

TORFAEN  
COUNTY  
BOROUGH



BWRDEISTREF  
SIROL  
TORFAEN



## **Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan (2018-2033)**

*Cynllun Datblygu Lleol Newydd Torfaen (2018-2033)*

### **Development Brief / Masterplan Guidance**

*Cyfarwyddyd ar y Briff Datblygu / Uwchgynllun*

**September 2020**

*Medi 2020*

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# Guidance for the Production of Development Briefs / Masterplans to Support Proposed Torfaen RLDP Sites and Planning Applications

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Welsh Government [Planning Policy Wales 10](#) (2018) (PPW10) requires the deliverability of all potential allocations to be properly evidenced. Therefore, as part of the RLDP process, the Council requires landowners / site proposers to prepare and submit to them a range of information which demonstrates that their site would come forward for development in a successful manner within the life of the plan. This will include Development Briefs for each site.
- 1.2 This document sets out the Council's guidance for the production of Development Briefs for sites, which, through the Candidate Sites Assessment, have been identified as potential allocations in the emerging Torfaen RLDP. It also applies to developers looking to submit an application for major development (10 or more dwellings or creating in excess of 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> commercial floor space) on windfall sites during the plan period (2018-2033).
- 1.3 This document will ensure that a standardised approach for the production and consultation on each Development Brief is adopted. The Development Briefs for all sites which are proposed as allocations within the RLDP will be used as evidence at examination and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on adoption of the new plan.

## 2. MAIN OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Development Briefs will form the Council's expectations for the future development of the proposed allocations. [PPW10's](#) requirement for placemaking and the sustainable development objectives which underpin it must be central to this work.
- 2.2 [PPW10](#) seeks to deliver high quality, sustainable places, through a Placemaking approach. Placemaking is defined as:  
*'a holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces, focused on positive outcomes. It draws upon an area's potential to create high quality development and public spaces that promote people's prosperity, health, happiness, and well-being in the widest sense'* (page 16).
- 2.3 Welsh Government [Building Better Places](#) (July 2020) reinforces this approach in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, noting that developments must secure a high standard of layout and design on sites through the provision of development objectives and principles which respond to the attributes of the site and its surroundings and create a sense of place. The integration of the development into the wider landscape or built environment is essential. **Standard layouts and designs will not be acceptable.** The Development Brief will provide a sound basis for good quality detailed design and a smoother planning process.
- 2.4 It is recommended that each Development Brief must take into account National planning policies and the [Development Plans Manual Version 3](#). It should also have regard to emerging policies within the RLDP and the appended Draft Concept Master Plans in the Preferred Strategy. A Brief should evidence sustainable development

and quality places based around the **National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes** ([PPW10](#) p20) as follows:

### **Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting Environmental Impact**

- Resilient biodiversity and ecosystems
- Distinctive and special landscapes
- Integrated green infrastructure
- Appropriate soundscapes
- Reduces environmental risks
- Manages water resources naturally
- Clean air
- Reduces overall pollution
- Resilient to climate change
- Distinctive and special historic environments

### **Creating and Sustaining Communities**

- Enables the Welsh language to thrive
- Appropriate development densities
- Homes and jobs to meet society's needs
- A mix of uses
- Offers cultural experiences
- Community based facilities and services

### **Growing Our Economy in a Sustainable Manner**

- Fosters economic activity
- Enables easy communication
- Generates its own renewable energy
- Vibrant and dynamic
- Adaptive to change
- Embraces smart and innovative technology

### **Making Best Use of Resources**

- Makes best use of natural resources
- Prevents waste
- Prioritises the use of previously developed land and existing buildings
- Unlocks potential and regenerates
- High quality and built to last

### **Facilitating Accessible and Healthy Environments**

- Accessible and high quality green space
- Accessible by means of active travel and public transport
- Not car dependent
- Minimises the need to travel
- Provides equality of access
- Feels safe and inclusive
- Supports a diverse population
- Good connections
- Convenient access to goods and services
- Promotes physical and mental health and well-being

- 2.5 A list of policy and guidance documents which should be considered when producing a Development Brief is included at the end of this document.

### 3. DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FORMAT

- 3.1 The Development Brief should be an A4 portrait or A3 landscape document. The main body text should be 12 point Arial. Site plans, illustrations and photographs will be useful in explaining the site and aspects of the Brief. The Brief is expected to include constraints, opportunities and a final Concept Masterplan for the site. The size of this document will be dependent on the scale and complexity of the development and any site specific constraints or issues. For example, one or two sides may be acceptable for a smaller site, but we'd expect to see a more comprehensive document in respect of a Strategic Action Area.
- 3.2 Each brief should include the following sections, as described below:
- A. A vision statement
  - B. Site location plan (on an OS base plan, scale 1:500)
  - C. An analysis of the site and its context
  - D. A development framework resulting in a summary Concept Masterplan
  - E. Infrastructure Study - Implementation and Delivery Plan

#### A. Vision Statement

- 3.3 A clear vision for the proposed development is critical. It should set out what the development aims to achieve, taking into account the characteristics of place and locality. What sort of place do you want to create? For whom? How will the proposed occupiers / the natural environment benefit from the key design principles and objectives? Can you live your whole life in this place?

#### B. Site Location Plan

- 3.4 Each Brief should include a scaled site location plan with the site edged in red.

#### C. An Analysis of the Site and its Context

- 3.5 [PPW10](#) (2018) states, '*Placemaking considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings. This will be true for major developments creating new places as well as small developments created within a wider place*' (p16).
- 3.6 The starting point of the Development Brief process should be a comprehensive analysis of the site and its context. This is critical to inform the design and rationale behind the development proposals. This will involve research, observation and surveys. Whilst it is important to record site constraints, the identification of assets and opportunities will help bring character and identity to the future development.
- 3.7 The site and context analysis should be undertaken in accordance with the Welsh Government's Guidance document [Site and Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the Value of a Site](#) (2016). Whilst the analysis undertaken will be unique to each site and circumstance, the table below is a useful basis for identifying topics to be examined:

**Fig 5: the four categories of site analysis**

1 Culture & Community	2 Landscape	3 Movement & Infrastructure	4 Built Form
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site location</li> <li>- Planning context</li> <li>- Surrounding land &amp; building use</li> <li>- Neighbourhood structure</li> <li>- Consultation &amp; engagement</li> <li>- Socio-economics</li> <li>- Markey analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Topography</li> <li>- Green &amp; blue infrastructure</li> <li>- Ecology</li> <li>- Ground conditions</li> <li>- Microclimate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Road hierarchy &amp; access</li> <li>- Public transport</li> <li>- Utilities &amp; infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urban form</li> <li>- History &amp; archaeology</li> <li>- Building Scale, height &amp; density</li> <li>- Building character &amp; building traditions</li> </ul>

Site and Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the Value of a Site (2016)

- 3.8 A review of existing information is important in the site analysis process. On-site observations and surveys are also critical.
- 3.9 A good starting point will be the Council’s Draft Candidate Site Assessment Report (March 2020). This includes details of some site constraints and other assessments which may be required to feed into this analysis e.g. Contaminated Land Assessments, Transport Assessments and Agricultural Land Classification Surveys. The [Draft Candidate Site Assessment Report \(March 2020\)](#) is available on the Council’s website.
- 3.10 For the strategic sites which are key to delivering the Council’s strategy, the Council has undertaken a Green Infrastructure Assessment which will be made available to the site proposer. The GIA clearly identifies what GI assets currently exist, and those that should be retained in the first instance, to inform the definition of the developable area. Similarly, the Council’s Green Infrastructure Assessment suite of documents will be useful, as a comprehensive survey of existing green assets (quantitative and qualitative), in and around each site will be essential to this analysis.
- 3.11 All developments will require a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS), which will inevitably influence the design and layout of the development. Pre-application discussions with the local SAB authority should therefore be undertaken at this point (contact: [SAB@Caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:SAB@Caerphilly.gov.uk))
- 3.12 Community facilities play an important role in the health and wellbeing of communities. [PPW10](#) advises they are ‘often a key element in creating viable and sustainable places’ (section 4.4). Your context analysis should include consideration of the level of existing community infrastructure in the vicinity and, in the case of strategic sites, identify any facilities which would be required as part of the development. This should include facilities such as schools, shops, bus stops, health services, cultural facilities, places of worship and allotments. Accessibility to such facilities is critical to the sustainability of residential schemes to prevent car dependant developments. Ideally, such facilities should be within 10-15 minutes walking distance of new homes, reducing the need to travel by car.

- 3.13 [TAN18: Transport](#) (2007) requires Transport Assessments (TA) to be produced for developments that generate significant levels of movement or are likely to have significant effects on existing patterns of movement. All Strategic sites and other sites which meet the thresholds set out in TAN18 (page 50) will require a TA. This includes sites of 100 or more dwellings and industrial developments with gross floor areas of over 5,000 m<sup>2</sup>. This study will play an important part in your Site Context and Analysis exercise.
- 3.14 Your Development Brief should include a summary of findings, including site assets/opportunities and constraints. This should include plans, drawings and, where appropriate, photographs. The level of information provided will be relative to the scale of the proposed development and / or the nature of the site.

#### **D. A Development Framework Resulting in a Summary Concept Masterplan**

- 3.15 The conclusions of the site analysis and local context study should inform a development framework which, when combined with key urban design and architectural principles, will establish the structure and parameters for future development. [PPW10](#)'s requirement for placemaking and the sustainable development objectives which underpin it must be central to this.
- 3.16 This part of the Development Brief will need to demonstrate how an integrated placemaking approach will be taken. It should clearly set out the development principles for the site and include a complementary concept layout plan. This should set out the key vision and high level design principles of a site and how it should be developed. [Building for Life 12 Wales](#) (2015) should be a key design tool in this process. Your proposals should achieve the 12 design criteria which this document promotes for successful development. The non-exhaustive list below also identifies matters which should be considered when developing these placemaking principles:
- 3.17 **Green infrastructure** - [PPW10](#) states that 'Green infrastructure plays a fundamental role in shaping places and our sense of well-being, and is intrinsic to the quality of the spaces we live, work and play in'. The Council is anticipating the forthcoming publication of the Green Infrastructure Assessment suite of documents which will provide an audit of the quantity and quality of various types of green spaces and set out standards of provision for new development. The Council expects all developments to maintain and conserve existing green assets in and around the site and a Green Infrastructure Assessment should be the starting point for all site design. Opportunities for enhancing Green Infrastructure (GI) should be maximised including connectivity with the surrounding GI network. SUDs should form a key part of Green Infrastructure within your proposed development.
- 3.18 Typical Green Infrastructure features that should be retained, improved or sought as part of a new development (subject to quantity and quality of existing local provision) would include:
- Community gardens / allotments / orchards
  - Children's play facilities
  - Natural / semi natural space
  - Amenity greenspace
  - Sports pitches
  - Outdoor recreation space
  - Green corridors

- Civic spaces within neighbourhoods

3.19 **Social and Community Assets** - These facilities should be provided in accordance with the Council's Planning Obligations SPG which sets out the Authority's requirements for social infrastructure provision as part of development. This should include facilities such as schools, shops, bus stops, health services, community halls. Please note that this SPG is under review so some standards may be subject to change to address the requirements as specified in [PPW10](#), such as Green Infrastructure and Placemaking.

3.20 **Biodiversity** - The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 (Section 6) and [PPW10](#) require development to maintain and enhance the biodiversity value of a site. Ecological assets, including legally protected habitats and species and those listed on Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, should be retained and opportunities for on-site enhancement should be identified. Where an impact on biodiversity/natural resources is proposed, development briefs must clearly demonstrate the application of the step-wise approach as detailed in para.6.4.21 (Maintaining and Enhancing Biodiversity) of [PPW10](#). Any Ancient Woodland should include minimum buffers of 15 metres between the edge of the tree canopy and any development.

3.21 **Layout and Built Form / Townscape** - Any new development should provide for a hierarchy of interconnected streets and spaces (including typical street sections) which create walkable neighbourhoods, are not dominated by vehicles and are designed for low vehicle speeds. In order to achieve this, you are advised to consider the '[Building For Life 12 Wales Standard](#)' and the principles of 'inclusive design' as follows:

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Information</b>
Places people at the heart of the design process	Inclusive design seen as an essential component of sustainable communities.
Acknowledges diversity and difference	Recognises the wide diversity of different needs including wheelchair users, but also sensory impairments, learning difficulties, mental ill health, hidden impairments and the needs of children and parents.
Offers choice for users in acknowledgement that a single solution that fits all users is not possible.	Accommodating for all people regardless of their age, gender, mobility, ethnicity or circumstances.
Flexibility in use Link to sustainable principles by acknowledgement of the need for adaptability in design to meet different needs at different stages	Convenient and enjoyable places for everyone.
Well connected buildings and streets	Understandable so that everyone knows where they are and can locate their destination.

[Inclusive Design in the Built Environment](#) (2016), Section 7

3.22 Standard layouts and designs will not be acceptable. Development needs to produce a unique product, which reflects context, rather than 'copy and paste architecture'. Streets and spaces should ensure active frontages to provide natural surveillance and character. The provision of shared footways / cycleways on both sides of the street, with verges and appropriate street trees should be promoted on primary

streets. The approach of Manual for Streets 2 for active and social streets should be adopted. The mixture of uses within a development, scale and massing and the way in which buildings relate to one another and surrounding streets, are also key elements of creating safe and attractive places. Good quality public realm will help to create a sense of place. Public art should be incorporated within key buildings, structures and / or public realm finishes. Careful consideration should be given to an appropriate palette of colours, which would help the development blend and sit more comfortably within the wider landscape. Larger schemes should consider the provision of character areas, which would add to the sense of place and avoid amorphous development. For example, more central areas could include higher density development and more peripheral areas could include lower densities, with higher levels of green space. The selected approach and rationale should be based on thorough testing of site specific circumstances and clearly demonstrated in the material presented.

**3.23 Renewable Energy / Energy Efficiency Opportunities** - An energy strategy is required to support the proposed development, based upon the Energy Hierarchy set out on p90 of PPW10 as follows:

1. Reduce energy demand
2. Use energy efficiently
3. Renewable energy generation
4. Minimise carbon impact of other energy generation
5. Minimise extraction of carbon intensive energy materials

The Council has commissioned The Carbon Trust to undertake a Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Assessment for Torfaen which is anticipated to be published in September 2020. This document will set out opportunities and make recommendations for development sites. The Councils' aim is that developments should achieve net-zero carbon energy systems. Practice guidance for sustainable buildings was published by the Welsh Government in July 2014 towards this aim. Appropriate orientation of buildings and harnessing the potential of any on-site microclimates will help reduce the on-site demand for energy. The energy efficiency of new buildings should be improved through introducing measures that limit heat loss and therefore reduce the demand for heat, such as triple glazing and higher standard fabrics for walls, roofs, floors and windows. The production and use of sustainable forms of energy on site, including the potential for wind, solar and heat network development should be explored. Electric Vehicle Charging points should be provided. Strategic sites in particular need to incorporate District Heat Networks where technically viable. Integrating energy generation technology into the built form of the development is strongly encouraged.

**3.24 Active Travel** - A movement strategy is required to support the proposed development in accordance with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy set out in PPW as follows:

1. Walking and Cycling
2. Public Transport
3. Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles
4. Other Private Motor Vehicles

**3.25** The promotion of active travel is critical therefore the creation and enhancement of Active Travel opportunities and encouragement of greater use of public transport should be prioritised. Possible pedestrian routes through the site to promote 'active

and social streets' (as detailed in Manual for Streets 2), including the incorporation of existing public rights of ways, and how these would knit into the wider network should be considered. Similarly, the provision of safe cycle routes within the site and connectivity to the wider National Cycle Route network is important. Public transport services and links to transport hubs should also be maximised.

- 3.26 **Mixed use developments** - Where a mixed use scheme is proposed, for example a Strategic Site Area, a viable mix of uses should be specified. Strategic Site Areas which include a large number of homes should demonstrate that the development will be supported by all the facilities, jobs and services that people need in order to live sustainably and minimise travel.
- 3.27 **Residential Densities** - An appropriate level of residential densities should be indicated to your vision of the site and efficient use of land. The densities may vary across larger sites, in order to respond to context and/or create different character areas. For example, higher density residential and mixed uses could be located along public transport corridors and in focal areas, with lower densities on rural/sensitive edges, and a range of densities elsewhere to meet different needs and create distinct character areas. Standard house types and layouts will not be acceptable; sites proposed for allocation in the RLDP must demonstrate how they will achieve distinctive developments which fulfils Placemaking goals.

## E. Infrastructure Study - Implementation and Delivery Plan

- 3.28 Your Brief should include an Implementation and Delivery Appendix which should set out the key issues, constraints, phasing and mitigation measures which are required to deliver the development of your site (as per Table 26 of Development Plans Manual Edition 3). It should include a brief description of the site, together with an overview of site specific delivery and implementation issues, including site constraints, necessary mitigation / compensation measures and policy / s106 obligations/ infrastructure requirements. Please refer to the Development Plans Manual Edition 3 for further explanation of what is expected in this respect.

## 4. CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

- 4.1 The Council will seek initial views from the public on proposed strategic allocations as part of the consultation process for the RLDP Preferred Strategy. The Preferred Strategy contains a draft Concept Master Plan for each strategic site. A summary of the feedback received for each site will be given to you for consideration in the Development Brief process. Developers / Site proposers of Strategic Sites will also be required to undertake a separate Planning for Real consultation exercise to further inform their proposals. This will need to involve members of the public local to the proposed development site and be attended by the Council. It will need to be completed prior to the Council's consultation on the Deposit RLDP.
- 4.2 The Development Brief will be a living document. If your site is taken forward as a recommendation for allocation, you will be expected to submit a draft of your Development Brief to the Council for comment. This will allow any necessary discussion or amendments to be made before the commencement of the formal consultation period at the Deposit Stage of the RLDP. Further amendments may be required to the Brief following the consultation on the wider Deposit RLDP. The

Council is also hoping to liaise with the Design Commission for Wales regarding Development Briefs for the strategic sites.

- 4.3 Once a draft of the Development Brief is agreed, a 'Concept Master Plan' summary will need to be produced for inclusion within the Deposit RLDP Written Statement. This should include the following sections:
- 1) Vision Statement incorporating description of development
  - 2) Summary of Constraints with Diagram / Plan
  - 3) Key Development / Placemaking Principles
  - 4) Annotated Concept Diagram setting out the key elements of a site (access, physical infrastructure, green infrastructure networks, development areas/uses, landscape, key features, key opportunities and constraint)
  - 5) Infrastructure Requirements (within and external to the site)
- 4.4 The final version of the Development Brief will be formally adopted by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance when the RLDP is adopted.
- 4.5 The following deadlines apply to the production of a Development Brief to support a proposed allocation within the RLDP:
1. Provision of draft Development Brief for comment by Council: **to be confirmed;**
  2. Submission of draft Development Brief (with any required amendments) and Concept Masterplan, to accompany the formal consultation of the Deposit RLDP: **to be confirmed;** and
  3. Development Brief and Concept Masterplan updated as appropriate following the examination of the RLDP ready for formal adoption: **to be confirmed.**

## 5. PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE CONTEXT

- 5.1 The Development Brief must demonstrate compliance with National Planning Policy, including [Planning Policy Wales 10](#) (2018) (PPW10), [Planning Policy Wales: Building Better Places](#) (July 2020) and [Technical Advice Note 12: Design](#) (2016) (TAN12).
- 5.2 It is recommended that proposals have regard to the draft Strategic Policies within the Preferred Strategy for the RLDP and the policies of the Deposit RLDP in due course (drafts of which will be shared with site proposers before it is formally published).
- 5.3 It is recommended that, where relevant, you consider the following documents as part of this work:

[Torfaen CBC: Draft Candidate Sites Assessment Report \(March 2020\)](#)

[Development Plans Manual Version 3](#)

[Planning Policy Wales 10](#) (2018) (PPW10)

[Planning Policy Wales: Building Better Places](#) (July 2020)

[Technical Advice Note 12: Design](#) (2016) (TAN12)

[Building for Life](#) (2015)

[WG: 'Site and Context Analysis Guide: Capturing the Value of a Site' \(2016\)](#)

[WG: 'Practice Guidance: Planning for Sustainable Buildings' \(2014\)](#)

[Design Commission for Wales: 'Inclusive Design in the Built Environment' \(2016\)](#)

[Design Commission for Wales / Building for Life Partnership: 'Building for Life 12 Wales' \(2016\)](#)

[Design Commission for Wales: Places for Life \(2016\)](#)

Manual for Streets 2 (2019)

The Carbon Trust: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Assessment for Torfaen (September 2020)

Torfaen CBC: 'Green Infrastructure Assessment' suite of documents (anticipated at the same time as the Deposit Plan)

[Torfaen CBC / CSS Wales: 'Wales Parking Standards 2014' \(2016\)](#)

[Torfaen CBC: 'Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site Design Guide' \(2011\) SPG](#)

[Cadw: 'Pontypool: Understanding Urban Character' \(2012\)](#)

Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales: Cwmbran Study (anticipated 2020)

[Torfaen CBC: Updated Planning Obligations SPG \(2016\)](#)

NRW: [LANDMAP](#)

[Flood and Water Management Act 2010 \(Schedule 3\)](#)

[Susdrain](#) (Independent platform that provides a range of resources for those involved in delivering sustainable drainage systems)

## Contact Details

If you have any queries regarding the production of your Development Brief, please feel free to contact us. We will be happy to look at information, such as the issues you propose to look at as part of the site analysis or draft structures for your study.

[LDP@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:LDP@torfaen.gov.uk)