



# Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) (2022-2037)

## Background Paper: Call for Candidate Sites: Submission Form Guidance Note

May 2023

### Executive Summary

*This document is available in Welsh  
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg*

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Submission Form Guidance Note has been prepared to assist proposers of candidate sites in considering their site for submission, to assist with the completion of the Candidate Site submission form and to identify the additional information that should be provided. Torfaen Council has adopted OpusConsult (including OpusMap) to aid with the consultation and engagement elements of the RLDP process which will provide the forms electronically, associated mapping and ability to upload accompanying documents to support the Call for Candidate Sites.
- 1.2 All of the information requested on the candidate site form is required to enable the Council to undertake assessment of submitted sites. Only those that meet sustainability and deliverability objectives and are in accordance with the plan strategy will be allocated. A separate candidate site form must be completed for each site submitted. If alternative uses are proposed for the same site, a separate candidate site form will be required for each use.

## 2. Overview of the Call for Candidate Sites

- 2.1 The Council will undertake an initial 8 week Call for Candidate Sites where submissions will be invited from interested parties who wish to have land considered for inclusion within the RDLP. These could be either for development, re-development or protection from development. Potential land uses include housing, employment, community facilities, tourism, green infrastructure, waste, health, education, social care, Gypsy and Traveller provision, retail, recreation, renewable energy, biodiversity, transport infrastructure and minerals.
- 2.2 The threshold for submission of a residential development is either 10 dwellings or a minimum site size of 0.33ha. Smaller residential sites will be considered through the

RLDP settlement boundary review. There are no minimum thresholds for any other land use site submissions.

- 2.3 Previously submitted candidate sites (2018 or 2020/21) and existing Local Development Plan allocations without current planning consent will need to be resubmitted. If a candidate site was ruled out previously, or the site was allocated but has not been developed, any new submission should consider the reasons why the site has not progressed and provide any additional information (e.g. surveys) to explain how any constraints can be overcome and why the site should be reconsidered for allocation.
- 2.4 A 'Candidate Sites Register' listing all submissions will be published for information following the Call for Candidate Sites. It is important to note that inclusion of a site within the Candidate Sites Register should not be taken to indicate in any way that a site will be developed, or that it will be included in the Replacement Local Development Plan, or that the Council considers that it should be developed.
- 2.5 All sites submitted during the 'Call for Candidate Sites' will be assessed using the Council's candidate site assessment methodology which is available on the Council's web site.
- 2.6 A Second Call for Sites running concurrently with the Preferred Strategy consultation will accept new sites and provide existing site proposers the opportunity to submit additional supporting information to address any outstanding issues. Stage 2 viability assessments (DVMs) and Preliminary Ecological Assessment Reports will be required at this time. It is not expected that the Council will accept any new Candidate Sites following the close of the Second Call for Sites.

### **3. Guidance for Sites**

- 3.1 Before submitting candidate sites, site proposers should be aware that the Council will only seek to allocate sites that adhere to national planning guidance as set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW)11 and the Technical Advice Notes (TANs). In summary, the broad parameters of where sites could potentially be acceptable are:
  - where they focus on the most sustainable settlements identified within the Council's Sustainable Settlement Appraisal;
  - where they comply with the site search sequence set out in PPW11;
  - where they would contribute positively to the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes (PPW11); and
  - where there is a focus on minimising the need to travel in accordance with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy (PPW11).
- 3.2 In accepting submissions, the Council makes no guarantee that the candidate site will be included (allocated) in the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). All sites will need to be assessed in accordance with the Candidate Site Assessment Methodology (May 2023).
- 3.3 The draft Stage 1 results of the assessment will be published for public consultation alongside the Preferred Strategy. Comments received and the resulting completed draft candidate sites assessment will be published for public consultation alongside the

Deposit RLDP. Consultation responses received will be addressed and incorporated into the Final Candidate Sites Assessment and Register to be submitted for Public Examination.

## Personal Information

- 3.4 Site submissions necessitate the provision of personal data including names and contact information for landowners and agents. Anonymous submissions will not be accepted. All personal information provided will be treated in accordance with our RLDP Privacy Notice in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

## Help and Advice

- 3.5 OpusConsult has been adopted by the Council to enable the Call for Candidate Sites and subsequent stages of the RLDP process. It contains a user guide and help function however, if you have any problems completing the candidate site form or uploading any accompanying information, please contact a member of the planning policy team for advice at [ldp@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:ldp@torfaen.gov.uk)
- 3.6 The Council will run at least one workshop event to assist landowners / developers and the wider community with submitting Candidate Sites and we will also offer an optional submission service for a (cost based) fee.

## 4. Submission Form

- 4.1 The submission form has been developed to enable the robust assessment of each site. As a minimum, each submission should comprise:
- A completed candidate site submission form inputted via OpusConsult;
  - Identification of the site boundaries, plotted directly within or uploaded to OpusConsult (the site itself should be outlined in red, and any additional land in the ownership or control of the site proposer (or joint owners) should be outlined in blue);
  - A Stage 1 viability statement (see the separate Financial Viability Guidance Note (May 2023))
- 4.2 The candidate site form includes specific questions on the anticipated timetable for site delivery along with identification of any legal restrictions or covenants which may directly impact future site delivery. It is important that this information is provided to enable the Council to fully assess the deliverability of the site in accordance with national planning policy. An inadequate level of information to demonstrate the deliverability of a site (including financial viability) is a valid reason for rejecting a site from Stage 1 of the assessment process.
- 4.3 Completed submission forms must be received by the stated deadline to allow the Council sufficient time to undertake the assessment process. A significant amount of information has been published well in advance of the Call for Candidate Sites to enable site proposers to review the methodology and begin to compile any relevant information they may require to supplement their submission.

- 4.4 All 'duly made' candidate site submissions will be registered and acknowledged via OpusConsult. Each candidate site will be allocated a unique site identification number which should be used in any future correspondence with the Council regarding the site.

## 5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 Site proposers should answer each question as fully as possible and provide supplementary information where necessary. If the answer to any questions is currently unknown, site proposers may wish to carry out further assessments or surveys to address this. The level of information submitted should be proportionate to the scale of the proposal and any potential issues. If there is a significant constraint that would prevent the site passing through Stage 1 of the assessment process successfully, (e.g. part of the site is within the flood plain, or the site has significant ecological value,) then it is within the site proposers interest to submit information in respect of this constraint to accompany the initial site submission.
- 5.2 Further surveys that may be required to demonstrate that a site is suitable / deliverable can be submitted during the Second Call for Sites / Call for Additional Supporting Information. These could include Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR), Green Infrastructure Assessment (including arboricultural surveys), Contaminated Land Assessment, Coal Mining Risk Assessment, Transport Assessments, LANDMAP Characterisation Study, Agricultural Land Survey, Air Quality / Noise / Light Assessments, Flood Consequences Assessment, Ground Investigation Study and any other information deemed necessary. It is the duty of site promoters to engage positively in the plan preparation process at all stages, working with the LPA to ensure that the relevant information is available at the appropriate stage. A high level illustrative concept masterplan could be provided to show that the arrangement of a site has been considered.

### Financial Viability

- 5.3 Viability assessment forms a key part of the Candidate Sites assessment process. DPM3 states that all Candidate Sites submissions must be accompanied by a viability assessment. An Initial Stage 1 viability assessment will need to have been submitted with the initial Candidate Site submission. If one has not been received, it is expected that the site will not progress beyond the Stage 1 Candidate Site assessment. A fully detailed viability assessment (DVM) will then be required to be submitted as part of the Call for Additional information. Further details on the nature of such an assessment are included within the Councils Financial Viability Guidance Note (May 2023).

### Sources of Information

- 5.4 Much of the information requested on the form is general information about you and the proposed candidate site and will therefore already be known e.g. ownership, current use etc. Other information, for example, predicted agricultural land quality, flood risk or proximity to an existing or programmed Active Travel Route will require more detailed investigation.

5.5 The Council has compiled sustainability, constraints and opportunities information within the Geographical Information System (GIS) resource, OpusMap that can be used to inform your submission. The Call for Candidate Sites Mapping is freely available on the Council's website.

## Appendix 1: Overview of the Candidate Sites Process

