

VALE OF GLAMORGAN

REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2021 - 2036

SPATIAL STRATEGY OPTIONS

June 2023



BACKGROUND PAPER - BP6



Executive Summary

- i. The Vale of Glamorgan Council is preparing a Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) for the plan period 2021 to 2036. Once adopted, the RLDP will set out the Council's planning framework for the development and use of land in the Vale of Glamorgan and will form the basis for consistent and rational decision-making.
- ii. The consideration of realistic spatial options is an important part in the preparation of the RLDP. Each spatial option will need to have regard to legislation, national planning policy, local and regional strategies. Furthermore, the Plan must take account of the specific characteristics, assets and issues within the Vale of Glamorgan and seek to guide development in the way that responds to this.
- iii. Four spatial strategy options have been prepared, illustrating different choices for the location of new development across the settlements within the Vale and an assessment has been made of the advantages and disadvantages of each option, including how well each strategic option would accord with Future Wales. The four spatial strategy options that were considered are:
 - Option 1 – Continuation of the adopted LDP Growth Strategy
 - Option 2 – Dispersed Growth
 - Option 3 – Focused Growth
 - Option 4 – Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth
- iv. In addition to the 4 realistic options listed, two other options were considered but discounted prior to consideration by stakeholders as they were not considered to be realistic, developable or accord with national planning policy. These options were:
 - Brownfield land only strategy
 - New settlement led strategy
- v. The four realistic options have been considered by stakeholders including the Public Services Board (PSB), Town and Community Councils and Elected Members and there was the widest support for the sustainable transport-oriented growth strategy option. Stakeholders broadly supported for the key components of that strategy, including targeting development to areas well served by both rail and buses, and allowing for affordable housing development led schemes in areas of need.
- vi. Each of the four options have also been considered as part of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA). Overall, Option 4 performs notably well against most of the ISA objectives, reflecting the sustainability merits of connected development.
- vii. It is important that the Preferred Strategy for the RLDP aligns with Future Wales, Planning Policy Wales and Llwybr Newydd, the Wales Transport Strategy and it is considered that Option 4, the Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth option would best accord with the national planning policies on sustainable transport and focusing development in the most sustainable places. This option will consider the capacity of settlements to accommodate development, rather than targeting development primarily to sites of a certain size or position in the hierarchy. This will ensure that the level of growth is sustainable.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Background Paper on the Spatial Strategy Options is one of a number of background documents prepared as part of the evidence base to support the Vale of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP).
- 1.2 The consideration of realistic spatial options is an important part in the preparation of the RLDP. Each spatial option will need to have regard to legislation, national planning policy, local and regional strategies. Furthermore, the Plan must take account of the specific characteristics, assets and issues within the Vale of Glamorgan and seek to guide development in the way that responds to this. This paper provides background information on the strategy options that have been considered. It should be read in conjunction with the Growth Options Background Paper, the Housing Trajectory Background Paper, and the Engagement Background Paper.
- 1.3 Chapter 2 of this paper sets out the policy context when determining realistic spatial options for the RLDP.
- 1.4 Chapter 3 summarises the key supply and demand considerations and contextual evidence that needs to inform any spatial strategy.
- 1.5 Chapter 4 explains four spatial strategy options that have been considered, identifying the advantages and disadvantages of each option, including how well each strategic option would accord with Future Wales. The four spatial strategy options are:
 - Option 1 – Continuation of the adopted LDP Growth Strategy
 - Option 2 – Dispersed Growth
 - Option 3 – Focused Growth
 - Option 4 – Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth
- 1.6 In addition to the 4 realistic options listed, two other options were considered but discounted prior to consideration by stakeholders as they were not considered to be realistic, developable or accord with national planning policy. These options were:
 - Brownfield land only strategy
 - New settlement led strategy
- 1.7 The four realistic options have been considered by a range of stakeholders and the views of stakeholders on each of these options are set out as part of the analysis in Chapter 5.
- 1.8 Each of the four options have also been considered as part of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) and the review of this is included within Chapter 6.
- 1.9 The final section of the paper concludes by identifying the Preferred Strategy option.

2 Policy Context

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11)

- 2.1 In considering the range of options available to the Council, consideration has been given to national planning policy objectives and guidance produced by the Welsh Government for local planning authorities when preparing their LDPs. Planning Policy Wales (PPW, Edition 11) emphasises that:

“Development plans must include a spatial strategy covering the lifetime of the plan which establishes a pattern of development improving social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being. A balance should be achieved between the number of homes provided and expected job opportunities. As well as ensuring all services needed for the expectant levels of growth are provided, an important consideration will be minimising the need to travel, reducing reliance on the private car, and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport” (para 3.42).

- 2.2 PPW also states that *“a broad balance between housing, community facilities, services and employment opportunities in both urban and rural areas should be promoted to minimise the need for long distance commuting. Planning authorities should adopt policies to locate major generators of travel demand, such as housing, employment, retailing, leisure and recreation, and community facilities (including libraries, schools, doctor’s surgeries, and hospitals), within existing urban areas or areas which are, or can be, easily reached by walking or cycling, and are well served by public transport” (para 3.50).*
- 2.3 In the development of spatial strategies, priority must be given to the use of suitable and sustainable previously developed land and/or underutilised land for all types of development.
- 2.4 Spatial strategies should be consistent with the key planning principles and contribute towards the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes.

Development Plans Manual (Edition 3)

- 2.5 The Development Plans Manual (DPM) states that the spatial strategy in LDPs *“must clearly communicate where future development will be located, why and how it will deliver the vision, key issues and objectives.”* This will need to be informed by a robust understanding of the area and the role and function of places as well as an understanding of supply and demand factors within and beyond the local authority boundary.

2.6 Figure 1 summarises the key elements that inform the spatial options.

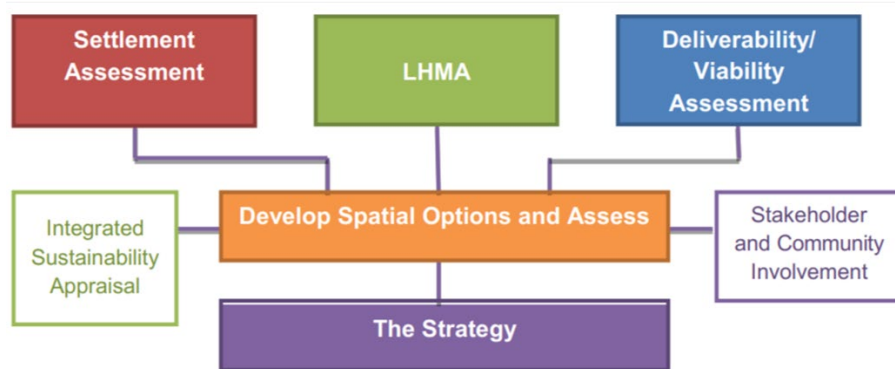


Figure 1 *Developing and Assessing Spatial Options for Growth (DPM, diagram 13)*

2.7 The DPM advises that when considering spatial options local planning authorities must consider and assess a number of realistic options for the spatial distribution of development across their area and take account of a number of factors when assessing spatial strategic options, include the following:

- Aspirations of the plan (areas for regeneration, wider regional context etc).
- Availability and suitability of brownfield land in preference to greenfield land. and land of high agricultural, ecological or landscape value.
- Minimise the need to travel, especially by private vehicles, through the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy and Active Travel Plans.
- Capacity of existing and potential infrastructure.
- Scale and location of market and affordable housing required.
- Scale and location of employment opportunities.
- Environmental implications, e.g., energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, flood risk, biodiversity, green infrastructure, mineral resources, and ground conditions, including mine gas.
- Social and cultural factors, including consideration of the Welsh language
- Accessibility to jobs, shops, and services.
- Understand how different market areas can affect the viability of delivering private and affordable housing as well as associated infrastructure to support the level of development proposed.
- Deliverability of key sites and overall strategy.
- National strategies and priorities, such as decarbonisation and health.

Future Wales

2.8 Future Wales sets out the 20-year spatial framework for land use in Wales, providing a context for the provision of new infrastructure and growth. Future Wales is the highest tier of development plan in Wales and is focused on solutions to issues and challenges at a national scale. Future Wales sets out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system at a national,

regional, and local level can deliver it. It provides direction for Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) and Local Development Plans (LDPs) and supports the determination of Developments of National Significance.

- 2.9 Policy 1 of Future Wales identifies three National Growth Areas, including with South East Wales. The spatial strategy diagram supporting this policy identifies that the Vale of Glamorgan is located within the South East National Growth Area, referred to as 'Cardiff, Newport, and the Valleys'. Policy 1 is supplemented by Policy 33, which specifically relates to the Cardiff, Newport, and the Valleys National Growth Area. The Policy states that LDPs should recognise the National Growth Area as the focus for strategic economic and housing growth; essential services and facilities; advanced manufacturing; transport and digital infrastructure.
- 2.10 Policy 2 on 'Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking' sets out the key placemaking principles that should be considered when determining the location of new development. This includes creating a mix of uses and variety of house types and tenures, building places at a walkable scale with homes, local facilities, and public transport within walking distance and ensuring development is built at appropriate densities with green infrastructure incorporated.
- 2.11 Future Wales also identifies a 'Town Centre First' approach in Policy 6, where significant new commercial, retail, education, health, leisure, and public service facilities must be located within town and city centres. The supporting text for the policy also indicates that town centres are appropriate locations for new homes.
- 2.12 Policy 7 – 'Delivering Affordable Homes' – identifies that LDPs should develop strong evidence-based policy frameworks to deliver affordable housing. Local Authorities should explore all opportunities to increase the supply of affordable housing.
- 2.13 Policy 8 on 'Flooding' recognises that flood risk is a constraining factor to development and there are parts of the National Growth Areas that are susceptible to flooding. Places that are not at risk of flooding should be prioritised within National Growth Areas
- 2.14 The identification of 'Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure' that should be safeguarded is set out in Policy 9. LPAs should include these areas and other opportunities in their development plan strategies and policies in order to promote and safeguard the functions and opportunities they provide.
- 2.15 Policy 10 relates to International Connectivity, with a Strategic Gateway being identified at Cardiff Airport. The LDP will need to support the Strategic Gateways by maximising the benefits they provide to their respective regions and Wales. New development around the Strategic Gateways should be carefully managed to ensure their operation is not constrained or compromised. It is recognised that Cardiff Airport is an essential part of Wales' strategic transport infrastructure and is

an important driver within the Welsh economy. Cardiff Airport is located within the Cardiff Airport and Bro Tathan Enterprise Zone which offers opportunities for investment in the site and surrounding areas. The Enterprise Zone offers a wide range of development sites and business accommodation, providing opportunities for the development of bespoke facilities or investment in existing accommodation.

- 2.16 Policy 12 on ‘Regional Connectivity’ states that LPAs must maximise opportunities arising from the investment in public transport when planning for growth and regeneration. Planning authorities must integrate site allocations, new development, and infrastructure with active travel networks and, where appropriate, ensure new development contributes towards their expansion and improvement.
- 2.17 The ‘South East Metro’ is addressed in Policy 36, with a requirement for LDPs to “plan growth and regeneration to maximise the opportunities arising from better regional connectivity, including identifying opportunities for higher density, mixed-use and car-free development around new and improved metro stations.” It is recognised that the high population concentration combined with a dense rail network in the South East means the region is well-suited to transit orientated development, as promoted by Policy 12. LDPs “*must ensure that long-term strategic decisions maximise opportunities in areas that will benefit from improved accessibility and investment in public transport, including from the Metro.*”

Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20: Planning and the Welsh Language

- 2.18 The TAN requires LDPs to consider the Welsh language in the preparation of the LDPs. A Sustainability Appraisal must be prepared, which consider the relationship of the LDP strategy, policies and site allocations with social and community needs and opportunities.
- 2.19 At strategic options and Preferred Strategy stage, consideration should be given to strategic approaches which may support the Welsh language. This may include:
- positive promotion of local culture and heritage.
 - planning the amount and the spatial distribution of new development and infrastructure, particularly where this would help to support community sustainability.
 - phasing of strategic housing and employment developments.
 - identifying areas of linguistic sensitivity or significance.
 - directing strategic sites to communities where the evidence suggests the likely impact on the use of the Welsh language is positive.
 - developing mitigation measures if evidence suggests the likely impact on the Welsh language to be negative.

2.20 The Welsh Government's Transport Strategy sets out three priorities for the next 5 years:

- Bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel.
- Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable, and efficient transport services and infrastructure.
- Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport.

2.21 The Strategy sets out a sustainable transport hierarchy to inform decisions about new infrastructure:

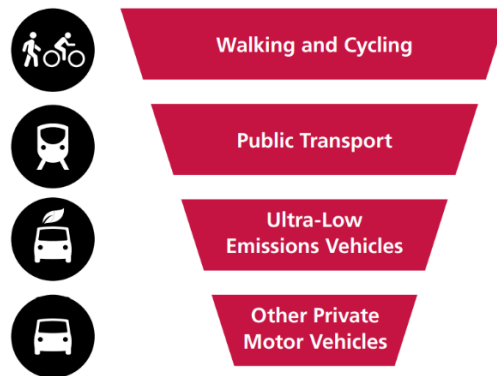


Figure 2 Sustainable Transport Hierarchy, Llwybr Newydd

Cardiff Capital Region

2.22 The Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) comprises the ten local authorities across the South-East Wales region, including the Vale. These local authorities are working collaboratively on projects and plans for the area that seek to tackle issues affecting the whole of the region, such as worklessness and poor transportation links. The authorities forming the CCR have entered into a City Deal to fund projects aimed at boosting the competitiveness of the region over the next 20 years. The CCR City Deal will help boost economic growth by improving transport links, increasing skills, helping people into work, and giving businesses the support they need to grow.

2.23 The South Wales Metro is a key funding commitment from City Deal aimed at providing an integrated network of active, bus and rail travel that will improve accessibility and make sustainable transport across and throughout the region easier and faster.

Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board Well-Being Plan 2023-2028

2.24 A new Well-being Plan was approved in May 2023 by the Public Services Board (PSB) setting out an agreed Vision for the Vale of 'Happy and healthy communities working together to create a fair and sustainable Vale for everyone'.

- 2.25 Three new Wellbeing Objectives have been agreed:
- A more resilient and greener Vale - by understanding and making the changes necessary as individuals, communities, and organisations in response to the climate and nature emergencies.
 - A more active and healthier Vale – by encouraging and enabling people of all ages to be more active and to promote the benefits of embracing a healthier lifestyle.
 - A more equitable and connected Vale - by tackling the inequities that exist across the Vale, engaging with our communities and providing better opportunities and support to make a lasting difference.
- 2.26 Priority workstreams have been identified where specific focus is needed to help deliver these objectives:
- Responding to the climate and nature emergencies
 - Working with people who live in our communities that experience higher levels of deprivation
 - Becoming an Age Friendly Vale
- 2.27 The RLDP has an important role to play in contributing to these objectives and workstreams. From the spatial strategy perspective, ensuring that targeting new developments to sustainable locations that are well served by services, facilities and employment opportunities and where there are sustainable transport options including active travel, will help respond to the climate change emergency. The spatial distribution of development to target affordable and specialist housing to those communities with the greater identified need will also help address inequalities.

3 Supply and Demand Factors

3.1 As explained in Chapter 2, the DPM highlights that the spatial strategy should be informed by a range of supply and demand factors, it is stated that “*the spatial strategy will draw upon a number of key pieces of evidence, such as a settlement assessment, Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) and viability assessment, to make informed policy decisions on where to locate development.*” These factors have shaped evaluation of each spatial option and proved critical in determining which is the most suitable to formulate a spatial strategy that will underpin the Replacement LDP. A summary of key supply and demand evidence is provided below in advance of the sequential assessment of each spatial option in the following chapter.

Settlements Appraisal

3.2 The adopted LDP identifies a hierarchy of settlements, based upon availability and accessibility to services and facilities, with the largest towns and villages considered to be the most appropriate locations for new homes and jobs.

3.3 In preparing the RLDP, a review of the Settlement Hierarchy has been undertaken which identifies the functional role of each settlement based on an audit of services, facilities, transport accessibility, and accessibility to employment within each settlement. Based upon the findings of the review, as detailed in the Settlements Appraisal Review Background Paper, the settlement hierarchy has been updated, as shown in Figure 3.

<u>Key and Service Centre Settlements:</u>		
Key Settlement: Barry		
Service Centre Settlements: Cowbridge, Llantwit Major, Penarth		
<u>Primary Settlements:</u>		
Dinas Powys, Rhoose, St. Athan, Llandough (Penarth), Sully, Wenvoe, Wick and Culverhouse Cross		
<u>Minor Rural Settlements:</u>		
Aberthaw (East)	Graig Penllyn	Penllyn
Aberthin	Llancarfan	Peterston Super Ely
Bonvilston	Llandow	Sigingstone
Colwinston	Llanmaes	St Brides Major
Corntown	Llysworney	St Nicholas
Ewenny	Ogmore by Sea	Treoes
Fferm Goch	Pendoylan	Ystradowen

Figure 3 Settlement Hierarchy, Settlements Appraisal Review

- 3.4 In line with national policy, the settlement hierarchy is a key factor in determining the future distribution of growth in the Vale of Glamorgan, and as such has informed the spatial options that have been considered. However, at this stage in the plan preparation the hierarchy simply reflects the current function of each town or village. Whilst some settlements are considered to be sustainable in terms of the facilities and services available, not all locations may be suitable to accommodate any significant additional housing, employment, or community facilities because of physical constraints or potential impacts, for example, flood risk or nature conservation designations, which limit the scope for the expansion of settlements.
- 3.5 The Settlements Appraisal Review has helped identify the most appropriate locations to accommodate future development to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth, minimise unsustainable patterns of movement and support local services and facilities. These findings will be duly considered when evaluating the spatial options within this paper. Ultimately, the Spatial Strategy will aim to direct growth towards areas that already benefit from good infrastructure, services and facilities, or where additional capacity can be provided, in accordance with the Settlements Appraisal.

Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2021

- 3.6 The latest LHMA for the Vale of Glamorgan covers the period 2021-2026, and calculates the net need for affordable housing, including social rented housing, intermediate rented housing, and low-cost home ownership housing products, over the coming five years. The assessment of need is based upon 12 housing market areas in the Vale, as detailed in Table 1.

Barry	Llantwit Major	St Athan
Penarth	Penarth and Llandough	St Brides Major
Dinas Powys	Peterston Super Ely	Sully
Llandow/Ewenny	Rhose	Wenvoe

Table 1 Vale of Glamorgan LHMA Housing Market Areas

- 3.7 Outside Barry and Penarth and Llandough these are coterminous with ward boundaries and sit within 5 broader market areas (Figure 3), namely, Penarth and Llandough, Barry, East Vale, Coastal, and Rural Vale and reflect the market viability that are used within the current LDP for calculating affordable housing requirements on developments site. These market viability areas were identified by the Council's through previous housing viability appraisals undertaken to support the adopted LDP.



Figure 4 Vale of Glamorgan Housing Market Viability Areas

- 3.8 The calculation for the LHMA 2021 shows a net annual requirement of 1,205 affordable units in the Vale of Glamorgan during the next five-year period 2021-2026 (4450 over the full period). This is an increase in the need for social rented units of 116 units per year from the LHMA 2019 and an increase in the number of LCHO units required from 21 in 2019 to 79 and the need for intermediate rent units increasing to 211 from 70 in 2019.
- 3.9 The headline annual need for affordable housing in the Vale of Glamorgan from 2021 to 2026 is: **1,205 units per annum**, comprising:
- 915 units of social rented accommodation
 - 211 units of intermediate rented housing
 - 79 units of low-cost home ownership
- 3.10 General needs properties show the greatest need, with a shortfall each year of 915, the majority of which are required in Barry and Penarth/Llandough wards. In terms of property sizes, the highest need continues to be for one- and two-bedroom homes.
- 3.11 Table 2 below shows the distribution of arising need by housing tenure for the 12 market areas for the period 2021-2026. This highlights that the greatest need for social rented housing is within the wards of Barry, Penarth and Llandough, and Llantwit Major, whilst elsewhere there the LHMA indicates there is a generally need for affordable housing across the Vale, particularly within those settlements contain large settlement populations.

Market Area Ward	Social Rent	Low-Cost Housing	Intermediate Rent
Barry	507	41	82
Penarth & Llandough	184	18	23
Llantwit Major	62	5	15
Cowbridge	37	-4	14
Rhose	34	4	7
Wenvoe	25	2	2
Dinas Powys	20	7	25
Peterston	16	1	8
St Bride's Major	8	2	14
Llandow/Ewenny	7	2	18
Sully	2	-1	2
Totals	915	79	211

Table 2 Annual Affordable Housing Need by Market Area

- 3.12 The provision of affordable housing is a key priority of the RLDP and as such will major factor in the determination of the location growth in the plan. In line national policy, the prioritising of growth within the areas of highest need would enable the RLDP to contribute towards meeting the affordable housing need. However, it must be recognised that there is a need in all market areas and consideration must be given to maximising opportunities for affordable across that there is general affordable housing need across the Vale, this would necessitate a strategy that offers a balanced approach to growth to contribute to meeting future affordable needs where they arise.

Affordable Housing Viability

- 3.13 Policy SP4 of the Adopted LDP identifies a target of up to 3,252 affordable homes across the Vale of Glamorgan over the Plan period. The target was derived from the results of the Council's Vale wide Affordable Housing Viability Study, which identified the potential levels of affordable housing that could be secured through the planning system.
- 3.14 PPW requires Local Planning Authorities have a thorough understanding of development viability across the authority to ensure that LDP policies relating to "*affordable housing thresholds and/or site-specific targets planning authorities must consider their impact on site viability to ensure residential sites remain deliverable*" (paragraph 4.2.31)
- 3.15 Whilst the Council has yet to undertake a review of development viability across the Vale, which will need to be in place for Deposit LDP, the levels of affordable housing secured through the existing policy framework to secure affordable housing provides an indication of future delivery and potential spatial consequences.

3.16 LDP Policy MG4 sets out the Council's requirements for the provision of affordable housing, based upon 3 tiers of affordable housing targets that reflect the spatial variations in viability across the authority. Namely:

- Within Barry a requirement for 30% affordable housing to be provided on residential developments that result in a net gain of 5 or more dwellings.
- Within Llantwit Major, Rhoose and St Athan a requirement for 35% affordable to be provided on residential developments resulting in a net gain of 5 or more dwellings
- Within Cowbridge, Dinas Powys, Llandough, Penarth, Sully, Wenvoe, the minor rural settlements (as defined in the LDP settlement hierarchy) and the rural Vale of Glamorgan¹ a requirement for 40% affordable housing to be provided on residential developments resulting in a net gain of 1 dwelling or more, and for a net gain of 2 dwellings in the case of developments that involve the conversion of existing buildings.

3.17 This tiered policy approach reflects variations in viability within the sub housing market areas found to be present within the Vale of Glamorgan Council through analysis of HM Land Registry house price sales data undertaken as part of the Council's earlier viability assessments. These market areas are consistent with that of the LHMA.

3.18 In terms of affordable housing delivery, the RLDP review report highlighted that between the period 2011 and 2021 a total of 1,622 affordable dwellings were provided against a monitoring target of 1,646 dwelling for the same period against the overall LDP target of 3,252 affordable homes. In terms the LDP policy framework, the review report highlighted that on many sites the Council has successfully secured the required percentage of affordable housing.

3.19 Initial viability information received from promoters of sites at the candidate site stage indicates that the current affordable housing thresholds and percentages set within the adopted LDP remain valid, although this will be subject to more detailed view as part of the High-Level Viability Assessment.

3.20 From a delivery perspective, focusing development in the most viable 40% areas (Cowbridge, Dinas Powys, Llandough, Penarth, Sully, Wenvoe and the minor rural settlements) would maximise the delivery of affordable housing through the planning system. However, the affordable housing targets in the other parts of the Vale are also comparatively high. It is important that consideration is not given only to maximising delivery, but also to responding to need, as Barry has a lower affordable housing target of 30% but also has the highest level of need.

¹ For the purposes of the policy, areas outside of the defined settlements are treated as being within the Rural Vale of Glamorgan

Flood Risk

- 3.21 In accordance with Planning Policy Wales, planning authorities should adopt a precautionary approach by directing development away from areas at risk of flooding from the sea or rivers. The Flood Map for Planning has been reproduced in the Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (SFCA) prepared by JBA, as shown in Figure 5. This identifies that parts of the Vale are affected by river and sea flooding, and this will have implications on the ability of certain areas to accommodate new development.

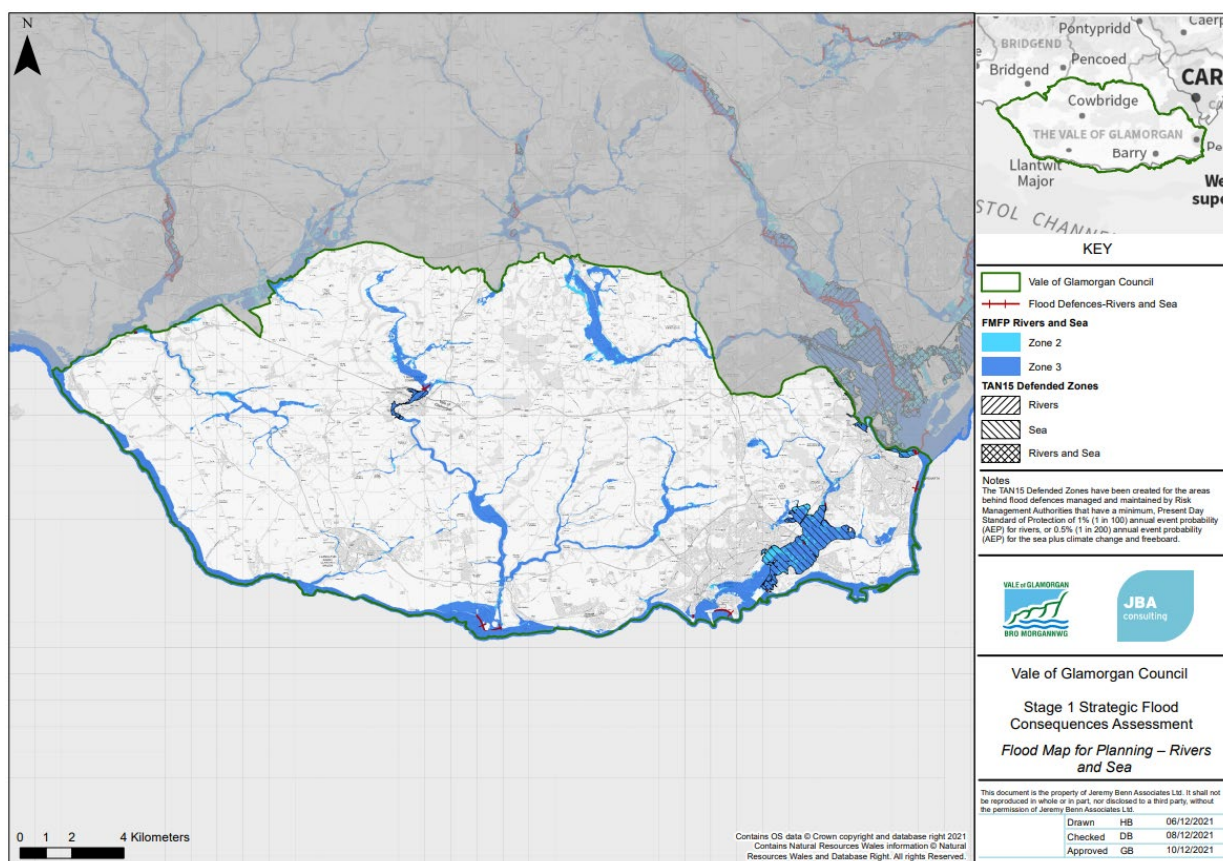


Figure 5 Flood Maps for Planning – Rivers and Sea

- 3.22 Appendix J1 of the SFCA indicates that fluvial flooding in the Vale of Glamorgan is predominantly confined to rural areas, with limited areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 within the existing urban areas. Flood defences are found along the River Cadoxton, in a small area of Dinas Powys and to the east of Cadoxton, as well as the River Thaw upstream of Cowbridge. These flood defences are maintained by NRW. The flood defences on the River Thaw benefit large areas of Cowbridge and form part of the TAN 15 Defended Zone. Therefore, all forms of development are possible if the requirements of the Justification Test can be satisfied. The flood defences have a standard of protection of 1 in 100 years, making areas behind the flood defences favourable to the requirements of TAN 15.
- 3.23 The report also highlights that there are areas of Dinas Powys and Barry that are currently at flood risk with no significant protection from flood defences.

Consequently, development in these areas will have to be carefully located away from flood risk areas, particularly areas of Flood Zone 3. Development within these floodplain areas will only be justified where land is previously developed.

- 3.24 Based on the Flood Map for Planning, the SFCA identifies that West Aberthaw, Barry and south of the Cadoxton area (Barry) are the main areas at risk of flooding from the sea. Flooding is most extensive on south of the Cadoxton areas in mainly industrial areas. NRW flood defences are present in Barry at Whitmore Bay with a standard of protection of 1 in 200 years and a wall in West Aberthaw with a 1 in 50 year standard of protection. The areas behind these flood defences are classified as TAN 15 defended areas. There are also TAN15 defended areas around Penarth and the Vale's border with Cardiff due to the Cardiff Bay Barrage.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- 3.25 The location and quality of agricultural land is a further factor that will inform the spatial distribution of growth. Planning Policy Wales emphasises that the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a by the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system should be conserved, as it is a finite resource.
- 3.26 PPW, paragraph 3.59, identifies that *“when considering the search sequence and in development plan policies and development management decisions considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development, because of its special importance. Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a should only be developed if there is an overriding need for the development, and either previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades is unavailable, or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweighs the agricultural considerations. If land in grades 1, 2 or 3a does need to be developed, and there is a choice between sites of different grades, development should be directed to land of the lowest grade.”*
- 3.27 The presence of BMV land is a key consideration within the candidate site assessment methodology. However, at the strategic level it is important to consider whether the presence of BMV land is likely to constrain the delivery of specific spatial choices.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

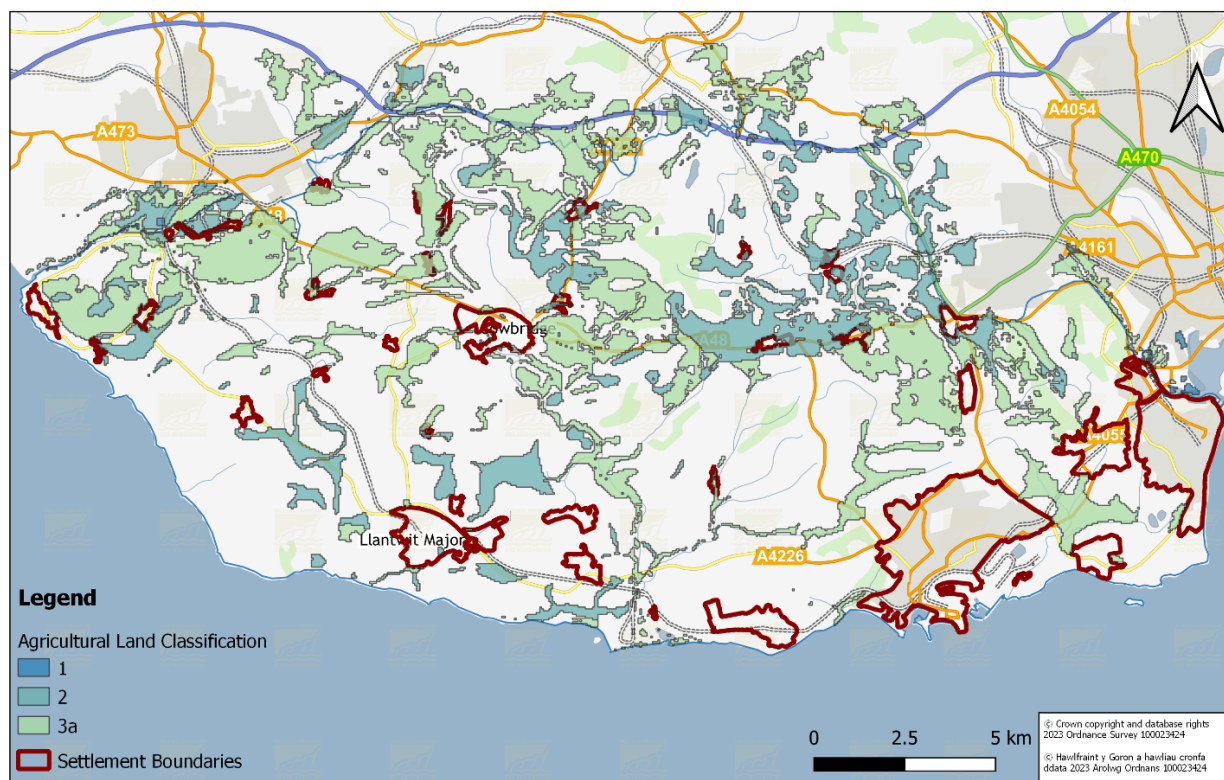


Figure 6 *Best and Most Versatile Land – Grades 1, 2 and 3a*

3.28 As shown in Figure 6, the latest Predicative ALC Map for Wales (Version 2), published in 2019, shows that there is only a small area of Grade 1 land (Excellent Quality Agricultural Land) within the Vale (in north Penarth), but a significant part of the local authority area is subject to Grade 2 (Very Good Quality Agricultural Land) or 3a (Good Quality Agricultural Land) designations. Grade 3a land is identified between the key settlement of Barry and the primary settlements of Dinas Powys and Sully, which would limit the ability of Barry to expand to the east. There is no BMV land contiguous with other parts of the Barry settlement boundary.

3.29 It is also important to consider how BMV land would affect the three ‘service centres’ of Penarth, Llantwit Major and Cowbridge. A small area of Grade 3a land is identified to the south of Penarth. As this area forms part of Cosmeston Country Park, this is not an area where a strategy would be looking to focus development. There are some small areas of BMV land on the boundary of Llantwit Major, but the location of these parcels is unlikely to affect any development strategy for Llantwit Major. There are also some small parcels of 3a land adjacent to the boundary of Cowbridge, although some of the areas identified are within the flood plain where development would be directed away from in any event. This constraint may influence future growth patterns for Cowbridge, but it would not preclude Cowbridge as a potential location for new development.

- 3.30 A review of the 'primary settlements' in the settlement hierarchy against ALC layers has identified that BMV land could be a constraint in the site selection process in Dinas Powys, St Athan, Sully, Wenvoe, Culverhouse Cross and Wick, depending on the scale and location of the new development proposed. The constraint is not so significant as to rule out the potential of any new development in Dinas Powys, St Athan, Sully or Wick but would be a significant constraint in Wenvoe and Culverhouse Cross.
- 3.31 A number of minor rural settlements, particularly in the rural north of the Vale, are significantly affected by the designation of BMV land contiguous with existing settlement boundaries. This could potentially limit the ability of specific minor rural settlements to accommodate additional development, and consideration must therefore be given to the deliverability of strategies that seek to target moderate levels of development to minor rural settlements.

Ecological Constraints

- 3.32 In line with national planning policy, a key objective of the plan is to protect and enhance the natural environment. Development must also protect natural habitats and soil quality and assist in halting the nature emergency by delivering a local net biodiversity benefit. At the highest level, it is prudent to undertake a broad assessment of settlements against national and local ecological designations to identify major constraints. Site specific ecological value will be considered as part of the candidate site assessment process.
- 3.33 The Vale currently has a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), as shown in red on Figure 7. These include Barry Woodlands, which is located to the north of Barry and is also an ancient woodland, and Fferm Walters to the north west of the key settlement. Furthermore, there are smaller areas within and adjoining Barry that are designated as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. The ecological constraints will restrict the options for the expansion of Barry.

Ecological Constraints

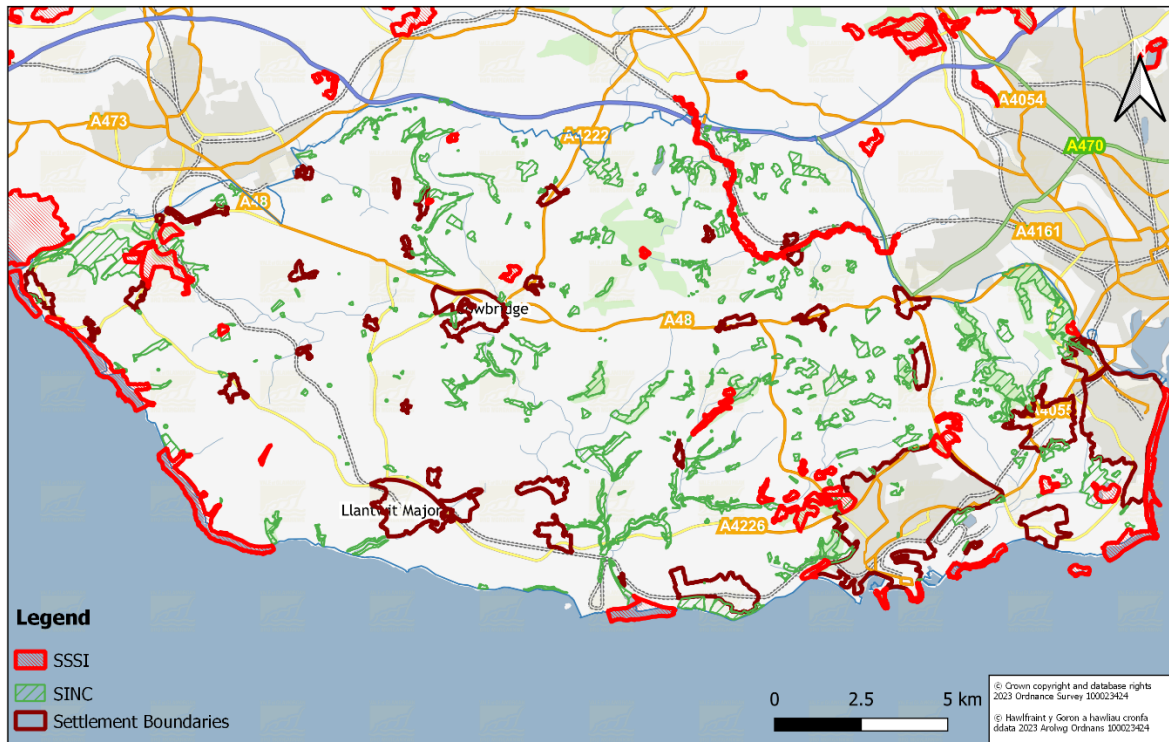


Figure 7 Ecological constraints

- 3.34 With regards to the service centres, there are no SSSI or SINC designations in or adjoining the existing settlement boundary of Llantwit Major. Cowbridge has two identified SINC – west of Cowbridge High School and Llanblethian Hill Down, which may limit the scale and location of any further development. The coastline adjoining Penarth has SSSI status – Penarth Coast/Severn Estuary. In addition, Cosmeston Lakes are an SSSI and the wider Cosmeston Lakes Country Park is a SINC.
- 3.35 SSSI designations are unlikely to affect any proposed development in the primary settlements. However, there are a number of edge of settlement SINC which may constrain future development location choices. This is particularly evident in Dinas Powys, which is constrained on its southern and western boundaries by SINC.
- 3.36 There are also three Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) within or adjoining the boundary to the Vale:
- Dunraven Bay, Southerndown.
 - Severn Estuary (including the coastline between Penarth and Lavernock).
 - Kenfig (adjoining the north west boundary of the Vale).
- 3.37 Due to their location on the Vale coastline, the SACs are not in locations where new development would be directly proposed. However, any potential cumulative

impact of new development on the habitats within these designated sites would be considered as part of the HRA process.

Landscape Constraints

- 3.38 A significant part of the Vale is also covered by landscape designations. The coast between Ogmore-by-sea and St Athan is subject to a Heritage Coast designation. The boundary of this is contiguous with the existing settlement boundary of Llantwit Major and encompasses the settlements of Ogmore-by-Sea and Southerndown. PPW states that “*designation as a heritage coast does not directly affect the status of the area in planning terms, however, the features which contributed to the designation of such areas will be important considerations in development plans and in making development management decisions*”. The designation will be reconsidered as part of the RLDP process,
- 3.39 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) are designated across a large part of the Vale, including north of Dinas Powys (Cwrt-yr-Ala Basin), land north of Barry (Duffryn Basin and Ridge Slopes), Nant Llancarfan, Elly Valley and Ridge Slopes, the Upper and Lower Thaw Valley and Castle upon Alun adjoining Ewenny.

Landscape Constraints

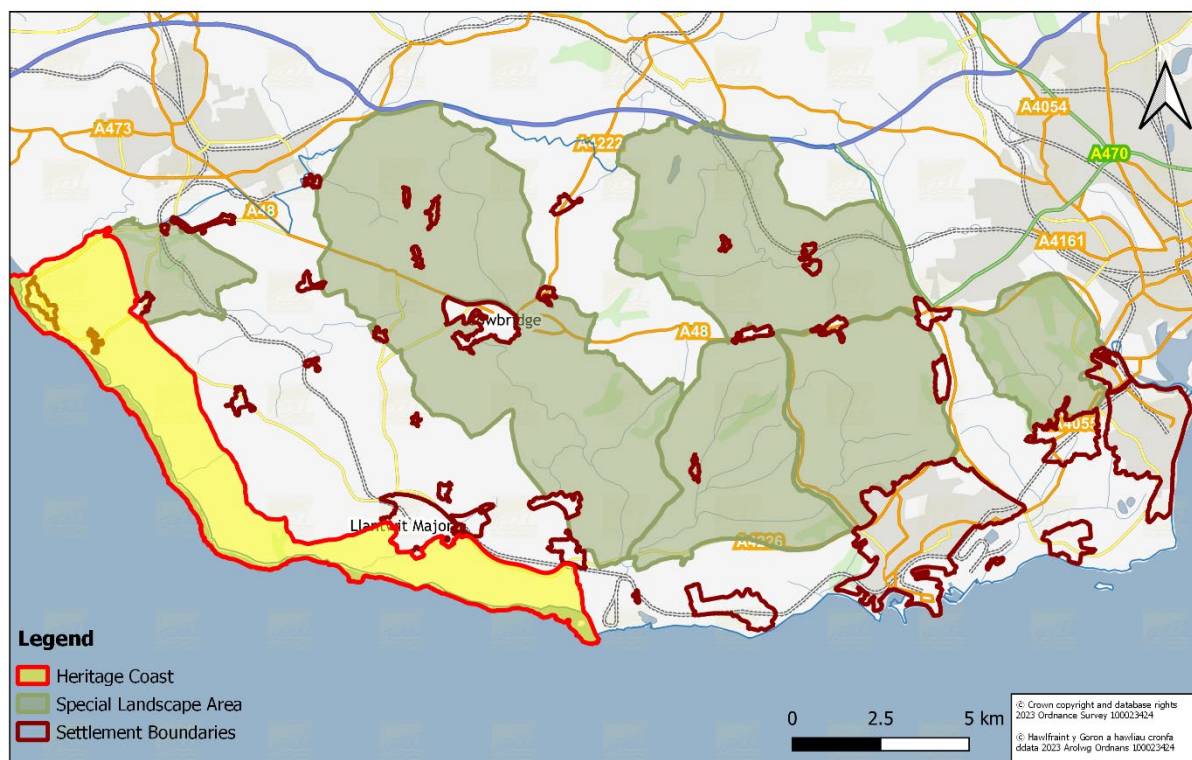


Figure 8 Landscape Constraints

3.40 SLAs are non-statutory designations that define local areas of high landscape importance and their boundaries will be reconsidered as part of the RLDP process. Candidate sites within SLAs will need to demonstrate that there would be no unacceptable harm to the important landscape character.

Welsh Language

3.41 The 2021 Census identifies that 9.3% of people aged 3 years and over in the Vale of Glamorgan can speak, read and write Welsh, which is a 0.7% increase above the 2011 Census. The overall percentage is lower than the Welsh average of 17.8%.

3.42 At Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) level, there is some variation in the percentage of people that can speak, read and write Welsh. The lowest levels are broadly in the more populated area on the coastal belt, with the lowest areas being the Palmerstown area (eastern Barry) with 7.8% and Llantwit Major with 8.1%. Welsh language skills are slightly higher in Penarth and the rural Vale (above 10%), with the highest levels in the Cowbridge MSOA (11.7%).

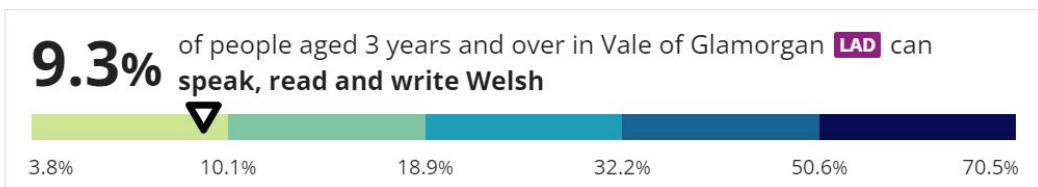
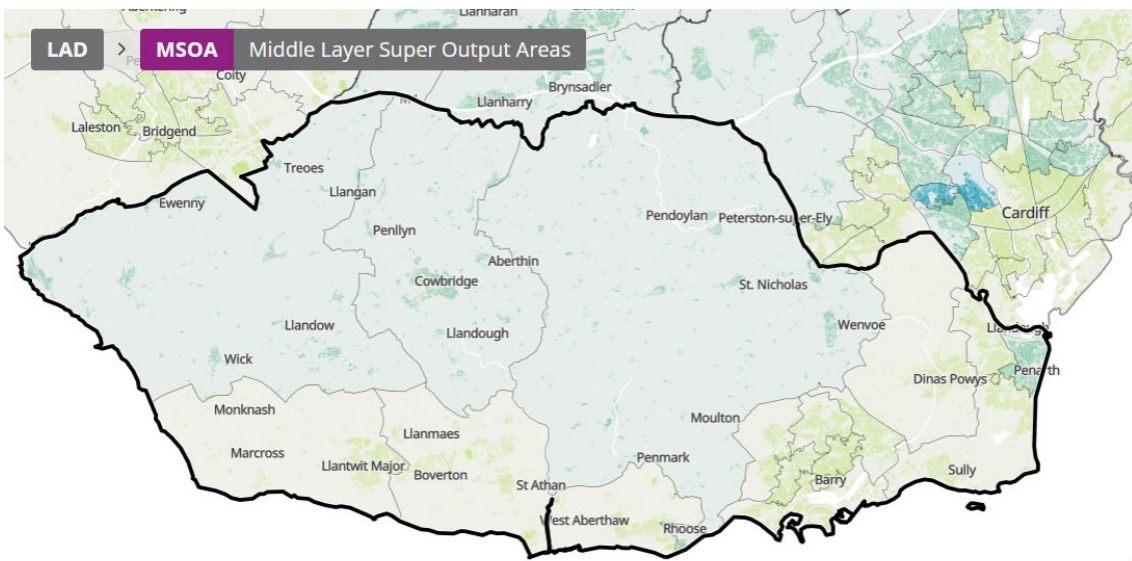


Figure 9 Welsh language skills - Census Maps, ONS

3.43 The Vale has a Welsh Medium Secondary School (Bro Morgannwg), which is located in Barry and serves the whole Vale, plus six Welsh primary schools, located in Barry, Penarth, Llantwit Major and Cowbridge, but serving the wider Vale. From

an RLDP strategy perspective, it is important that there are opportunities for local people to remain living within their existing communities, which could help sustain the Welsh language, and that this includes appropriate housing for families with school aged children, to help sustain the Welsh Medium primary schools.

- 3.44 The evidence from the Growth Options Background Paper indicates that there has been significant net in-migration of families into the Vale over the last decade, primarily from Cardiff, and a net out-migration of younger people from the Vale to other areas. The Welsh language skills of those moving into and out of the Vale are not known but ensuring that there is an availability of a range and choice of all types of housing, including affordable housing, will benefit community sustainability overall, which may have positive impacts on Welsh speakers.

4 Spatial Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council has sought to identify realistic options based upon broad approaches for the distribution of growth for housing and other forms of development over the lifetime of the plan. In identifying the preferred option, consideration has been given to the advantages and disadvantages of each option, as discussed below. This includes a consideration of how each option accords with Future Wales.
- 4.2 It should be noted that there are some key planning policy issues that must be incorporated in whatever strategy option is chosen. These are not repeated under each strategy option but will be an integral part of any strategy. These include:
- Utilise previously developed land before greenfield sites in the first instance
 - Address climate change through mitigation and adaptation
 - Promote placemaking principles
 - Promote sustainable transport and modal shift
 - Maximise opportunities for green infrastructure enhancement
 - Respond to the nature emergency through biodiversity net benefit

Option 1 – Continuation of the Adopted LDP Growth Strategy

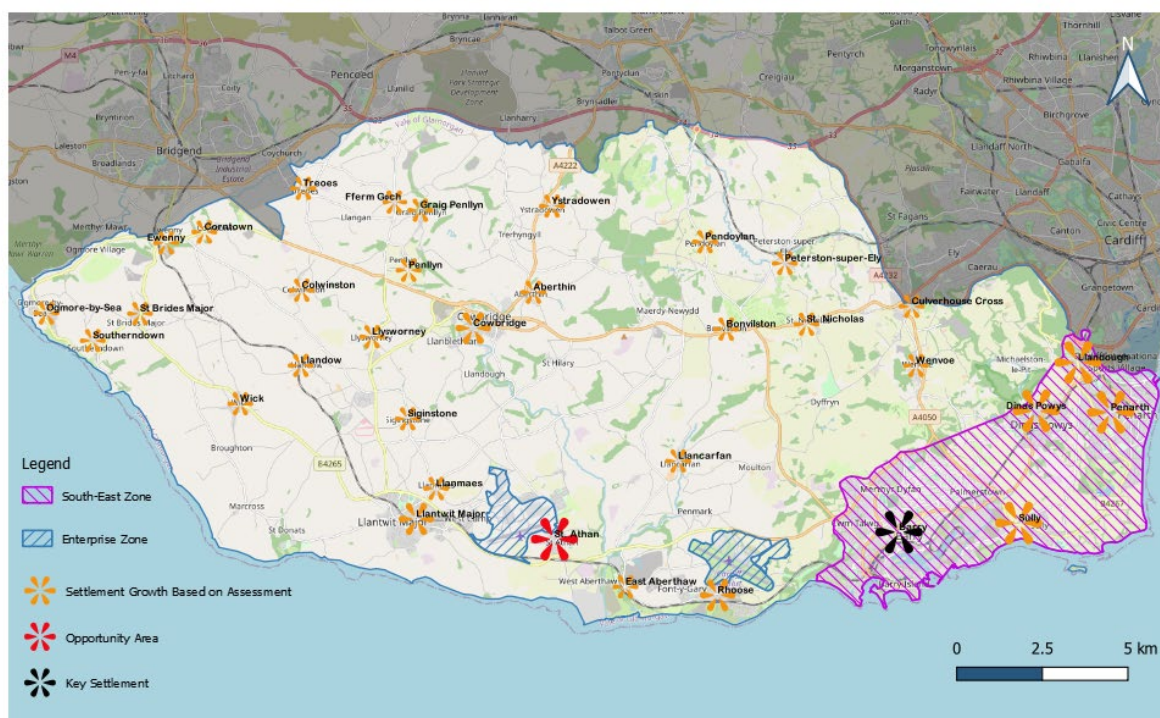
- 4.3 The spatial strategy for the adopted LDP seeks to promote new development in the South East Zone, which includes the settlements of Barry, Dinas Powys, Llandough, Penarth and Sully, as this area has the widest range of services and facilities and good transport links to the wider region. Barry Waterfront is identified as a strategic site for a mix of uses including residential, employment, retail, and leisure with its redevelopment a key part of the wider regeneration of Barry. If this strategy were to continue, the remaining land at Barry Waterfront would continue to be an allocation, although it would no longer be a strategic site, as the majority of the Waterfront is now complete. There would be a need for additional housing in the Barry area to support its role and function.
- 4.4 In accordance with the strategy, new development sites were allocated in the other settlements with the South East Zone include Penarth, Dinas Powys and Sully. The majority of these sites have either been developed, have planning permission or have an application awaiting determination on them. The continuation of the strategy would require finding additional sites within these areas over and above what already has planning permission at a level that would accord with the role and function of these settlements. Consideration would be given to the constraints and opportunities of individual settlements.
- 4.5 The adopted LDP strategy also promotes development in a number of other sustainable settlements outside of the South East Zone, which included the service centres of Llantwit Major and Cowbridge, the primary settlements of Rhoose, St Athan and Wenvoe, as well as a number of minor rural settlements, as this helped to spread the benefits of residential and commercial development more evenly across the Vale of Glamorgan. Those settlements that accommodated new

development were those that had the services and facilities to assimilate growth without it having a detrimental impact on the existing character and local environment and where new development would help sustain existing services and facilities and provide opportunities to improve infrastructure. If the adopted LDP strategy were to be continued, an appropriate level of additional development would also be targeted to those sustainable settlements.

- 4.6 The other elements of the adopted strategy include the identification of St Athan as a key development opportunity, maximising opportunities for new investment linked to the Enterprise Zone and identifying significant levels of new development to reflect the importance of St Athan in the Plan Strategy. The strategy also recognises the importance of the Airport as an employment and transport opportunity. If the adopted LDP strategy was to be continued into the Replacement LDP, the role of St Athan as a focus for development would be retained.
- 4.7 It should be noted that the LDP Review Report has highlighted that the strategy as a whole has been largely successful in the delivery of new housing, employment, and infrastructure, as well as facilitating regeneration opportunities. However, the strategy did require the release of a number of large edge of settlement greenfield sites in minor rural settlements for market led developments in places that are not well served by sustainable transport. If this element of the strategy were to continue, this would not be compatible with Future Wales policies on focusing development close to town centres and in areas well served by the Metro.
- 4.8 The continuation of this strategy would mean that development would continue to be focused in the South East Zone in Barry, Penarth, Llandough and Dinas Powys as well as around the St Athan area. This strategy would also mean that development would be targeted to those settlements that are considered to be sustainable in the settlement review, including primary settlements and minor rural settlements where appropriate.

Spatial Option 1 - Continuation of Adopted LDP Growth Strategy

Vale of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan 2021 - 2036



3.45 The key advantages and disadvantages of this strategy option are as follows:

Advantages

- This strategy has been highly successful with housing, including affordable housing, being delivered and the majority of allocations being progressed.
- It offers to opportunity to address affordable housing need where it is most acute (SE Zone).
- The identification of St. Athan as an opportunity area means there is a strong correlation between new housing and employment.

Disadvantages

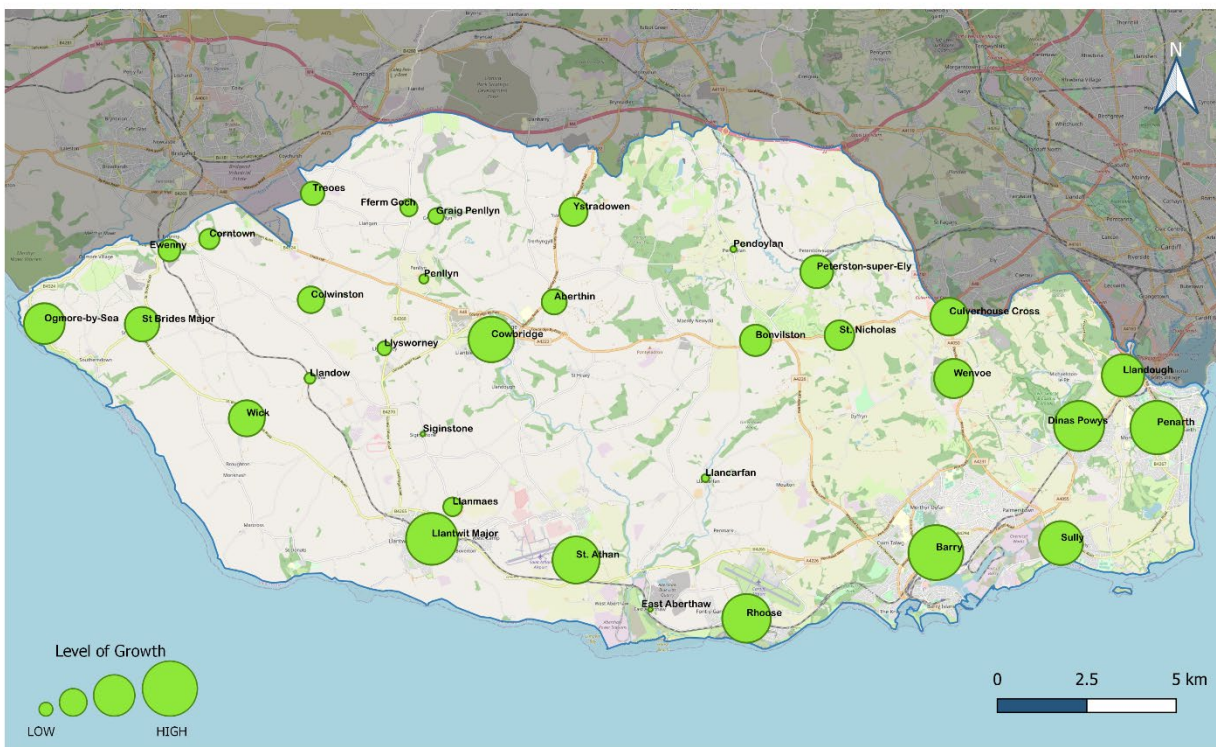
- Some minor rural settlements have experienced significant growth in adopted plan period. Accommodating further growth could change the character of these areas further.
- There may not be appropriate sustainable sites available within each of the settlements identified.
- Focusing development in settlements in communities with limited sustainable transport options would be contrary to Future Wales, which seeks to target development to sustainable areas close to town centres and well served by the South Wales Metro.

Option 2 – Dispersed Growth

- 4.9 This option would disperse development across all settlements that are defined as key and service centre settlements, primary settlements and minor rural settlements at level that is proportionate to the size of each settlement.
- 4.10 With this approach, the number of new homes allocated in each settlement would reflect the size of the settlement, based on the number of dwellings that were currently within that settlement. The Key Settlement of Barry would need to accommodate the most growth, with the Service Centres of Cowbridge, Llantwit Major and Penarth also being required to accommodate a significant share. Primary Settlements and Minor Rural Settlements would be required to take a smaller share proportionate to their size. Due to their very small size, those hamlets and smaller rural settlements that are not specifically referenced in the settlement hierarchy would not be required to accommodate any growth.

Spatial Option 2 - Dispersed Growth

Vale of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan 2021 - 2036



- 4.11 The following table sets out how future growth could potentially be dispersed across all settlements within the Vale of Glamorgan. The residential populations in the table have been calculated using the residential dwelling counts for each settlement using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer, applying an average household size of 2.26 (taken from the 2021 Census data for the Vale of Glamorgan).

Settlement	Estimated Residential Population	Percentage of new development	Settlement Hierarchy
Barry	54768	41.8%	Key Settlement
Penarth	23891	18.3%	Service Centre
Llantwit Major	8521	6.5%	Service Centre
Dinas Powys	7807	6.0%	Primary Settlement
Rhoose	6116	4.7%	Primary Settlement
St Athan	5128	3.9%	Primary Settlement
Cowbridge	4267	3.3%	Service Centre
Sully	3653	2.8%	Primary Settlement
Llandough (Pen)	1964	1.5%	Primary Settlement
Ogmore by Sea	1408	1.1%	Minor Rural Settlement
Wenvoe	1345	1.0%	Primary Settlement
Culverhouse Cross	1058	0.8%	Primary Settlement
Wick	755	0.6%	Primary Settlement
St Brides Major	673	0.5%	Minor Rural Settlement
Peterston Super Ely	621	0.5%	Minor Rural Settlement
Bonvilston	601	0.5%	Minor Rural Settlement
St Nicholas	582	0.4%	Minor Rural Settlement
Ystradowen	517	0.4%	Minor Rural Settlement
Colwinston	478	0.4%	Minor Rural Settlement
Aberthin	381	0.3%	Minor Rural Settlement
Treoes	322	0.2%	Minor Rural Settlement
Llanmaes	292	0.2%	Minor Rural Settlement
Corntown	309	0.2%	Minor Rural Settlement
Ewenny	311	0.2%	Minor Rural Settlement
Fferm Goch	214	0.2%	Minor Rural Settlement
Graig Penllyn	208	0.2%	Minor Rural Settlement
Llysworney	201	0.2%	Minor Rural Settlement
Llandow	171	0.1%	Minor Rural Settlement
Llancarfan	156	0.1%	Minor Rural Settlement
Penllyn	156	0.1%	Minor Rural Settlement
Pendoylan	115	0.1%	Minor Rural Settlement
Aberthaw (East)	102	0.1%	Minor Rural Settlement
Sigingstone	99	0.1%	Minor Rural Settlement

Table 3 *Distribution of future housing growth by settlement population*

3.46 The key advantages and disadvantages of this strategy option are as follows:

Advantages

- Development would be shared equitably across the Vale, proportionate to the size of settlement.
- A number of smaller sites may place less pressure on services and facilities than a few larger sites.

Disadvantages

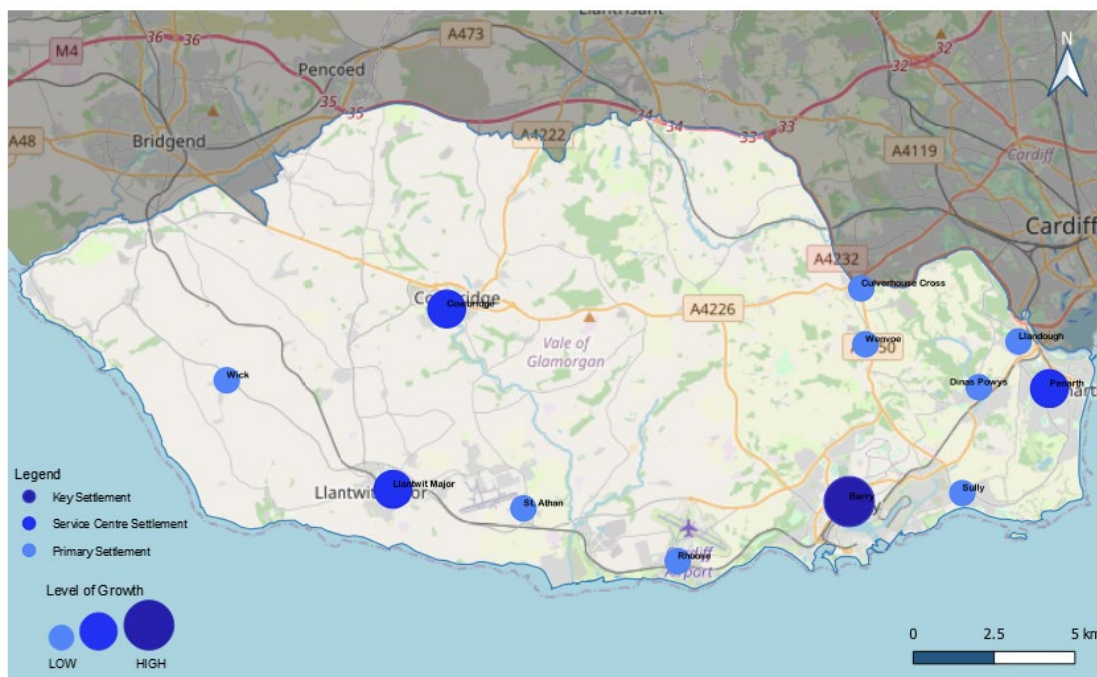
- No consideration is given to the character and environmental constraints of a settlement.
- Development would potentially be targeted to areas with limited services and facilities.
- There would be no alignment between employment and housing
- The ability to deliver infrastructure improvements more may be more difficult on smaller sites.
- There may not be available sites within each of the settlements identified.
- This option could potentially limit the ability for affordable housing in areas of most acute need.
- It is considered to be contrary to Future Wales which seeks to target development to sustainable areas close to town centres and well served by the South Wales Metro, as a proportion of new development would be in places with poor sustainable transport access.

Option 3 – Focused Growth

4.12 In this strategy option, the largest settlements in the Vale of Glamorgan would deliver most of the growth. The level of growth would accord with their position within the settlement hierarchy – Barry, as a key settlement, and Cowbridge, Llantwit Major and Penarth, as service centres, would be required to accommodate the most development. The primary settlements would also accommodate an element of growth, proportionate to their size. New development would be restricted in the minor rural settlements, hamlets, and smaller rural settlements.

Spatial Option 3 - Focused Growth

Vale of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan 2021 - 2036



4.13 The key advantages and disadvantages of this strategy option are as follows:

Advantages

- This strategy option would accord with Future Wales which seeks to target development to sustainable areas close to town centres and well served by the South Wales Metro, as the majority of settlements where new development would be proposed have good transport links.
- Significant development would be targeted in those areas with the most acute affordable housing need (Barry and Penarth market areas).

Disadvantages

- Focussing significant development on a smaller number of settlements will place pressure on services and facilities in these areas.
- There would be limited opportunities for affordable housing delivery outside of the identified areas, which would not help address need in smaller communities.
- It does not consider the capacity of these communities to accommodate additional development.
- There may not be available sites within each of the settlements identified.

Option 4 – Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth

4.14 This option would see the greatest development take place in the settlements along the Vale of Glamorgan Line and Penarth branch line as these areas have the greatest accessibility to sustainable transport modes. Growth in these areas would encompass most of the Vale's largest settlements and current strategic sites, including the remaining land at Barry Waterfront, the Cardiff Airport Enterprise Zone, and Llantwit Major. The option would seek to maximise opportunities along the line, including a potential additional railway station in St. Athan, and improved service frequency along the line.

4.15 It is recognised that not all of the Vale's service centre and primary settlements are served by the rail network. However, there are some settlements that have frequent bus links to other communities within the Vale and to the wider region, including Cardiff. The spatial strategy will therefore also seek to target development in the service centre of Cowbridge if appropriate sites are available as the settlement has excellent bus connectivity and public transport therefore represents a realistic alternative to the car. As identified within the Settlements Appraisal Review, Cowbridge is also a sustainable location with a thriving high street accommodating a supermarket and a range of other shops, services and facilities which cater for everyday needs, reducing the need to travel. It also has primary and secondary schools, a leisure centre and health facilities.

4.16 Unlike Option 3, which assumes that the level of growth will be based on the position in the hierarchy, consideration will be given in this option to the capacity of each settlement to accommodate additional development having regard to the constraints within each settlement.

Spatial Option 4 - Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth

Vale of Glamorgan Replacement Local Development Plan 2021 - 2036



4.17 The key advantages and disadvantages of this strategy option are as follows:

Advantages

- Would accord with Future Wales which seeks to target development to sustainable well served by the SE Metro. These are also generally towns so would accord with the town centre first policy.
- This approach would allow for modal shift, encouraging journeys to be made by means other than the car.
- Significant development would be targeted in those areas with the most acute affordable housing need (Barry and Penarth market areas).
- Limited affordable housing growth in minor rural settlements where appropriate to help address need.

Disadvantages

- Focussing significant development on a smaller number of settlements will place pressure on services and facilities in these areas.
- There may not be available sites within each of the settlements identified.

Additional options that have been ruled out

4.18 It should be noted that two further strategic options were considered, but discounted for the following reasons:

- **Brownfield only strategy** – an option which sought to only allocated previously developed (brownfield) land where opportunities are available has been considered. The search sequence set out in national planning policy states that previously developed and under-utilised land in sustainable locations should be allocated before greenfield sites and this will be a key principle that will be reflected in all strategy options chosen. However, this option has been discounted as not being realistic as insufficient previously developed land is available across the settlements of the Vale to meet housing requirements. A significant proportion of the key brownfield development opportunity in the adopted LDP, Barry Waterfront, has been developed and whilst the remaining land will continue to be allocated, this alone will not meet housing requirements. There are several other smaller brownfield opportunities, but again these are not at a sufficient scale upon which to base a growth strategy.
- **New Settlement led strategy** – consideration has also been given to the potential of allocating a new settlement within the Vale of Glamorgan. However, this approach has been discounted as it would be contrary to Planning Policy Wales, which states “*due to their strategic nature new settlements should only be proposed as part of a joint LDP, an SDP or Future Wales. This is due to their significance and impacts extending beyond a single local authority.*”

5 Stakeholder Engagement

- 5.1 In order to inform the determination of a preferred strategy option, engagement with key stakeholders on the spatial strategy options was held through a series of seminars in January/February 2023. The purpose of the workshop series was to explain the policy context that informed the development of the spatial strategy options and present the four preferred options to stakeholders for discussion.
- 5.2 In accordance with the Delivery Agreement, the engagement workshops were held with Elected Vale of Glamorgan Councillors, Local Community Councils, and members of the Vale of Glamorgan Public Service Board² (PSB). The primary purpose of these workshops was to enable stakeholders to have direct input into the Plan making process and develop collective ownership of the Plan as it progresses through its various stages.

Group	Date
Elected Members	16/01/23
Town and Community Councils	08/02/23
Vale of Glamorgan Officers group	14/02/23
Vale of Glamorgan Public Services Board	15/02/23

- 5.3 As part of each workshop, there were opportunities to discuss each strategy option and each participant was encouraged to express their views on a preferred strategy option by participating in a Mentimeter poll which allowed stakeholders to vote for which overall strategy they felt was most appropriate for the Vale, which components of the strategy they were most supportive of and to also identify any other strategies or components that they felt should be considered.
- 5.4 Prior to each engagement event, all invitees received a briefing note which included an explanation of the four strategy options, which allowed interested parties to consider the matter in advance of the meetings. Those who were unable to attend the workshop were also invited to share their views via email or through a Microsoft Forms survey.
- 5.5 Detailed information on this engagement can be found in the Council's Engagement Background Paper. However, the key conclusion was that the majority of stakeholders felt that Option 4 Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth was the most appropriate strategy option, and there was broad support for the key components of the strategy, including targeting development to areas well served by both rail and buses, and allowing for affordable housing development led schemes in areas of need.

² Vale of Glamorgan PSB brings together senior leaders from public and third sector organisations across the Vale. Partners include Cardiff & Vale University Health Board, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Natural Resources Wales, South Wales Police. For full list of partners see https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Public-services-board/Public-Services-Board.aspx

6 Integrated Sustainability Appraisal of Spatial Strategy Options

6.1 An Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) for the Spatial Strategy Options has been prepared by Aecom. The four options are assessed in relation to each of the ten ISA themes established through scoping and the detailed findings are presented within the ISA report and summarised below

Summary findings

ISA theme	Rank/ Significant effects	Option 1: Continue the adopted LDP strategy	Option 2: Dispersed growth	Option 3: Focused growth	Option 4: Sustainable transport- oriented growth
Economy and employment	Rank	2	3	4	1
	Significant effects?	No	No	No	No
Population and community	Rank	2	3	3	1
	Significant effects?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Health and wellbeing	Rank	2	2	3	1
	Significant effects?	No	No	No	No
Equality, diversity, and social inclusion	Rank	1	1	2	1
	Significant effects?	No	No	No	No
Climate change (mitigation and adaptation)	Rank	2	3	2	1
	Significant effects?	No	No	No	Yes - positive
Transport and movement	Rank	2	4	3	1
	Significant effects?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Yes - positive
Natural resources (air, soil, minerals and water)	Rank	1	3	2	1
	Significant effects?	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Rank	1	2	1	1
	Significant effects?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Historic environment	Rank	1	3	2	2
	Significant effects?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Landscape	Rank	1	2	2	2
	Significant effects?	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative

6.2 Overall, Option 4 performs notably well against most of the ISA objectives, reflecting the sustainability merits of connected development. The following conclusions are drawn in relation to each theme.

ISA theme	Conclusions
Economy and employment	No significant effects are considered likely under any of the options, but Option 3 is notably less preferred overall due to the limitations placed on developing the rural economy (alongside rural housing growth), and a narrowed focus on the largest settlements, which may be at an opportunity cost of successfully integrating employment development alongside housing growth. Option 4 is preferred overall due the focus on connected development (including economic connections) alongside appropriate consideration of rural development. Option 1 is considered likely to deliver similar benefits and is preferred to Option 2 as it considers appropriate rural development as opposed to assigning growth to every settlement despite their potential lack of economic and transport connections.
Population and community	Distributing the housing supply under all options is likely to support significant positive effects in the long-term. Option 4 performs notably better than the other options by means of its potential to deliver accessibility benefits, ensuring all new homes are well connected. Option 1 also provides the benefits of a considered and more equitable housing distribution across the borough and is thus ranked next. Options 2 and 3 are ranked least favourably given the constraints identified under each option (potential effects on settlement identities under Option 2 and restricting rural development under Option 3).
Health and wellbeing	Whilst no significant effects are considered likely, it is recognised that Option 4 would support more residents across the borough with sustainable transport options including active travel options and green infrastructure networks. Options 1 and 2 are also considered to perform marginally better than Option 3 given these options provide greater potential for rural development benefits.
Equality, diversity, and social inclusion	No significant effects are considered likely at this stage, and positive effects are likely to be realised when the supporting policy framework emerges. Whilst few differences are drawn between the options, Options 1, 2, and 4 are considered to rank better than Option 3, given that they support an element of rural inclusivity.
Climate change (mitigation and adaptation)	<p>Given the potential to deliver significant positive effects in relation to climate mitigation (i.e., focusing development in locations well served by sustainable transport), Option 4 is preferred overall.</p> <p>In relation to climate change adaptation, it is recognised that all options will be directed by the need for sequential and exception testing, which should ultimately ensure that vulnerable development within the floodplain is avoided, and no significant effects are considered likely in this respect. It is also recognised that the supporting policy framework for any of the options could ensure that suitable drainage strategies are included in development proposals, which minimise all forms of flood risk and seek betterment in terms of flood risk and/ or water quality.</p>
Transport and movement	Option 4 ultimately stands out by focusing growth along sustainable transport corridors, including smaller settlements that are well connected by active travel and bus services. This option is ranked most favourably overall given its alignment with sustainable transport and movement objectives and the potential delivery of a new rail station at St Athan. No significant effects are considered likely under the remaining options and Option 2 is ranked least favourably given it directs development to less connected areas.

	Option 1 is considered to perform better than Option 3 as the approach considers settlement constraints and opportunities more widely across the Vale, which may help unlock more minor positive effects at smaller settlements.
Natural resources (air, soil, minerals, and water)	Whilst no significant negative effects are anticipated in relation to air, mineral resources, or water resources, there is an identified potential for negative effects of significance in relation to soil resources for all options. Limiting rural development under Options 1, 3, and 4 make these options perform marginally better than Option 2, and Options 1 and 4 provide notable benefits by means of connected development providing alternatives to the private car making them rank better overall.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Whilst the potential for negative effects of significance is recognised under all options, there is uncertainty in the absence of precise locations and growth levels at individual settlements. Options 1, 3, and 4 are marginally preferred to Option 2 as they provide greater potential for strategic benefits (associated with economies of scale) and limit the extent of effects across the borough.
Historic environment	With a wealth of heritage assets and heritage settings abundant across the borough, all growth strategies (i.e., all options) are recognised for potential negative effects of significance, which will be better informed by consideration of precise development locations (with overall uncertainty noted at this stage). Option 2 is notably most likely to lead to impacts across a greater extent of the borough, by allocating development within every settlement area proportionate to its size. Whilst Option 3 (and to a lesser extent Option 4) would limit the extent of development across the borough by focusing it in the main settlement areas (potentially positive), the increased scale of development in main settlements, because of its narrowed focus, could ultimately lead to greater impacts in relation to the significance of designated heritage assets and their settings in these settlements. Option 1 is considered to perform marginally better in this respect, by way of wider distribution and consideration of each settlement's capacity for growth.
Landscape	With a focus on settlement expansion (with limited brownfield opportunities) under all options, it is considered likely that future growth will place pressures upon sensitive landscapes and key characteristics, predominantly from increased urbanisation. The potential for significant negative effects is ultimately recognised at this stage under all options (pre-mitigation), though this will be better informed by consideration of precise development locations. Option 2 is notably most likely to lead to impacts across a greater extent of the borough, by allocating development within every settlement area proportionate to its size. Whilst Option 3 (and to a lesser extent Option 4) would limit the extent of development across the borough by focusing it in the main settlement areas (potentially positive), the increased scale of development in main settlements, because of its narrowed focus, could ultimately lead to greater impacts in relation to landscape character and encroachment upon the countryside. Option 1 is considered to perform marginally better in this respect, by way of wider distribution with greater consideration of each settlement's capacity for growth, including landscape capacity for change.

7 Recommended Spatial Strategy Option

- 7.1 It is important that the Preferred Strategy for the RLDP aligns with Future Wales, Planning Policy Wales and Llwybr Newydd and it is considered that Option 4, the Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth option would best accord with the national planning policies on sustainable transport and focusing development in the most sustainable places. This option will consider the capacity of settlements to accommodate development, rather than targeting development primarily to sites of a certain size or position in the hierarchy. This will ensure that the level of growth is sustainable.
- 7.2 Many of the key employment opportunities, include the Cardiff Airport and Bro Tathan Enterprise zone, are well related to existing and proposed rail stations. This will offer the opportunity for commuting using sustainable means. Furthermore, the alignment of new housing with the areas that are identified for employment growth has the potential to reduce the need to travel.
- 7.3 This option will also allow for small scale affordable housing led developments in minor rural settlements where appropriate in order to respond to the need for affordable housing in communities across the Vale. This may also help to support the Welsh language in these communities by allowing local people to remain within their communities.
- 7.4 This option was also identified as the preferred option by the majority of stakeholders, with widespread support for the key components of the strategy including targeting development to places that are well served by rail and bus services, aligning housing and employment, and identifying affordable housing led schemes in areas of identified need. This option will best support the objectives set out in the Well-being Plan, including the workstreams on responding to the climate and nature emergencies, addressing inequalities and becoming an age friendly Vale.
- 7.5 Option 4 also performs best against most of the ISA objectives, reflecting the sustainability merits of connected development.

Appendix 1 - Assessment against Future Wales Policies

++	Strategy would strongly accord with Future Wales policy
+	Strategy would accord with Future Wales policy
○	Strategy would have a neutral effect on Future Wales policy/policy not relevant
⊖	Strategy would conflict with Future Wales policy
⊖⊖	Strategy would strongly conflict with Future Wales policy

Future Wales Policy	Option 1 – Continuation of the adopted LDP Strategy	Option 2 – Dispersed Growth	Option 3 – Focused Growth	Option 4 – Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth
1. Where Wales will grow	+	+	+	+
2. Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration – Strategic Placemaking	+	○	+	+
3. Supporting Urban Growth and Regeneration – Public Sector Leadership	+	○	++	++
4. Supporting Rural Communities	+	+	○	+
5. Supporting the Rural Economy	+	+	○	+
6. Town Centre First	+	⊖	++	++
7. Delivering Affordable Homes	+	+	+	++
8. Flooding	+	+	+	+
9. Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure	+	○	○	+
10. International Connectivity	++	○	+	++
11. National Connectivity	+	○	+	++
12. Regional Connectivity	+	⊖	++	++

Future Wales Policy	Option 1 – Continuation of the adopted LDP Strategy	Option 2 – Dispersed Growth	Option 3 – Focused Growth	Option 4 – Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth
13. Supporting Digital Communications	○	○	○	○
14. Planning in Mobile Action Zones	○	○	○	○
15. National Forest	○	○	○	○
16. Heat Networks	+	○	+++	+
17. Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and Associated Infrastructure	+	+	+	+
18. Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of National Significance	+	+	+	+
19. Strategic Policies for Regional Planning	+	+	+	+
33. National Growth Area – Cardiff, Newport, and the Valleys	+	+	+	+
34. Green Belts in the South East	○	○	○	○
35. Valleys Regional Park	○	○	○	○
36. South East Metro	+	○	+++	+++

Appendix 2 - Assessment against RLDP Objectives

++	Strategy would strongly accord with RLDP Objectives
+	Strategy would accord with RLDP Objectives
○	Strategy would have a neutral effect on RLDP Objectives / not relevant
⊖	Strategy would conflict with RLDP Objectives
⊖⊖	Strategy would strongly conflict with RLDP Objectives

RLDP Objective	Option 1 – Continuation of the adopted LDP Strategy	Option 2 – Dispersed Growth	Option 3 – Focused Growth	Option 4 – Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth
Objective 1 - Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change	+	⊖	+	++
Objective 2 - Improving Mental and Physical Health and Well-being	+	⊖	+	+
Objective 3 - Homes for All	+	++	+	++
Objective 4 – Placemaking	+	○	+	+
Objective 5 – Protecting and enhancing the Natural Environment	+	○	○	+
Objective 6 - Embracing Culture and Heritage	+	+	+	+
Objective 7 - Fostering Diverse, Vibrant, and Connected Communities	+	○	+	++
Objective 8 - Promoting Active and Sustainable Travel Choices	+	⊖	+	++

RLDP Objective	Option 1 – Continuation of the adopted LDP Strategy	Option 2 – Dispersed Growth	Option 3 – Focused Growth	Option 4 – Sustainable Transport Oriented Growth
Objective 9 - Building a Prosperous and Green Economy	++	+	○	+
Objective 10 – Promoting Sustainable Tourism	+	+	+	+



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