

Monmouthshire Local Development Plan

Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper Updated June 2021

Executive Summary

- i. The Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for Monmouthshire (excluding the part of the County that is within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The RLDP will identify where and how much new development will take place during the 'Plan period' (2018-2033). It will allocate land for development, identify areas to be protected, and contain policies to guide decisions on applications for planning permission. We aim to adopt the RLDP late 2023.
- ii. The RLDP will be accompanied by an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) which will consider the environmental, equalities, health and well-being impacts of the Plan. The Integrated Sustainability Appraisal is a working document, updated as the RLDP progresses. The RLDP will include an Infrastructure Plan, setting out what is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and will sit alongside a Local Transport Plan and Economic Strategy. Together, these Plans will seek to deliver on the Council's economic ambition and its core purpose to build sustainable and resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations.
- iii. This Paper identifies the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing the County (economic, environmental, social and cultural). Thirty-eight key issues have been identified (see **Table 2.1**), informed by a range of evidence, in particular the public engagement unpinning Monmouthshire's Public Service Board Well-being Plan.
- iv. The Monmouthshire Replacement LDP Vision is

By 2033 Monmouthshire will be a place where:

- (1) People are living in sustainable, resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and are more inclusive, cohesive, prosperous, vibrant and balanced demographically. Both urban and rural communities are well-connected with better access to local services and facilities, open space and employment opportunities.**
- (2) Communities and businesses are part of an economically thriving and well-connected County.**
- (3) The best of the County's built heritage, countryside, landscape and environmental assets have been protected and enhanced to retain its distinctive character.**
- (4) People enjoy healthier, more sustainable lifestyles with improved access to public transport and active travel opportunities and have a minimised impact on the global environment.**

The spatial implications of achieving this Vision will be that by 2033:

Monmouthshire will have grown sustainably, with a proportionate distribution of new homes and jobs across the most sustainable settlements, which are supported

by amenities and infrastructure with the delivery of affordable housing to meet local needs.

Development will have contributed to facilitating sustainable lifestyles by delivering high quality places that promote low carbon developments with an appropriate mix of uses and that are well-connected both digitally and physically to the wider area in terms of character, environment and movement by public transport, walking and cycling.

- v. The role of the RLDP vision is to clarify the core purpose of the RLDP and provide a framework for developing the RLDP's Preferred Strategy and future detailed policies. It sets out how Monmouthshire will develop, change or be conserved in land use planning terms.
- vi. Seventeen RLDP objectives (see below) have been drawn up to set out how the issues will be addressed and the vision delivered. These have been reviewed and amended to reflect relevant feedback from the targeted engagement process, the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019, continued development of the RLDP evidence base and the spatial element of the Vision. They were also reviewed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and endorsed by Cabinet on 17th June 2020 and Council on 22nd October 2020 as remaining relevant. The objectives are listed under the most relevant Well-being goals from the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015, and matched against the LDP issues, the theme from Planning Policy Wales edition 11 (PPW11), and matched against the PSB Monmouthshire Well-being Plan (see **Table 4.1**).

1) Economic Growth/Employment

To support a thriving, well-connected, diverse economy, which provides a range of good quality employment opportunities to enable and encourage indigenous business growth and attract inward investment and competitive innovative businesses in appropriate growth sectors, including through the provision of start-ups and grow on spaces.

2) Retail Centres

To sustain and enhance the County towns of Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth, Caldicot and Usk as vibrant and attractive retail centres serving their own populations and those of their surrounding hinterlands, along with increasing the potential customer base through future growth whilst recognising that the role of these centres is evolving.

3) Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape

To protect, enhance and manage Monmouthshire's natural environment and ecosystems. This includes, the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the County's other high quality and distinctive landscapes, protected sites, protected species and other biodiversity interests, along with the connectivity between them by creating new linkages for them to adapt while at the same time maximising benefits for the economy, tourism, health and well-being.

4) Flood Risk

To ensure that new development takes account of the risk of flooding, both existing and in the future, including the need to avoid inappropriate development in areas that are at risk from flooding or that may increase the risk of flooding elsewhere and the need to design development to appropriately manage surface water run-off.

5) Minerals and Waste

To meet the County's regional and local obligations to manage and dispose of its waste and to safeguard and exploit its mineral resource in a sustainable fashion.

6) Land

To promote the efficient use of land, including the need to:

- Maximise opportunities for development on previously developed land, whilst recognising that brownfield opportunities are limited in Monmouthshire.
- Protect the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land whilst at the same time recognising that this will not always be possible given high proportion of BMV land in the County and the limited opportunities for brownfield development.

7) Natural Resources

To promote the efficient use of natural resources including providing increased opportunities for water efficiency, energy efficiency, renewable energy, recycling and waste reduction.

8) Health and Well-being

To improve access for all ages to recreation, sport, leisure activities, open space and the countryside and to enable healthier lifestyles.

9) Demography

To increase opportunities for the younger population to both live and work within Monmouthshire to assist in ensuring a balanced demography.

10) Housing

To provide a level of housing that is sufficient to provide a wide ranging choice of homes both for existing and future residents, while ensuring that local needs for appropriate, affordable and accessible housing are met as far as possible, particularly in towns but also in rural areas, so long as such housing can assist in building sustainable balanced communities.

11) Placemaking

To promote good quality sustainable places through design, layout and mix of uses that enhance the character and identity of Monmouthshire's settlements and countryside; create attractive, safe and accessible places to live, work and visit; and promote people's prosperity, health, happiness and well-being.

12) Communities

To build sustainable resilient communities where people have good access to employment, shops, housing, public transport, active travel, healthcare, community and cultural facilities.

13) Rural Communities

To sustain existing rural communities as far as possible by providing development opportunities of an appropriate scale and location in rural areas in order to assist in building sustainable rural communities and strengthening the rural economy.

14) Infrastructure

To ensure that appropriate physical and digital infrastructure (including community and recreational facilities, sewerage, water, transport, schools, health care and broadband etc.) is in place or can be provided to accommodate new development.

15) Accessibility

To seek to reduce the need to travel by promoting a mix of land use allocations and improved internet connectivity, and where travel is required, to provide opportunities for active travel and integrated sustainable transport.

16) Culture, Heritage and Welsh Language

To protect and enhance the built environment, culture and heritage of Monmouthshire for the future while maximising benefits for the economy, tourism and social well-being, including supporting and safeguarding the Welsh Language.

17) Climate Change

To strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C, supporting carbon reduction through a variety of measures including the use of renewable energy, the design and location of new development, encouraging balanced job and population growth to reduce out-commuting, the provision of broadband connectivity to reduce the need to travel, the provision of ultra-low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to reduce emissions and improve air quality, and the provision of quality Green Infrastructure.