

Monmouthshire

Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033

Updated Preferred Strategy - Easy Read

October 2023



monmouthshire
sir fynwy

What is the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP)?

Monmouthshire County Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for the period from 2018-2033. The RLDP will allocate land for sustainable development, designate land for protection and contain policies to provide the basis for decisions on planning applications. It will cover the whole County except for the part within the Brecon Beacons National Park.

It aims to deliver the Council's core purpose of becoming a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life.

It will deliver the Council's objectives and address the core issues of delivering essential affordable homes at pace and scale, responding to the climate and nature emergency by delivering net zero carbon new homes in exemplar places, and ensuring our communities are socially and economically sustainable by attracting and retaining younger people to rebalance our ageing demographic.



The RLDP Process

Preparing the RLDP is a step by step process. We are currently at the Preferred Strategy stage of the process. The key steps for Monmouthshire's RLDP are:

1 Delivery Agreement
The formal timetable of the RLDP and community involvement scheme
Revised December 2022

2 Evidence Gathering
Social, environmental, economic and cultural data that informs the plan
July 2018 - Autumn 2022

3 Preferred Strategy
Setting how much growth and where it will go.
December 2022- January 2023 *

4 Deposit Plan
A draft version of the RLDP, which will identify proposed sites for specific uses.
Spring 2024

5 Submission, Examination and Adoption
The RLDP is submitted to the Welsh Government and examined by an independent planning Inspector. If found to be sound the Plan can be formally adopted.
Autumn 2024- Early 2025

6 Monitoring and Review
Reviewed annually to monitor the effectiveness of the RLDP.
2025 onwards

*Consultation on the Preferred Strategy and Candidate Site Register took place December 2022 - January 2023

Our Key Issues , Challenges and Opportunities

In order to achieve the Council's core purpose of becoming a zero-carbon county, supporting well-being, health and dignity for everyone at every stage of life, a number of key issues and challenges have been identified.

- 1. Rebalancing the County's demography** by providing opportunities to retain and attract younger people. This will help to ensure that our communities are socially and economically sustainable.
- 2. Addressing inequality** by addressing the urgent need to increase the amount of affordable homes and provide a wider choice of homes where younger people can get onto the housing ladder.
- 3. Addressing the climate emergency** with policies requiring new development to be net zero carbon incorporate renewable energy generation and technologies, sustainable travel infrastructure and provision of green space and local food production.
- 4. Addressing the nature emergency** with polices that will protect and enhance Monmouthshire's special environment and tackle phosphate pollution in our rivers.

These issues, challenges and opportunities have been informed by a range of evidence, in particular the public engagement underpinning Monmouthshire's Public Service Board Well-being Plan. They have been re-assessed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and remain relevant.

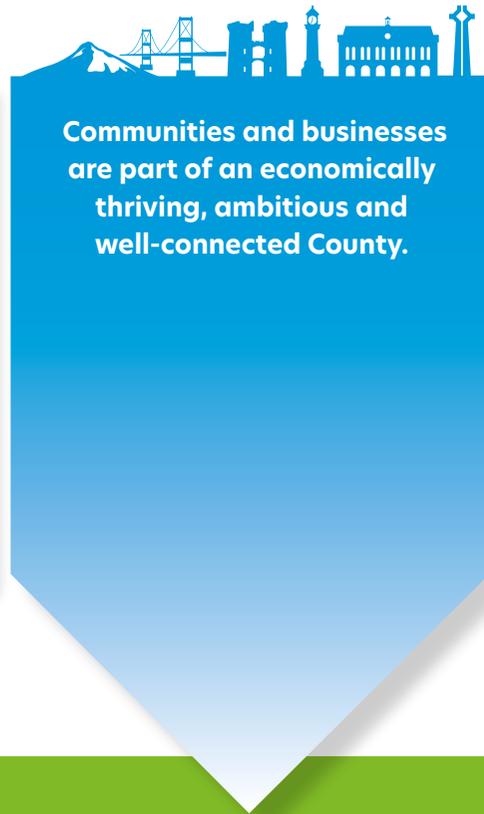


Our Vision for Monmouthshire

By 2033 Monmouthshire will be a place where:



People are living in sustainable, resilient communities that support the well-being of current and future generations and are more inclusive, equal, safe, 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.



Communities and businesses are part of an economically thriving, ambitious and well-connected County.



The best of the County's built heritage, countryside, biodiversity, landscape and environmental assets have been protected and enhanced to retain its distinctive character.



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, supporting our ambitions for a zero carbon county.



The implications of achieving this Vision will be that by 2033 Monmouthshire will be home to well-connected exemplar, affordable housing-led, net zero carbon places that provide employment and support demographically balanced sustainable and resilient communities for all.

What goals do we need to set to achieve Our Vision?

Aspirational yet achievable objectives for the RLDP have been set to meet our key issues and deliver the vision.

Our core underpinning objectives are:



- **Delivering essential affordable homes at pace and scale;**
- **Responding to the climate and nature emergency by delivering net zero carbon new homes in exemplar places;**
- **Ensuring our communities are economically sustainable by attracting and retaining younger people to rebalance our ageing demographic.**

Housing

To provide urgently needed affordable housing within exemplar, mixed, sustainable and well-connected places both for existing and future residents.

Demography

To increase opportunities for the younger population to both live and work within Monmouthshire, creating a more balanced demography and socially and economically sustainable communities.

Climate and Nature Emergency

To strive to limit the increase in global temperatures to 1.5°C, supporting carbon reduction through a variety of adaptation measures including facilitating resilient ecosystems and nature recovery, the use of renewable energy, net zero homes, 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.

Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity & Landscape

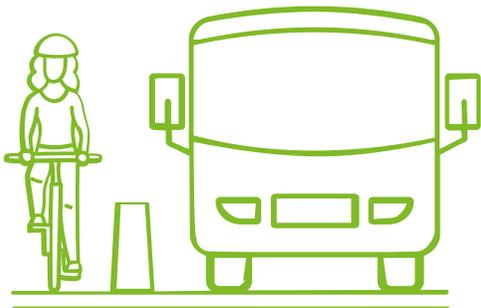
To protect, enhance and manage the resilience of Monmouthshire's natural environment, biodiversity and ecosystems and the connectivity between them, while at the same time maximising benefits for the economy, tourism, health and well-being. This includes the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty,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

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.

Placemaking

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



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.

Accessibility

To seek to reduce the need to travel by promoting a mix of land use allocations in well-connected, sustainable locations and by improving internet connectivity, and where travel is required, to provide opportunities for active travel and integrated sustainable transport above use of the private car.

Communities

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

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.

Health and Well-being

Improve access for all to recreation, sport, leisure activities, open space and the countryside and to enable healthier lifestyles. To support the Health Board to improve health infrastructure to meet community needs.

Town and Local Centres

To sustain and enhance the County's towns of Abergavenny, Caldicot, Chepstow, Monmouth, and local centres of Magor, Raglan and Usk as vibrant and attractive centres serving the needs of their population and those of their surrounding hinterlands, and supporting adaptation to meet the needs of the evolving role of the high street.



Culture, Heritage & 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.

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.
- support the adaptation and re-use of existing sustainably located buildings.

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.

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.

Minerals & 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.

The RLDP 2018-2033 Preferred Strategy

Our Key Issues, Vision and Objectives as well as community consultation and engagement sessions have informed how much growth (jobs and homes) is needed in the County over the Plan period and broadly where that growth could be located.

How much growth

Between 2018- 2033 the New Preferred Strategy aims to :

Grow Monmouthshire between 5,400– 6,210 homes *

This includes the provision of approximately 1,580 - 1,910 affordable homes

Enable a level of job growth that supports our housing growth and grow Monmouthshire's economy by 6,240 jobs

There are currently approximately 4,085 homes in the landbank. This means that we will need to allocate land for 1,660- 2,125 new homes, including 830 – 1,065 new affordable homes

* *Because the plan period has already begun (2018) some of these homes in the landbank have already been built/ are under construction/ or already have planning permission. The housing growth figure also takes into account 'windfall housing' (unplanned housing that is predicted to be built within existing settlements between 2018-2033)*



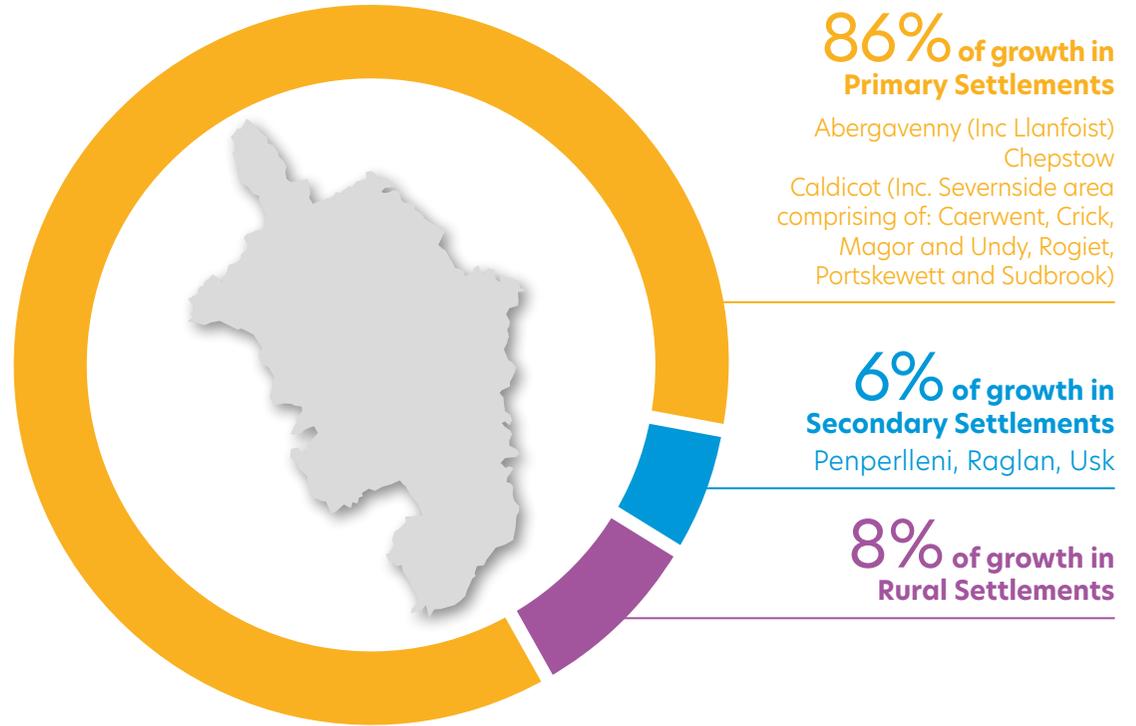
- Maximise affordable housing delivery with a commitment to deliver 50% affordable homes on new housing allocations which will help to tackle Monmouthshire's housing need, homelessness and social inequality. This approach may require Welsh Government policy position changes on use of Social Housing Grant or other public sector funding. Additional viability work will be required to demonstrate site viability and deliverability based on these policy requirements.
- We want to provide a wider choice of smaller homes to enable younger people to live and work in Monmouthshire.
- We want these homes to be designed and built to be 'net zero carbon' with a variety of renewable energy technologies and Green Infrastructure.
- The new homes and jobs will provide people with the opportunity to both live and work within the County with the aim of delivering sustainable and resilient communities for all.
- Although Monmouthshire is not within the national growth area identified in the Future Wales: the National Plan 2040, our evidence shows that the proposed level of growth is essential to meet our evidenced-based objectives and ensure the RLDP is sound. The proposed strategy is supported by FW2040 policies 3, 4, 5 and 7 in particular. The proposed growth will meet our objectives without harming or compromising Welsh Government's objectives for the wider region.
- Promoting job growth through supporting the delivery of the priorities and aims identified in the Council's Economic Growth and Ambition Statement, Investment Prospectus; maximising opportunities from Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, targeting growth in key economic sectors, facilitating home working and providing appropriate employment land in the right locations.

Where will the growth go?

The Preferred Strategy also looks at where this growth should go across the County.

We will focus growth in the County's most sustainable settlements of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Caldicot (including Severnside). This will limit the impact of climate change and ensure good placemaking principles of attractive, accessible places to live and work that reduce the need to travel, have access to sustainable transport links and reduce journeys by the car.

Due to the lack of an identified strategic solution to the treatment of phosphates at the Monmouth Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTW) within the Plan period, no new site allocations are proposed in the primary settlement of Monmouth or within the upper River Wye catchment area north of Bigsweir Bridge.



Homes delivered:

Primary Settlements

Abergavenny (inc. Llanfoist): approximately **1,403 homes** of which **600** will be **new allocations**

Chepstow: approximately **769 homes** of which **145** will be **new allocations**

Caldicot (inc. Severnside): approximately **2,609 homes** of which **1,200** will be **new allocations**

Monmouth: **275** homes already completed/committed since **2018. 0** new allocations

Secondary Settlements

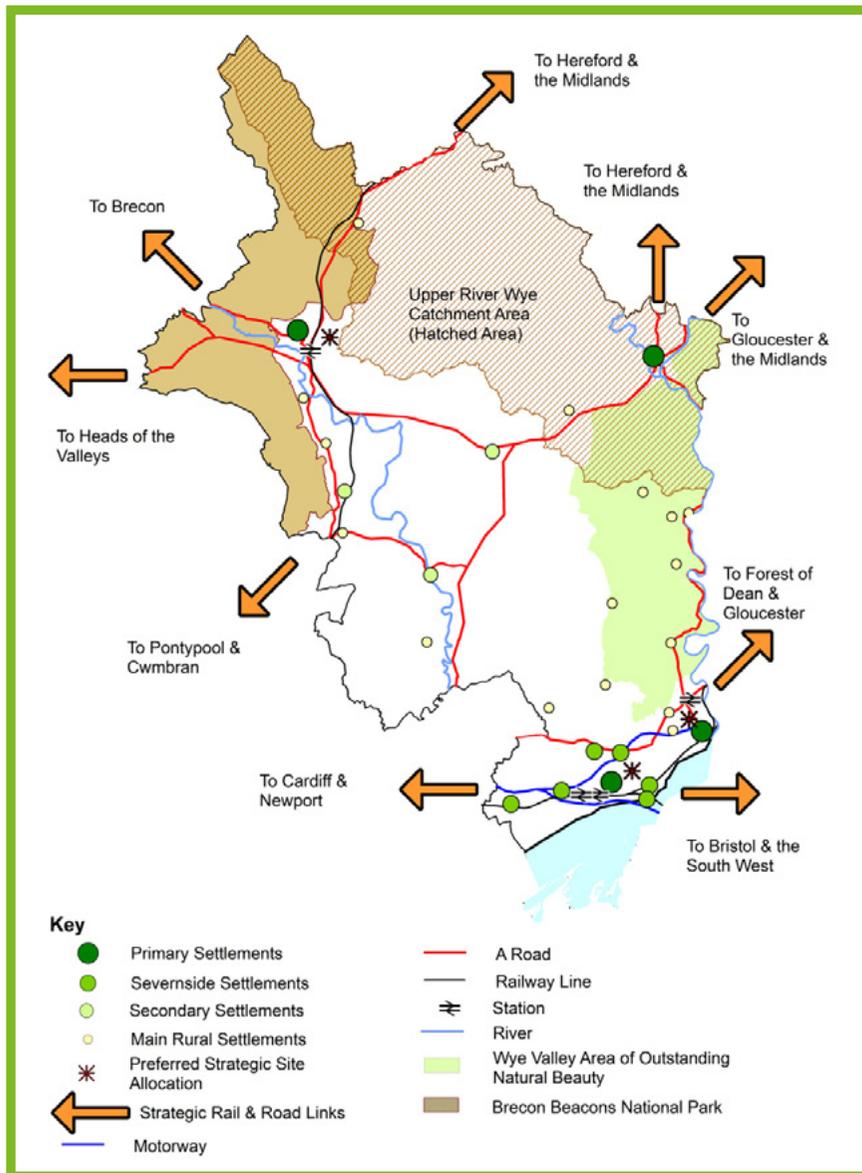
approximately **380 homes** of which **155** will be **new allocations**

Rural settlements

approximately **504 homes** of which **100** will be **new allocations**

- If a strategic solution to the phosphate issue is developed in the Monmouth WwTW during the Plan period, then windfall sites within development boundaries could be developed. In accordance with the Development Plans Manual, these will be considered as 'bonus sites' and will not count towards our housing figures.
- The housing growth figures for each settlement area are indicative and the exact distribution of growth will be determined at the next key stage of the process - The Deposit Plan.
- The housing growth figures also include a 10% flexibility allowance as per Welsh Government guidance.

Preferred Strategy Key Diagram



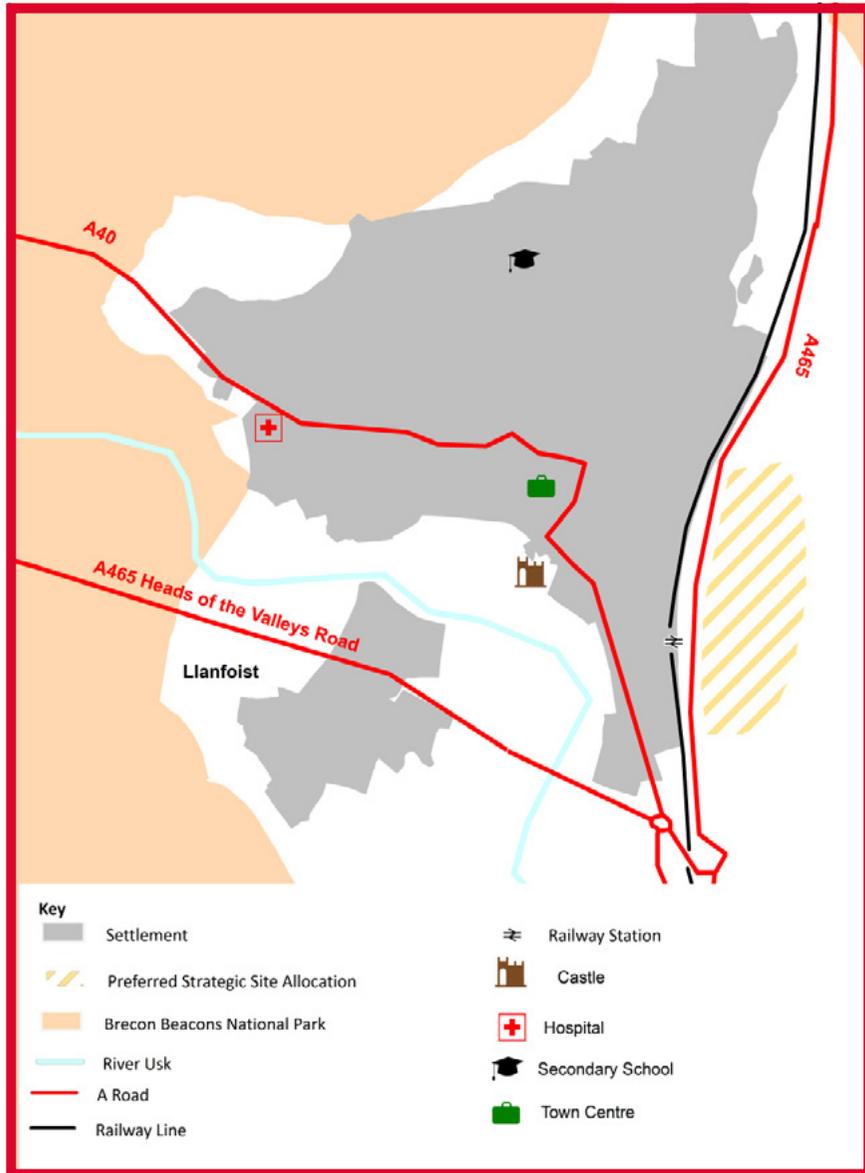
Preferred Strategic Site Allocations

We have identified Preferred Strategic sites in the Primary Settlements of Abergavenny, Chepstow and Caldicot.

- These sites have been selected from a total of 13 strategic growth options located across Abergavenny, Chepstow, Monmouth and Severnside that were previously consulted on in the 2021 Preferred Strategy.
- Site selection has been informed by the consultation responses on the 2021 Preferred Strategy and candidate site assessments that have been undertaken to identify those sites which could contribute to delivering the level of growth required to deliver the Preferred Strategy.
- These sites have provided sufficient evidence of viability and deliverability that will be built on as the Plan progresses.
- Two of the sites, namely Abergavenny East and Caldicot East, are anticipated to provide housing both within and beyond the Plan period.

Abergavenny East

Indicative map for the future strategic growth of Abergavenny East



| Site Name | Size (Ha) | CS Ref | Proposed Use |
|--|-----------|---|--|
| Abergavenny East | 24.75 | CS0213 | Mixed Use: Residential, Employment, Retail, Leisure, Education and Community Use |
| No. of homes proposed in Candidate Site Submission | | Approximate No. of homes within Plan period | |
| 635 | | 500 | |

Mounton Road Chepstow

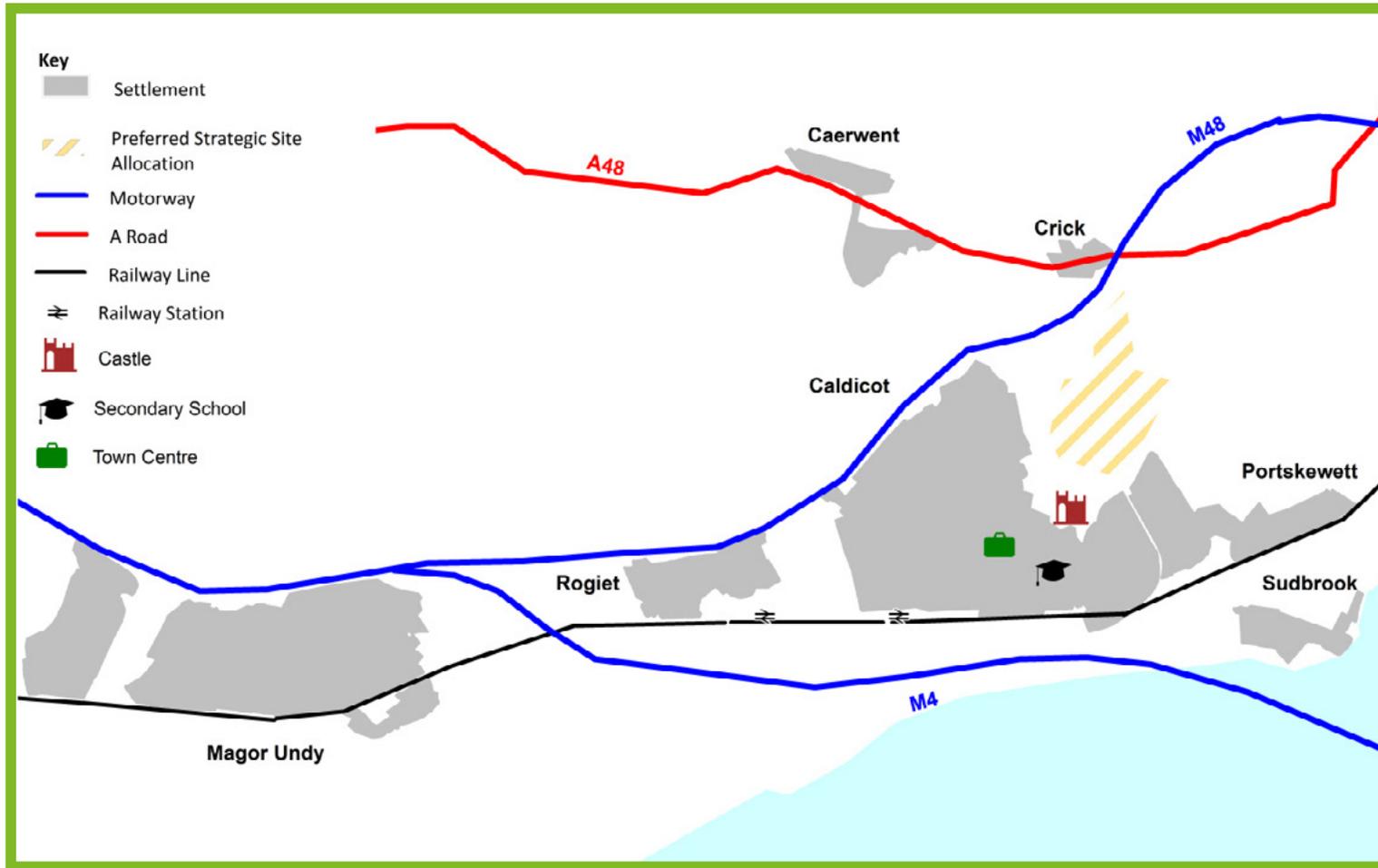
Indicative map for the future strategic growth of Mounton Road Chepstow



| Site Name | Size (Ha) | CS Ref | Proposed Use |
|--|-----------|---|--|
| Mounton Road, Chepstow | 12.08 | CS0165 | Mixed use: Residential, Commercial and Care home |
| No. of homes proposed in Candidate Site Submission | | Approximate No. of homes within Plan period | |
| 145 | | 145 | |

Caldicot East

Indicative map for the future strategic growth of Caldicot East



| Site Name | Size (Ha) | CS Ref | Proposed Use | No. of homes proposed in Candidate Site Submission | Approximate No. of homes within Plan period |
|---------------|-----------|------------------|---|--|---|
| Caldicot East | 67.67 | CS0087 CS0251 | Mixed Use: Residential, Employment, Retail, Leisure | 1460 | 735 |

Strategic Policies

The Preferred Strategy also sets out Strategic Policies which cover a whole range of topic areas. These reflect the four placemaking themes in Planning Policy Wales (PPW) edition 11 set out below.

The Strategic Policies will provide the Planning Policy Framework to deliver affordable homes to reduce homelessness and inequalities, support job opportunities and growth of our economy, and promote high quality, carbon net zero ready homes and well connected places. The policies will draw together measures to ensure we are protecting Monmouthshire's unique and special environment and actively responding to the impacts of our climate and nature emergencies.



The RLDP will be supported by two independent assessments:

Integrated Sustainable Appraisal (ISA) - assesses the extent to which the Plan's strategy and policies will help achieve the wider environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives of the RLDP. The ISA also assesses the Plan's impact on health, equality and Welsh language.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) - demonstrates the Plan's proposals will not have a significant effect upon protected species and designated nature conservation sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

The RLDP will also be accompanied by an **Infrastructure Plan** setting out what is needed to support the development of the allocated sites, and will sit alongside an updated **Local Transport Plan** and an **Economic Development Strategy**.