

Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan

PREFERRED STRATEGY: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 2020

Executive Summary

Replacement Local Development Plan – Process and Stages Completed

- i. The Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire (excluding the part of the County that is within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will identify where and how much new development will take place during the ‘Plan period’ (2018-2033). It will allocate land for development, identify areas to be protected, and contain policies to guide decisions on applications for planning permission. We aim to adopt the RLDP early 2022.
- ii. The Council has now reached the Preferred Strategy stage of the development plan process. This is the first of the statutory consultation stages in the RLDP process. However, a number of earlier pre-deposit plan preparation stages have been undertaken which have informed the Preferred Strategy. The first stage involved the preparation of an **Issues, Vision & Objectives Paper** (January 2019, amended June 2019 and March 2020), and a **Growth & Spatial Options Consultation Paper** (June 2019), which sets out a number of alternative options for how much growth is needed over the RLDP period and where this growth should take place. The consultation responses to these papers have been considered and helped shape the Preferred Strategy.

What is the Preferred Strategy?

- iii. The Preferred Strategy is the first formal publication in the RLDP preparation process. It provides the strategic direction for the development and use of land until 2033. The overall purpose of the Preferred Strategy is to:
 - Identify key issues, challenges and opportunities for the County.
 - Develop a vision and set of objectives for the RLDP that response to the key issues, challenges and opportunities.
 - Set out the growth and spatial options that the Council has considered in determining the Preferred Strategy.
 - Set out the Preferred Strategy including the scale of future growth in population, housing and jobs and establish the spatial distribution of growth.
 - Set out strategic policies that will deliver/implement the strategy.

Preferred Strategy – Sustainable & Resilient Communities Strategy

- iv. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy promotes an appropriate level and spatial distribution of housing and employment growth for Monmouthshire to 2033, which assists in addressing the demographic and affordability challenges facing the County and ultimately seeks to deliver the Council’s core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.
- v. A summary of the key points of the Strategy is set out in Box 1.

Box 1: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy

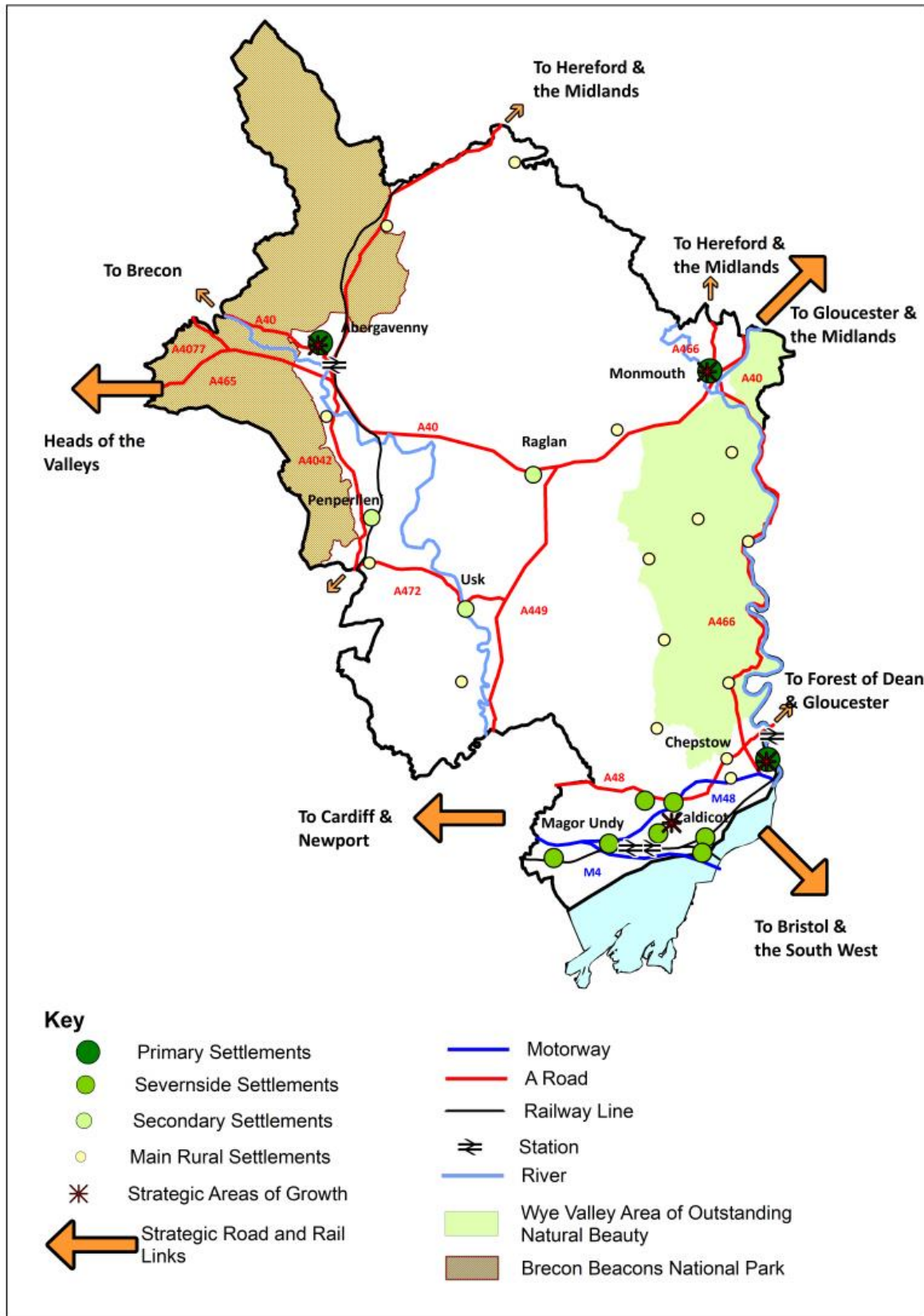
In order to deliver the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy the RLDP will:

- Make provision for a total of **8,232 homes to deliver a housing requirement of 7,483 dwellings** (this is based indicatively on 10% flexibility allowance which will be given further consideration and refined at Deposit Stage). This level of housing growth will enable the provision of market and affordable housing in both urban and rural areas and, importantly, provides the opportunity to address the unbalanced demography, improve labour force retention by retaining/attracting younger adult population age groups and assists in addressing the County's housing affordability challenge. Taking account of the existing housing land supply the RLDP will need to make provision for new housing allocations to deliver 3,568 homes
- Make provision for **4,695 additional jobs**. To enable this a minimum of 42ha of employment land will be allocated (to be refined in the Deposit Plan). This level of growth takes account of a reduced level of commuting which means that more of the working-age population would be employed in the County. Supporting a positive approach to growth will provide the younger demographic with the opportunity to live and work within the County. It will also help reduce levels of commuting and promote more self-contained communities. This reflects the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Ambition Statement and climate emergency declaration.
- Distribute growth across the County in a manner that reflects and addresses the aims of the two strands of the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy, by:
 - Distributing growth proportionately across rural and urban areas to accommodate the level of housing provision to deliver the Demographic-led strand of the preferred growth strategy, and
 - Specifically allocating 50% affordable housing-led sites aligned with the identified intermediate affordable housing need, to deliver the Affordable Housing Policy-led strand of the preferred growth strategy.

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

Any decisions on whether or not to allocate particular sites for development in the settlements will also depend on such issues as their impact on the physical form of the settlement, landscape setting, environmental constraints, infrastructure capacity and placemaking.

Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy

- vi. Having regard to the issues faced by Monmouthshire and the previous consultation exercises that been undertaken, the Preferred Growth Strategy is a hybrid strategy comprising of two elements, namely a Demographic-led Strategy and an Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy, which when combined assist in addressing the key demographic and affordability issues facing the County. The strands of the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy (Hybrid Strategy Option 5A+) are considered in turn.

Strand 1: Demographic –led Strategy (Growth Option 5A)

- vii. The first strand of the preferred growth strategy is a demographic-led strategy (Growth Option 5A) and proposes a growth level of 5,835 dwellings over the RLDP period of 2018-2033. Given the RLDP’s key role in strengthening the local economy and ensuring an appropriate economic base for people to live and work in the County, the demographic-led strand of the Preferred Strategy (Option 5A) seeks to address the unbalanced demographic in the County by retaining the younger age groups and reducing out-commuting. It aims to create a more balanced population structure to ensure that the County has a sufficient population base of working aged people to support the economy and to ensure our communities are sustainable and resilient, and to provide a level of growth that can provide opportunities for younger people to both stay and move to the area.

Strand 2: Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy

- viii. The second strand of the preferred growth strategy is an Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy. Housing affordability is one of the most fundamental issues/challenges facing the County and in order to specifically address this issue, the Council considers it necessary to incorporate an affordable housing policy-led element to the Preferred Strategy. This strand of the strategy aims to specifically address the issue of affordability for those people who are either not able to form households or are forced to leave the County due to high average house prices in the County. The provision of intermediate affordable housing (defined as intermediate rent and low cost home ownership tenures) would provide opportunities to retain these people and therefore redress the demographic imbalance and improve the resilience and sustainability of our communities and the strength of our economic base. It is proposed to address this issue by allocating additional housing over and above the Demographic-led strand of the Growth Strategy (Option 5A) as this offers limited scope to effectively address the issue relating to intermediate affordable housing need.
- ix. The Affordable Housing Policy-led strand of the Growth Strategy results in the need for an additional 1,648 dwellings over the Plan period, comprising 824 intermediate affordable homes and 824 market homes, based on a 50/50 split to delivery. This intermediate affordable homes figure is derived from the Local Housing Market Assessment (September 2018), and represents 15% of the intermediate housing need. These homes will be delivered on sites allocated for additional housing over and above the requirement established in the Growth Option 5A in housing market areas where

there is an identified need for this type of intermediate housing and on sites where 50% of the dwellings will be affordable.

- x. In considering the appropriate split of affordable to market housing on these sites, consideration has been given to the Minister for Housing and Local Government's letter of July 2019 which states that when reviewing LDPs local planning authorities must make provision for affordable housing led housing sites and that such sites will include at least 50% affordable housing, as well as to the viability and deliverability of sites, and the Council's aim of delivering mixed, balanced and sustainable communities.

Delivering the Residential Growth

- xi. The overall housing provision figure of 8,232 homes (including an indicative 10% flexibility allowance) will be delivered through a number of housing supply streams. These include existing commitments that have planning permission, Adopted LDP Rollover sites, and an allowance for windfall and infill sites such as barn conversions and development sites that emerge throughout the life of the plan. Combined these account for 4,664 homes. The remaining 3,568 homes will be delivered on new allocations to be identified in the Deposit RLDP. Of these 1,755 homes are linked to the Demographic-led Strategy and will be delivered on sites where the appropriate mix of affordable and private market homes is yet to be determined by viability work. The remaining 1,813 homes are derived from the Council's Affordable Housing Policy-led Strategy and will be delivered on sites identified to specifically deliver 50% intermediate tenure affordable housing and 50% private market housing.

Economic Growth

- xii. The RLDP is underpinned by a level of growth that seeks to address the issues currently impacting on economic growth such as a shrinking working age population and high levels of out commuting. The Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy is estimated to support employment growth of approximately 4,695 jobs over the Plan period (313 jobs per annum). It should be noted that not all of these jobs will be in planning B-class uses and will be delivered through a range of sectors such as tourism, leisure and retail. This will be achieved by enabling 'good growth' through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement, maximising opportunities from CCR City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations.

Sustainable and Resilient Communities Spatial Strategy

- xiii. The Preferred Spatial Strategy seeks to distribute development across the County in a manner that reflects and addresses the aims of the two strands of the overarching Sustainable and Resilient Communities Growth Strategy. Accordingly, there are two strands to the spatial strategy, a Proportionate Distribution Strategy for the level of growth proposed under the Demographic-led Growth Strategy (Growth Option 5A, Spatial Option 3), and a spatial strategy which distributes growth by housing market

area to reflect the need for intermediate affordable housing, to deliver the Affordable Housing Policy-led Growth Strategy.

Strand 1: Proportionate Distribution Spatial Strategy (linked to the Demographic-led Growth Strategy)

- xiv. Spatial Option 3, to distribute growth proportionately across rural and urban areas, is identified as the Preferred Spatial Strategy to accommodate the level of housing provision associated with the Demographic-led strand of the preferred growth strategy (Growth Option 5A). This spatial option provides a land use framework that will help to deliver the Council's core purpose of helping to build sustainable and resilient communities for current and future generations, by enabling proportionate growth in urban and rural areas in accordance with a sustainable settlement hierarchy defined in the Plan.
- xv. The focus of growth under this strand of the spatial strategy will be channelled towards the most sustainable settlements that benefit from significant services, facilities, employment opportunities and sustainable and active travel networks, but will allow for some growth in the County's most sustainable rural settlements to support/enhance such areas. Accordingly, new development associated with the Demographic-led Growth Strategy will be focussed on the primary settlements of Abergavenny (including Llanfoist), Monmouth (including Wyesham) and Chepstow and the Severnside area, together with a proportionate amount of growth to the lower tier settlements. The exact distribution of development will follow in the Deposit RLDP following the second call for candidate sites and subsequent detailed site assessments.

Strand 2: Affordable Housing Policy-led Spatial Strategy

- xvi. The second strand of the spatial strategy specifically reflects and addresses the Affordable Housing Policy-led strand of the growth strategy. It aims to distribute the housing provision associated with this strand of the growth strategy in accordance with the identified intermediate affordable housing need in the County, focusing on sustainable settlements with the highest levels of intermediate housing need, as evidenced by the Local Housing Market Assessment and the most up to date waiting list information available. Growth associated with this element of the Strategy will reflect the three housing market areas in the County, namely Abergavenny, Monmouth and Chepstow/Caldicot. The proposed spatial distribution will be subject to refinement as more detailed assessment is undertaken and an update to the Local Housing Market Assessment will also be undertaken as part of the evidence base for the RLDP Deposit Plan.

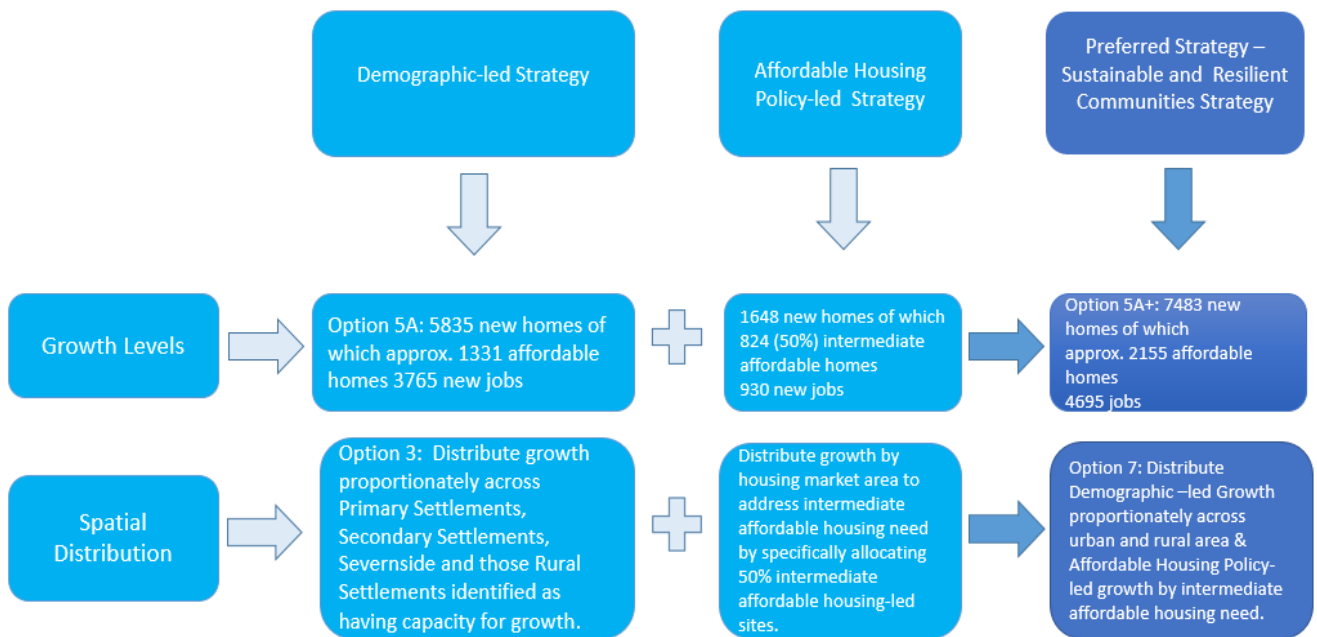
Economic Growth – Land Requirement & Spatial Distribution

- xvii. The Council has commissioned the preparation of an Employment Land Review (ELR). This involves undertaking a review of employment forecasts and land requirements for the Plan period 2018 – 2033. The study recommends that a forecast scenario based on past employment land take-up rates is adopted for the RLDP. This provides a minimum requirement of 42ha of land (41.7ha) for traditional B use class industries

such as manufacturing and warehousing, including a five-year buffer to allow for choice and uncertainty in forecasting.

- xviii. The spatial distribution of Employment Allocations to meet this requirement will be set out in the Deposit RLDP and will be consistent with the spatial strategy and commensurate to the level of housing growth proposed for an area. Details of employment land allocations and existing protected sites will be provided in the Deposit RLDP, along with criteria setting out the exceptional circumstances in which the loss of existing industrial and business sites or premises will be considered acceptable. The Plan will also include policies that allow for the assessment of non-B use class industries such as leisure, retail and tourism to facilitate job growth in these economic sectors.

Summary of the Sustainable and Resilient Communities Strategy



Strategic Policies

- xix. The main document also contains a number of Strategic Policies which form the framework for implementing and delivering the Preferred Strategy of the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). A list of policies contained within the Preferred Strategy is set out below:

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

Supporting Documents

- xx. The RLDP is accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA), which considers the environmental, equalities, health and well-being impacts of the Plan, and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The ISA and HRA are working documents, updated as the RLDP progresses. The RLDP will also include an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and will sit alongside an Updated Local Transport Plan and Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations. There are also a range of technical Background Papers to provide additional detail on the evidence and methodologies used in developing the Preferred Strategy.

Consultation Arrangements

- xxi. Community and stakeholder involvement is invited during the six week statutory engagement and consultation on the Preferred Strategy between Monday 9th March and Wednesday 22nd April 2020, whereby comments will be invited on the consultation questions set out in the Preferred Strategy. Engagement/consultation will also take place via:
- Notifying all parties on the LDP database of the consultation.
 - Planning Policy Officer attendance at Area Committee and Area Cluster meetings during March and April 2020;
 - A Members' Workshop in February 2020 (hosted by the Economy & Development Select Committee);
 - Scrutiny by Economy & Development Select Committee in June 2020;

- Internal discussions within the Council through an officer workshop, Department Management Team and Senior Leadership Team;
- RLDP Preferred Strategy Drop-in Sessions during March and April 2020 at the following locations:

Monmouth - Shire Hall	11 th March 2020	1pm – 7pm
Raglan - Village Hall	12 th March 2020	1pm – 7pm
Abergavenny - St Michael’s Centre	18 th March 2020	1pm – 7pm
Chepstow - Drill Hall	24 th March 2020	1pm – 7pm
Magor - Ebenezer Chapel	26 th March 2020	1pm – 7pm
Caldicot - Community Hub	31 st March 2020	1pm – 7pm
Usk - County Hall	9 th April 2020	1pm – 7pm

xxii. The closing date for the submission of comments is midnight on Wednesday 22nd April 2020. For details of how to respond to this consultation please see the Planning Policy Current Consultations page on the Council’s website. Feedback from the consultation/engagement on the Preferred Strategy will be considered and set out in the Consultation Report on the Preferred Strategy. The feedback will help to inform the RLDP Deposit Plan which will be subject to statutory consultation in early 2021.