



Torfaen County Borough Council Local Development Plan (to 2021)

Annual Monitoring Report 2022-23

October 2023





TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2022-23**

OCTOBER 2023

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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Torfaen Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted by Torfaen County Borough Council on 13th 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' (24th February 2021), it provides the land use framework which guides the future use and development of land in the County Borough up to 31st March 2021 and beyond (i.e. until it is superseded by the adopted Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP)).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 31st 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 17th 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 eighth AMR report, and is based on the one-year period from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 and is required to be submitted to the Welsh Government by the 31st October 2023. 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 26th 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 3rd 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: -

Indicators Required by Legislation	
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.
Key Indicators Applicable to all Plans	
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.

	<p>This must be presented clearly in the AMR both in numerical and percentage terms (plus/minus x%).</p> <p>The components of housing supply, including site allocations, large and small windfalls should also be monitored separately.</p>
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 2022 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 31st January 2020 and entered a 11-month transition or implementation period which ended on the 31st December 2020. Since the 1st January 2021, the UK has no longer been part of the EU single market or the EU customs union. On 27th 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 1st May 2021. EU countries applied full customs requirements and checks on UK exports at the start of 2021, while the UK has further delayed the introduction of full customs requirements on EU imports until April 2024 and full health, safety and security checks to October 2024.
- 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 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. Securing Levelling Up Funding is a competitive process and funding is not guaranteed, requiring projects to demonstrate a strong 5-Case Business Model to support a funding request. Ten '**Round 1**' projects in Wales were awarded £121 million funding (7%) out of a total of £1.7 billion allocated across the UK. Torfaen did not make a bid for Round 1 Funding as there were no 'oven ready' projects at the outset of this process.

3.8 Torfaen CBC submitted two applications for '**Round 2**' of the Levelling Up Fund, these were:

- **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 Pontypool Cultural Hub and Café Quarter bid was one of only 11 successful Round 2 LUF bids in Wales, with LUF funding of £7,607,805 agreed.

The Pontypool Cultural Hub and Café Quarter bid comprises of three interventions, these combine to provide a cultural and evening economy within Pontypool. The package seeks to drive significant growth in footfall, making the town centre offer more attractive to visitors from the local area and beyond. The 3 interventions are clustered around the Hanbury Road / Glantorvaen Road junction and include:

St. James' Church: located in the heart of town adjacent to the Civic Centre and Register Office, this Grade II Listed building has been vacant for many years. LUF funding will create a high-quality mixed-use cultural hub filled with active multi-purpose spaces (based on the successful Cardiff Chapter Arts centre). It will include a pop-up cinema, pop-up food and exhibition space, a bar-serverly with indoor and outdoor seating, and a community events space to enhance social activity and community cohesion.

Park Entrance Café/Restaurant: currently a public toilet immediately opposite St. James' Church and at the entrance to Pontypool Park. The space will provide a high-quality lunchtime café offer and will transform into a "small plates"-style restaurant in the evening. Coupled with St. James' Church this building will form a cluster of food and cultural activity stimulating a much-needed evening offer. The café/restaurant will be an 'attractor' from the park (a strong source of footfall) driving people towards the town centre. It will create opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship in catering for economically inactive Pontypool residents.

Glantorvaen Road Car Park: To stimulate an evening economy, towns require safe, modern and secure parking. The current facility does not provide this and requires significant redevelopment, increased surveillance and lighting to instil confidence for modern users. The upgrades will reduce opportunities for and antisocial behaviour. Upgrading will also include solar PV, resulting in carbon reductions and contributing to the green economy.

- 3.10 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').
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 **Inflation and Economic Forecast** – Inflation over the monitoring period has reached high levels peaking at 11.1% (October 2022) but has subsequently begun to fall. In June, prices were 7.9% higher than a year ago. One of the main reasons for this fall is that energy prices have stopped rising but inflation is still high caused by a series of big shocks, the Covid pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a big fall in the number of people available to work linked to the Covid pandemic. It's meant that employers have had to offer higher wages to attract job applicants. Many businesses have had to increase their prices to cover those costs. That includes firms in the services sector, where wages are the largest part of businesses costs. To tackle inflation the Bank of England has increased interest rates during the plan period (5.25% in August 2023) and this is anticipated to continue into the next plan monitoring period. Higher interest rates make it more expensive for people to borrow money and encourages them to save. That means that, overall, they will tend to spend less with many people will face higher borrowing costs with around one in three households in the UK have a mortgage. According to the OBR, "*gas prices remain*

more than twice their pre-pandemic level which, when added to the stagnation in business investment since 2016, the recent rise in labour market inactivity, and the slowdown in productivity growth since the financial crisis, means that there remains weak underlying momentum.”

- 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.
- 3.13 **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.
- 3.14 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.
- These matters have and will 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

National Policy Documents and actions - Since 1st April 2022, the following relevant policy ‘documents’, etc. have been affected by Welsh Government actions: -

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

- 3.15 **TAN14: Coastal Planning** - is still extant, as whilst formal publication of TAN15 on ‘Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion’ on 1st December 2021 was expected to cancel TAN14 at that time; a Ministerial Letter dated 23rd November 2021 updated on 3rd March 2023, suspended the coming into force of the new TAN15 (and thus cancellation of TAN14). The expected date of this is now Spring 2024.
- 3.16 **TAN15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion** - The Welsh Government consulted on changes to the 2004 TAN15 on ‘Development and Flood Risk’ between 9th October 2019 and 17th 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 28th September 2021, to allow time for current planning applications to take its guidance into account before being

formally published on 1st December 2021 (alongside TAN14 being cancelled and the issuing of an updated Notification Direction with regards development in areas of flood risk).

3.17 However, the Minister subsequently delayed its introduction until 1st 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 (

- Details of the new TAN15 will be reported in the 2024 LDP AMR, if issued, and will be considered in the Deposit RLDP.

3.18 **Planning legislation and policy for second homes and short-term holiday lets.**

The Welsh Government introduced changes to the development management system and planning policy in Wales to allow local planning authorities manage Second Homes and Short-term Holiday Lets. These changes introduced in October 2022 and consisted of new use classes:

- The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (the UCO) has been amended to create new use classes for 'Dwellinghouses, used as sole or main residences' (Class C3), 'Dwellinghouses, used otherwise than as sole or main residences' (Class C5) and 'Short-term Lets' (Class C6);
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (the GPDO) has been amended to allow permitted changes between the new use classes, C3, C5 and C6. These permitted development rights can be dis-applied within a specific area by an Article 4 Direction made by a local planning authority on the basis of robust local evidence.

3.19 Two Statutory Instruments also came into force on the 20 October 2022:

- The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2022; and
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2022.

3.20 To facilitate and assist with making Article 4 Directions, the GPDO was also amended to include a new Article 4 which simplifies the process. The requirement to secure the Welsh Ministers' approval for the introduction of an Article 4 Direction has been removed. Instead, the new Article 4 places all aspects of making Directions within the remit of a local planning authority in order to expedite their confirmation and potentially encouraging their use where evidence demonstrates localised intervention is necessary.

3.21 Complementary changes have been made to section 4.2 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW). These policy changes make it explicit that, where relevant, the prevalence of second homes and short-term lets in a local area must be taken into account when considering housing requirements and policy approaches in Local Development Plans (LDPs).

3.22 Where local evidence suggests that second homes and short term lets are an issue, there is the potential for a coordinated approach to be deployed using taxation, planning and other levers. This includes limiting the occupation of all new dwellings to Class C3 where a Council tax premium is imposed on second homes.

- This legislation is noted in terms of development management decisions and will be considered in the preparation of the Torfaen RLDP.

Dear Chief Planning Officer (CPO) letters

3.23 COP15, Biodiversity Deep Dive, Section 6 Duty and the Planning System (20th December 2022)

The purpose of this letter is to highlight the essential role that the planning system must play in meeting the challenges laid down by COP15, the Deep Dive recommendations and in fulfilling the Section 6 duty in Wales. Further, the letter gives notice of proposed changes to planning policy in relation to net benefit for biodiversity and the protection afforded to Sites of Special Scientific Interest and trees and woodlands.

3.24 The Deep Dive committed delivery of the 30 by 30 target, to protect, effectively and equitably manage 30% of our land, freshwater and seas by 2030 as a strategic focus to consider where and how action could be accelerated. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) includes the planning system response to the Section 6 Duty by setting out a framework for planning authorities to maintain and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions (providing a net benefit for biodiversity).

3.25 The letter concludes “Planning Policy Wales will be amended to further emphasise the importance of net benefit for biodiversity and the resilience of ecosystems, including strengthened protection for SSSIs, trees and woodlands. A consultation exercise will take place on amendments to policy early in the New Year. We will continue to work with stakeholders to provide further guidance to enable the implementation of this vital policy”.

- The content of this letter is noted in terms of development management decisions and will be considered in the preparation of the Torfaen RLDP.

3.26 Changes to planning legislation and policy for second homes and short-term lets (28th September 2022)

3.27 Planning legislation and policy for second homes and short-term holiday lets - The Welsh Government introduced changes to the development management system and planning policy in Wales to allow local planning authorities manage Second Homes and Short-term Holiday Lets. These changes were introduced in October 2022 and are detailed in section 3.18-3.22

- The content of this letter is noted in terms of development management decisions and will be considered in the preparation of the Torfaen RLDP.

3.28 Technical advice note (TAN) 15: development, flooding and coastal erosion (2nd March 2023)

- 3.29 Updating the position on TAN15. A consultation on further changes to TAN 15 concluded on 17th April 2023. The proposed changes seek to introduce more flexibility for regeneration and critical infrastructure whilst recognising that new highly vulnerable development must not be built in the areas of greatest flood risk.
- 3.30 Detailed responses to the consultation are being analysed by Welsh Government and they expect to issue the TAN spring 2024. The Minister issued a Written Statement on the TAN 15 timeline on 12th May. Details included in Sections 3.15-3.17
- 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 Evidence

- 3.31 **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 paused many of their road projects across Wales to carry out a review of their support for increasing road capacity; and 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.
- 3.32 The independent panel presented its findings to Welsh Government in September 2022 and these were announced on 14th February 2023.
- 3.33 The findings come with some key recommendations from the panel, including four new road building tests. Going forward, the Welsh Government will only consider future road investment for projects that:
- Reduce carbon emissions and support a shift to public transport, walking and cycling
 - improve safety through small-scale change
 - help the Welsh Government adapt to the impacts of climate change
 - provide connections to jobs and areas of economic activity in a way that maximises the use of public transport, walking and cycling
- 3.34 In developing schemes, the focus should be on minimising carbon emissions, not increasing road capacity, not increasing emissions through higher vehicle speeds and not adversely affecting ecologically valuable sites.
- 3.35 Projects progressing – Trunk Road Modal Shift Programme
- Early-stage scheme not reviewed by Panel. To continue with WeITAG process aligned to the future road building tests - A4042 Southern Corridor Pontypool to M4

3.36 Economic development schemes

- A small sample of three land development schemes (Celtic Business Park, Fishguard; **Llanfrechfa, Cwmbbran**; Warren Hall, Flintshire) were reviewed due to Welsh Government involvement via land ownership or funding.
- The Panel did not make recommendations on whether these individual schemes should proceed. Instead, the sample was used to inform the Panel's advice on future road investment.
- To aid implementation of these and other economic development schemes, Councillor Anthony Hunt and Councillor Llinos Medi are leading a group to develop guidance on delivering place based economic development enabled by transport solutions that support the growth of a prosperous, green, and equal economy and are consistent with the future tests for road building and the Wales Transport Strategy.

3.37 Roads Review & National Transport Delivery Plan

Both the Roads Review and National Transport Delivery Plan explicitly acknowledge the role of planning in reducing transport demand and promoting modal shift. The importance of coordinating Strategic Development Plans and Regional Transport Plans by CJC's is highlighted as is the assistance available from Transport for Wales providing data and modelling to support the use of accessibility modelling and multi modal studies.

- Planning Policy Wales, Future Wales Net Zero Wales and the National Transport Strategy the Roads Review and National Transport Delivery Plan show the new framework to consider the scale and location of new development by adopting the transport hierarchy. This framework is noted in terms of development management decisions and has formed a central part of the work that will be considered in informing and the preparation of the new Torfaen RLDP.

Regional Context - Policy & Evidence

3.38 **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.

3.39 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 1st April 2021; and the work of the CCRCD will transition into the CJC in due course.

- 3.40 **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).
- 3.41 The **South-East Wales CJC Regulations** came into force on 1st 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 31st 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 30th June 2022.
- 3.42 **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 28th 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.
- 3.43 All CJCs are now operational. Issues regarding VAT and borrowing powers have now been resolved. Technical work on aspects of an SDP can be undertaken now, building on replacement LDPs being progressed. A Strategic Development Plans Manual (DPM) was published for informal consultation (September – December 2022), before a formal consultation summer/autumn 2023 and publication January 2024. This guidance sets out the key concepts, content and scope of an SDP. In combination with Future Wales and the SDP Regulations this will provide sufficient guidance to enable an SDP to be prepared. 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 2024; and then with 5 years to prepare the plan, an SDP is not expected to be adopted until 2029.
- 3.44 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."

3.45 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.

3.46 The Minister for Climate Change wrote to all four CJs early 2023 setting out what the Welsh Ministers expect in terms of SDP progress. The letter expressed that a Delivery Agreement (DA) should be submitted this financial year, along with a demonstration of technical work being progressed and the recruitment of an officer to drive forward both an SDP and RTP.

- 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.

3.47 **Cardiff Capital Region Regional Economic and Industrial Plan drafted (endorsed by Regional Cabinet in January 2023).**

The new REIP roadmaps CCR's plans to nurture a bigger, fairer and greener economy – generating good growth and creating conditions for shared prosperity, realising the best possible opportunities and outcomes for every community across the ten local authorities that make up the Region.

3.48 The REIP details how CCR aims to create a Region that is:

- More Competitive – Enabling businesses within our priority sectors and public services to achieve higher levels of productivity through innovation-led growth.

- More Connected – Investing in cutting-edge digital and physical infrastructure and growing our green economy to support the decarbonisation of SE Wales by 2050.
- More Resilient – Maximising ‘good growth’ by taking direct steps to reduce inequality, ensuring prosperity is shared and spread across our region.

3.49 The REIP identifies four key challenges.

1. Tackling economic disparities & boosting growth
2. Enhancing innovation capability and capacity
3. Decarbonising our environment by 2050
4. Improving our physical and digital infrastructure

and details it will take a comprehensive approach to achieving its objectives, through a focus on:

- Industrial Clusters and Research & Innovation
 - Green investment plans
 - Infrastructure that connects within and across our places
 - Increasing our workforce size and quality
 - Demand-driven skills
- The Cardiff Capital Region Economic and Industrial Plan as it relates to land use planning, will be considered in the RLDP.

3.50 **SWRAWP: Regional Technical Statement, 2nd 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 paragraph 3.57 below). 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.

3.51 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 11th November 2021. 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 16th 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, 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.

3.52 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' is now overdue and expected to be published for consultation in Autumn 2024;
- 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 '2nd 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. Their 'RLDP Preferred Strategy' was subject to concerns from Welsh Government on proposed strategic sites and need for regional work with other SE Wales LPAs. Following a Council meeting in July, approval for starting a new LDP was in abeyance until the position on the Regional Growth Work was resolved.
- **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, they produced a further Preferred Strategy consultation on which finished in

January 2023 they are now expected to proceed to Deposit Plan consultation in Spring 2024:

- **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' is due for consultation October 2023 with Deposit plan due Autumn 2024.
- 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 and work on regional growth issues currently underway. Neighbouring authorities are invited to the Torfaen pre-deposit participation workshops and regular officer meetings are held on the emerging RLDPs.

Local Context - Policy & Evidence

3.53 House Extension and Alterations (SPG - December 2022)

3.54 This Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) aims to provide a clear set of guidelines with appropriate illustrations of how changes to existing dwellings, such as side, rear and roof extensions, should be designed in order to secure good quality design which enhances the environmental quality of Torfaen.

3.55 Good design means any extension should reflect or respect the design and scale of the original building and also have regard to the characteristics of the wider area. The need to achieve good quality design should be an overriding consideration for all development regardless of how prominent or accessible the site is. While site specific circumstances will need to be taken into consideration, the overall objective should be achieving good quality design.

3.56 Site Design, Masterplanning and Development Brief (SPG - February 2023)

3.57 The Site Design, Masterplanning and Development Brief SPG (February 2023) has now been adopted by Council and forms a material consideration in the Council's decision-making.

3.58 Placemaking and the need for high quality design are the basis for the Council's approach to the development of sites within Torfaen. This SPG has two main purposes. Firstly, it has been produced to support and add detail to the policies within the Adopted Torfaen Local Development Plan (December 2013) and secondly, to inform the Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan process. This SPG provides clear guidance on the form and content of Masterplans and Development Briefs and will ensure that a standardised approach is adopted.

3.59 It should be used by prospective applicants, agents, architects, members of the public with an interest in an application, elected Members of the Council and other decision-making bodies, but is particularly relevant to developers looking to submit a planning application for major development (10+ dwellings or 1,000 m²+ commercial floor space) on 'windfall' (unallocated) or existing allocated sites; and to landowners / site proposers in the preparation of Development Briefs for a site.

- 3.60 **The Revised Planning Obligations (SPG - February 2023)**
- 3.61 The latest version of the Planning Obligations SPG has now been adopted by Council.
- 3.62 New development inevitably has an impact on its surrounding area and community. The planning system aims to address any negative impacts and where possible deliver community and / or environmental benefits through planning obligations. The Council have produced Supplementary Planning Guidance to explain how planning obligations are used and set out expectations from new development. This revision to the Planning Obligations SPG has been largely driven by the Welsh Government change in approach to Acceptable Cost Guidance figures which, from April 2022, do not include the value of land. Changes to Annex 1 therefore include a new 'tariff' based system for social rented affordable properties. In addition, affordable housing will now be required to contribute towards any ongoing site maintenance charges; and a new process has been introduced that potentially allows an RSL to use WG Social Housing Grant to make up the affordable housing percentage on a site. The opportunity has been taken to update a number of other elements of the SPG including reference to the Development Viability Model as the Council's preferred method of assessing development viability; clarification of the Council's approach to calculating available school capacity and changes to area requirements per pupil and costs definitions.
- 3.63 The SPG has also been subject to minor wording improvements and changes to reflect the increased national policy / guidance emphasis on reducing the need to travel, active travel modes, placemaking and ecological resilience as well as updates to education and recreation costings to reflect current circumstances.
- 3.64 The SPG refers to a wide range of matters that may be the subject of planning obligations. Not all of these matters will be relevant to every planning application. The Council will consider the issues that are relevant on a case by case basis, taking into account the nature of the development proposal, the site and the local context. It does not replace the negotiation of planning obligations as each application will continue to be considered on its individual merits.
- 3.65 **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 *"LPAs 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..."*.
- 3.66 Therefore, the Torfaen LDP Policy S5, set a 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1st April 2021, **3,480 dwellings (74%)** had been built, some **1,220 dwellings (26%)** short of the target. In addition, Table 21 (page 24) and Diagram 16 (page 25) below (from DPMv3) show housing completions in Torfaen for the LDP plan period 1st January 2006 - 31st March 2021, which were previously agreed by the Torfaen Housing Study Group.
- 3.67 In the following 2021-2023 monitoring period, an additional **472 dwellings** were built; therefore, as of April 2023, **4,312 dwellings (91.7%)** had been built, some **388**

dwellings (8.3%) short of the LDP target; again these housing completions have been agreed by the Torfaen Housing Study Group.

- 3.68 **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.
- 3.69 In the following 2021-2023 monitoring period, an additional **150** affordable dwellings were delivered; therefore, as of April 2023, **1,293** affordable units had been delivered (**113%** of the target); which also equates to **30%** of all completions.
- 3.70 **Housing Supply in Torfaen** - Going forward, DPMv3 Tables 19-20 have been combined into AMR Table 3.3 on page 26 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 (2023-2028) @ 1st April 2023). Table 3.3 also shows that over the next five years, it is forecast that an average of **318 dwellings per annum** (dpa) will be built in Torfaen. Indeed, this is above the Torfaen LDP Average Annual Requirement of **308 dpa**. Therefore, this demonstrates that housing supply will not run out in the County Borough before the new Torfaen RLDP is adopted.
- 3.71 **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.
- 3.72 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 175 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	241	184	96	116	145	154	143	223	133	134	211	256	326	423	271
F Actual recorded completions on small sites	44	58	37	27	41	13	18	17	32	30	15	30	33	22	7
G Anticipated completions on allocated sites during year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
H Anticipated land bank completions during year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
I Anticipated completions large windfall during year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J Anticipated completions small windfall during year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	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	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308	308
M Total projected cumulative completions	285	527	660	803	989	1,156	1,317	1,557	1,722	1,886	2,112	2,398	2,757	3,202	3,480
N Remaining housing completions (housing requirement minus completions by year)	4,415	4,173	4,040	3,897	3,711	3,544	3,383	3,143	2,978	2,814	2,588	2,302	1,943	1,498	1,220

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

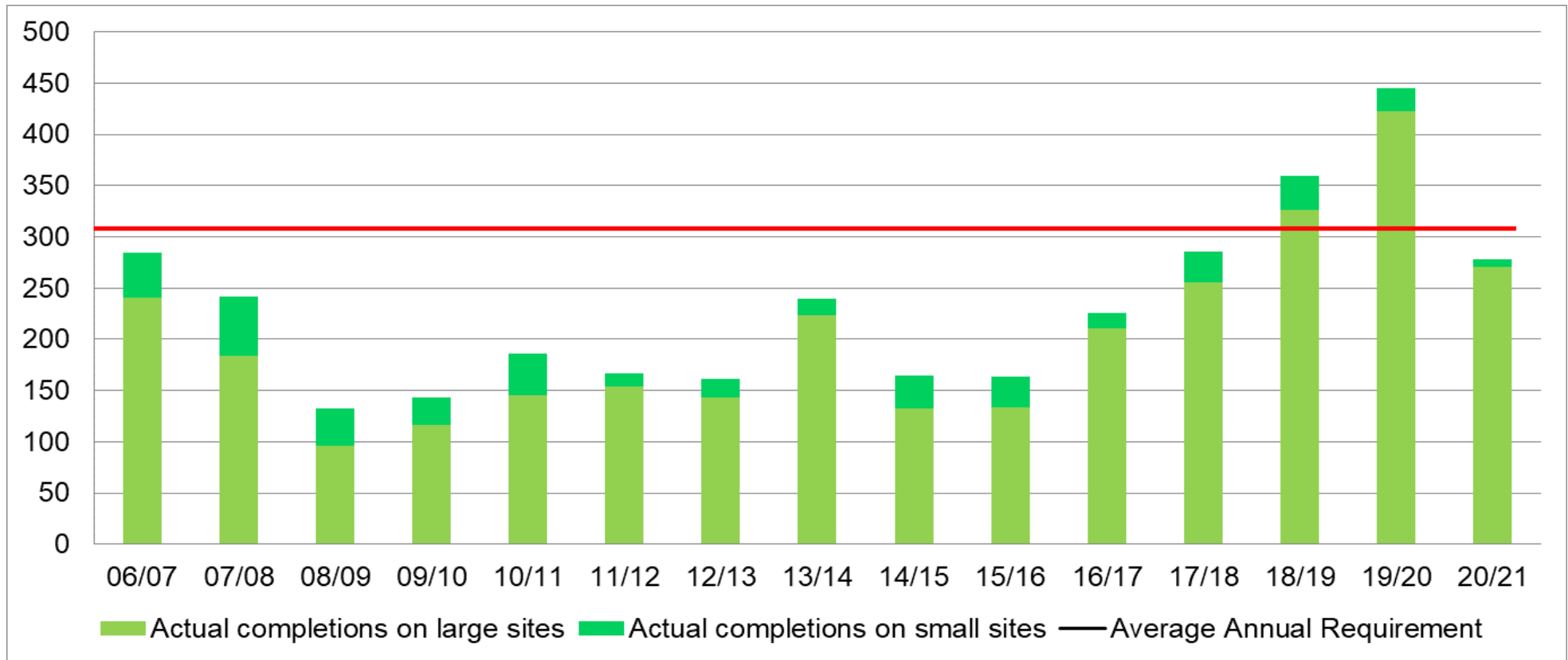


Table 3.3: The timing and phasing of housing sites with planning permission / LDP/RLDP housing allocations in Torfaen (2023-2028) @ 1st April 2023

Site	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
Permitted Large Sites (based upon DPMv3 Table 20)					
South Sebastopol - Wrens Nest / Uplands / Maesgwyn (Taylor Wimpey)	100	92	90	90	90
South Sebastopol - Village Core (Taylor Wimpey)	8	0	0	0	0
South Sebastopol - Village Core (Barratts)	29	0	0	0	0
Malthouse Lane, Llantarnam (Enzo Homes)	62	60	26	0	0
County Hall (Pobl)	0	0	45	49	49
Manor Way, Abersychan	10	0	0	0	0
Lower Shepherds Hill G&T Site, Pontypool (21)	0	0	10	0	0
Osborne Road And Michael Way Pontypool	0	9	0	0	0
The Former New Bridge Inn, Greenhill Road	9	0	0	0	0
Glanwern House (10 dwellings - 6 new)	6	0	0	0	0
Rifle Club Victoria St / Ventnor Rd, Cwmbran	13	0	0	0	0
Penywain Lane, Pontypool	33	0	0	0	0
Pearl House, Pontypool (16)	16	0	0	0	0
Pisgah Road, Talywain (23)	0	0	0	0	0
Former Pontypool Hospital (34)	0	0	0	0	0
LDP Allocated Large Sites (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	0	0	0
H1/2 - Police College Phase 3 (Barratts)	0	20	25	25	0
H1/4 - Ty'r-ywen Farm, Fairwater (25)	0	0	0	0	0
H2/2 - Animal Pound & Adj. Land, Wainfelin (70?)	0	0	0	0	0
H2/3 - Pontypool College (112)	0	0	30	30	30
H2/4 - Coal Yard, Station Road, Panteg (15)	0	0	0	0	0
H3/1 - Garn-yr-Erw Terrace, Blaenavon (26)	0	0	0	0	0
H3/2 - Blaenavon Health Centre (17)	0	0	0	0	0
H3/3 - St Peters School, Blaenavon (18)	0	0	0	0	0
H3/5 - Giles Road, Blaenavon (20?)	0	0	0	0	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	0	0	0	0
Large Site Total (A)	286	181	311	279	254
Large Windfall Sites Allowance (B)	0	0	50	50	50
Small Windfall Sites Allowance (C)	26	26	26	26	26
	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28
TOTAL A+B+C	312	207	387	355	330
5-year average completions	318				

3.73 Torfaen's 21st 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 initially granted planning permission in January 2022 and the construction contract was let in September 2022. However, following extraordinary price inflation and a value engineering exercise, the design has changed sufficiently to require a revised planning application due for submission in October. Subject to planning work is expected to start on site in 2024 with completion in 2025.
3. Construction of the 50-place extension at Crownbridge School in Croesyceiliog, has commenced and is due to open in January 2025;
4. Significant refurbishments are proposed at Ysgol Gymraeg Cwmbran and Ysgol Bryn Onnen (in Varteg, Pontypool). The projects are in the design stage, but currently on hold. It is anticipated these will recommence in 2024, with completion dates to be confirmed.
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. Planning application is anticipated for the Pontypool College site (allocated for housing in the LDP - Policy H2/2).
 - 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 21st 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 21st Century Schools Programme and other educational asset developments currently have no significant implications for the LDP.

3.74 Welsh In Education Strategic Plan

A fundamental aspect in ensuring the successful delivery of education vision is the realisation of an ambitious Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for 2022-32. "We want to ensure our learners develop and build on their language skills and their confidence in its use to become bilingual citizens".

The Council is committed to ongoing review of Welsh medium provision in respect of future Local Development Plans (LDPs).

4. Local Development Plan Strategy & Policy Monitoring

- 4.1 The 2023 AMR is the eighth 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 (1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023). As this is the eighth AMR, we are able to draw comparisons of trends over time.
- 4.3 An overview of the LDP Monitoring Data for the 2023 AMR provides an interesting insight into the implementation of the LDP over the monitoring period. In addition, in combination with previous AMRs, trends can be identified over the wider monitoring period. Table 4.5 of this AMR (pages 40-44) includes details of the 'required and key indicators' specified by Welsh Government in DPMv3. Similarly, Table 4.2 (pages 34-35) and Table 4.3 (pages 35-39) provide information on the delivery of LDP strategic sites and all other site allocations, respectively. Of note are the following monitoring results identified between 1st April 2022 and 31st March 2023:-

Housing

- **156** dwellings were built in Torfaen; of which **126** were market and **30** were affordable; with a further 93 dwellings completed at South Sebastopol (thus 567 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 1st April 2023, **4,312** dwellings (91.7%) had been built (of which **3,019** were market dwellings and **1,293** were affordable dwellings). The remaining **388** dwellings (8.3%) are expected to be delivered within the next 1-2 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 **30 affordable units** being delivered in the last year. To date against the LDP Policy H4 - 1,132 dwellings target; **1,293** dwellings or **114%** 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 633 dwellings, and the final Phase 3 of Llantarnam SAA3 at Malthouse Lane (148 remaining dwellings), along with 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 **318 dpa** (dwellings per annum) will be built in Torfaen; which is 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].

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 new Crane ChemPharma & Energy 9,770m² 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 was opened in Autumn 2022. Therefore, despite previous 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 vacant legacy factory / site is similarly protected by LDP Policy EET5;
- Therefore, **19.4ha (40%)** 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 **3.2ha (7%)** of allocated employment sites are expected to be developed in the next few years (at the residual of the Eastern Strip SAA and Plot C in the Llantarnam SAA in Cwmbran).

Minerals

- In March 2021, the Welsh Minister endorsed the **SWRAWP Regional Technical Statement 2nd 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 11th 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 16th 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 initially granted planning permission in January 2022 and the construction contract was let in September 2022. (However, following extraordinary price inflation and a value engineering exercise, the design has changed sufficiently to require a revised planning application due for submission in October 2023 and subject to planning approval work expected to start on site in 2024 with completion in 2025).

S106 Contributions, etc. from new development

- Under LDP Policy S8 on 'Planning Obligations', 2 new agreements were signed for new planning approvals and through S106 Obligations, etc. negotiated by planning officers, during the 2022-23 monitoring period, alongside provision of 30 affordable dwellings, financial contributions totalling **£913,392** were collected for the provision of community facilities: including for education provision, transport, ecology, open space, adult recreation, children's play, etc. as follows:-

Location	2022/23 S106 details		
	Infrastructure	Contribution	Affordable
New S106 Signed 1st April 2022 - 31st March 2023			
Land At Penywain Lane Wainfelin Pontypool	Affordable housing, children's play/open space, adult recreation and traffic calming/highway safety measures	£88,252	
1 Pearl House Hanbury Road Pontypool Torfaen	Affordable Housing; and Recreation: Off-site children's play/open space and adult recreation	£26,304	
2022/23 Monitoring of pre April 2022 S106			
South Sebastopol (currently 12% affordable via S106 - subject to review every 300 completions)	Education Contribution Transport Contribution <i>(there are many other onsite provisions / S106 sums already provided, collected or due)</i>	£692,726 £34,636	(S106)
Police College (Phase 1)	<i>Ecology contribution</i>	£53,378	
Ventnor Road (former public toilet site)	Adult rec/childrens play/open space contribution	£30,020	
Penywain Lane		£102,632	
TOTALS		£913,392	30

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 2023.

Table 4.1: LDP Strategy Monitoring - Summary									
LDP Objectives		AMR							
		2023	2022	2021	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
1	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								
2	To promote health and well-being through the provision of development including community facilities, leisure and outdoor recreational opportunities, accessible to all								
3	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								
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								
6	To protect, manage and enhance sustainable tourist attractions and facilities in Torfaen for the benefit of tourists and the community								
7	To conserve and enhance the distinctive cultural and historic resources of the County Borough								
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								
9	To allocate mineral sites if required and safeguard appropriate mineral resources from sterilization								
10	To protect, manage and enhance biodiversity and ecological networks across Torfaen								
12	To protect and enhance the valued landscape character of Torfaen, including important open space and sense of rurality between settlements								
13	To protect Greenfield land by enabling and promoting the most efficient use of appropriate brownfield sites for redevelopment across Torfaen								
14	To ensure all development contributes to improving water quality, protecting water supply and maximising the efficiency of water consumption								
15	To identify and conserve important soil and geological resources including Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) and maintain their quality								

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	Red	Yellow
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	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	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	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

4.6 From Table 4.1 above it can be seen that the 2022/23 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, House extensions, Site Design, Masterplanning, Parking Standards, Blaenavon WHS Design Guide, a range of Development Briefs, etc.), others remain to be produced or adopted (Shopfronts, Trees, Landmap, Biodiversity, Heritage, etc.). In response, several of these new SPG (inc. ‘Biodiversity’ & ‘Green Infrastructure’) are now being prepared for Council;
- **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 2022/23. 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 fully 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 19.4ha (40%) having been built by 2023, and a further 3.2ha (7%) 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 2nd 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 was back above the required dwelling numbers in 2021/22, but has dropped down below in 2022/23 due to the cost of living crisis alongside high mortgage interest rates, etc. However, by 1st April 2023, of the Torfaen LDP Policy S5, 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the plan period, 4,312 dwellings (91.7%) had been built; only some 388 dwellings short. Build rates should improve over the next few years, as building will continue at South Sebastopol, Llantarnam and the former Police College; and planning permissions (subject to agreement of a S106) have been granted at County Hall and part of Mamhilad; and an application is expected shortly for Pontypool College. Therefore, it is expected that the residual LDP housing target will be met by in 2025; 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.

Table 4.2: Strategic Action Area Monitoring - Summary			
Site		Progress	Actions
SAA1	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	Continue ongoing discussions with landowners to bring forward the remaining

		5.6ha B2 Meritor factory has been reduced in size, retained & refurbished; and the residual 1.05ha B1 / Hotel site is now ready to be developed.	elements of this regeneration scheme.
SAA2	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
SAA3	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 dwellings 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. Employment uses are not being progressed.	Continue discussions with landowners to bring forward the remaining employment elements (8ha).
SAA4	Mamhilad, Pontypool	Outline Planning Application approved subject to agreement of S106 , in May 2023, 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.	Due to passage of time application was reconsidered and approved by Planning Committee. 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.
SAA5	The British, Talywain, Pontypool	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.	The Council to continue progressing proposals for the site.
SAA6	South Sebastopol, Cwmbran	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	Continue to facilitate delivery of this scheme through the Development Management process

		site by three developers who have delivered 567 dwellings by April 2022 and are expected to deliver the remaining 633 units in due course.	
SAA7	Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran	Planning permission was granted for the Grange University Hospital (GUH) element in 2014, which opened in November 2020. The remaining residential, transport & employment elements are unlikely to be delivered in the form envisaged in the LDP; and will now be reviewed in the Torfaen RLDP.	Site to be reviewed in the RLDP.

Table 4.3: LDP Site Allocations Monitoring - Summary

Site		Progress	Actions
H1/1	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
H1/2	Former Police College & Adj. Land, St. Dials - 350 dwellings	Phases 1 & 2 completed (327 dwellings). Planning approval for Phase 3 for 70 dwellings granted in April 2022 subject to S106 being signed.	Phase 3 of application approved. Progress the completion of the associated S106 Agreement;
H1/3	Former Belle Vue Nursery, St. Dials - 16 dwellings	Site completed	
H1/4	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
H2/1	Former Trevethin School, Penygarn - 115 dwellings	Site completed	No action necessary
H2/2	Animal Pound & Adjacent Land, Wainfelin - 135 dwellings	Site stalled. Not being progressed	Site stalled. Encourage & support site planning application from landowners
H2/3	Pontypool College, Cwmynyscoy - 140 dwellings	Developers are working up proposals for the site.	Encourage and support landowner / developers to submit planning application in due course.

H2/4	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.
H3/1	Garn-yr-Erw Terrace, Blaenavon - 26 dwellings	Site stalled and landowner unlikely to bring forward as unviable. Planning application disposed of.	No action necessary
H3/2	Blaenavon Health Centre, Blaenavon - 17 dwellings	Site was occupied for employment uses, following change of use permission in 2015, but now vacant.	Encourage and support landowner / developer to submit residential planning application, subject to protection of employment premises LDP Policy EET5.
H3/3	St Peters School, Blaenavon - 18 dwellings	Site previously cleared	Encourage and support landowner to bring site forward
H3/4	Hillside School, Blaenavon - 64 dwellings	Site completed	No action required
H3/5	Land off Giles Road, Blaenavon - 25 dwellings	Site purchased by a housing developer	Encourage and support developer to bring site forward
H3/6	Old Co-op, 39-43 High Street, Abersychan - 24 dwellings	Site unlikely to be brought forward in the plan period	No action required
H7/1	Rose Cottage, Pontypool - 10 pitches	Currently stalled invalid planning application for site	Encourage & support progressing planning application and site delivery
H7/2	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)
EET1/1	Ty Coch Way, Two Locks	Site now built out - 1.4ha delivered	No action required
EET1/2	Llantarnam Park A	Site now built out - 0.7ha delivered for Gwent Police HQ	No action required
EET1/3	Llantarnam Park B	Site now built out - 0.4ha delivered for Gwent Police HQ	No action required
EET1/4	Llantarnam Park C	No planning application - Site recently sold and planning application expected in due course	Encourage and promote site development
EET2/1	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

EET2/2	Lower Mill Field (North), Pontymoile	No Planning permission - owner currently exploring options	Encourage and promote site development
EET2/3	Lower Mill Field (South), Pontymoile	No Planning permission - undeveloped	Encourage and promote site development
EET2/4	Land South of Travel Lodge, Pontymoile	No Planning permission - undeveloped	Encourage and promote site development
EET2/5	Mamhilad Business Park	No Planning permission - undeveloped, but interest from adjacent firms to expand here	Encourage and promote site development
EET2/6	Usk Vale, Mamhilad	Site now built out - 6.7ha delivered	No action required
EET3/1	Varteg Road, Garndiffaith, Pontypool	Site developed for car parking purposes	No action required
EET3/2	Gilchrist Thomas Ind. Est., Blaenavon	Site now built out - 1.2ha delivered	No action required
EET3/3	Kays and Kears, Blaenavon	1.6ha has obtained planning permission (August 2022) for B1, B2 & B8 (3,927m ²)	Encourage and promote site development with landowner
EET4/1	Craig Y Felin, Cwmbran	No planning permission and landowner not progressing employment site,	Encourage and promote potential site options of this key LDP strategic site
EET4/2	Former Ty Coch Tip, Cwmbran	14.0ha Site considered not suitable for employment.	Investigate potential options for new RLDP
RLT2/1	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
T1/1	North Torfaen Highway Improvements	All the highway schemes completed by March 2022.	No action required
T1/2	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
T1/3	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.
T1/4	Llanfrechfa Grange Link Road	The link road, residential & employment elements	Review in the Torfaen RLDP.

		are unlikely to be delivered in the form envisaged in the LDP; and are now being reviewed in the Torfaen RLDP.	
T3/1	NCN492 Varteg Road Bridge to Blaenavon Town Centre	Scheme implemented	No action required
T3/2	NCN492 to Abersychan Town Centre	Awaiting investigation Outline	Liaise with Highways with planning input if necessary
T3/3	Abersychan Town Centre to NCN492 at Merchant's Hill, Pontypool	Scheme implemented	No action required
T3/4	Pontypool & New Inn Train Station to Pontypool Town Centre.	Awaiting investigation Outline	Liaise with Highways with planning input if necessary
T3/5	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
T3/6	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 the canal towpath has been designed. The canal towpath does have an existing access at Coed-y-Gric, but not to Active Travel standards.	Liaise with Highways with planning input if necessary
M3	Tir Pentwys Preferred Area for Aggregates	Planning application refused by TCBC and appeal refused by Welsh Minister for proposed access.	Liaise with landowner to establish if a new planning application will be submitted.
CF1	Blaenavon Primary Care Resource Centre	Scheme Completed	None required
CF2	Panteg Primary School	School opened February 2017	None required
CF6	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	Council to continue pursuing other playing field sites in the locality

		playing field site in the locality	
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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.

Table 4.4: LDP Policy Effectiveness Monitoring - Summary			
Policy		Issue	Actions
S1	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 considered sustainable in relation to Future Wales Policy 2 and guidance in PPW11.	Review of urban boundaries to be considered in RLDP; Future Wales, PPW 11 and Sustainable Locations SPG should be considered in relation to the determination of planning applications.
S5	Housing	By 31 March 2023, 4,312 dwellings have been completed which is just 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
S6	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
HE1	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.

Table 4.5: Legislative and Key Indicators	
Indicators Required by Legislation	
Number of net additional affordable and market dwellings built in the LPA area.	Over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, 3,480 (net) dwellings were built in Torfaen, of which 2,337 were market and 1,143 were affordable. In 2021-2023, 472 (net) dwellings were built in Torfaen; of which 322 were market and 150 were affordable.
Key Indicators Applicable to all Plans	
Spatial distribution of housing development	Policy S5 of the Torfaen LDP set a 4,700 dwelling housing target, split between three Housing Sub-Market Areas as follows (with actual delivery between 2006-2023 shown in {}): - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Torfaen (Blaenavon and North Pontypool) = 550 dwellings target {502 dwellings delivered -91.3%}; ▪ Pontypool (mid and south) = 1,875 dwellings target {1,186 dwellings delivered 63.2%}; and Cwmbran (south & east and north & west combined) = 2,275 dwellings target {2,264 dwellings delivered -99.5%}.
The <u>annual</u> level of housing completions monitored against the Average Annual Requirement (AAR)	The AAR for the Torfaen LDP is (4,700 dwellings target / 15.25 years plan period) 308 dwellings p.a. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In 2022/23, 156 dwellings were built = -152 dwellings / -49% against the AAR The LDP Policy S5 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: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small Windfall Sites (2010 to 2021 = 300 dwellings target); and 404 such dwellings were delivered over this period = +104 dwelling / +_35%; and ▪ Large Windfall Sites (2010 to 2021 = 289 dwellings target); and 1,054 such dwellings were delivered over this period = +765 dwelling / +265%.
Total cumulative completions monitored against the cumulative average annual housing requirement.	The Torfaen LDP Policy S5 , set a 4,700 dwellings housebuilding target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1 st April 2021, 3,480 dwellings (74%) had been built, some 1,220 dwellings (26%) short of the target. In addition, by 1 st April 2023, 4,312 dwellings (91.7%) had been built, still some 388 dwellings (8.3%) short of the target.
The level of affordable housing completions monitored against the plan's overarching target. The tenure of affordable housing completions.	The Torfaen LDP Policy H4 , set a 1,132 dwellings (24.1% of all completions) affordable housing target over the 2006 to 2021 plan period, and by 1 st April 2021, using both S106 Obligations and WG Social Housing Grant, some 1,143 affordable dwellings had been built; which equates to 32.8% of all completions. In addition, by 1 st April 2023, a total of 1,293 affordable dwellings had been built; which equates to 30% of all completions. 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.

Employment land take-up against allocations.

Allocated LDP employment sites have been taken up as follows: -
EET1/1 - Ty Coch Way, Two Locks: Site now built out - 1.4ha delivered;
EET1/2 - Llantarnam Park A: Site now built out for new Gwent Police HQ - 0.7ha delivered;
EET1/3 - Llantarnam Park B: Site now built out for new Gwent Police HQ - 0.4ha delivered;
EET1/4 - Llantarnam Park C (1.4ha): Site sold for employment uses and planning application expected shortly;
EET2/1 - Former Gas Works Site, New Inn: 0.9ha used for household waste recycling centre - 1.2ha remaining;
EET2/2 - Lower Mill Field (North), Pontymoile (1.2ha): No Planning permission - undeveloped;
EET2/3 - Lower Mill Field (South), Pontymoile (0.5ha): No Planning permission - undeveloped;
EET2/4 - Land South of Travel Lodge, Pontymoile (2.1ha): No Planning permission - undeveloped;
EET2/5 - Mamhilad Business Park (3.0ha): Undeveloped, but interest from adjacent firms to expand here, with planning applications expected in due course;
EET2/6 - Usk Vale, Mamhilad (6.7ha): Site now built out;
EET3/1 - Varteg Road, Garndiffaith, Pontypool (0.8ha): Site developed for alternative car parking purposes;
EET3/2 - Gilchrist Thomas Ind. Est., Blaenavon:(1.2ha): Site now built out;
EET3/3 - Kays and Kears, Blaenavon (6.0ha): Land sold by WG. Landowner has obtained planning permission (August 2022) for B1,B2 and B8 (3,927sqm) on 1.6ha, 4.4ha remaining;
EET4/1 - Craig Y Felin, Cwmbran (21.0ha): No planning permission and landowner not progressing employment site.
EET4/2 - Former Ty Coch Tip, Cwmbran (14.0): Site not suitable for employment, unimplemented permission for 3MW solar farm on part.
SAA1: Eastern Strip Central, Cwmbran - (2.7ha B1/hotel & 5.6ha B2) - 5.6ha B2 site retained as a refurbished Meritor factory; only 1.05ha B1/hotel site remains and is being marketed as such.
SAA3: Llantarnam, Cwmbran - (8.0ha B1) no progress;
SAA7: Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran - (8.4ha total, 4.8ha in plan period) - no progress, will be considered under the new RLDP.

In summary, based upon the above information, Table 4.6 below (based upon LDP 'Appendix 7: Employment Allocations Table') shows that **19.4ha** of the required **48.6ha (40%)** (23% including regional sites, which were added for flexibility) of the LDP employment allocations have been delivered, and a further **3.2ha (7%)** is expected to be developed in the next few years.

Table 4.6: Employment land take-up against allocations - 31 March 2023				
Employment Allocations	Allocated (ha)	Delivered (ha)	U/C	Anticipated (1-3 years)
Cwmbran	25.0ha	9.8ha (39%)	0ha	2.5ha (10%)
Pontypool	15.6ha	7.6ha (49%)	0ha	0.7ha (5%)
North Torfaen	8.0ha	2.0ha (25%)	0ha	0ha (0%)
LDP Sub Total	48.6ha	19.4 ha (40%)	0ha	3.2ha (7%)
Regional	35.0ha	0ha (0%)	0ha	0ha
TOTAL	83.6ha	19.4ha (23%)	0ha	3.2ha (4%)

"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.

Job growth.

<p>Delivery of affordable housing policy - thresholds and percentage targets for each sub-market area.</p>	<p><i>“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.”</i> - 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.</p>
<p>Viability</p>	<p>House Prices - In the one year AMR monitoring period between April 2022 and April 2023, 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 £181,459 to £194,029; a rise of £12,570 (6.9%). For new build properties, the HPI data shows that the average new house price in Torfaen, over the same period, has risen from £349,399 to £423,014; a rise of £73.615 (21.1%).</p> <p>Land Values - very little comparable data exists for land sales, so this factor has not been monitored to establish trends.</p> <p>Build Costs - 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) in Qtr2/2022 was £1,238m² (gross internal floor area) (using the BCIS locational indices of 91%); compared to £1,300m² in Qtr2/2023 (using the BCIS locational indices of 91%). This equates to a rise in build costs of £62m² (5%) over the 2022-23 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>SAA1: 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 & refurbished; and the residual 1.05ha B1 / Hotel site is now ready to be developed.</p> <p>SAA2: 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>SAA3: 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.</p> <p>SAA4: Mamhilad, Pontypool - Outline planning application approved (subject to the signing of a S106 Agreement, which remains pending), in May 2023, 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>SAA5: 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>SAA6: South Sebastopol, Cwmbran - This large greenfield site obtained outline planning permission in 2014; Construction has commenced on site by three developers who have delivered 567 dwellings so far and are expected to deliver the remaining 633 units in due course.</p> <p>SAA7: Llanfrechfa Grange, Cwmbran - This brownfield mixed use site has received planning permission for the Grange University Hospital element (2014) which opened in November 2020. Recent hospital permissions include a Specialist Inpatient Service Unit (June 2022, 22/P/0446/OUT, 10,000m²).and an extension to the Hospital A&E Dept (Sept 2023, 23/P/0430/FUL, 1,158m²). The remaining residential & employment elements are unlikely to be delivered in the form envisaged in the LDP; and will be reviewed in the Torfaen RLDP.</p>
<p>The delivery of key infrastructure that underpins the plan strategy.</p>	<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>Road Infrastructure: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policy T1/1: North Torfaen Highway Improvements - All the highway schemes were completed by March 2022. ▪ Policy T1/3: Cwmbran Town Centre Improvements - Part completed through Morrison's / Arvin Meritor schemes under SAA1. Still requires public funding to complete. ▪ Policy T1/4: Llanfrechfa Grange Link Road - Currently part of the allocated SAA7 site at Llanfrechfa Grange under the LDP. No progress, and now linked to the review of the Llanfrechfa SAA in the Torfaen RLDP; and subject to the WG 'Roads Review' published in February 2023. <p>Rail Infrastructure - Allocated under Policy T1/2, the £7.1m Pontypool & 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>Active Travel Infrastructure - The greater majority of active travel routes allocated in the LDP (see Policy T3 in Table 4.3) have been delivered and continue to be delivered as funds become available.</p> <p>Education Infrastructure - Under the WG / Council's 21st 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>Health Infrastructure - the regional 471 bed Grange University Hospital element of Policy SAA7, opened in November 2020.</p>
<p>The completion of Gypsy and Traveller sites to meet identified need.</p>	<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 Policy H7: -</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>

	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.
The scale / type of highly vulnerable development permitted within C2 flood risk areas.	No developments has been approved in a C2 flood zone between 1 st April 2022 and 31 st March 2023

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

5.1 This 2022 AMR is the eighth 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' 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 paused many of their road projects across Wales to carry out a review of their support for increasing road capacity; and have published the report of the 'independent panel' reviewing 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 and the report was published in February 2023. The findings and work has informed the new 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 2nd 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 2023 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 eighth 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. The majority of these sites are delivering housing numbers, supplemented by some acceptable windfall sites, however 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 slower progress than anticipated 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 34-35) & 4.3 (pages 35-39) 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 approved 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 went back above the AAR in 2021/22 (316 dwellings), but dipped below again in 2022/23 (156 dwellings). Going forward, the Torfaen Housing Study Group have forecast an average build rate of 318 dpa over the next five-years; which is 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 1st April 2021, 3,480 dwellings had been built, some 1,220 dwellings short of the target. However, by 1st April 2023, 4,312 dwellings had been built, only 388 dwellings short of the LDP target; which is expected to be delivered within the next 1-2 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, the pandemic, and the recent economic issues 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 1-2 years. Similarly, 40% of the employment target has been built, and another 7% 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 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 2023 Annual Monitoring Report

As a result of the above, the LDP Annual Monitoring Report 2023 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.