide a baseline, summary information source for the planning authority when considering planning applications.

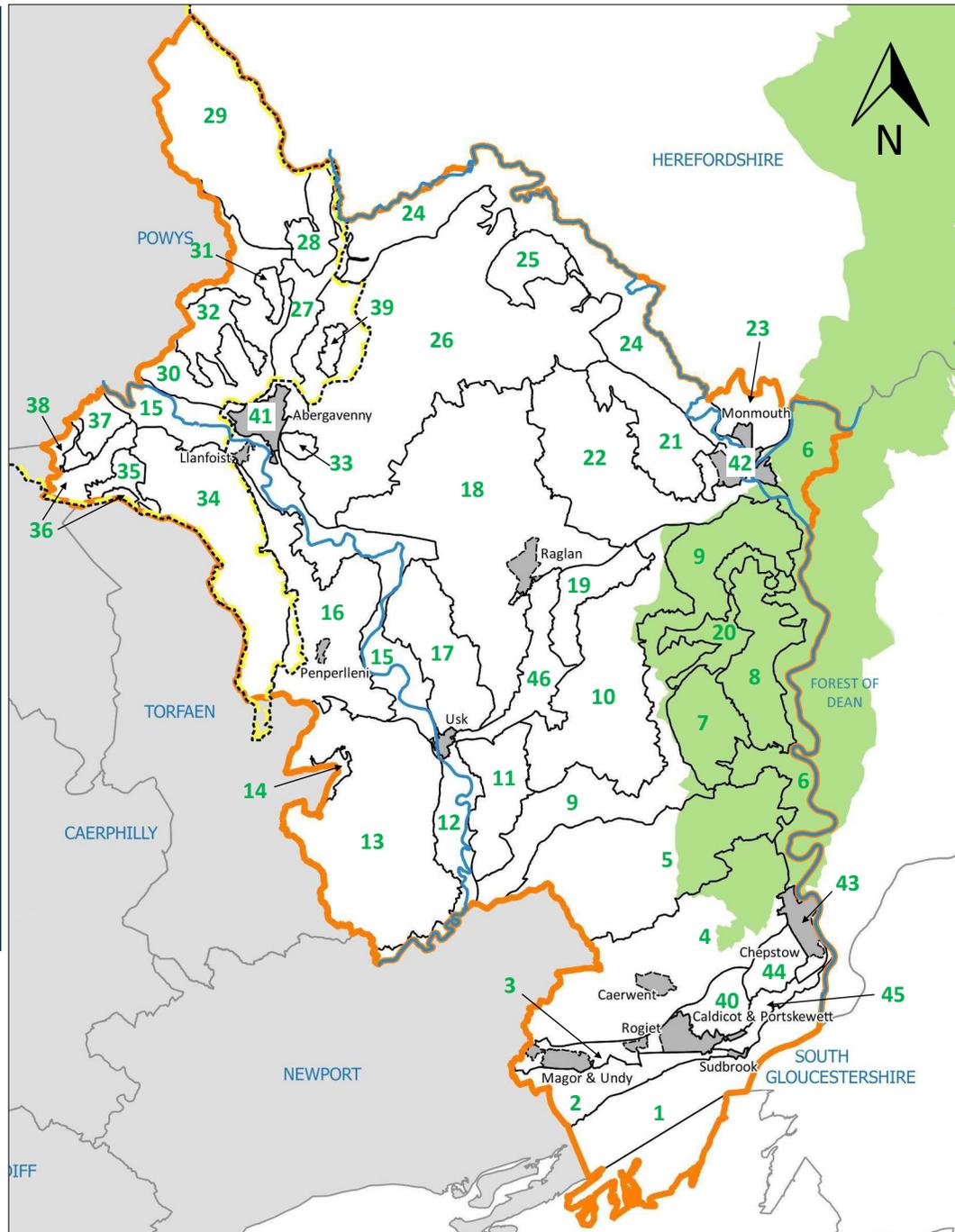
2.2.2 USING THE LANDSCAPE DATASHEETS

The Landscape Datasheets contain the basic summary information and sources of further information for each of the Landscape Character Areas across the county. It should be noted that LCAs falling within Brecon Beacons National Park lie within that Planning Authority and all planning matters will be dealt with by that body and not Monmouthshire County Council.

The following pages give a brief introduction and explanation of each section of the datasheet, how that information has been derived and what further information sources you may need to refer to in order to fully inform or assess a planning application.

2.2.3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

LCA 1	Severn Estuary
LCA 2	Caldicot Levels
LCA 3	Sevenside
LCA 4	Caerwent Hinterland
LCA 5	Chepstow Parkland
LCA 6	Wye Valley
LCA 7	Trellech Grange
LCA 8	Trellech Commons & Forest
LCA 9	Devauden Escarpment
LCA 10	Llangovan Foothills
LCA 11	Llangeview
LCA 12	Southern Usk Valley
LCA 13	Western Hills
LCA 14	Llandegfedd Reservoir
LCA 15	Upper Usk Valley
LCA 16	Llanover Lowland
LCA 17	Gwehelog Valleys
LCA 18	Raglan Hinterland
LCA 19	Kingcoed Scarp Slopes
LCA 20	Trellech Plateaux
LCA 21	Kings Wood
LCA 22	Trothy Valley
LCA 23	Buckholt Woods



LCA 24	Monnow Valley
LCA 25	Graig y Syffryn
LCA 26	Northern Hills
LCA 27	Penyclawdd Watershed
LCA 28	Olchon Valley
LCA 29	Black Mountains
LCA 30	Sugar Loaf Scarps
LCA 31	Bryn Arw
LCA 32	Sugar Loaf
LCA 33	Ysgyrd Fach
LCA 34	Bloreng
LCA 35	Gilwern Hill
LCA 36	Clydach Gorge
LCA 37	Maesygartha
LCA 38	Black Rock Slopes
LCA 39	Skirrid Fawr
LCA 40	Chepstow Hills
LCA 41	Abergavenny
LCA 42	Monmouth
LCA 43	Chepstow
LCA 44	Mathern Hinterland
LCA 45	Mathern Levels
LCA 46	Olway Valley

- Monmouthshire County Boundary
- Landscape Character Areas
- Main Towns, Rural Secondary Settlements & Sevenside settlements
- Brecon Beacons National Park
- Wye Valley AONB
- Main Rivers: Wye, Usk and Monnow

DIAGRAM 2.2.3 Landscape Character Areas

2.2.5 KEY ISSUES—ICONS

This section is designed to give an easy reference guide to key constraints and opportunities relating to landscape, environment and planning issues that are likely to be of importance when considering development within the LCA.

Environmental constraints and opportunity areas are represented by easy to read graphic icons that are displayed along the bottom left hand side of each datasheet.

This basic information will give an initial impression of the LCA. A more detailed analysis of those topics made by the developer will give a better understanding of what type, form and scale of development may be appropriate, and of what Green Infrastructure and environmental opportunities should be incorporated into its design.

A brief explanation of each icon is shown to the right.

2.2.5 KEY ISSUES—ICONS (Continued)



Settlement Edge and Development: Identifying issues relating to built form, styles and settlement



Housing allocations: identifying areas allocated for housing development in the MCC LDP



Important views and vistas: Indicating that the area has particularly scenic or culturally and historically important views that should be safeguarded.



Landscape Framework: Indicating that there are important landscape features such as woods, hedges, walling/boundary features characteristic of the LCA and could be referenced or related to in the new development.



Nature Conservation: Indicating that a known presence of Protected species and habitats of value.



Water Management: Identifying that potential areas of consideration such as flood risk, floodplain and water management are present.



Mineral Safeguarding Areas: Identifying areas in the MCC LDP



Historical and Cultural Influences: Indicating sites such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments, areas of Archaeological Sensitivity, Registered Parks and Gardens, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas



Industry: Identifying Key development opportunities allocated in the MCC LDP



Green Infrastructure Opportunities: As identified in section 2.27 of this document and within the existing MCC GI Supplementary Planning Guidance.



Indicating that the LCA is either partially or wholly within or lies in close proximity to the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)



Indicating that the LCA is either partially or wholly within or lies in close proximity to the Brecon Beacons National Park (BBNP)

2.2.6 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY AND CAPACITY METHODOLOGY

In formulating a methodology for assessing this topic, reference is made to best practice guidance specifically Topic Paper 6 Techniques and Criteria for judging Capacity and Sensitivity (2011) alongside the LCA methodology. This was then informed by MCC local assessments; the Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Studies 2009/10 NECR undertaken by White Consultants and the existing 2001 LANDMAP Landscape Assessment Volumes 1-6.

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity was identified for each of the LCA 's supported by the existing Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Studies 2009/10, the same definitions for Sensitivity and Capacity have been used. (ref para 2.3 and 2.4 of the Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study 2009)

For **Landscape Sensitivity** this has been taken to mean,

'...the sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change which may be under consideration. It is a combination of the sensitivity of the landscape resource [including its historical and ecological features and elements] and the visual sensitivity of the landscape [such as views and visibility].....it also includes landscape value [including designations]. For example, an undesignated very gently sloping landscape with large arable fenced fields and trees may have a lower sensitivity than a steeply sloping pastoral landscape with small fields and strong hedgerow and tree cover.'

and **Landscape Capacity**,

'...the ability of a landscape to accommodate different amounts of change for a development of a specific type. For example, a flat landscape with tree belts may be able to accommodate housing more easily than an open sloping landscape but the size of field may limit the scale of desirable development. A low sensitivity does not automatically mean a high capacity as this depends on the type and scale of development considered.'

Given the high scenic quality of Monmouthshire's landscape, priority has been given to the protection, conservation and enhancement of the County's landscape character. For the Landscape Datasheets this has been expanded to give each individual LCA a sensitivity and capacity rating based on a review of the LANDMAP data which should be referred to when considering potential future development and landscape impacts. This methodology has been clearly set out in the appendices

It is important to understand that a landscape considered to be of a low sensitivity does not automatically mean that it would have a high capacity for development as this depends on the type and scale of development proposed. This rating gives a sensitivity and capacity of the LCA as a whole giving the applicant an overview of the area. At a more detailed level an individual site may have a lower or higher rating depending on local site conditions and the additional information given within the Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA).

Once sensitivity and capacity ratings have been identified These are then rated against a 'traffic light' system of **RED - high sensitivity/low capacity**, **AMBER - medium sensitivity/medium capacity** and **GREEN - low sensitivity/high capacity**.



HIGH SENSITIVITY/LOW CAPACITY

Thresholds for change are very low and the area is considered unable to accommodate development without significant adverse effects.



MEDIUM SENSITIVITY/MEDIUM CAPACITY

Development may be accommodated in some areas with adequate consideration of design and landscape and ecological impacts and relevant planning considerations.



LOW SENSITIVITY/HIGH CAPACITY

Landscape capacity is considered to be high and development may be accommodated over a significant proportion of the area with adequate consideration of design and landscape and ecological impacts and relevant planning considerations.

A summary table then follows showing the landscape sensitivity and capacity of each of the Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA) based on the Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity studies undertaken on 2009/2010. These relate to the areas surrounding each of the main settlements and larger villages within the LCA and evaluate the sensitivity and capacity of the settlements to accommodate new housing.

These are then similarly given a **RED** (High sensitivity/low capacity), **AMBER** (Medium sensitivity/medium capacity) or **GREEN** (Low sensitivity/High capacity) rating enabling a quick and easy, at-a-glance guide that will form the basis for further analysis by the applicant as a part of their development proposals.

It is important to note that the LCA wide rating needs to also be cross referenced with the more detailed LLCA settlement sensitivity and capacity studies when considering the suitability of development in the LCA.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

The methodology is based upon the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Studies 2009/10 .

Using this methodology the overall LCA Sensitivity evaluations have been made based on the evaluation of the character, vulnerability, tolerance and resilience to change gathered from an assessment of the five LANDMAP layers;

- ◆ Visual and Sensory
- ◆ Landscape Habitats
- ◆ Historical Landscape
- ◆ Geological Landscape
- ◆ Cultural Landscape

The LCA's sensitivity is assessed against the land area (km²) that each individual aspect area makes up of the overall LCA. This then provides the overall % evaluation for the LCA for each layer and is shown as Outstanding, High, Moderate or Low. The overall sensitivity is then further refined through an assessment of the specific evaluation criteria that describes the sensitivity of the landscape for each LANDMAP aspect layers (ref NRW LANDMAP Aspect area Layers).

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY

The methodology is based upon Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for judging Capacity and Sensitivity (SNH/CA/NE),

'Reaching conclusions about capacity means making a judgement about the amount of change of a particular type that can be accommodated without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of the landscape, or the way that it is perceived, and without compromising the values attached to it.'

'Capacity is a question of the interaction between the sensitivity of the landscape, the type and amount of change, and the way that the landscape is valued.'

As the LCA Landscape Capacity depends largely on the type, scale and form of development proposed a detailed assessment is difficult to make at this level therefore this appraisal is influenced by a number of factors, these include; the already identified landscape sensitivity evaluations, the overall settlement capacity identified by Monmouthshire's previous Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity studies 2009/10, an assessment of any known relevant constraints and landscape qualities within the LCA and criteria a-f in LDP Policy LC5.

2.2.7 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

When appropriately planned, designed and managed, GI assets have the potential to deliver a wide range of benefits – from providing sustainable transport links to mitigating and adapting the effects of climate change.

Monmouthshire CC have developed a detailed Green Infrastructure SPG which should be referred to alongside this document which outlines a three step procedure that developers should consider when refining their proposals.

For the purposes of this document, the key GI checklists to be considered as a part of any development proposals are as follows;

L	Landscape setting & quality of place
H	Habitat provision & connectivity
G	Green space provision, connectivity & enjoyment
E	Sustainable energy use
F	Local food production
W	Flood attenuation & water resource management

Relevant GI opportunities are displayed along the bottom left hand side of each datasheet as icons highlighting which GI functions they enhance.

2.2.8 DESIGN GUIDANCE

Design Guidance summarised in the appendices should be read in parallel with the GI SPG to provide further guidance to the developer and end user in understanding what is likely to be appropriate in terms of design solution for each LCA.

REFERENCES

[Monmouthshire Local Development Plan 2011–2021 \(LDP\)](#)

[NRW Website LANDMAP Maps](#)

[Green Infrastructure SPG \(MCC 2015\)](#)

[Greenspace Study \(MCC 2010\)](#)

[Open Space Study \(MCC 2008\)](#)

[Monmouthshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Studies \(MCC 2009/2010\)](#)

[Biodiversity Checklist \(MCC 2013\)](#)

[Planning Guidance for Smaller Scale Wind Turbine Development](#)

[Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Requirements \(The Heads of the Valleys : April 2015\)](#)

[Landscape Officers and Planners](#)

[Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Supplementary Planning Guidance \(MCC, 2016\)](#)

[Ecological Connectivity Assessment of Settlements in Monmouthshire \(MCC, 2010\)](#)

[Brecon Beacons National Park Authority website](#)

[Wye Valley AONB website](#)

[PPW10 December 2018](#)

[Sustainable Tourism Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance November 2017](#)

