



# Torfaen County Borough Council Local Development Plan (to 2021)

## Annual Monitoring Report 2021-22

October 2022



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# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 The Torfaen Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted by Torfaen County Borough Council on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2013. The LDP sets out the Council's objectives and priorities for the development and use of land within Torfaen and its policies and proposals for implementing them. Together, with the Welsh Government's development plan 'Future Wales: The National Plan 2040' (24<sup>th</sup> February 2021), it provides the land use framework which guides the future use and development of land in the County Borough up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 and beyond (i.e. until it is superseded by the adopted Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP)).
- 1.2 Following adoption of the LDP the Council has a statutory duty under Section 76 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for submission to the Welsh Government by the 31<sup>st</sup> October each year, which is based on the preceding financial year. The AMR normally has two key roles, firstly to consider whether the LDP Strategy and Policies are being implemented successfully and secondly to consider all the information gathered from the various monitoring indicators to determine whether a full or partial review of the plan is required. However, as a full review of the plan was required to be undertaken 4 years after implementation in 2017, this was carried out and reported to Council on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2018.
- 1.3 Therefore, the AMR will continue to monitor the effectiveness of delivery of the adopted Plan, the Plan's sustainability credentials and any contextual issues that will influence its implementation.
- 1.4 This is the seventh AMR report, and is based on the one-year period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and is required to be submitted to the Welsh Government by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022. The AMR provides an opportunity to identify the progress in the delivery of the LDP policies and allocations and the impact on key social, economic and environmental objectives.
- 1.5 It is noted that as a decision has already been made to review the adopted LDP, the AMR will also feed into the Torfaen Replacement LDP which is currently being prepared.

## Monitoring Requirements

- 1.6 The Council has a statutory obligation, under Section 61 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA), to keep all matters under review that are expected to affect the development of its area or the planning of its development. These matters include:
  - The principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area of the authority (including the extent to which the Welsh language is used in the area);
  - The principal purposes for which land is used in the area;
  - The size, composition and distribution of the population of the area;
  - The communications, transport system and traffic of the area;
  - Any other considerations which may be expected to affect those matters;
  - Such other matters as may be prescribed or as the Assembly in a particular case may direct.

- 1.7 In addition, under Section 76 of the PCPA, the Council has a duty to produce information on these matters in the form of an Annual Monitoring Report for submission to the Welsh Government at the end of October each year following plan adoption.
- 1.8 In producing the AMR, the Council has had regard to the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2015; Regulation 37 of which requires the AMR to: -
1. where a policy specified in an LDP is not being implemented, the annual monitoring report must identify that policy; and for each such policy the report must include a statement of: -
    - a) the reasons why that policy is not being implemented;
    - b) the steps (if any) that the LPA intend to take to secure that the policy is implemented; and
    - c) whether the LPA intends to prepare a revision of the LDP to replace or amend the policy;
  2. specify the housing land supply taken from the current Housing Land Availability Study; and
  3. specify the number (if any) of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA's area both in the period in respect of which the report is made; and in the period since the LDP was first adopted or approved.
- 1.9 However, a recent Welsh Government 'Review of the Delivery of Housing through the Planning System' found that many adopted LDPs were failing to deliver the number of new homes required, with allocated sites not being brought forward for development or being developed at a slower than anticipated rate (as per the Torfaen LDP); and it was concluded that this was due to the policy framework for ensuring housing delivery and the associated monitoring mechanism not being sufficiently aligned with the LDP process.
- 1.10 Therefore, on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, in a letter from the Minister for Housing and Local Government, Planning Policy Wales (PPW) was amended to remove the five-year housing land supply policy. It was replaced with a policy statement which makes it explicit that the housing trajectory, as set out in the adopted LDP, will be the basis for monitoring the delivery of the development plan housing requirements as part of LDP Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). At the same time, Technical Advice Note 1 (TAN1), January 2015 on 'Joint Housing Land Availability Studies' (JHLAS) was revoked in its entirety; and thus, the need to produce an annual Torfaen JHLAS. Similarly, the Welsh Government's 'Development Plans Manual' (DPM) was amended to provide details of how to monitor housing delivery under this new system; including the response to under-delivery.
- 1.11 Therefore, the latest 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Welsh Government's Development Plans Manual (DPMv3), March 2020 (Table 29, page 185) requires that all monitoring frameworks include a range of indicators as follows: -

<b>Indicators Required by Legislation</b>	
Number of net additional affordable and market dwellings built in the LPA area.	LDP Regulation 37. All AMRs must include the annual affordable and market housing completions in the plan area.
<b>Key Indicators Applicable to all Plans</b>	
Spatial distribution of housing development	To monitor housing completions each year in line with the growth strategy and the settlement hierarchy

The <u>annual</u> level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR)	Annual housing completions ... For those plans published prior to the publication of the DPMv3, completions will be measured against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR) set out in the plan. This must be presented clearly in the AMR both in numerical and percentage terms (plus/minus x%). The components of housing supply, including site allocations, large and small windfalls should also be monitored separately.
Total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative average annual housing requirement.	... For those plans published prior to the publication of the DPMv3, completions will be measured against the cumulative average annual housing requirement set out in the plan. This must be presented clearly in the AMR both in numerical and percentage terms (plus/minus x%).
The level of affordable housing completions monitored against the plan's overarching target. The tenure of affordable housing completions.	To monitor affordable housing completions delivered through the planning system each year against the target set in the plan. A separate indicator should monitor the tenure split (social rented and intermediate) in line with need identified in the LHMA.
Employment land take-up against allocations. Job growth.	To monitor the take-up of employment land in the plan. Indicators monitoring Class B job growth in line with the strategy.
Delivery of affordable housing policy - thresholds and percentage targets for each sub-market area.	To monitor the delivery of affordable housing in line with policy targets and thresholds in each sub-market area (where relevant) including any deviation above or below the target.
Viability	LPA should monitor trends (positive and negative) in key determinants of market conditions and viability such as, house prices, land values, build costs.
The rate of development on key allocations (completions linked to phasing trajectories and infrastructure schemes, where appropriate).	To monitor the development of land uses and associated infrastructure on key development sites in the plan. The rate of development will need to be considered against the anticipated trajectory, Placemaking principles and delivery appendix.
The delivery of key infrastructure that underpins the plan strategy.	This will monitor the development of new infrastructure, such as road and rail improvements and utility enhancements on which the plan strategy is dependent.
The completion of Gypsy and Traveller sites to meet identified need.	This will monitor the development of allocated gypsy and traveller sites to meet identified need over the full plan period. A separate indicator will also be required to monitor and make provision for any newly arising need outside of the GTAA
The scale / type of highly vulnerable development permitted within C2 flood risk areas.	To demonstrate the effectiveness of avoiding highly vulnerable development in the areas at most risk.

1.12 DPMv3 (Table 31, page 190) also sets out the following five key questions to be considered in the AMR in relation to the delivery of the LDP strategy (with Q4 being added in 2020): -

1. What new issues have occurred in the plan area, or changes to local/national policy?
2. How relevant, appropriate and up to date is the LDP strategy and its key policies and targets?
3. What sites have been developed or delayed in relation to the plan's expectations at both places and in the phasing programme (as set out in the trajectory)?
4. What is the degree of variance from the anticipated annual and cumulative build rate? Is there a two-year trend of under delivery (annual completions not number of AMRs submitted)?
5. What has been the effectiveness of delivering policies and preventing inappropriate development?

### **Format and Content**

- 1.13 The purpose of the AMR is to monitor the effectiveness of the Strategy and Policy Framework in the LDP and to consider whether amendments to these are required. The principal function of the whole monitoring process is to identify if and when a revision to the LDP should take place; a decision on which has already been made in this case.
- 1.14 The monitoring process for the LDP involves the collation and interpretation of significant datasets. The Council considers that the inclusion of this more detailed information within the AMR would lead to the report being overly long and complex, therefore the report focuses on just the inclusion of the key results.

## **2. Monitoring Framework - Overview**

- 2.1 The AMR will report progress on the LDP Strategy, policies and proposals.

### **The Monitoring Framework**

- 2.2 The Monitoring Framework sets out the mechanism by which the implementation of the LDP Policies and the LDP Strategy will be assessed. However, the DPMv3 advises against assessing every LDP Policy as this would be onerous and cumbersome and would result in a long-winded assessment process.
- 2.3 In monitoring the effectiveness of the LDP it makes sense to monitor what the LDP is seeking to achieve i.e. the LDP Objectives. It is from the Objectives that the LDP Strategy and Policies have been derived. The LDP identifies the Policies, which support each of the 18 LDP Objectives; this information is also contained in the Monitoring Proforma for each LDP Objective as part of this Monitoring Framework.
- 2.4 The seven Strategic Action Areas (SAA's) (excluding the British SAA5, which is a land reclamation scheme during the plan period) identified in the LDP as land use allocations make up the majority of the provision of residential units, employment land and community facilities to be allocated in the LDP and therefore, the successful implementation of the seven SAA's will provide the greatest impact in the LDP Strategy. They will provide a reasonable gauge on how the other LDP Policies are performing and whether there are any policies not being implemented e.g. provision of residential dwellings and employment land.
- 2.5 The Monitoring Framework sets out the indicators against which the LDP will be monitored. As outlined above it is intended to monitor the LDP Objectives and the seven SAA Policies.

### **Site Monitoring**

- 2.6 As part of the AMR an update on the delivery status of all allocated housing/employment sites and other allocations will be submitted. This will highlight what activity has taken place in any given year including preparation of studies / pre-application discussions / planning permissions, etc. If sites are not being progressed as anticipated, this will be interpreted as a trigger and appropriate action will be taken by the Council as needed.

### 3. Contextual Changes

- 3.1 This chapter sets out significant contextual changes that have occurred since the previous 2021 AMR, as Torfaen does not exist in isolation, and it is important to understand how the implementation of the LDP has and will be influenced by local, regional, national and international factors, many of which are out of the Council's control. Any potential implications for the LDP as a whole are outlined where appropriate. However, as the Council has already decided to review its plan, any actions as a result of relevant contextual changes will also be considered in the current development of the Replacement LDP.
- 3.2 The following section looks at the factors that may have influence on development in Torfaen CBC and may need considering in the Replacement LDP: -
- National Context (Overview, Legislation, Policy & Evidence);
  - Regional Context (Policy & Evidence); and
  - Local Context (Policy & Evidence).

#### National Context Overview

- 3.3 **Brexit** - In June 2016 the UK electorate voted in favour of leaving the European Union (EU), known as 'Brexit'. Therefore, the UK formally left the EU on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and entered a 11-month transition or implementation period which ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. Since the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021, the UK has no longer been part of the EU single market or the EU customs union. On 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 the European Parliament formally approved the post-Brexit EU-UK trade deal (known as the 'Trade and Co-operation Agreement' (TCA) which ensures that tariff and quota-free trade continues) which finally came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021. EU countries applied full customs requirements and checks on UK exports at the start of 2021, while the UK delayed the introduction of full customs requirements on EU imports until January 2022 and full health, safety and security checks to the second half of 2022.
- 3.4 The TCA covers EU-UK trade in goods, but not services (the UK economy is dominated by services sectors such as banking, insurance, advertising and legal advice), but has still resulted in more paperwork, extra costs and less trade between the two parties, since the UK left the EU. It will take some time before the long-term effect of Brexit on trade becomes clear.
- 3.5 Brexit also means free movement of citizens between the UK and EU no longer applies; and whilst the rights of the roughly one million UK citizens living in the EU, and three million EU citizens in the UK (the deadline for the EU Settlement Scheme applications was 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021) are protected under the TCA; the new restrictions have deepened labour shortages.
- The implications of Brexit will continue to be considered in the Torfaen RLDP including the wider role that planning can have in assisting economic development.
- 3.6 It is noted that now that the UK has left the EU, it will no longer receive EU Structural Funds (which will tail off by the end of 2024). Therefore, these EU funds have been replaced with a domestic funding programme - aimed at addressing regional disparities, this is being termed in the media as the 'Levelling Up Agenda'. This programme currently has three strands relevant to Torfaen:-
- **The Levelling Up Fund:** Capital funding aimed at physical infrastructure projects (see paragraph 3.7-3.8 below);

- **Community Renewal Fund:** This fund will pilot short-term projects to inform future multi-annual **Shared Prosperity Fund** projects - these funds will also help to level up and create opportunity across the UK in places most in need and is complementary to the Levelling Up Fund, but focuses revenue investment on skills, enterprise, and employment (see paragraphs 3.9-3.10 below); and
  - **Community Ownership Fund:** £150 million over 4 years to support Community groups in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, to take ownership of assets and amenities at risk of being lost, with a 50% grant up to £250,000. The fund will run until 2024/25 and there will be at least eight bidding rounds in total.
- 3.7 The UK **Levelling Up Fund** (LUF) will invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities and will support economic recovery. Ten **'Round 1'** projects in Wales (including the Porth Transport Hub - £3.6m and the A4119 Coed-ely Dualling Scheme £11.4m in nearby Rhondda Cynon Taf, and £15.5m for the Montgomery Canal Restoration in Powys) were awarded £121 million funding (7%) out of a total of £1.7 billion allocated across the UK; albeit Torfaen was not able to make a bid as there were no 'oven ready' projects at the outset of this process some 10 months ago.
- 3.8 The UK Government opened **'Round 2'** of the Levelling Up Fund for competitive Local Authority applications to support projects investing in 'transport, regeneration and culture' in July 2022; which is allocated according to assessment criteria, and Wales will receive at least 5% of the total allocation. Torfaen has bid for £27,389,073 in LUF2 grant against a total cost of £33,099,073 for the:-
- **Blaenavon House Heritage Hotel:** redevelopment of the former Ironmasters House as a luxury Boutique Destination Hotel with conferencing facilities and ancillary spa facilities; and
  - **Pontypool Cultural Hub and Café Quarter:** a package of interventions to catalyse the regeneration of Pontypool Town Centre to transform a derelict Grade II listed building into a thriving cultural-hub; convert public toilets into a landmark café/restaurant to encourage a night-time economy; and improve an existing car park to provide safe and secure parking for users of these facilities.
- 3.9 The UK government provided £220m of funding in 2021-22 through the UK **Community Renewal Fund** to support 100 communities ('priority places' based on an index of economic resilience across Great Britain which measures productivity, household income, unemployment, skills and population density) most in need, including Torfaen; to pilot programmes and new approaches, with investment in 'skills', 'local business', 'communities & place'; and 'supporting people into employment'. The Council had to invite, appraise and submit project proposals from a range of local applicants, including itself, voluntary & community sector organisations and local education. As a result, [five new projects](#) aimed at supporting businesses and increasing skills in Torfaen are to receive nearly £1.3m ('Stepping Stones', 'Pontypool & Blaenavon Small Business Support Project', 'The Life You Want', 'Young Enterprise Torfaen' and 'A Complete Digital Package for Torfaen Businesses') and two regional schemes led by Torfaen Council will receive around £2.5m ('Connect, Engage, Listen & Transform' and 'Food 4 Growth').
- 3.10 The UK Government's £2.6 billion **Shared Prosperity Fund** (SPF) provides funding to local areas across the UK between April 2022 to March 2025; which will invest in communities and place; supporting businesses; and people and skills. The UK Government wants the SPF to be delivered at regional level in Wales, across the four City and Growth Deal areas, with the intention that a lead local authority (Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council) submits a plan on behalf of the region for UK

Government to approval. The local authorities within the Cardiff Capital Region have been allocated £279 million between April 2022 and March 2025, out of the £585 million total allocation for Wales. Torfaen's share is £24.7m (£20.4m Core UK SPF & £4.3m for 'Multiply' an adult numeracy programme) and schemes have yet to be confirmed.

- These welcome UK funding streams and associated Torfaen projects / bids will be considered in the Torfaen RLDP including the wider role that planning can have in assisting communities, climate change, placemaking, green infrastructure, economic development, town centres, etc.

**3.11 Expected Recession** - Whilst outside the 2021-22 LDP monitoring period, the Bank of England has forecast the UK will fall into recession (the economy getting smaller for two consecutive three-month periods - having already shrunk by 0.1% in Q2 2022) after Q3 2022 as energy (particularly gas) / fuel, materials, goods, inflation and lending costs increase (and are expected to continue increasing). It predicts a decline of almost 1% in the size of the economy in the last three months of 2022 and thinks it will shrink in every quarter of 2023. However, other economies are also struggling, with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) latest World Economic Outlook highlighting downturns in China and Russia, alongside higher-than-expected inflation, especially in the United States and Europe. This is partly due to Russia's war in Ukraine, which has increased energy and food prices; as well as drought conditions in many countries. There are also continuing effects from Covid-19. Indeed, since late 2021, there has been a 'cost of living crisis' with a fall in 'real' disposable incomes, caused predominantly by high inflation (9.4% in the 12 months to June 2022 - Consumer Price Index) outstripping increases in benefits / pensions (3.1% in April 2022) and wages (4.3% in the period between March-May 2022). According to the [BBC](#), *"some people may lose their jobs, or find it harder to get promotions, or pay rises big enough to allow them to cope with increases in prices; and graduates & school leavers could find a first job harder to get. However, the pain of a recession is typically not felt equally across society, and inequality can increase. Benefit recipients and those with fixed incomes are particularly likely to struggle."*

- These matters will be considered in the Torfaen RLDP as well as the wider role that planning can have in assisting economic development, renewable energy, carbon zero, local food production, water management, etc.

**3.12 Covid-19 Pandemic** - the world has been greatly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, associated deaths and long-term recovery period for some, as well as its impact on the economy, the costs of materials and goods, housebuilding levels, town centres, and people's physical & mental well-being. Similarly, there have been impacts on the way people work, travel, shop, socialise and use open / green spaces, the urban environment and public realm.

**3.13** As part of planning for the recovery, there is now a focus on 'green' economic growth (development that provides for growth in employment and income, but is resource efficient and socially inclusive, with reduced carbon emissions & pollution; and prevents the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem resilience), infrastructure, addressing housing need - including homelessness, active travel, homeworking, and improving public spaces and the public realm. The Welsh Government published 'Building Better Places: The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures - Placemaking and the Covid-19 Recovery', July 2020. Similarly, following a request from the Welsh Minister, the Council produced a Covid-19 Assessment that considered the consequences of the pandemic on both the Plan's supporting

evidence base and the RLDP Preferred Strategy in September 2020. In summary, the Assessment concluded that it is too early to assess the full impacts of the pandemic, but the evidence base, vision, objectives and 17 strategic policies of the RLDP Preferred Strategy, including the proposed levels of new housing and employment growth, remain sound, appropriate and flexible enough to facilitate the recovery and mitigate Covid's other impacts. However, five Preferred Strategy key issues needed to be updated, i.e. those relating to 'Commuting to Work', 'Town Centres', 'Traffic Issues', 'Public Transport' and 'Deprivation'; and one new key issue on the 'Economic Impacts of Covid-19 and Enabling the Recovery' was added.

- These matters have and will continue to be considered in the Torfaen RLDP as well as the wider role that planning can have in assisting in the Covid-19 recovery.

## National Legislation and Policy

3.14 **Relevant Legislation** - None since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

3.15 **National Policy Documents** - Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, the following relevant policy 'documents', etc. were issued by the Welsh Government: -

### Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

3.16 **TAN14: Coastal Planning** - is still extant, as whilst formal publication of TAN15 on 'Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion' on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 was expected to cancel TAN14 at that time; a Ministerial Letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021, suspended the coming into force of the new TAN15 (and thus cancellation of TAN14) until 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023.

3.17 **TAN15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion** - The Welsh Government consulted on changes to the 2004 TAN15 on 'Development and Flood Risk' between 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020, following a review of its effectiveness in 2017. The [new TAN15](#) contains a number of proposed changes and factual updates to terminology and references, replacing the '**Development Advice Map**' (**DAM**) with a new Wales '**Flood Map for Planning**' (**FMfP**) to be maintained by Natural Resources Wales (NRW), policy for the new flood zones, which places greater emphasis on development plans and the role of the '**Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment**' (**SFCA**); and updating guidance on coastal erosion currently set out in TAN14 on 'Coastal Planning' and integrating it within TAN15 (which will enable TAN14 to be cancelled). TAN15 also introduced 'drainage statements' as a formal requirement when planning and SuDS approval processes are sought separately by developers. The new TAN15 was soft launched on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2021, to allow time for current planning applications to take its guidance into account before being formally published on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 (alongside TAN14 being cancelled and the issuing of an updated Notification Direction with regards development in areas of flood risk).

3.18 However, the Minister subsequently delayed its introduction until 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 to allow LPAs to fully consider the impacts of the new TAN15; produce 'Strategic Flood Consequences Assessments' for their area; refine the 'Flood Map for Planning'; identify a pipeline of projects for flood and coastal erosion risk management; and develop locally specific policy approaches (see paragraphs 3.19 to 3.27 below for details).

- 3.19 **Letter sent by the Minister for Climate Change to local authorities on the suspension of TAN 15, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021** - this [letter](#) stated that *“To enable local planning authorities to consider fully the impact of the climate change projections on their respective areas, I am suspending the coming into force of the new TAN 15 and Flood Map for Planning until 1st June 2023. The existing TAN 15, published in 2004, and the Development Advice Map will continue in the meantime as the framework for assessing flood risk.”*
- 3.20 The letter also stated *“It is imperative that local planning authorities use the suspension to develop a more detailed understanding of the consequences of flooding, and therefore I require every local planning authority to complete work to review, within the next 12 months, the Strategic Flood Consequences Assessments (SFCAs) for their area, either individually or on a regional basis. I also require each local authority, working in partnership with other flood risk management authorities where appropriate to identify a pipeline of priority flood risk management schemes to address flood risk and vulnerability, as well as an assessment and specific assurances on the effective delivery of SuDS Approval Body functions. This work must be informed by the Flood Map for Planning and a full range of climate change projections to provide a finer grain assessment of the consequences of flooding, identify appropriate mitigations and to refine the Flood Map through the map challenge process... The outcome of this work should be that every local authority considers options and identifies its preferred ways to adapt to increased flood risks caused by climate change. In addition to the potential need for flood management schemes to which I refer above, local authorities may need to consider relocation of infrastructure, site specific resilience measures or new green infrastructure.”*
- 3.21 **Further letter sent by the Welsh Government to local authorities on the pause of TAN15, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021.** This [letter](#) from the WG Chief Planner and Deputy Director for Water, Flood and Coal Tip Safety provides further details on the implications of the Minister letter of 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2021. During the 18 month pause period, the existing policy framework of Planning Policy Wales, TAN15 and the Development Advice Map (DAM), along with TAN14 will remain in place. The letter set out the package of work to be completed by local authorities before 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023, and the key implications for planning services during the pause period. In summary:
- 1. Strategic Flood Consequence Assessments (SFCAs) - confirmation of needs:** By the end of January 2022, we expect every local planning authority to notify the Welsh Government whether it is undertaking a new SFCA, updating an existing document, or has concluded no further work is necessary.
  - 2. SFCAs - progress reports:** WG expect updates on progress in conducting the SFCAs, and the Minister expects SFCAs to be finalised by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022.
  - 3. Development plans:** When plans are reviewed, the flood risk considerations that feed into the settlement strategy and site allocations must be in accordance with the new TAN15 and the Flood Map for Planning. The SFCA will be the principal source of evidence to inform those elements of the plan and locally specific flood risk policies.
  - 4. Development management:** The pause means the existing policy framework remains in place for a further 18 months. Planning authorities should recognise however that it may be appropriate to take best and more recent information into account as a material consideration.

- 3.22 Detailed advice was also given on the content of **Strategic Flood Consequences Assessments (SFCAs)** from Chapter 7 of the new TAN15; and regional assessments were encouraged where possible because this work can inform Strategic Development Plans and also offer better value for money and an opportunity to consider appropriate solutions and responses to flood risk over a wider area. Reviewing the SFCA will help with the publication of LA statutory 'local flood strategies' required in 2023; and will set out their flood risk priorities over the next decade, including their pipeline of flood alleviation works. Local flood strategies will be complemented by Natural Resources Wales' long term investment strategy for projected works to manage flooding from main rivers and the sea.
- 3.23 The letter also noted that in 18 months' time the **FMfP** will become the principal source of spatial information on flood risk and coastal erosion for planning purposes. During which time the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales welcome the opportunity to further refine it and ensure it reflects all appropriate evidence from Risk Management Authorities of flood risk and mitigation schemes before it takes full effect. The FMfP will be updated three times before it comes into force (in May 2022, November 2022 and May 2023).
- 3.24 The new TAN15 will enable planning authorities to introduce distinct and locally specific approaches, where they are informed by strong evidence. Examples of locally specific approaches are set out in paragraph 7.5 of the new TAN15; and should be included in an adopted development plan.
- 3.25 The letter notes that for **local development plans under review** the pause in implementation of TAN15 provides an opportunity to clearly factor in climate-related flood risks. It is important that settlement strategies and the site selection processes are aligned to SFCA findings. When drafting policies on flood risk the focus should be on site specific details and locally specific approaches, as there is no need to repeat national policies. The development plan should complement the local flood strategy, by identifying key risks and setting out where flood and coastal erosion risk management schemes are to be located.
- 3.26 As regards **Development Management**, the letter stated that decisions on planning applications as well as pre-application discussions where flood risk is a consideration must be based on the existing TAN15 and the LPA still has a duty to consult Natural Resources Wales (NRW) on planning applications for development in flood risk areas (Flood Zone C1 or C2). LPAs can expect advice from NRW to highlight the FMfP where it clearly affects the context of the application. For example, if a site in DAM zone C1 will become zone 3 in the FMfP, NRW will highlight that fact and advise whether a flood consequences assessment should be undertaken. This type of advice is possible because the FMfP remains publicly accessible and provides better and more up to date information than the DAM. The FMfP holds no formal weight as it is not yet national policy, but best available information may be regarded as a material consideration.
- 3.27 Finally, the letter states that the **2012 Notification Direction** remains in place; where if an LPA is minded to approve highly vulnerable development located entirely in the C2 flood zone they must notify the Welsh Ministers, to allow them to consider calling-in the application. The Direction applies to residential schemes of 10 or more units, to other types of development defined in the existing TAN15 as highly vulnerable, and the emergency services.
- The new TAN15 will be reported in the 2023 LDP AMR and will be considered in the Deposit RLDP.

## Dear Chief Planning Officer (CPO) letters

- 3.28 **Best and most versatile agricultural land and solar PV arrays, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2022:** this [letter](#) notes that PPW11 paragraphs 3.58 and 3.59 outline national policy towards safeguarding Wales' Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land [*“... in development plan policies and development management decisions considerable weight should be given to protecting such [BMV] land from development, because of its special importance. Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a should only be developed if there is an overriding need for the development, and either previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades is unavailable, or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweighs the agricultural considerations.”*]; and Future Wales identifies BMV agricultural land as a national natural resource under Policy 9.
- 3.29 Further guidance is provided in TAN6 ('planning for sustainable rural communities', July 2010), including the consultation arrangements with the Welsh Government [LPA's are required to consult with the Welsh Government before granting planning permission for any proposals which do not accord with the Development Plan and would involve the loss (both permanent and temporary) of 20 hectares (including 'cumulatively') or more of BMV land] and the Practice Guidance: Planning Implications of Renewable and Low Carbon Energy. Noting that any loss of BMV land may be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications; and the Welsh Government may still comment on planning applications which do not 'trigger' the above statutory requirement.
- 3.30 The letter clarifies that in accordance with Welsh Government policy outlined above, where BMV land is identified within a proposed solar PV array development, considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development, because of its special importance, and unless other significant material considerations indicate otherwise it will be necessary to refuse permission. Similarly, when considering the above search sequence and in development plan policies and development management decisions it is important to have access to accurate land quality information; and the letter highlights the freely available [Predictive Agricultural Land Classification \(ALC\) Map 2](#) published by WG; the guidance on its use and the need for ALC surveys [Agricultural land classification: predictive map guidance](#); and their free ALC report validation service which LPAs are encouraged to use.
- The content of this letter is noted in terms of development management decisions and will be considered in the preparation of the Torfaen RLDP.
- 3.31 **Regional Technical Statements for Aggregates 2nd Review, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021:** this [policy clarification letter](#) rectified an arithmetical error in the Regional Technical Statements for Aggregates 2<sup>nd</sup> Review (RTS2); concerning the annual average house completions figure for Torfaen which incorrectly stated the figure as 313 completions. The correct figure should have been 174.6 completions; upon which the 'crushed rock' aggregate apportionment calculations for each LPA are partly based. As a result of this clarification, Torfaen's apportionment reduced by 2.7Mt to 3.75Mt over 25 years; with corresponding increased apportionments for Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire & Newport, in the 'Former Gwent' Sub-Region, and for Cardiff & Rhondda Cynon Taff in the 'Cardiff' Sub-Region. However, in the letter, WG considered that although individual apportionments do change these are considered small in both practical terms and over the timescale of 25 years; the changes do not affect the overall approach outlined in the RTS and the methodology remains

unchanged; and the clarification does not require local authorities to re-endorse the RTS.

- Council on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021 endorsed RTS2, as amended by this Welsh Government letter; which will be considered by Council as part of the Torfaen RLDP going forward. (see paragraphs 3.56-3.57 on RTS2 below for further details).

3.32 **Coronavirus (Covid-19) Response: updated guidance to planning authorities, 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021:** this letter provides advice to LPAs with an updated position regarding a number of temporary development management measures previously introduced by the Welsh Government over the previous 18 months; including on enforcement, construction working hours, hospitality, supermarkets / food distribution; pre-application / Community Council consultation, Developments of National Significance, site visits, Covid-19 applications and Permitted Development. As regards 'Annual Performance Reports' (APRs), whilst WG would encourage all LPAs to prepare APRs as a matter of best practice, they are not required for 2020-21, but full reporting and submission will commence again in respect of 2021-22. **Annual Monitoring Reports of Local Development Plan** implementation are required to be submitted from October 2021.

- The content of this letter is noted in terms of development management decisions, and the submission of this Torfaen LDP 2022 AMR.

3.33 **Guide to Future Wales - Frequently Asked Questions, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021:** this [letter](#) signposted this [second FAQs document](#), which addresses common questions raised by LPAs following the publication of Future Wales in February 2021 and supplements Edition 1, which was also published in February 2021. Edition 1 continues to apply and addresses mainly process and procedural questions; whilst the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition focuses more on policy matters. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition provides clarification on, for example, Strategic Development Plans and Corporate Joint Committees, Green Belts (being designated in the SDP and suggests 4 questions to ask when considering the matter in the interim), the National Forest, directing development to town centres, Mobile Action Zones, defines 'gigabit capable' broadband infrastructure, and discusses dwelling density. However both FAQs are published for information purposes only, do not introduce any new requirements, and are not part of Future Wales; therefore they hold no weight or status. Indeed, the document advises readers to review legislation for certainty on statutory requirements; and Planning Policy Wales and Future Wales for certainty on policy. It also notes, "Future Wales states that guidance will be prepared on the development of on-shore wind, and strategic placemaking. Preparation of this guidance will commence in 2021", but nothing has been published to date.

- The content of this latest Future Wales FAQ is noted and will be considered in development management decisions and in the preparation of the Torfaen RLDP.

3.34 **Planning and Environment Decisions Wales, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021:** this [letter](#) advised that the organisation responsible for determining planning appeals and environment casework in Wales changing from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021; from the 'Planning Inspectorate' (PINS - a joint executive agency of the Welsh Government, and the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government) to 'Planning and Environment Decisions Wales / Penderfyniadau Cynllunio ac Amgylchedd Cymru' (PEDW / PCAC) as a new Division within Welsh Government.

- The content of this letter is noted in terms of development management matters, and for the ‘submission’ and ‘examination’ of the Torfaen RLDP and subsequent ‘report’ by an independent PEDW Inspector in due course.

## National Strategies

3.35 **Welsh Government: Programme for Government 2021-2026 (updated December 2021** - after ‘Co-operation Agreement’ with Plaid Cymru) - Following the Senedd Cymru-Welsh Parliament elections in May 2021, the Welsh Labour Government has published their “[Programme for Government](#)” for what they want to achieve over the next five years. It details almost 100 specific areas of activity under the following 10 wellbeing objectives (with activity more relevant to planning listed under each):-

1. Provide effective, high quality and sustainable healthcare;
2. Protect, re-build and develop our services for vulnerable people;
3. Build an economy based on the principles of fair work, sustainability and the industries and services of the future;
  - Enable our town centres to become more agile economically by helping businesses to work co-operatively, increase their digital offer and support local supply chains, including local delivery services.
  - Seek a 30% target for working remotely.
4. Build a stronger, greener economy as we make maximum progress towards decarbonisation;
  - Work towards our new target of 45% of journeys by sustainable modes by 2040, setting more stretching goals where possible.
5. Embed our response to the climate and nature emergency in everything we do;
  - Create a National Forest to extend from the North of Wales to the South.
  - Harness the economic, cultural, and recreational potential of the National Forest as part of progress towards a sustainable timber industry.
  - Develop a Wales Community Food Strategy to encourage the production and supply of locally-sourced food in Wales.
  - Support 80 re-use and repair hubs in town centres.
  - Uphold our policy of opposing the extraction of fossil fuels in Wales, both on land and in Welsh waters, using the powers available to us.
  - Expand arrangements to create or significantly enhance green spaces.
6. Continue our long-term programme of education reform, and ensure educational inequalities narrow and standards rise;
7. Celebrate diversity and move to eliminate inequality in all of its forms;
8. Push towards a million Welsh speakers, and enable our tourism, sports and arts industries to thrive;
9. Make our cities, towns and villages even better places in which to live and work; and
  - Build 20,000 new low carbon social homes for rent.
  - Make 20mph the default speed limit in residential areas.
  - Ban pavement parking wherever possible.
10. Lead Wales in a national civic conversation about our constitutional future, and give our country the strongest possible presence on the world stage.

3.36 The government has also made a plethora of delivery “commitments” under the following headings (with commitments more relevant to planning listed under each):

- Health and Social Services;
- Economy;
- Climate Change;
  - Develop new remote working hubs in communities.
  - Develop new Regional Transport Plans.

- Invest in bus services and complete major new bus infrastructure projects.
- Work with Transport for Wales and local authorities to strengthen the promotion of walking and cycling.
- Support innovative new social enterprise schemes such as bike maintenance repair cafes and bike recycling schemes.
- Develop new Active Travel Integrated Network Maps.
- Invest in travel options that encourage public transport and support walking and cycling.
- Support innovation in new renewable energy technology.
- Support communities to create 30 new woodlands and connect habitat areas.
- Strengthen the protections for ancient woodlands.
- Fund additional flood protection for at least 45,000 homes.
- Legislate to strengthen the requirements for the use of sustainable drainage systems that provide wildlife habitat.
- Expand renewable energy generation by public bodies and community groups in Wales by over 100MW by 2026.
- Ensure that estate charges for public open spaces and facilities are paid for in a way that is fair.
- Develop masterplans for towns and high streets.
- Develop community recycling facilities in town centres and promote repair and re-use facilities to encourage zero-waste shopping.
- Create more community green space in town centres.
- Repurpose public space for outdoor events, markets, street vendors, pop-up parks and 'parklets'.
- Education and Welsh Language;
  - Invest more than £1.5 billion in the next phase of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools and Colleges Programme.
  - With local authorities, transform learning environments, develop net-zero carbon schools and open up school facilities for local communities.
- Finance and Local Government;
  - Develop further effective tax, planning and housing measures to ensure the interests of local people are protected.
- Social Justice;
- Rural Affairs and North Wales;
- Constitution;
- The content of Welsh Government's 'Programme for Government 2021-2026' is noted; with many of the matters therein being considered by the RLDP going forward.

- 3.37 **Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 (2021-2025), October 2021** - [*Net Zero - means the greenhouse gases taken from the atmosphere is in balance with the greenhouse gases emitted*] This '[Net Zero Wales Plan](#)', follows on from '[Prosperity for all: A Low Carbon Wales](#)' covering the first carbon budget (2016-20) and sets out 123 policies and proposals (inter alia, covering: electricity & heat generation; transport; residential buildings; industry & business; agriculture; Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF); waste management; and the public sector), alongside commitments and action from every corner of Wales to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, along the following 'net zero by 2050' trajectory, which have been set in law.
- Carbon Budget 2 (2021-25): 37% average reduction (with 0% offset limit);
  - Carbon Budget 3 (2026-30): 58% average reduction;
  - 2030: 63% reduction;
  - 2040: 89% reduction;
  - 2050: at least 100% reduction (net zero).

- The content of Welsh Government's 'Net Zero Wales: Carbon Budget 2 (2021-2025)' is noted; and will be considered by the RLDP going forward.

3.38 **Age Friendly Wales: Our Strategy for an Ageing Society, October 2021** - This [Strategy](#) notes that in Wales, it is projected that, by 2038, 1-in-4 of the population will be over 65; and those aged over 75 is also projected to increase from 9.3% in 2018 to 13.7% in 2038. However, despite these predictions, improvements in life expectancies have stalled since around 2011; and the estimated number of people living alone has been increasing steadily over the last decade. Today, people aged 65 and over make up 45% of single person households. Also, from 2006/07 to 2015/16, the number of people on the dementia register rose from 9,550 to 13,617, an increase of 43%; the number of unpaid carers in Wales is also increasing; and people aged 65 and over are the fastest growing group.

3.39 An ageing population does bring new challenges for governments, communities and individuals; the impact of Covid-19, deep rooted social & economic inequality, austerity, and the rising number of older people living with complex conditions cannot be ignored. Consequently, the Strategy spans a broad range of policy areas from health and social care and has 4 aims, which (with regards to planning) include:-

1. Enhancing well-being;
2. Improving local services and environments - Housing, transport systems and the natural and built environment fundamentally affect how well we live and age. Going forward, the priorities are:
  - reviewing affordable housing supply and ensuring all Welsh Government grant funded new housing complies with the Lifetime Homes Standards;
  - tackling fuel poverty;
  - improving access and availability of affordable homes;
  - investing in active travel;
  - improving green spaces and other green infrastructure;
  - ensuring our natural and built environment is safe and age friendly;
  - improving the availability of public toilets; and
  - re invigorating town centres;
3. Building and retaining people's own capability; and
4. Tackling age-related poverty;

3.40 Finally, the Strategy has three cross-cutting themes:

- Theme 1: Creating an age friendly Wales;
  - Theme 2: Prioritising prevention - by building communities, homes, transport systems and outdoor spaces that enable people to age well; and
  - Theme 3: A rights based approach.
- The content of Welsh Government's 'Age Friendly Wales: Our Strategy for an Ageing Society' is noted; and will be considered in the RLDP and the 2022 Torfaen Local Housing Market Assessment going forward.

## National Evidence

3.41 **Welsh Government: Wales Road Review Panel, September 2021** - In accordance with 'Llwybr Newydd, the Wales Transport Strategy' (March 2021) WG want to reduce Wales's carbon footprint to protect people and wildlife from the climate emergency, by reducing the number of journeys taken by private cars and increase the number of people walking, cycling and using public transport. Therefore, WG have paused many of their road projects across Wales to carry out a review of their support for increasing

road capacity; and have appointed an 'independent panel' (of experts in transport policy, climate change, highway engineering and freight & logistics) to carry out the review; chaired by Dr Lynn Sloman MBE, a transport specialist based in Wales. There are 55 such schemes under review, which include the following within Torfaen:-

- Strategic Road Network - (10) A4042 Southern Corridor, Pontypool to M4; and
- Economic Development - (41) Llanfrechfa, Cwmbran.

3.42 The Roads Review Panel was required to provide the Final Report to the Minister by June 2022; and on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022, the Deputy Minister for Climate Change issued a [written statement](#) stating that: "*The panel has submitted its final report ...*" and "*has also provided recommendations and tests on the conditions where building new roads is the right thing to do.*" The Minister "*will now carefully consider the panel's advice and recommendations ... alongside the advice provided by officials.*"; and intends to publish the panel's report and his decision, "*later in the autumn*".

- The outcome of the WG 'Roads Review' on these important roads in Torfaen will be reported in the 2023 AMR and will be considered in the RLDP.

## Regional Context - Policy & Evidence

3.43 **Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD)** - The CCRCD is a 20 year / £1.28 billion investment programme, agreed in 2016 between the UK Government, the Welsh Government and the ten local authorities of South East Wales, which aims to achieve a 5% uplift in the Region's GVA (*'Gross Value Added' - a measure of the value of the goods produced and services delivered in the area*) by delivering a range of programmes which will increase connectivity, improve physical and digital infrastructure, as well as regional business governance. Over its lifetime, local partners expect the CCRCD to deliver up to 25,000 new jobs and leverage an additional £4 billion of private sector investment by 2036. The CCRCD has 6 Objectives: -

1. Connecting the Cardiff Capital Region;
2. Investing in innovation and the digital network;
3. Developing a skilled workforce and tackling unemployment;
4. Supporting enterprise and business growth;
5. Housing development and regeneration; and
6. Developing greater city-region governance across the Cardiff Capital Region.

3.44 The CCRCD includes funding of £734m for the proposed South Wales 'Metro' integrated transport improvements; of which over £500 million is provided by the Welsh Government and £125m from the UK Government. The UK Government has provided an additional £375m contribution for other investments, and the ten local authorities have agreed a commitment to borrow a combined total of £120m as part of the £495m Wider Investment Fund.

- It is considered that the 'Cardiff City Region City Deal' currently has no significant implications for the LDP, other than implementation of the Policy T1/2 'Pontypool & New Inn Train Station Park & Ride' scheme currently under construction. However, from the next section on the S.E. Wales SDP, it is noted that the SE Wales Corporate Joint Committee (CJC) came into being on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021; and the work of the CCRCD will transition into the CJC in due course.

3.45 **South East Wales Strategic Development Plan (SDP)** - There is now a statutory duty (introduced by the Welsh Government under the **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021** to prepare a 20-year SDP through a **Corporate Joint**

**Committee** (CJC); a new model of collaborative regional local governance in four defined Welsh Regions (North Wales, Mid Wales, South-East Wales and South West Wales) for specified functions (relating to: 'strategic development planning'; 'regional transport planning'; and 'economic well-being of their areas'; with other functions potentially to be added at later dates).

- 3.46 The **South-East Wales CJC Regulations** came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, which established the corporate legal entity of the CJC, consisting of the 10 constituent Cardiff Capital Region local authorities and, for the purposes of Strategic Development Plan, the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA). The first statutory duty of the CJC was to set a budget on or before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022; with the commencement duties around development of a SDP, Regional Transport Plan and economic wellbeing powers to be conferred to the CJC on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.
- 3.47 **The Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2021** establish the procedural requirements for the preparation, monitoring and review of SDPs; and came into force on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The SDP Regulations reflect the main stages of plan preparation and review requirements outlined in the LDP Regulations and provide details about the key stages, procedures and consultation arrangements that must be followed by CJCs when preparing an SDP. They set out the requirements for the preparation, examination, monitoring and revision of SDPs and associated matters. The regulations also set out the provisions for the content, availability, and publication of documents. Under the Regulations the CJC's membership is one member (executive leader or the elected mayor) for each of the ten constituent councils, and a member from the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority who is only permitted to vote on matters relating to the strategic planning function.
- 3.48 Whilst the DPMv3 contains some information on SDPs in Chapter 10, the WG aim is to consult formally on a more detailed and updated standalone 'SDP Manual' for 12 weeks towards the Summer / Autumn 2023. Therefore, given the time to set up the necessary processes and undertake the work, etc., it is not expected that a 'Delivery Agreement' for the production of the SDP will be submitted to the Welsh Government until 2023; and then with 4-5 years to prepare the plan, an SDP is not expected to be adopted until 2027-2028.
- 3.49 However, we generally know what the SDP is likely to cover, from Chapter 10 of the DPMv3 on 'Strategic Development Plans' and from 'Future Wales: The National Plan 2040', Policy 19 on 'Strategic Policies for Regional Planning' (and Policy 33 on the 'National Growth Area'; Policy 34 on 'Green Belts'; Policy 35 on the Valleys Regional Park; and Policy 36 on the 'South-East Metro'), where the Welsh Government states:-  
*"Policy 19 - Strategic Development Plans should embed placemaking as an overarching principle and should establish for the region (and where required constituent Local Development Plans):*
- *a spatial strategy;*
  - *a settlement hierarchy;*
  - *the housing provision and requirement;*
  - *the gypsy and traveller need;*
  - *the employment provision;*
  - *the spatial areas for strategic housing, employment growth and renewable energy;*
  - *the identification of green belts, green corridors and nationally important landscapes where required;*
  - *the location of key services, transport and connectivity infrastructure;*

- a framework for the sustainable management of natural resources and cultural assets;
- ecological networks and opportunities for protecting or enhancing the connectivity of these networks and the provision of green infrastructure; and
- a co-ordinated framework for minerals extraction and the circular economy, including waste treatment and disposal.

*The Welsh Government requires the adoption of Strategic Development Plans in the North, Mid-Wales, South-West and South-East regions.”*

3.50 Therefore, whilst TCBC is proceeding with its RLDP, collaborative working will continue to be undertaken with neighbouring authorities and within the broader region to prepare a joint evidence base which, wherever possible, can also be used for an SDP in due course.

- It is considered that emerging processes for the preparation of a South-East Wales SDP currently have no significant implications for the LDP itself. However, progress on the SDP and any subsequent implications for the RLDP will be reported in future AMRs.

3.51 **Cardiff Capital Region Energy Strategy, November 2021** - This regional energy strategy for the Cardiff Capital Region was commissioned by the Welsh Government and supported by the Welsh Government Energy Service. It has been developed by Cardiff Capital Region City Deal with additional support from regional stakeholders. The overall objective of the strategy is to develop a strategic pathway identifying key interventions to deliver on the region’s ambitions for decarbonising its energy system.

3.52 The vision for Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) is:  
*“To create the conditions for a transition to a carbon neutral economy and society in the CCR, using low carbon energy as an enabler of economic regeneration, growing our regional income whilst maintaining guardianship of our environment through a laser-focus on clean growth.”*

3.53 The priorities for achieving this vision are:

1. Energy efficiency and heat;
2. Electricity and flexibility;
3. Decarbonise transport;
4. Grow business and jobs; and
5. Coordination, planning, regional support and ownership of the plan.

3.54 A baseline energy assessment has been produced, which sets out the current energy use and generation in the region. To achieve the energy vision for Cardiff Capital Region: to meet Welsh Government targets, and to be on track for net zero by 2050, Cardiff Capital Region needs to reduce emissions from its energy system by 55% by 2035, split by sector as follows:

- 51% reduction in domestic heat and power emissions;
- 54% reduction in commercial and industrial emissions; and
- 60% reduction in road transport emissions.

3.55 An Energy Vision scenario has been modelled to set out a potential decarbonisation route that will put the region on track to achieve a net zero energy system by 2050 but assumes a significant shift away from business as usual by 2035. The assumptions of the modelled future vision include (not intended to be prescriptive):

Domestic:

- 154,000 homes improved from EPC band G, F and E to D, C and B;

- Over 140,000 heat pumps installed;
- 42,000 suitable houses accurately fitted with internal or external wall insulation;
- Over 185,000 other insulation measures in homes;
- 112,000 homes currently heated by fossil fuels to move to low carbon heating;
- Replacing heating systems in oil, LPG and solid fuel heated homes prioritised;
- No new gas connections for homes from 2025.

Commercial and industrial:

- A significant energy efficiency programme to reduce energy demand by 13%;
- A switch to alternative fuels, including hydrogen and electrification of heating;
- Decarbonising the electricity network through renewables and behind the meter renewable generation.

Road transport:

- 64% of vehicles driven in Cardiff Capital Region in 2035 are electric, equivalent to 15,000 more electric vehicles per year by the mid-2020s, peaking at 70,000 per year in the 2030s. This is to be facilitated by the deployment of 10,000 public and on-street EV chargers;
- 3,300 gas and hydrogen HGVs and 1,000 hydrogen vehicles;
- A 20% reduction in private vehicle mileage by 2035;
- A slowing of the growth in total number of vehicles on the road, facilitated by increased use of public transport and active travel.

Renewable electricity generation:

- 532MW of onshore wind installed (233MW of new capacity);
- 830 MW of solar PV installed (520 MW of new capacity of which 190 MW is roof-mounted and 325 MW from solar farms);
- Sufficient flexibility, including storage, and network infrastructure upgrades to enable low carbon generation and demand technologies to connect;
- The region to generate the equivalent of ~50% of its total energy consumption in 2035 from regional renewable sources.
- The Cardiff Capital Region Energy Strategy, priorities and vision, in relation to land use planning, will be considered in the RLDP.

**3.56 SWRAWP: Regional Technical Statement, 2<sup>nd</sup> Revision, September 2020 (RTS2)**

- To ensure the managed supply of land won aggregates (i.e. crushed rock and sand & gravel) through the planning system, the Council (as a Minerals Planning Authority - MPA) is required by Welsh Government 'Minerals' Technical Advice Note 1 (MTAN1), via the South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party (SWRAWP), to produce a Regional Technical Statement (RTS) on aggregates every 5 years; and for any recommendations therein to be considered in its Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). The latest SWRAWP Regional Technical Statement Second Review (RTS2), recommends that: -

- using a methodology based upon 'historical sales data / share of housing completions', Torfaen makes provision for 258,000 tonnes of 'crushed rock' aggregate p.a. in its LDP Review (i.e. 2018-2033) and 10 years thereafter; which equates to a total 25 year 'apportionment' of 6.441 million tonnes (these annual & 25-year tonnages were subsequently reduced, see paragraphs 3.31 & 3.57 for details). There is no requirement to make provision for 'land won sand and gravel', given there are enough supplies from dredging in the Severn Estuary / Bristol Channel;
- a 'Sub-Regional Statement of Collaboration' for the total aggregate requirement for the former 'Gwent' area (of Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen) be agreed in due course; and

- the LDP maximise the use of secondary ‘recycled’ aggregates; and safeguards primary aggregate resources, wharves and railheads.

3.57 The Welsh Minister endorsed RTS2 in March 2021; and following representation from Torfaen’s planning officers that there had been an arithmetical error in calculating Torfaen’s apportionment, issued a policy clarification letter rectifying this error on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 (see paragraph 3.31 above for details). As a result of this Ministerial clarification, Torfaen’s apportionment reduced by 2.7Mt to 3.75Mt over 25 years (i.e. 150,000 tonnes pa). Therefore, Torfaen Council endorsed RTS2 (as amended) on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021; and noted that a report on the ‘Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration’ will be presented to Council for consideration at a future date.

- In terms of this latest RTS2 apportionment (as amended) for Torfaen, Policy M3 of the Torfaen LDP already makes a 7.2Mt ‘Preferred Area’ aggregate allocation at Tir Pentwys, near Pontypool. Therefore, subject to an acceptable access being provided (a new northern access road to the B4248 has been proposed as part of an RLDP Candidate Site, which is currently being assessed), this LDP allocation more than meets the 3.75Mt RTS2 apportionment for Torfaen. Similarly, LDP Policy M1 on ‘Mineral Safeguarding’ already safeguards primary aggregate resources, and there are no wharfs or railheads in Torfaen to be safeguarded. Finally, this matter and a Sub-Regional Statement of Collaboration’ will be addressed in the preparation of the Torfaen RLDP in due course.

3.58 **Local Development Plan Reviews of Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)** - All of Torfaen’s neighbouring LPAs have an extant LDP. Furthermore, Blaenau Gwent (BGCBC), the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA), Caerphilly (CCBC), Monmouthshire (MCC), and Newport City (NCC) are all also currently reviewing their Local Development Plan as follows:-

- **Blaenau Gwent** commenced a review of their LDP in November 2016 and agreed their LDP ‘Review Report’ in September 2017; which concluded that a full revision be commenced. Their ‘revised Delivery Agreement’ for a 2018-2033 RLDP was agreed by Welsh Government in October 2020. Their ‘formal call for candidate sites’ took place between November 2018-January 2019; with a second call for sites from March-May 2021. Their ‘RLDP Preferred Strategy’ was published for consultation January-February 2020; and their ‘Deposit RLDP’ was expected to be published for consultation in June-November 2021, but is now overdue;
- The **Brecon Beacons National Park Authority** commenced a review of their LDP in December 2017 and agreed their LDP ‘Review Report’ in April 2018; which concluded that a full revision be commenced. Their ‘Delivery Agreement’ for a 2018-2033 (R)LDP2 was agreed by Welsh Government in September 2018 and revised in June 2020. Their ‘formal call for candidate sites’ ran from November 2018 and closed in January 2019. Their ‘(R)LDP2 Preferred Strategy’ was published for consultation July-August 2019; and their ‘Deposit RLDP’ was expected to be published for consultation in July-August 2021, but is now overdue;
- **Caerphilly** commenced a review of their LDP in early 2020 and agreed their LDP ‘Review Report’ in June 2021; which concluded that a full revision be commenced. Their ‘Delivery Agreement’ for a ‘2<sup>nd</sup> Replacement LDP - up to 2035 ’ was agreed by Welsh Government in June 2021. Their ‘formal call for candidate sites’ took place between July-August 2021, and their ‘RLDP Preferred Strategy’ was expected to be published for consultation in June / July 2022, but is now overdue;
- **Monmouthshire** agreed their LDP ‘Review Report’ in March 2018; which concluded that a full revision be commenced. Their ‘Delivery Agreement’ for a

2018-2033 RLDP was agreed by Welsh Government in May 2018, revised in March 2020 and again in October 2020. Their 'formal call for candidate sites' took place between July-November 2018; with a second call for sites from July-August 2021. Whilst consulting on an initial RLDP Preferred Strategy in early 2020, and then a second Preferred Strategy in July-August 2021; following comments from WG that their growth strategy was too high and not in conformity with 'Future Wales' and with the SAC phosphates issue potentially restricting development, are now expected to consider options on how to proceed in September 2022; and

- **Newport** commenced a review of their LDP in October 2020 and agreed their LDP 'Review Report' in May 2021; which concluded that a full revision be commenced. Their RLDP (2021-2036) 'Delivery Agreement' was agreed by Welsh Government May 2021. Their 'formal call for candidate sites' took place between June-August 2021; and, having consulted upon their 'RLDP - Draft Vision, Issues & Objectives' between January-March 2022, their 'RLDP Preferred Strategy' was expected to be published for consultation in August-October 2022, but is now overdue.
- Torfaen is committed to working collaboratively with its neighbouring authorities and a number of joint pieces of evidence have been produced, with further joint research currently underway. All neighbouring authorities attended the Torfaen pre-deposit participation workshops and regular officer meetings are held on the emerging RLDPs.

## Local Context - Policy & Evidence

- 3.59 **Housing Delivery in Torfaen** - The DPMv3 advises that, for adopted LDPs, the Average Annual Requirement methodology (AAR - i.e. the LDP housing requirement / plan period in years = 4,700 dwellings / 15.25 years = 308 dwellings per annum (dpa)) and Tables 19-21 and Diagram 16 be used within the AMR with the 'best information' in conjunction with the Housing Study Group to monitor the delivery of housing. Also, with regard these tables, once the plan end date has been reached, the Welsh Government have also advised that "*LPA's should just say they underbuilt by xx (that number is frozen) at plan end but include more up to date commentary for where they are now...*".
- 3.60 Therefore, the Torfaen LDP Policy S5, set a 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, **3,480 dwellings (74%)** had been built, some **1,220 dwellings (26%)** short of the target. In addition, Table 21 (page 26) and Diagram 16 (page 27) below (from DPMv3) show housing completions in Torfaen for the LDP plan period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2006 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, which were previously agreed by the Torfaen Housing Study Group.
- 3.61 In the following 2021-2022 monitoring period, an additional **316** dwellings were built; therefore, as of April 2022, **3,796 dwellings (81%)** had been built, some **904 dwellings (19%)** short of the LDP target; again these housing completions have been agreed by the Torfaen Housing Study Group.
- 3.62 **Affordable Housing Delivery in Torfaen** - Similarly, the Torfaen LDP (Policy H4) seeks to achieve approximately **1,132** affordable homes out of the 4,700 new dwellings expected to be built over the plan period to 2021. This equates to a **24.1%** provision of affordable housing or the delivery of 75 affordable homes per year. Therefore, as of April 2021, **1,143** affordable units have been delivered (**101%** of the LDP target); which also equates to **32.8%** of all completions. However, it should be noted that this delivery has only been achieved through the use of both S106

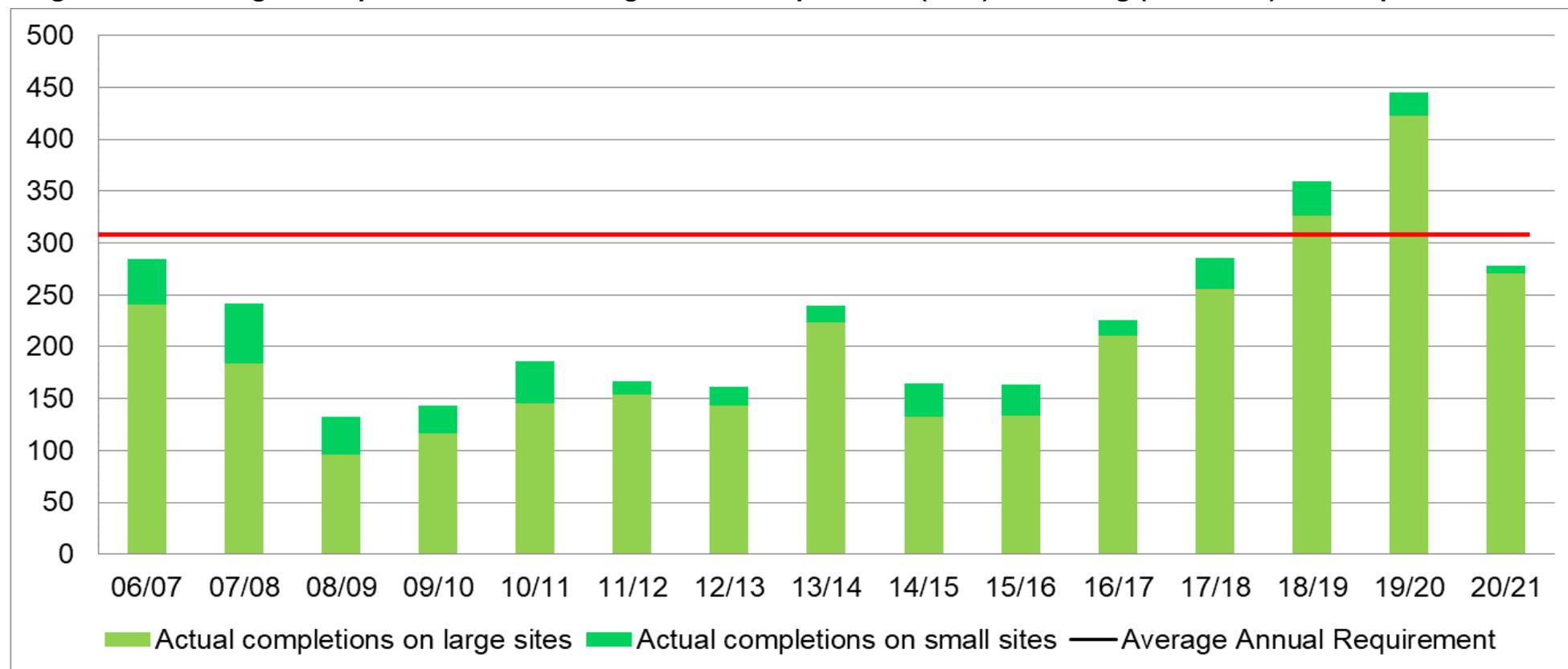
Obligations and WG Social Housing Grant; and that the total affordable housing need, was and still is, much higher than the above LDP target.

- 3.63 In the following 2021-2022 monitoring period, an additional **120** affordable dwellings were delivered; therefore, as of April 2022, **1,263** affordable units had been delivered (**112%** of the target); which also equates to **33.3%** of all completions.
- 3.64 **Housing Supply in Torfaen** - Going forward, DPMv3 Tables 19-20 have been combined into AMR Table 3.3 on page 28 below (which shows the timing and phasing of large housing sites (10 or more dwellings) with planning permission or LDP / RLDP housing allocations in Torfaen (2022-2027) @ 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022); and have been agreed by the Torfaen Housing Study Group. Table 3.3 also shows that over the next five years, it is forecast that an average of **376 dwellings per annum** (dpa) will be built in Torfaen. Indeed, this is above the Torfaen LDP Average Annual Requirement of **308 dpa**; and the proposed 320 dpa in the Torfaen RLDP: Preferred Strategy. Therefore, this demonstrates that housing supply will not run out in the County Borough before the new Torfaen RLDP is adopted.
- 3.65 **Torfaen Active Travel Network Map (ATNM)** - 'Active Travel' means walking and cycling for purposeful journeys to a destination, or in combination with public transport. This includes travel to work, school and other educational facilities, travel to shops, travel to leisure facilities, travel to bus and rail stations and so on. Active Travel is seen as an increasingly significant factor in providing an alternative transport solution for short journeys, reducing vehicle use, associated emissions, contributes to people's health and is a positive measure in responding to the Climate Emergency.
- 3.66 In March 2022, following public consultation, the Council submitted the Torfaen ATNM to the Welsh Government for agreement. The ATNM is a second-generation map that incorporates and replaces the routes included in the Torfaen Existing Route Map, 2016 (ERM - the number of which have risen from 23 to 64 routes) and the Torfaen Integrated Network Map, 2018 (INM - the number of which have risen from 37 to 173 routes). The ATNM sets out a 15-year plus programme of improvements to active travel routes and forms the basis of the future development of the active travel network in Torfaen. Only routes on the ATNM are eligible for consideration for future Welsh Government active travel funding; and it is expected to be updated within three years.
- The Torfaen ATNM and 'active travel', being a significant element of 'placemaking', will be considered in the determination of current planning applications and the Torfaen RLDP going forwards.

**Table 21: Calculating the Average Annual Requirement (AAR) for housing delivery in Torfaen @ 1st April 2021**

LDP Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
A Year	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
B Remaining years	15.25	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
C Total housing provision	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740	5,740
D Total LDP housing requirement	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700	4,700
E completions on large sites during year	<b>241</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>271</b>
F Actual recorded completions on small sites	<b>44</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>
G Anticipated completions on allocated sites during year	N/A														
H Anticipated land bank completions during year	N/A														
I Anticipated completions large windfall during year	N/A														
J Anticipated completions small windfall during year	N/A														
K Total completions (E+F+G+H+I+J)	285	242	133	143	186	167	161	240	165	164	226	286	359	445	278
L Average Annual Rate	<b>308</b>														
M Total projected cumulative completions	<b>285</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>803</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>1,156</b>	<b>1,317</b>	<b>1,557</b>	<b>1,722</b>	<b>1,886</b>	<b>2,112</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>2,757</b>	<b>3,202</b>	<b>3,480</b>
N Remaining housing completions (housing requirement minus completions by year)	<b>4,415</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>4,040</b>	<b>3,897</b>	<b>3,711</b>	<b>3,544</b>	<b>3,383</b>	<b>3,143</b>	<b>2,978</b>	<b>2,814</b>	<b>2,588</b>	<b>2,302</b>	<b>1,943</b>	<b>1,498</b>	<b>1,220</b>

**Diagram 16: Housing Development: Torfaen Average Annual Requirement (AAR) Monitoring (2006-2021) @ 1st April 2021**



**Table 3.3: The timing and phasing of housing sites with planning permission / LDP/RLDP housing allocations in Torfaen (2022-2027) @ 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022**

Site	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27
<b>Permitted Large Sites</b> (based upon DPMv3 Table 20)					
South Sebastopol - Wrens Nest / Uplands / Maesgwyn (Taylor Wimpey)	105	100	92	90	90
South Sebastopol - Village Core (Taylor Wimpey)	8	0	0	0	0
South Sebastopol - Village Core (Barratts)	40	37	0	0	0
Malthouse Lane, Llantarnam (Enzo Homes)	56	108	0	0	0
County Hall (Pobl)	0	23	60	60	0
Foundry Cottages, Griffithstown	30	0	0	0	0
Manor Way, Abersychan	10	0	0	0	0
Lower Shepherds Hill G&T Site, Pontypool (21)	0	0	10	0	0
Rifle Club Victoria St / Ventnor Rd, Cwmbran	13	0	0	0	0
Penywain Lane, Pontypool	0	33	0	0	0
Pearl House, Pontypool (16)	0	16	0	0	0
Pisgah Road, Talywain (23)	?	?	?	?	?
Former Pontypool Hospital (34)	?	?	?	?	?
<b>LDP Allocated Large Sites</b> (based upon DPMv3 Table 19)					
SAA2 - Canalside Cwmbran (150)	0	0	0	0	0
SAA4 - Mamhilad (JEUK land) (850) (resolved to approve subject to agreement of S106)	0	0	85	85	85
SAA4 - Mamhilad (PPE land) (425)	0	0	0	?	?
SAA7 - Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran (300)	0	0	0	0	0
H1/1 - Police HQ (77)	0	0	?	?	?
H1/2 - Police College Phase 3 (Barratts) (84?)	0	20	30	34	0
H1/4 - Ty'r-ywen Farm, Fairwater (25)	0	0	0	0	0
H2/2 - Animal Pound & Adj. Land, Wainfelin (70?)	0	0	?	?	?
H2/3 - Pontypool College (100-140)	0	0	0	40	40
H2/4 - Coal Yard, Station Road, Panteg (15)	?	?	?	?	?
H3/1 - Garn-yr-Erw Terrace, Blaenavon (26)	0	0	0	0	0
H3/2 - Blaenavon Health Centre (17)	0	?	?	?	?
H3/3 - St Peters School, Blaenavon (18)	0	?	?	?	?
H3/5 - Giles Road, Blaenavon (20?)	0	?	?	?	?
H3/6 - Old Co-op, High Street, Abersychan (24)	0	0	0	0	0
H7/1 - Rose Cottage G&T site, Pontypool (10)	0	10	0	0	0
<b>RLDP Allocated Strategic Sites</b> (based upon DPMv3 Table 19)					
Craig y Felin SAA, Cwmbran (300)	0	0	0	30	50
Llanfrechfa SAA, Cwmbran (1,200)	0	0	0	50	80
<b>Large Sites Sub-Total (A)</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>325</b>
<b>Large Windfall Sites Allowance from RLDP (B)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Small Windfall Sites Allowance from RLDP (C)</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>
	<b>22-23</b>	<b>23-24</b>	<b>24-25</b>	<b>25-26</b>	<b>26-27</b>
<b>TOTAL A+B+C</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>401</b>
<b>5-year average completions</b>	<b>376</b>				

**3.67 Torfaen's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme / other educational asset developments** - is progressing as follows: -

1. the proposal to change Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw in Pontypool from an 11-18 school to a 3-18 school was implemented in September 2022; with a new build primary provision opening on the site and the whole school being renamed Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw;
  2. a new and extended school on the current Maendy Primary School site in Cwmbran was granted planning permission in January 2022 and the construction contract was let in September 2022, with completion expected in 2024;
  3. there is a proposed 50-place extension at Crownbridge School, in Croesyceiliog, due to open in January 2024, currently at planning application stage (July 2022);
  4. significant refurbishments are proposed at Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran and Ysgol Bryn Onnen (in Varteg, Pontypool), the designs for which are currently underway, and completion is expected in 2024;
  5. negotiations continue with the applicant / landowner as regards to the allocated primary school to serve the Mamhilad SAA4 mixed use site which has a resolution to grant planning permission subject to the agreement of required S106 Planning obligations; and
  6. Coleg Gwent and two housing developers are working up proposals for the Pontypool College site (allocated for housing in the LDP - Policy H2/2); which remains partially open for the Construction Dept and the Torfaen Covid-19 Vaccination Centre (so delivery not expected to start for 3-5 years).
- In writing the LDP the Council was aware of its school proposals, even though they could not be fully integrated into the Plan; which is considered flexible enough to accommodate them without the need for a review. It is expected that, as provided for by the LDP, new primary school capacity to accommodate LDP housing sites, especially in Cwmbran South & East, can be provided through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme with appropriate S106 funding if necessary. A planning application for the redevelopment of Pontypool College, which is allocated for up to 140 dwellings, is expected to be submitted in due course. Therefore, it is considered that Torfaen's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme and other educational asset developments currently have no significant implications for the LDP.

## 4. Local Development Plan Strategy & Policy Monitoring

- 4.1 The 2022 AMR is the seventh monitoring report to be prepared following adoption of the Torfaen LDP in December 2013. The purpose of the monitoring process is to review whether the policies of the LDP are being implemented and the plan strategy being delivered.
- 4.2 The following overview of the LDP monitoring data provides an insight into the implementation of the LDP over the last 12 months (1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022). As this is the seventh AMR, we are able to draw comparisons of trends over time.
- 4.3 An overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 2022 AMR provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the LDP over the monitoring period. In addition, in combination with the 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021 AMRs, trends can be identified over the wider monitoring period. Table 4.5 of this AMR (pages 43-47) includes details of the 'required and key indicators' specified by Welsh Government in DPMv3. Similarly, Table 4.2 (pages 36-38) and Table 4.3 (pages 38-42) provide information on the delivery of LDP strategic sites and all other site allocations, respectively. Of note are the following monitoring results identified between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022:-

### Housing

- **316** dwellings were built in Torfaen; of which **196** were market (26 on small sites) and **120** were affordable (on six sites); with the former Llantarnam Comp (226 total dwellings) site being built out, and Phase 2 of the former Police College site (Phase 1-2 totals = 327 dwellings so far) also being completed; with a further 129 dwellings completed at South Sebastopol (thus 511 dwellings of 1,200 total so far);
- The Torfaen LDP Policy S5, sets a 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, **3,796** dwellings (81%) had been built (of which **2,533** were market dwellings and **1,263** were affordable dwellings). The remaining **904** dwellings (19%) are expected to be delivered within the next three years; [which should be seen as a success of the plan when considering the effects of two major periods of economic recession, Brexit and the pandemic on housing delivery during the 15-year plan period];
- Notwithstanding that, the plan has performed very well in terms of enabling the provision of affordable housing; with a further **120 affordable units** being delivered in the last year. To date against the LDP Policy H4 - 1,132 dwellings target; **1,263** dwellings or **112%** has now been delivered through both S106 Obligations and the use of WG Social Housing Grant; and it should be noted that the total affordable housing need, was and still is, much higher than the LDP target;
- **Going forward**, on permitted large sites currently under construction, South Sebastopol is expected to deliver the remaining 689 dwellings, and the final Phase 3 of Llantarnam SAA3 at Malthouse Lane (164 dwellings) should be delivered in the next few years. Also, subject to obtaining planning permission / S106, the allocated former County Hall (143 dwellings), former Pontypool College (100/140 dwellings), former Police College Phase 3 (84 dwellings) and Mamhilad SAA4 (850 dwellings) sites should deliver additional dwellings in due course; and
- Therefore, as regards the '**housing supply trajectory**' required by DPMv3, over the next five years, it is forecast that an average of **376 dpa** (dwellings per annum) will be built in Torfaen; which is well above the Torfaen LDP '**Average Annual Requirement**' (AAR) of **308 dpa**. [Therefore, this demonstrates that housing

supply will not run out in the County Borough before the new Torfaen RLDP is adopted; which is an important 'material consideration' in the determination of residential planning applications / appeals].

### Employment

- The new regional £32m **Gwent Police Headquarters** in Llantarnam Business Park (on LDP employment sites EET2/1&3 - 1.1ha) was completed in November 2021 and fully occupied by April 2022. It is used by 480 officers and staff and contains the 999/101 control room, major crime teams, training functions, support services and senior management;
- The final Phase 4 (2.6ha / 5,899m<sup>2</sup>) at **Usk Vale**, Mamhilad (LDP Policy EET2/6 - 6.7ha site) and the last 0.5ha on **Gilchrist Thomas** Industrial Estate (opposite Heritage Court) in Blaenavon (LDP Policy EET3/2 - 1.2ha site) were built out;
- The new '**Saunders Valve**' (Crane ChemPharma & Energy) 9,770m<sup>2</sup> factory, offices and a car park on the adjacent former Alfa Laval brownfield site in Cwmbran was permitted in April 2021; with construction starting in December 2021 and is expected to open in Autumn 2022. Therefore, despite candidate site proposals for alternative uses, the site was protected for employment uses by LDP Policy EET5 and has thus successfully retained 170 high quality manufacturing jobs in the Borough. The legacy factory / site is similarly protected by LDP Policy EET5;
- Therefore, **17.7ha (36%)** of the allocated **48.6ha** of LDP employment sites (excluding the two (35.0ha) regional employment sites added for flexibility) has now been delivered; and
- A further **8.7ha (18%)** of allocated employment sites are expected to be developed in the next few years; including 1.6ha (of the LDP Policy EET3/3, 6.0ha site) at **Kays & Kears** Industrial Estate in Blaenavon, which obtained planning permission in August 2022 for a 3,927m<sup>2</sup> mix of smaller B1, B2 and B8 employment units.

### Minerals

- In March 2021, the Welsh Minister endorsed the **SWRAWP Regional Technical Statement 2<sup>nd</sup> Review (RTS2)**; which now requires TCBC to make a crushed rock aggregate apportionment in its LDP/RLDP. Following consideration of an arithmetical error for Torfaen, the required tonnage was corrected in a Ministerial letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021, to 150,000 tonnes of aggregates p.a. over 25 years (3.75Mt in total); which is 2.7Mt less than the original RTS2 apportionment. Therefore, the Council endorsed RTS2 (as amended) on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021; and a 'Former Gwent Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration', (to show that each of the four constituent Mineral Planning Authorities can provide for its own apportionment in the first instance, or failing that, one of the other Councils has agreed to meet any shortfall) will be considered by Council in due course.

### Rail Infrastructure

- The allocated **Pontypool & New Inn Park and Ride scheme** (LDP Policy T1/2) was granted planning permission in May 2020; and commenced construction in March 2022. The scheme will be accessed from the A4042 trunk road and includes the provision of 133 parking spaces, inc. 11 with EV charging; accessible platform access (footbridge & lift); and improved station facilities, inc. cycle parking.

### Education Infrastructure

- The proposal to change Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw in Pontypool from an 11-18 school to a 3-18 school was implemented in September 2022; with a new build primary

provision opening on the site and the whole school being renamed **Ysgol Gymraeg Gwynllyw**; and

- A new and extended school on the current **Maendy Primary School** site in Cwmbran was granted planning permission in January 2022 and the construction contract was let in September 2022, with completion expected in 2024.

### Flooding

- **One development** has been approved (21/P/0370/FUL & 21/P/0900/FUL) in a C2 flood zone between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022; i.e. the northern 1/3 of the replacement Maendy Primary School, but not the main school building or access - a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was submitted and accepted by NRW. However, contractors are currently on site delivering the Blaen Bran Brook flood alleviation scheme which should remove the flood zone designation for that entire site.

### S106 Contributions, etc. from new development

- Under LDP Policy S8 on 'Planning Obligations', through S106 Obligations, etc. negotiated by planning officers, during the 2021-22 monitoring period, alongside provision of 120 affordable dwellings, financial contributions totalling **£273,500** were collected for the provision of community facilities: including for a subsidised bus service, school provision, footpath and canal improvements, open space, adult recreation, children's play, etc. as follows:-

Location	2021/22 S106 details		
	Infrastructure	Paid	Affordable Built
<b>New S106 Signed 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022</b>			
Land Off Albert Road, Talywain (outline - 23 residential)	Adult Recreation (tbc) Education (tbc) Onsite POS / Children's Play 5% Affordable	N/A	tbc
Land At Manor Way, Abersychan (10 dwellings)	£39,961 Affordable if not RSL Adult Recreation (£11,360) Children's Play (£5,080) Public Open Space (£2,240)	- CoD Occupation of 1 <sup>st</sup> dwelling	tbc
Victoria St / Ventnor Rd, Cwmbran (13 affordable - 100% RSL)	Adult Recreation (£14,781) Children's Play (£6,604) Public Open Space (£2,912)	CoD	N/A
Bottom Bridge Inn, Cwmbran (9 affordable - 100% RSL)	Less than 10 dwellings - so no infrastructure S106	N/A	N/A
Glanwern House, Heol Bryngwyn, Pontypool (10 affordable - 100% RSL)	Adult Recreation (£11,360) Children's Play (£5,080) Public Open Space (£2,240)	CoD CoD tba	N/A
<b>2021/22 Monitoring of pre April 2021 S106</b>			
New Road Farm, Blaenavon	Adult Recreation (£58,800) Children's Play (£24,400)	Due subject to viability review	25 delivered with SHG in 2020/21
South Sebastopol (currently 12% affordable via S106 - subject to review every 300 completions)	Bus Subsidy Contribution Pump House Contribution (there are many other onsite provisions / S106 sums already provided, collected or due)	<b>£59,921</b> <b>£25,000</b>	<b>12</b> (S106)
Llantarnam Neighbourhood Centre	N/A	N/A	<b>22</b> (100%)

Former Ruby's Bar & Grill, Cwmbran	No S106 as care facility	N/A	<b>19</b> (100%)
Llantarnam Road, Cwmbran	<i>£32,944 Adult Recreation £11,175 Children's Play £4,875 Ecology Onsite POS</i>	paid in 2019/20	<b>29</b> (100%)
Former Llantarnam Comp	<i>£256,736 Adult Recreation £602,358 playing field loss Onsite POS/Children's Play</i>	paid in 2018	<b>10</b> (S106)
Former Pontymoile School	Recreation & Public Open Space	<b>£100,673</b>	<i>39 delivered in 2020/21</i>
Aldi, Skew Fields	Footpath Contribution	<b>£26,029</b>	N/A
Caldicot Way, Cwmbran	Adult Rec & Children's Play	<b>£61,877</b>	<b>28</b> (100%)
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>£273,500</b>	<b>120</b>

#### Table Notes

Most £ sums are indicative until paid, as they are increased by the RPI (Retail Price Index) between the date of resolution to grant planning permission and the date of payment.

- CoD - Commencement of Development
- POS - Public Open Space.
- N/A - Not Applicable
- tba - to be agreed
- tbc - to be confirmed

### LDP Strategy Monitoring

- 4.4 The following 'traffic-light' system colour scheme is used to monitor actions in implementing the Torfaen LDP objectives: -

#### Figure 4.1: Torfaen LDP Objectives - Monitoring Actions

Continue Monitoring
Officer Training; Production of Supplementary Planning Guidance / Development Briefs; or Policy Research Required
Policy Review or Plan / Strategy Review Required

- 4.5 Table 4.1 below summarises the results of the monitoring with respect to each of the 18 LDP Objectives. The results of previous AMRs are also shown to indicate whether there has been a change in the situation from 2015 to 2022.

LDP Objectives		AMR						
		2022	2021	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
<b>1</b>	To ensure the provision of an appropriate quality & range of employment sites and retail opportunities to support high and stable levels of employment in Torfaen and deliver a competitive, modern and sustainable economy and thriving town centres							
<b>2</b>	To promote health and well-being through the provision of development including community facilities, leisure and outdoor recreational opportunities, accessible to all							
<b>3</b>	To ensure that the location of development does not result in unacceptable risk from flooding, subsidence or health hazards							

4	To ensure the highest quality of design in all developments and delivering safe, healthy and attractive environments	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Green	Amber
5	To provide opportunities for the establishment of a network of quality educational facilities which serve local communities and are accessible for all sections of the current and future population	Green						
6	To protect, manage and enhance sustainable tourist attractions and facilities in Torfaen for the benefit of tourists and the community	Green	Green	Green	Amber	Green	Green	Green
7	To conserve and enhance the distinctive cultural and historic resources of the County Borough	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Red	Amber
8 & 11	To ensure that all new development reflects best practise in sustainable design and location, construction and operation AND To minimise climate change impacts through reduced emissions of greenhouse gases in both new and existing development, and to adapt to climate change through considerations of its effects in the design and location of new development	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Amber
9	To allocate mineral sites if required and safeguard appropriate mineral resources from sterilization	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red
10	To protect, manage and enhance biodiversity and ecological networks across Torfaen	Green						
12	To protect and enhance the valued landscape character of Torfaen, including important open space and sense of rurality between settlements	Green						
13	To protect Greenfield land by enabling and promoting the most efficient use of appropriate brownfield sites for redevelopment across Torfaen	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Green
14	To ensure all development contributes to improving water quality, protecting water supply and maximising the efficiency of water consumption	Green						
15	To identify and conserve important soil and geological resources including Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) and maintain their quality	Green						
16	To ensure the allocation of an appropriate quantity and variety of housing sites to deliver high quality choice in sustainable locations, well served by essential facilities and accessible by a range of transport modes	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Amber
17	To develop integrated and efficient transport infrastructure, public transport and communication networks which are accessible and attractive to all, and encourage a reduction in private car use	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber	Green	Green
18	To ensure people and organisations reduce, reuse and recycle waste and to foster this through the provision of regional and local waste management facilities	Green						

4.6 From Table 4.1 above it can be seen that the 2021/22 monitoring indicates that for 11 of the 18 LDP Objectives, shown in green, the LDP policies are being implemented effectively and no further action is required.

4.7 However, for 7 LDP Objectives the LDP policies are not currently being achieved; with 4 objectives shown as ‘amber’ as follows: -

- **Objective 4 - Ensuring High Quality Design** - mainly through adoption of an annual programme of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) detailed in Appendix 2 of the LDP - whilst some SPG has been adopted or updated (Planning

Obligations, Parking Standards, Blaenavon WHS Design Guide, a range of Development Briefs, etc.), others remain to be produced (Shopfronts, Trees, Landmap, Biodiversity, Heritage, etc.) or adopted (House Extension & Alterations). In response, several of these new SPG (inc. 'Biodiversity' & 'Green Infrastructure') are now being prepared for Council consideration in the Spring 2023; and the 'House Extension & Alterations' SPG will be reported to Council for adoption in December 2022;

- **Objective 7 - Conserve/Enhance Cultural/Historic Resources** - mainly through production of Heritage SPG (including addressing a Local List of 'Buildings and Structures of Local Importance') and Conservation Area Appraisals / Reviews - whilst some done (Blaenavon, Cwmavon, Mon & Brecon Canal and Pontypool Conservation Areas) other are outstanding (Llantarnam & Upper Cwmbran Conservation Areas and Heritage SPG). In response, the Council is to develop a programme of conservation work;
- **Objective 13 - Protection of Greenfield Land** - mainly through an annual target of 60% of all developed land by ha being 'brownfield'; which was not the case in 2021/22. Noting that overall the Plan has delivered this target, and going forward the brownfield former Alfa Laval, Pontypool College, Mamhilad sites should improve on this annual target; and
- **Objective 17 - Develop Transport Infrastructure** - i.e. roads, public transport and active travel; so whilst much has been delivered (some Cwmbran Town Centre Improvements, North Torfaen Highway Schemes and many Active Travel Routes; and the Mon & Brecon Canal safeguarded), all the improvements to Cwmbran Town Centre, the Canalside Strategic Action Area, the Llanfrechfa Link Road and the Pontypool/New Inn Park & Ride (now under construction) have yet to be delivered.

4.8 Finally, the remaining 3 LDP Objectives, shown as 'red' cannot be addressed without a full review of the Plan. In summary these are: -

- **Objective 1 - Delivery of Employment Sites (Red)** - Delivery of allocated employment land is below the 48.6ha of LDP target; with 17.7ha (36%) having been built by 2022, and a further 8.7ha (18%) expected to be developed in the next few years. In addition, the majority of small, allocated employment sites in Cwmbran have all been sold or are under construction; and from evidence of Torfaen companies relocating, enquiries / demand and the Torfaen Employment Land Study (March 2020), all have shown there is a qualitative lack of serviced sites, especially for multiple large business requirements. The need for available and deliverable employment sites of all sizes to meet demand, the rolling forward of existing allocations, and the protection of existing employment land / premises will be key issues for the LDP Review.
- **Objective 9 - Provision of an Aggregate Landbank (Red)** - The SWRAWP Regional Technical Statement 2<sup>nd</sup> Review (RTS2), which was endorsed by the Welsh Minister in March 2021, subsequently amended by the Minister in November 2021 and endorsed by Torfaen Council in November 2021, now requires the Council to make an 'apportionment' of 150,000 tonnes of crushed rock aggregate per year in its LDP Review (2018-2033) and 10 years thereafter; which equates to a total of 3.75 Million tonnes of primary aggregate 'apportionment' over 25 years. However, a planning application for part (4.75 Million tonnes) of the 7.2 Million tonnes LDP aggregate allocation (Policy M3) at Tir Pentwys Quarry, near Pontypool, was previously refused by the Council and upheld at appeal by the Welsh Minister, mainly for an unsatisfactory access road. Therefore, Torfaen does

not have a permitted aggregate 'landbank' to satisfy this LDP monitoring objective. This requirement will now be addressed in the 'Former Gwent Statement of Sub-Regional Collaboration' and the Torfaen RLDP.

- **Objective 16 - Delivery of Housing Target (Red)** - After a slow start due to the great recession at the end of 2007 and delays in bringing strategic sites forward, the LDP started to enable the delivery of the required dwelling numbers in both 2018/19 & 2019/20, as several Strategic and large windfall sites came on stream. The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic temporarily took delivery down below the required level in 2020/21; and is now back above the required dwelling numbers in 2021/22. However, by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, of the Torfaen LDP Policy S5, 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the plan period, 3,796 dwellings (81%) had been built; some 904 dwellings short. Build rates should continue to deliver over the next few years, as building has commenced on several allocated strategic housing sites, including at South Sebastopol and the last phase at Llantarnam; planning permissions (subject to agreement of a S106) have been granted at County Hall and part of Mamhilad; and a planning application has been submitted for the last phase of the Former Police College and an application is expected shortly for Pontypool College. Therefore, it is expected that the residual LDP housing target will be met by the end of 2024; so in conclusion the greater majority of the LDP housing sites were deliverable, but over a longer time period than first envisaged. This situation is not likely to occur with the RLDP, because DPMv3 requires a 'housing trajectory' to be prepared alongside robust evidence of site deliverability and viability.

## LDP Policy Monitoring

- 4.9 Tables 4.2 and 4.3 below show a monitoring summary of the progress of every LDP Strategic Action Area and site allocation or proposal respectively, with any actions the Council proposes to take to aid in their implementation also listed.

Site		Progress	Actions
<b>SAA1</b>	Eastern Strip Central, Cwmbran	This brownfield strategic mixed-use site has already received planning permission; the Morrisons store and Torfaen Learning Zone are now built; the 5.6ha B2 Meritor factory has been reduced in size, retained & refurbished; and the residual 2.7ha B1 / Hotel site is now ready to be developed.	Continue ongoing discussions with landowners to bring forward the remaining elements of this regeneration scheme.
<b>SAA2</b>	Canalside, Cwmbran	This brownfield strategic mixed-use site is allocated in the LDP for 150 dwellings. No planning application has been submitted to date and therefore delivery is behind schedule	Work on going to look at opportunities by the Council's Planning Policy and Regeneration teams to bring this site forward for redevelopment in whole or in part
<b>SAA3</b>	Llantarnam, Cwmbran	Majority of site obtained outline planning permission (July 2015) for up to 450 dwellings, B1 employment uses and a neighbourhood centre. So far 124	Continue discussions with landowners to bring forward the remaining

		<p>dwelling have been built; and a further 164 dwellings were approved June 2021, which are now under construction. Therefore, a total of 288, rather than the 450 dwellings envisaged in the LDP are likely to be delivered on this site.</p> <p>Employment uses are not being progressed and residential Candidate Site submitted on the Cottage Farm element - rejected in dCSAR.</p>	<p>employment elements (8ha).</p>
<b>SAA4</b>	Mamhilad, Pontypool	<p>Outline Planning Application approved subject to agreement of S106 , in July 2020, for approx. 2/3 (brownfield element) of the site for a mixed-use development - including, housing, open space, a primary school and re-use of the Grade II* Listed Building.</p>	<p>Progress the completion of the associated S106 Agreement; and liaise with the remaining landowner to establish if the residual (greenfield) residential allocation will be pursued in due course. Due to passage of time application will also need to be reconsidered by Planning Committee.</p>
<b>SAA5</b>	The British, Talywain, Pontypool	<p>This brownfield land reclamation site, within the Pontypool Housing Sub-Market Area, is not likely to involve new built development within the Plan Period. The site has been bought by the Council and a Cleaning and Greening scheme for the reclamation and subsequent regeneration and redevelopment of this key site in North Torfaen is being progressed.</p>	<p>The Council to continue progressing proposals for the site</p>
<b>SAA6</b>	South Sebastopol, Cwmbran	<p>This large greenfield site obtained outline planning permission in 2014; with several reserved matters applications being approved since on a phased basis. Construction has commenced on site by three developers who have delivered 511 dwellings by April 2022 and are expected to deliver the remaining 689 units in due course.</p>	<p>Continue to facilitate delivery of this scheme through the Development Management process</p>
<b>SAA7</b>	Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran	<p>Planning permission was granted for the Grange University Hospital (GUH) element in 2014, which opened in November 2020.</p> <p>The remaining residential, transport &amp; employment elements are unlikely to be delivered in the form envisaged in the LDP; and are now being considered via a new larger mixed used allocation</p>	<p>Work commenced in relation to planning a future proposed development that is to be considered as part of a wider area in the RLDP.</p>

	proposed in the Torfaen RLDP Preferred Strategy.	
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<b>Table 4.3: LDP Site Allocations Monitoring - Summary</b>			
<b>Site</b>		<b>Progress</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>H1/1</b>	County Hall & Police HQ, Llanyravon - 220 dwellings	County Hall part of site permitted for 143 dwellings (with condition to enter into a S106). Site sold to developer by the Council.	Encourage signing of S106 and construction of County Hall site & submission of planning application for Police HQ site
<b>H1/2</b>	Former Police College & Adj. Land, St. Dials - 350 dwellings	Phases 1 & 2 completed (327 dwellings). Planning application for Phase 3 submitted for 84 dwellings in April 2022.	Determine planning application and encourage developer to implement if approved.
<b>H1/3</b>	Former Belle Vue Nursery, St. Dials - 16 dwellings	Site completed	
<b>H1/4</b>	Ty'r-ywen Farm, Fairwater - 25 dwellings	Planning application refused by Planning Committee Aug 2022 on several grounds; including that the site now falls contrary to national planning policy on placemaking and sustainability considerations.	No action necessary
<b>H2/1</b>	Former Trevethin School, Penygarn - 115 dwellings	Site completed	No action necessary
<b>H2/2</b>	Animal Pound & Adjacent Land, Wainfelin - 135 dwellings	Site stalled. Not being progressed	Site stalled. Encourage & support site planning application from landowners
<b>H2/3</b>	Pontypool College, Cwmyrnyscoy - 140 dwellings	Coleg Gwent and two housing developers are working up proposals for the site; which remains partially open for the Construction Dept and the Torfaen Covid-19 Vaccination Centre (so delivery not expected to start for 3-5 years).	Encourage and support landowner / developers to submit planning application in due course.
<b>H2/4</b>	Coal Yard, Station Road, Panteg - 15 dwellings	Site now in one land ownership and being considered by housing developer.	Encourage & support site landowner to submit planning application and bring the site forward.

<b>H3/1</b>	Garn-yr-Erw Terrace, Blaenavon - 26 dwellings	Site stalled and landowner unlikely to bring forward as unviable. Planning application disposed of.	No action necessary
<b>H3/2</b>	Blaenavon Health Centre, Blaenavon - 17 dwellings	Site was occupied for employment uses, following change of use permission in 2015, but now vacant. Residential RLDP Candidate Site submitted and being evaluated.	Encourage and support landowner / developer to submit residential planning application, subject to protection of employment premises LDP Policy EET5.
<b>H3/3</b>	St Peters School, Blaenavon - 18 dwellings	Site previously cleared	Encourage and support landowner to bring site forward
<b>H3/4</b>	Hillside School, Blaenavon - 64 dwellings	Site completed	No action required
<b>H3/5</b>	Land off Giles Road, Blaenavon - 25 dwellings	Site purchased by a housing developer	Encourage and support developer to bring site forward
<b>H3/6</b>	Old Co-op, 39-43 High Street, Abersychan - 24 dwellings	Site unlikely to be brought forward in the plan period	No action required
<b>H7/1</b>	Rose Cottage, Pontypool - 10 pitches	Currently stalled invalid planning application for site	Encourage & support progressing planning application and site delivery
<b>H7/2</b>	Former Race AFC Football Pitch, Pontypool - 32 G&T pitches	Granted full planning permission in January 2015 for 31 G&T pitches. 10 pitches completed.	Council to monitor demand and consider implementation of further phase(s)
<b>EET1/1</b>	Ty Coch Way, Two Locks	Site now built out - 1.4ha delivered	No action required
<b>EET1/2</b>	Llantarnam Park A	Site now built out - 0.7ha delivered for Gwent Police HQ	No action required
<b>EET1/3</b>	Llantarnam Park B	Site now built out - 0.4ha delivered for Gwent Police HQ	No action required
<b>EET1/4</b>	Llantarnam Park C	No planning application - Site recently sold and planning application expected in due course	Encourage and promote site development
<b>EET2/1</b>	Former Gas Works Site, New Inn	0.9ha granted permission as part of household waste recycling centre (now built) - 1.2ha remaining	Encourage and promote site development

<b>EET2/2</b>	Lower Mill Field (North), Pontymoile	No Planning permission - owner currently exploring options	Encourage and promote site development
<b>EET2/3</b>	Lower Mill Field (South), Pontymoile	No Planning permission - undeveloped	Encourage and promote site development
<b>EET2/4</b>	Land South of Travel Lodge, Pontymoile	No Planning permission - undeveloped	Encourage and promote site development
<b>EET2/5</b>	Mamhilad Business Park	No Planning permission - undeveloped, but interest from adjacent firms to expand here	Encourage and promote site development
<b>EET2/6</b>	Usk Vale, Mamhilad	Site now built out - 6.7ha delivered	No action required
<b>EET3/1</b>	Varteg Road, Garndiffaith, Pontypool	Site developed for car parking purposes	No action required
<b>EET3/2</b>	Gilchrist Thomas Ind. Est., Blaenavon	Site now built out - 1.2ha delivered	No action required
<b>EET3/3</b>	Kays and Kears, Blaenavon	Landowner has proposed RLDP employment Candidate site and 1.6ha has obtained planning permission (August 2022) for B1, B2 & B8 (3,927m <sup>2</sup> )	Encourage and promote site development - consider candidate site in RLDP
<b>EET4/1</b>	Craig Y Felin, Cwmbran	No planning permission and landowner not progressing 100% employment site, but submitted as a 100% residential candidate site (rejected in dCSAR) but allocated in RLDP: Preferred Strategy for mixed use scheme	Encourage and promote site development of this key LDP/RLDP strategic site
<b>EET4/2</b>	Former Ty Coch Tip, Cwmbran	14.0ha Site not suitable for employment - landowner has proposed RLDP Candidate Site for a 3MW solar farm (5.73ha) (now permitted October 2019) and a canal-based tourism facility.	None required - consider tourism candidate site in RLDP
<b>RLT2/1</b>	Cwmbran Town Centre (Eastern Side)	No Planning permission - taking account of current retail demand it is considered that this specific expansion area is no longer required.	No action required
<b>T1/1</b>	North Torfaen Highway Improvements	All the highway schemes completed by March 2022.	No action required

<b>T1/2</b>	Pontypool & New Inn Park and Ride	Planning permission granted in May 2020 for the construction of a car park, access slip roads from the A4042; a new passenger footbridge / lift and improved station facilities - commenced in March 2022	No action required
<b>T1/3</b>	Cwmbran Town Centre Improvements	Part completed through Morrison's / Arvin Meritor schemes under SAA1 Still requires public funding to complete	Continue seeking public funds; and relevant S106 / S278 schemes.
<b>T1/4</b>	Llanfrechfa Grange Link Road	The link road, residential & employment elements are unlikely to be delivered in the form envisaged in the LDP; and are now being considered via a new larger mixed-use allocation proposed in the Torfaen RLDP Preferred Strategy. Also within scope of the WG 'Roads Review'.	Integrate into proposals for the Llanfrechfa SAA in the Torfaen RLDP; and await outcome of WG 'Roads Review' expected "later in the autumn" 22
<b>T3/1</b>	NCN492 Varteg Road Bridge to Blaenavon Town Centre	Scheme implemented	No action required
<b>T3/2</b>	NCN492 to Abersychan Town Centre	Awaiting investigation Outline	Liaise with Highways with planning input if necessary
<b>T3/3</b>	Abersychan Town Centre to NCN492 at Merchant's Hill, Pontypool	Scheme implemented	No action required
<b>T3/4</b>	Pontypool & New Inn Train Station to Pontypool Town Centre.	Awaiting investigation Outline	Liaise with Highways with planning input if necessary
<b>T3/5</b>	Pontypool & New Inn Train Station to Mamhilad	It has recently been decided by WG and SWTRA to include this scheme within the A4042 Corridor WeITAG study	Liaise with Highways with planning input if necessary
<b>T3/6</b>	Usk (Monmouthshire) to Coed-y-Gric Road, Griffithstown	Parts of the current and future Active Travel Network may provide partial links. An Active Travel route on Usk Road between the Horse & Jockey roundabout and	Liaise with Highways with planning input if necessary

		the canal towpath has been designed. The canal towpath does have an existing access at Coed-y-Gric, but not to Active Travel standards.	
<b>M3</b>	Tir Pentwys Preferred Area for Aggregates	Planning application refused by TCBC and appeal refused by Welsh Minister for proposed access. Site re-submitted as a RLDP Candidate Site by landowner with a proposed new northern access - currently being assessed.	Liaise with landowner to establish if a new planning application will be submitted, subject to assessment of proposed new northern access.
<b>CF1</b>	Blaenavon Primary Care Resource Centre	Scheme Completed	None required
<b>CF2</b>	Panteg Primary School	School opened February 2017	None required
<b>CF6</b>	Playing Field - Eastern Fields, Cwmyrnyscoy	Uneconomic to develop new playing field due to excessively high remediation costs (£753,600 + land costs). However, Council is now looking to identify another playing field site in the locality	Council to continue pursuing other playing field sites in the locality

4.10 Table 4.4 below details LDP policies where there are issues with their effectiveness either in part or as a whole. All other LDP policies are considered to be performing effectively. Table 4.4 also details the actions the Council will undertake to remedy these LDP performance issues.

<b>Table 4.4: LDP Policy Effectiveness Monitoring - Summary</b>			
<b>Policy</b>		<b>Issue</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>S1</b>	Urban Boundaries	The British SAA5 - Regeneration area is included within the Urban Boundary. Concern that the inclusion of the wider site in the urban area is encouraging potential sporadic, piecemeal development in this area, not part of a comprehensive regeneration scheme.  Similarly, the urban boundary around Varteg allowed the implementation of a residential scheme allowed at appeal. This permission has now lapsed, and the settlement is now not	Review of urban boundaries to be considered in RLDP; Future Wales and PPW 11 should be considered in relation to the determination of planning applications.

		considered sustainable in relation to Future Wales Policy 2 and guidance in PPW11.	
<b>S5</b>	Housing	By 31 March 2022, 3,796 dwellings have been completed which is below the LDP target of delivery of 4,700 dwellings by 2021.	Plan assessed as requiring review. Implement actions from Tables 4.2 & 4.3 above
<b>S6</b>	Employment and Economy	Behind on delivery of employment land on allocated LDP Sites. However, an identified lack of readily available sites for new development. New employment opportunities required to meet demand	Whilst the allocated sites have yet to be developed there is an identified lack of available sites for new development. The protection of existing employment sites and the need for the identification of new employment opportunities should be a priority
<b>HE1</b>	Buildings and Structures of Local Importance	Policy not effectively being used; as the Heritage SPG / 'Local List' and associated Article 4 Direction (to remove demolition Permitted Development rights) has not yet been prepared / made	Council to develop programme of Conservation work including Heritage SPG, 'Local List' and associated Article 4 Direction

## Legislative and Key Indicators

- 4.11 DPMv3, March 2020 (Table 29, page 185) requires that all monitoring frameworks include a range of 'Legislative and Key indicators'; Table 4.5 below reports on the results for these indicators. Neither the LDP Regulations nor DPMv3 set out a requirement to analyse the information set out in respect of the mandatory indicators. Albeit many of these indicators are included in the LDP Monitoring Framework and are thus subject to analysis and consideration as part of the monitoring process.

<b>Table 4.5: Legislative and Key Indicators</b>	
<b>Indicators Required by Legislation</b>	
Number of net additional affordable and market dwellings built in the LPA area.	Over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, <b>3,480</b> (net) dwellings were built in Torfaen, of which <b>2,337</b> were market and <b>1,143</b> were affordable. In 2021-2022, <b>316</b> (net) dwellings were built in Torfaen; of which <b>196</b> were market and <b>120</b> were affordable.
<b>Key Indicators Applicable to all Plans</b>	
Spatial distribution of housing development	<b>Policy S5</b> of the Torfaen LDP set a 4,700 dwelling housing target, split between three Housing Sub-Market Areas as follows (with actual delivery between 2006-2022 shown in {}): - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>North Torfaen</b> (Blaenavon and North Pontypool) = <b>550</b> dwellings target {<b>500</b> dwellings delivered - <b>91%</b>};</li> <li>▪ <b>Pontypool</b> (mid and south) = <b>1,875</b> dwellings target {<b>1,143</b> dwellings delivered - <b>61%</b>}; and</li> <li>▪ <b>Cwmbran</b> (south &amp; east and north &amp; west combined) = <b>2,275</b> dwellings target {<b>2,154</b> dwellings delivered - <b>95%</b>}.</li> </ul>
The <u>annual</u> level of housing completions	The AAR for the Torfaen LDP is (4,700 dwellings target / 15.25 years plan period) <b>308</b> dwellings pa

<p>monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In 2021/22, <b>316</b> dwellings were built = +8 dwellings / +2.6% against the AAR</li> </ul> <p>The LDP <b>Policy S5</b> envisaged the delivery of the 4,700 dwelling (2006-2021). However, housing targets for large windfall and small windfall sites were not set until the Deposit LDP using April 2010 as the start date; as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small Windfall Sites (2010 to 2021 = <b>300</b> dwellings target); and <b>404</b> such dwellings were delivered over this period = +104 dwelling / +35%; and</li> <li>▪ Large Windfall Sites (2010 to 2021 = <b>289</b> dwellings target); and 1,054 such dwellings were delivered over this period = +765 dwelling / +265%.</li> </ul>
<p>Total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative average annual housing requirement.</p>	<p>The Torfaen LDP <b>Policy S5</b>, set a 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, <b>3,480</b> dwellings (74%) had been built, some <b>1,220</b> dwellings (26%) short of the target.</p> <p>In addition, by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, <b>3,796</b> dwellings (81%) had been built, still some <b>904</b> dwellings (19%) short of the target.</p>
<p>The level of affordable housing completions monitored against the plan's overarching target.</p> <p>The tenure of affordable housing completions.</p>	<p>The Torfaen LDP <b>Policy H4</b>, set a <b>1,132</b> dwellings (<b>24.1%</b> of all completions) affordable housing target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, through the use of both S106 Obligations and WG Social Housing Grant, some <b>1,143</b> affordable dwellings had been built; which equates to <b>32.8%</b> of all completions.</p> <p>In addition, by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, a total of <b>1,263</b> affordable dwellings had been built; which equates to <b>33.3%</b> of all completions.</p> <p>DPMv3 states “A separate indicator should monitor the tenure split (social rented and intermediate) in line with need identified in the LHMA” - Unfortunately, given that this indicator was only introduced in March 2020, no data has been collected on the tenure split of affordable housing provided over the plan period 2006-2021.</p>
<p>Employment land take-up against allocations.</p> <p>Job growth.</p>	<p>Allocated LDP employment sites have been taken up as follows: -</p> <p><b>EET1/1</b> - Ty Coch Way, Two Locks: Site now built out - 1.4ha delivered;</p> <p><b>EET1/2</b> - Llantarnam Park A: Site now built out for new Gwent Police HQ - 0.7ha delivered;</p> <p><b>EET1/3</b> - Llantarnam Park B: Site now built out for new Gwent Police HQ - 0.4ha delivered;</p> <p><b>EET1/4</b> - Llantarnam Park C (1.4ha): Site being sold for employment uses and planning application expected shortly;</p> <p><b>EET2/1</b> Former Gas Works Site, New Inn: 0.9ha used for household waste recycling centre - 1.2ha remaining;</p> <p><b>EET2/2</b> - Lower Mill Field (North), Pontymoile (1.2ha): No Planning permission - undeveloped;</p> <p><b>EET2/3</b> - Lower Mill Field (South), Pontymoile (0.5ha): No Planning permission - undeveloped;</p> <p><b>EET2/4</b> - Land South of Travel Lodge, Pontymoile (2.1ha): No Planning permission - undeveloped;</p> <p><b>EET2/5</b> - Mamhilad Business Park (3.0ha): Undeveloped, but interest from adjacent firms to expand here, with planning applications expected shortly;</p> <p><b>EET2/6</b> - Usk Vale, Mamhilad (6.7ha): Site now built out;</p> <p><b>EET3/1</b> - Varteg Road, Garndiffaith, Pontypool (0.8ha): Site developed for alternative car parking purposes;</p> <p><b>EET3/2</b> - Gilchrist Thomas Ind. Est., Blaenavon:(1.2ha): Site now built out;</p> <p><b>EET3/3</b> - Kays and Kears, Blaenavon (6.0ha): Land sold by WG. Landowner has proposed RLDP employment Candidate Site and 1.6ha</p>

has obtained planning permission (August 2022) for B1,B2 and B8 (3,927sqm), 4.4ha remaining;

**EET4/1** - Craig Y Felin, Cwmbran (21.0ha): No planning permission and landowner not progressing 100% employment site, but submitted as a 100% residential candidate site (rejected in dCSAR) but allocated in RLDP: Preferred Strategy for mixed use scheme; and

**EET4/2** - Former Ty Coch Tip, Cwmbran (14.0): Site not suitable for employment - landowner has proposed RLDP Candidate Site for a 3MW solar farm (5.73ha) (permitted October 2019) and a canal-based tourism facility.

**SAA1**: Eastern Strip Central, Cwmbran - (2.7ha B1/hotel & 5.6ha B2) - 5.6ha B2 site retained as a refurbished Meritor factory; only 2.7ha B1/hotel site remains and is being marketed as such.

**SAA3**: Llantarnam, Cwmbran - (8.0ha B1) no progress; and residential candidate site submitted on Cottage Farm land under the RLDP, but rejected in dCSAR.

**SAA7**: Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran - (8.4ha total, 4.8ha in plan period) - no progress, employment land now being considered under the new RLDP Llanfrechfa SAA, through the Council's 'medi-park' proposals on alternative land to the south of the new hospital; as well as further hospital developments.

In summary, based upon the above information, Table 4.6 below (based upon LDP 'Appendix 7: Employment Allocations Table') shows that **17.7ha** of the required **48.6ha (36%)** (21% including regional sites, which were added for flexibility) of the LDP employment allocations have been delivered, and a further **8.7ha (18%)** is expected to be developed in the next few years.

**Table 4.6: Employment land take-up against allocations - 31 March 2022**

Employment Allocations	Allocated (ha)	Delivered (ha)	U/C	Anticipated (1-3 years)
Cwmbran	25.0ha	8.1ha (32%)	0ha	4.1ha (16%)
Pontypool	15.6ha	7.6ha (49%)	0ha	3.0ha (19%)
North Torfaen	8.0ha	2.0ha (25%)	0ha	1.6ha (20%)
<b>LDP Sub Total</b>	<b>48.6ha</b>	<b>17.7 ha (36%)</b>	<b>0ha</b>	<b>8.7ha (18%)</b>
Regional	35.0ha	0ha (0%)	0ha	0ha
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83.6ha</b>	<b>17.7ha (21%)</b>	<b>0ha</b>	<b>8.7ha (10%)</b>

*"Indicators monitoring Class B job growth in line with the strategy"* - Again, given that this indicator was only introduced in March 2020, no jobs growth target was set in the adopted LDP (December 2013); and thus, cannot be monitored.

Delivery of affordable housing policy - thresholds and percentage targets for each sub-market area.

*"To monitor the delivery of affordable housing in line with policy targets and thresholds in each sub-market area (where relevant) including any deviation above or below the target."* - Again, given that this indicator was only introduced in March 2020, whilst a site size threshold and affordable housing % target was set in LDP **Policy H4** for each housing sub-market area, it was never monitored.

Viability

**House Prices** - In the one year AMR monitoring period between April 2021 and March 2022, the Land Registry [House Price Index](#) (HPI) for the resale of existing properties, shows that the average second-hand house price in Torfaen has risen from £160,559 to £185,486; a rise of £24,927 (15.5%). For new build properties, the HPI data shows that the average new house price in Torfaen, over the same period, has risen from £308,958 to £392,375; a rise of £83,417 (27.0%).

	<p><b>Land Values</b> - very little comparable data exists for land sales, so this factor has not been monitored to establish trends.</p> <p><b>Build Costs</b> - The average build cost for a 'general estate dwelling' (using the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) median average tender price adjusted for Torfaen) on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 was £1,113m<sup>2</sup> (gross internal floor area) (using the BCIS locational indices of 91%); compared to £1,168m<sup>2</sup> on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 (using the BCIS locational indices of 90%). This equates to a rise in build costs of £55m<sup>2</sup> (5%) over the 2021-22 AMR monitoring period.</p>
<p>The rate of development on key allocations (completions linked to phasing trajectories and infrastructure schemes, where appropriate).</p>	<p>Firstly, given that such requirements were not introduced until the publication of the DPMv3 in March 2020, the rate of development of the following strategic sites cannot be considered against the anticipated trajectory, placemaking principles and delivery appendix; as these were not set in the LDP.</p> <p>However, key development (strategic) sites in the plan have been monitored in the detailed Table 4.2, and in summary: -</p> <p><b>SAA1:</b> Eastern Strip Central, Cwmbran - This brownfield mixed use site has already received planning permission; the Morrisons store and Torfaen Learning Zone are now built; the Meritor factory has been reduced in size, retained &amp; refurbished; and the residual 2.7ha B1 / Hotel site is now ready to be developed.</p> <p><b>SAA2:</b> Canalside, Cwmbran - No planning application has been submitted for this brownfield mixed-use site in its current form due to viability issues; and therefore, delivery is behind schedule.</p> <p><b>SAA3:</b> Llantarnam, Cwmbran - This greenfield mixed-use site has obtained planning permission (July 2015). So far 124 dwellings have been built; the remaining 164 dwellings have commenced construction; and the neighbourhood centre is expected to be sold / built soon. So, a total of 288 rather than the 450 dwellings envisaged in the LDP are likely to be delivered on this site. The employment sites have stalled, and a developer is seeking an alternative residential use through the RLDP candidates site process, which has been rejected by Council in the 'draft Candidate Sites Assessment Reports'.</p> <p><b>SAA4:</b> Mamhilad, Pontypool - Outline planning application approved (subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement, which remains pending), in July 2020, for approx. 2/3 of site for a mixed-use development - including, housing, a primary school and re-use of the large Grade II* Listed Building; which are expected to be progressed in due course. Remaining 1/3 residential site unlikely to be progressed by the landowner.</p> <p><b>SAA5:</b> The British, Talywain, Pontypool - This brownfield land reclamation site, is now not likely to involve new build residential development, as originally envisaged. The site has been bought by the Council and a 'Cleaning and Greening' scheme for the reclamation and subsequent regeneration is being progressed.</p> <p><b>SAA6:</b> South Sebastopol, Cwmbran - This large greenfield site obtained outline planning permission in 2014; Construction has commenced on site by three developers who have delivered 511 dwellings so far and are expected to deliver the remaining 689 units in due course.</p> <p><b>SAA7:</b> Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran - This brownfield mixed use site has received planning permission for only the Grange University Hospital element (2014) which opened in November 2020. The remaining residential &amp; employment elements are unlikely to be delivered in the form envisaged in the LDP; and are now being considered via a new</p>

	larger mixed used allocation proposed in the Torfaen RLDP Preferred Strategy.
The delivery of key infrastructure that underpins the plan strategy.	<p>Progress on delivering key road, rail, active travel, education and health infrastructure, on which the plan strategy is dependent, is as follows: -</p> <p><b>Road Infrastructure:</b> -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy T1/1:</b> North Torfaen Highway Improvements - All the highway schemes were completed by March 2022.</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy T1/3:</b> Cwmbran Town Centre Improvements - Part completed through Morrison's / Arvin Meritor schemes under SAA1. Still requires public funding to complete.</li> <li>▪ <b>Policy T1/4:</b> Llanfrechfa Grange Link Road - Currently part of the allocated SAA7 site at Llanfrechfa Grange under the LDP. No progress, and now linked to proposals for a larger Llanfrechfa SAA under the Torfaen RLDP: Preferred Strategy; and also subject to the WG 'Roads Review', expected to report late Autumn 2022.</li> </ul> <p><b>Rail Infrastructure</b> - Allocated under <b>Policy T1/2</b>, the £7.1m Pontypool &amp; New Inn Park and Ride 'South Wales Metro' scheme (which includes the construction of a new 160 space car park (with EV charging), a new slip roads access from the A4042T, a new passenger footbridge / lift, and improved station facilities) commenced construction in March 2022.</p> <p><b>Active Travel Infrastructure</b> - The greater majority of active travel routes allocated in the LDP (see <b>Policy T3</b> in Table 4.3) have been delivered and continue to be delivered as funds become available.</p> <p><b>Education Infrastructure</b> - Under the WG / Council's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools Programme, in addition to the opening of several new or refurbished primary schools since 2006, a replacement Croesyceiliog Comprehensive School was opened in January 2020, and the new Coleg Gwent Post-16 Torfaen Learning Zone opened in January / April 2021; with further primary school re/developments planned going forward.</p> <p><b>Health Infrastructure</b> - the regional 471 bed Grange University Hospital element of <b>Policy SAA7</b>, opened in November 2020.</p>
The completion of Gypsy and Traveller sites to meet identified need.	<p>The Torfaen Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA, February 2016) identified a need for 6 additional pitches between 2016 - 2021, therefore, 10 new pitches were built on the Council's Lower Shepherd Hill, Pontypool site in March 2016. A new Torfaen 2020 GTAA has been prepared and submitted to the Welsh Ministers for approval.</p> <p>The Torfaen LDP allocated two Gypsy and Traveller Sites under <b>Policy H7:</b> -</p> <p>The Council's Lower Shepherds Hill site, which was granted planning permission for 31 pitches in January 2015 - Phase 1 of which delivered 10 pitches in 2016, with the further two phases of 10 and 11 pitches to be delivered over time, subject to the monitoring of demand; and</p> <p>A private Rose Cottage site in Pontypool for 10 pitches, where an invalid planning application submitted in 2013 remains stalled - Council officers are currently liaising with the landowner to encourage and support progressing the planning application and site delivery.</p>
The scale / type of highly vulnerable development permitted within C2 flood risk areas.	<p>One development has been approved (21/P/0370/FUL &amp; 21/P/0900/FUL) in a C2 flood zone between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022; i.e. the northern 1/3 of the replacement Maendy Primary School, but not the main school building or access - a Flood Consequences Assessment (FCA) and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) was submitted and accepted by NRW.</p>

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions

5.1 This 2022 AMR is the seventh monitoring report prepared since the adoption of the Torfaen LDP in December 2013. The findings of the AMR provide an important opportunity for the Council to assess the effectiveness of the Plan. DPMv3 (Table 31, page 190) now sets out the following five key questions to be considered in the AMR in relation to the delivery of the LDP Strategy (with Question 4 being added in 2020):-

#### 1. What new issues have occurred in the plan area, or changes to local / national policy?

5.2 The AMR needs to consider whether any significant changes in local circumstances or to national legislation, regulations and policy planning have any significant implications for the LDP.

5.3 Nationally, the impacts of Brexit; the new UK funds to replace EU Structural Funds; the Covid-19 pandemic; climate / weather changes; increasing inflation, mortgage rates & energy costs and the resulting 'cost of living crisis; and the expected recession, on jobs and the economy, housebuilding levels, affordable housing need, town centres, people's physical & mental well-being, etc. all will have an effect on Torfaen. The LDP and future RLDP will have a part to play in preventing / mitigating their effects, with policies addressing, job retention / creation, market / affordable housing, diversifying town centres, placemaking & GI, active travel, climate change, ecological resilience, etc. all being paramount.

5.4 WG published and then suspended the introduction of a new TAN15: 'Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion' (until 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023) to allow LPAs to fully consider the impacts of the new TAN15; produce a 'Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment' for their area (completed in June 2022); refine the new 'Flood Map for Planning' (FMfP) - which replaced the 'Development Advice Map' (DAM), etc.

5.5 In addition, WG have paused many of their road projects across Wales to carry out a review of their support for increasing road capacity; and have appointed an 'independent panel' to carry out the review of 55 such schemes; including the 'A4042 Southern Corridor, Pontypool to M4' and the 'Llanfrechfa 'Relief Road' within Torfaen. The Panel submitted their findings to the Minister in September 2022, who is expected to make a decision on them by the end of 2022; which will inform the Torfaen RLDP going forward.

5.6 Regionally, there is now a statutory duty to prepare a 'South-East Wales Strategic Development Plan' (SDP) through a Corporate Joint Committee (CJC); which also has economic development powers and will also produce a Regional Transport Plan. Therefore, whilst this Council is proceeding with its RLDP, collaborative working will continue to be undertaken with neighbouring authorities to prepare a joint evidence base which, wherever possible, can also be used for the SDP.

5.7 Locally, within Torfaen, the Council has endorsed the SWRAWP Regional Technical Statement 2<sup>nd</sup> Review (RTS2); which now requires TCBC to make a crushed rock aggregate apportionment of 150,000 tonnes of aggregates p.a. over 25 years (3.75Mt in total). To this end, it is noted that the Torfaen LDP already makes a 7.2Mt 'Preferred Area' aggregate allocation at Tir Pentwys, near Pontypool (albeit a satisfactory road access has yet to be established).

- 5.8 Finally, using the WG methodology for monitoring housing delivery, the 2022 AMR has also concluded that housing supply is in line with the required annual growth levels in the LDP; and will not run out in the County Borough before the new Torfaen RLDP is adopted.
- 5.9 These contextual matters will be taken into account in the production of the replacement Torfaen LDP as none require alteration to the existing plan.

## **2. How relevant, appropriate and up to date is the LDP Strategy and its key policies and targets?**

- 5.10 It is considered that the evidence collected from this seventh AMR following adoption of the LDP in 2013 indicates that the strategy, whilst still sound, is taking longer to deliver than anticipated, both in relation to housing and employment development. This can be attributed to the impacts of the 'great recession'; the uncertainties around Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic in recent years; and the delays in bringing forward key strategic sites. Whilst a number of these sites are now starting to deliver housing numbers, supplemented by some acceptable windfall sites, the numbers being delivered are still below the projected plan targets. It is considered the plan is moving in the right direction in terms of the achievement of its objectives. Viability continues to be an issue in overall house building; and this has an adverse impact on the levels of affordable housing that can be delivered through the planning system.
- 5.11 The development strategy remains fundamentally sound however due to slow progress there is considered a need for intervention at this stage in the form of a review of the Plan; which is now underway.

## **3. What sites have been developed or delayed in relation to the plan's expectations at both places and in the phasing programme (as set out in the trajectory)?**

- 5.12 Tables 4.2 (pages 36-38) & 4.3 (pages 38-42) of this AMR provide a detailed analysis of the delivery of each individual LDP site allocation; and where this is behind schedule a statement to facilitate delivery.
- 5.13 The monitoring results indicate generally that the plan policies are performing effectively and the LDP Objectives are generally being met. Housebuilding has commenced on several allocated strategic housing sites, including at South Sebastopol (SAA6) and the last phase at Llantarnam (SAA3). However, despite planning approvals for the County Hall site (H1/1) and part of the Mamhilad site (SAA4) neither associated S106 obligations agreement has been signed in order for the sites to commence. Similarly, significant delays in bringing forward the remaining strategic sites at Canalside (SAA2), the remainder of Mamhilad (SAA4), Llanfrechfa Grange (SAA7) and the Animal Pound & Adjacent Land, Wainfelin (H2/2) has meant the plan has not delivered the housing envisaged in the plan period. However, a planning application has been submitted for the last phase at the Former Police College site (H1/2); and a planning application for Pontypool College (H2/3) is expected in due course.
- 5.14 Therefore, the LDP allocations are being delivered, albeit generally over a longer than anticipated timescale and are contributing towards the delivery of the LDP Strategy.

## **4. What is the degree of variance from the anticipated annual and cumulative build rate? Is there a two-year trend of under delivery?**

- 5.15 The annual house building rate increased in 2019/20 (445 dwellings) to above the 308 dwellings Average Annual Requirement (AAR) in the LDP; but temporarily decreased below the AAR in 2020/21 (278 dwellings) and is now back above the AAR in 2021/22 (316 dwellings). This temporary reduction in the build rate level in 2020/21 was as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic (from March 2020) which led to the closure of residential site sales offices and construction sites due to national, regional and local lockdown requirements throughout the UK. Indeed, going forward, the Torfaen Housing Study Group have forecast an average build rate of 376 dpa over the next five-years; which is well above the 308 AAR of the Torfaen LDP.
- 5.16 As regards the cumulative build rate, the Torfaen LDP, set a 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, 3,480 dwellings had been built, some 1,220 dwellings short of the target. However, by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022, 3,796 dwellings had been built, still some 904 dwellings short of the LDP target; which is expected to be delivered within the next three-years.
- 5.17 The Council is preparing a Replacement LDP which will need to consider this issue, amongst others, and be reflected in the housing trajectory for the RLDP.

#### **5. What has been the effectiveness of delivering policies and in discouraging inappropriate development?**

- 5.18 It is clear that parts of the plan, namely housing delivery and employment delivery is slower than anticipated. Delays to the bringing forward of the strategic sites, the downturn of the economy on two occasions and the pandemic has resulted in slower delivery of housing. However, the affordable housing target has been met; and the overall LDP housing target is expected to be met within 3 years. Similarly, 36% of the employment target has been built, and another 18% is expected to be delivered within the next few years.
- 5.19 The LDP has so far proved effective in discouraging inappropriate development with only one major allocated minerals application (at Tir Pentwys - LDP Policy M3) requiring to be refused and being subject to a dismissed appeal for an unsatisfactory access road, but not the principle of the allocated extraction site under the LDP Policy. Similarly, the new 'Saunders Valve' (Crane) factory on the adjacent former Alfa Laval brownfield site in Cwmbran shows that, despite candidate site / planning proposal for alternative uses, the site was protected for employment uses by LDP Policy EET5 and has thus successfully retained high quality jobs in the County Borough.
- 5.20 **Recommendation of the 2022 Annual Monitoring Report**

**As a result of the above, the LDP Annual Monitoring Report 2022 concludes that: -**

**Notwithstanding the statutory duty to review the Torfaen LDP 4 years after adoption (in December 2017), there is evidence to indicate the need for a review of the plan at this time because progress in delivery of the strategy is slower than expected primarily due to the global recession and its impact on the housing and employment markets. A review of the plan was carried out in 2018 and a replacement plan is now in preparation.**