

# **MERTHYR TYDFIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006-2021**

**ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT  
for the period  
1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Merthyr Tydfil Local Development Plan 2006-2021 was formally adopted by Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2011.
- 1.2 Under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, all Councils have a duty to produce an LDP Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which must be submitted to the Welsh Government at the end of October each year.
- 1.3 This report represents the third AMR of the Merthyr Tydfil LDP and is based on the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 with referrals to earlier parts of the plan period where indicators dictate this to be necessary. The Report has two primary roles – the first is to consider whether the policies identified in the monitoring framework are being implemented, and secondly, to consider whether the plan as a whole is working successfully, and if not, whether a partial or complete review is necessary.

### **The requirement for LDP monitoring**

- 1.4 In order to monitor performance consistently, the plan needs to be considered against a standard set of monitoring targets and indicators. Chapter 6 of the LDP sets out the monitoring targets and indicators that will be used as a basis for this AMR and reflects the information that is required to be included by LDP Regulation 37. In this context, the AMR is required to:
- Identify policies that are not being implemented, and for each such policy
    - identify reasons why the policy is not being implemented
    - identify steps that can be taken to enable the policy to be implemented
    - explore whether a revision to the plan is required.
  - Specify the housing land supply from the current Housing Land Availability Report for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan,
  - Specify the number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the LPA area for that year, and for the full period since the adoption of the plan.
- 1.5 The LDP Manual supplements the above requirement by setting out additional factors that should be assessed in the AMR, namely:
- Whether the basic strategy remains sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed);
  - What impact the policies are having globally, nationally, regionally and locally;
  - Whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy;
  - Whether policies and related targets in the LDP have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant supplementary planning guidance (SPG);
  - Where progress has not been made, the reasons for this and what knock-on effects it may have;
  - What aspects, if any, of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and/or sustainable development objectives; and

- If policies or proposals need changing, what suggested actions are required to achieve this.
- 1.6 Monitoring the LDP also accords with the requirements for monitoring the sustainability performance of the plan through the Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal (SEA/SA). There is, inherently, a cross over between the information used to inform the SEA/SA monitoring and that used to monitor the plan directly.

### **Format and content of the Annual Monitoring Report**

- 1.7 The AMR has been designed as much as possible to be a succinct and easily accessible document that can be used as a convenient point of reference to ascertain the Plan's performance over the period under review.
- 1.8 Inevitably, the monitoring process involves the collection and interpretation of significant amounts of data, but the Council considers that the inclusion of this more detailed information within the AMR would lead to the report being overly long and cumbersome to use. Content has therefore been restricted to the pertinent results.
- Sections 2 and 3 consider the extent to which each of the LDP's strategic objectives is being realised with reference to **policy performance** and relevant **policy assessments**. As part of this consideration, the report also examines any contextual changes that have occurred during the period under review.
  - Sections 4 and 5 consider **sustainability performance** through the **assessment of sustainability indicators** and outline the principal findings of monitoring against the indicators identified in the SEA/SA, identifying the main effects and whether a review of the plan is necessary on sustainability grounds.
  - Section 6 contains the **conclusions** and **recommendations** with reference to the analysis made in the preceding sections.
  - **Appendix 1** sets out a quick-reference summary to policy achievements based on the template for the full monitoring framework included at Chapter 6 of the LDP Written Statement.

### **Policies considered to be failing**

- 1.9 If policies are found to be failing, clear recommendations on what needs to be done to address these failings are identified as part of Section 3.
- 1.10 However, just because a policy reaches one (or more) of its trigger levels, it should not be assumed that the policy is necessarily failing. There may be extraneous circumstances that are causing the poor performance which the plan has no control over, or the policy may be failing in part due to over-achievement in other policy areas. It is the role of the AMR to consider whether the policy is failing or whether there are mitigating circumstances that could not be influenced by the Plan. Where it is found that the Monitoring Framework results are affected by factors outside the remit of the plan, amending the plan will have no effect and will not ensure the

implementation of policy as required by the Regulations. In these instances, the policy cannot be construed to be failing and will not be identified as such in its consideration in the AMR.

- 1.11 Furthermore, whilst there is a significant amount of statistical information gathered and used in monitoring, the information gained through this process must be balanced against a complete consideration of the policies and issues raised. It would be inappropriate for the statistical information to solely and directly dictate when policies, or the plan as a whole, require amendment. Such a literal and rigid assessment would fail to take account of the multitude and variety of factors that influence the performance of the plan. A more measured and considered approach, that takes account of these factors, whilst acknowledging the findings of the monitoring information, provides the best approach to ensure effective monitoring of the plan.

#### **Future Monitoring**

- 1.12 The Monitoring Framework is part of the Adopted LDP and, as such, cannot be amended without undertaking a formal review of the Plan. However, the monitoring process is dependent upon a wide range of statistical information that is sourced from both local authority and external sources. Whilst the Council can control information that it supplies, it is recognised there is a risk of change in respect of external data which lies beyond the control of the Planning Authority. Even minor changes to external data have the potential to render certain existing Indicators ineffective or obsolete.
- 1.13 Resulting from the above, the Council envisages that the Monitoring Framework will inevitably evolve during the course of the plan period and each Annual Monitoring Report will be used as a means of drawing attention to unavoidable change.

## **2.0 Policy Performance**

- 2.1 This section considers the extent to which the LDP's strategy is being realised with reference to the performance of particular policies against the indicators, targets and triggers contained within the LDP monitoring framework. The structure of the section is as follows:

### **Strategic objective**

- 2.2 This is the starting point for the monitoring process. The AMR replicates each of the 12 overarching LDP objectives from which the LDP policies flow.

### **Contextual changes**

- 2.3 Before the performance of the policies is considered, it is important for the AMR to identify any significant contextual changes that have occurred since the LDP was prepared. Such changes are likely to be circumstantial in nature and will lie outside the remit of the Plan.
- 2.4 In identifying any relevant contextual changes, the AMR is able to consider the implications of each change and whether or not the performance of an individual policy is likely to have been affected.

### **Indicators**

- 2.5 The LDP monitoring framework contains a variety of core and local indicators which will inform policy progress and achievement. The selection of these indicators has been guided by the need to identify output indicators which are able to measure quantifiable physical activities that are directly related to the implementation of LDP policies.
- 2.6 Several of the core indicators are either prescribed by LDP Regulation 37 or recommended by the LDP Manual for their ability to enable an assessment of the implementation of national policy. Further core indicators were identified on the basis of their ability to provide useful information on whether the delivery of the LDP strategy is progressing as anticipated.
- 2.7 The local indicators supplement the core indicators and have been selected based on the availability and quality of data and their relevance to the local area. Some local contextual indicators have also been included which cover key local characteristics against which LDP policies operate.

### **Targets**

- 2.8 The policy indicators are associated with corresponding targets which provide a benchmark for measuring policy implementation. Given the length of the plan period, it is necessary to incorporate 'milestone' targets to determine whether the Plan is progressing towards meeting the overall strategy. The timeframe attributed to such targets primarily relates to the anticipated delivery of development. The Council will investigate any policy that fails to meet its target. The level of consideration given to

such policies within the AMR will depend on the reasons identified for the failure and the significance of the policy for the delivery of the overall plan strategy.

### **Triggers**

- 2.9 Trigger levels have also been included for certain targets to ensure that any potential failings in policy implementation are identified at an early stage enabling an early review of the Plan if necessary. They will provide a clear indication of when policy targets are not being met, or insufficient progress is being made towards meeting them.

### **Analysis**

- 2.10 Having set out the results of policy performance with reference to the indicators, targets and triggers of the LDP's monitoring framework, the AMR proceeds to provide an analysis of those results and includes the identification of any policies that have reached their trigger points. This analysis also considers whether those policies require amendment taking into account any mitigating circumstances.

### **Recommendations**




- 2.11 Following the analysis of policy performance, appropriate recommendations are put forward including a statement of any actions that are required to be taken. For instance, certain policies may need adjusting or amendments to the plan may be required to secure successful implementation overall.

### **Overall findings for each strategic objective**

- 2.12 Finally, for each strategic objective, an overall statement of performance is provided and a conclusion made on whether that particular objective is being achieved through the combination of policies identified.

### **Explanation of performance criteria**

- 2.13 As a visual aid in monitoring the effectiveness of individual policies, and to provide a quick reference to collective policy performance, a colour coded assessment is included based on the criteria set out below. Colour coding in certain cells may be split to reflect the fact that performance against targets may sometimes differ from performance against trigger levels.

Targets / objectives are being achieved.	
Targets have not been achieved but there are no concerns over the implementation of policy / objectives.	
Targets have not been achieved with resulting concern over implementation of policy / objectives.	



## 3.0 Policy Assessments

- 3.1 The following pages set out the policy assessments with reference to the relevant strategic objectives.

***Strategic Objective SO1: To capitalise on Merthyr's strategic position, further developing its role as the main commercial, service and employment centre in the Heads of the Valleys area by focusing developing within the main Town of Merthyr Tydfil.***

### 3.1.1 Contextual Changes

The Welsh Government revised the economic development chapter of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) in February 2014. The entire chapter has been updated to align planning policy on economic development more closely with Welsh Government's broader economic policies and to ensure that the planning system in Wales facilitates economic renewal more effectively. The revision of Planning Policy Wales coincided with the publication of new Technical Advice Note (TAN) 23: Economic Development. The TAN highlights the importance of recognising the economic aspects and benefits of all development and aims to ensure that planning decisions are made in a sustainable manner which balance social, environmental and economic considerations.

### 3.1.2 Policy Monitoring

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW1 AS1	Number of new homes built in the primary growth area	Between 1890 and 2110 net completions by April 2016	--	1178 completions by April 2014
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b> The data collected shows that 1178 dwellings were built in the Primary Growth Area between the start of the Plan period and April 2014. This figure indicates that the correct proportion of housing has been built in the Primary Growth Area in comparison to the Secondary and Other Growth Areas of the County Borough.</p> <p>However, in order to meet the target of between 1890 and 2110 completions by 2016, over 350 completions a year will now be required in the Primary Growth Area. As this is envisaged to be beyond that which the LDP strategy considers a realistic average per annum, a red scoring has been introduced.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b> Given that there has been a much lower level of housing delivery than that required by the adopted LDP strategy it is highly unlikely that the housing strategy of the plan can be met</p>				

without changes being affected. All undelivered allocated housing sites should therefore be revisited as part of the wider four year LDP review.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance	
BW1 AS14	New employment floorspace built in the primary growth area	Between 36,490 and 40,470 sq m net floorspace by April 2016	Greater than 14,700 sq m per annum or less than 1,834 sqm per annum for 2 consecutive years.	Current figure at 2013/14 is 25494 sq m	206 sq m

### **Analysis**

The monitoring framework contains two performance indicators which relate to Policy AS14, namely, a net target floor space figure by 2016, and a trigger level figure. The performance of each indicator is considered separately below.

As reported in the first AMR, the target indicator for the delivery of new employment floor space up to April 2011 (the end of the first phase of the plan) was easily met. The next employment floor space target (to be delivered by April 2016) is also likely to be met although, due to the low amount of new employment floor space being delivered during the 2013 - 2014 monitoring period (206 sq m), progress towards this figure has slowed.

With only 206 sq m of new employment floorspace being delivered in the Primary Growth Area during this monitoring period; this is the first year that the delivery of floorspace has fallen below the trigger level.

### **Recommendations**

This year's drop in the amount of new employment floorspace being delivered means that future delivery rates will be more difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, the overall trend suggests that the target figure for delivery of new floorspace by April 2016 is still likely to be met and specific action may not be necessary.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
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AS18	<u>Local - Town Centre Health Checks</u> i) Total annual vacant floor space in Town Centre  (Vacancy rate currently at 13% - Retail, Commercial and Leisure Capacity Study, 2009)	Vacancy rate to reduce to 9% (UK average 2009)	Vacancy rate increasing for 1 year or remaining static above target for 2 consecutive years	14.6%	Decreased (-0.4%)
AS19	ii) Percentage of A1 retail uses in primary shopping area	Maintain a percentage of at least 83%	Percentage less than 83%	82.3%	A1 units decrease by 0.9%

### **Analysis**

- i. The town centre vacancy rate is currently 14.6%; this represents a decrease of 0.4% from the previous AMR.

Recent figures published by The Local Data Company in 'Property Week' show that the UK average shop vacancy rate for December 2013 was 13.9%, with the Welsh vacancy rate being 15.7%. In comparison, Merthyr Tydfil is 0.7% higher than the UK average and when compared to the Welsh average is 1.1% lower. Although the vacancy rate figure is not as low as desired, it is not considered to offer cause for immediate concern given the current economic situation which is outside the control of the Plan.

- ii. During the period under review, the percentage of A1 retail uses in the Primary Shopping Area has marginally decreased to below the trigger level at 82.3%.

### **Recommendations**

- i) Once again, the influence of the current economic situation has undoubtedly had an impact on the health of the town centre and, in particular, the failure to keep vacancy rates as low as the stipulated target. The effectiveness of LDP Policy AS18 is therefore difficult to fully quantify; nevertheless, the Council considers it reasonable to assume that the policy may have been influential in ensuring there has been a 0.4% improvement in the vacancy rate since the previous AMR.
- ii) Although the percentage of A1 retail uses in the Primary Shopping Area has slipped marginally below the relevant trigger, this year's figure is less than 1 percentage point

below that which is considered acceptable and no action is considered necessary at this moment in time.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
AS21	New social and community infrastructure i) Merthyr Tydfil Health Park	Deliver by the end of 2013	No planning application registered by the end of 2011	Delivered
AS13	ii) Merthyr College	Deliver by the end of 2016	No planning application registered by the end of 2014	Delivered
	iii) Ysgol Santes Tudful	Deliver by the end of 2010	-	Delivered
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b> The 2013/14 monitoring period saw the completion of the final infrastructure project under the above indicator with the new Merthyr Tydfil College opening in September 2013.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b> No action is required, this element of policy has been achieved.</p>				

### 3.1.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO1 is based on the performance of 7 separate LDP policies as outlined above.

Whilst the Town Centre Health Check indicates a higher retail vacancy rate compared with the 2009 baseline, this figure is still below the national average for Wales during the comparable period and does not provide particular cause for concern given the influence of external factors (particularly, the economic climate) which are beyond the control of the LDP.

However, the lower than required number of homes being constructed in the LDP's Primary Growth Area is a matter for concern and it is highly unlikely that the strategy of the Plan can be realised without changes being made

On balance, it is considered that the strategic objective is only partially being met. All undelivered allocated housing sites should be revisited as part of the wider four year LDP review.

**3.2 SO2: To focus appropriate levels of development within the County Borough's smaller valley communities to create affordable and attractive places to live with good access to jobs and services.**

**3.2.1 Contextual Changes**

No significant contextual changes relating to this strategic objective have been introduced during the monitoring period.

**3.2.2 Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW2 AS2	Number of new homes built in secondary growth area	Between 280 and 320 net completions by April 2016	--	214 completions by April 2014
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>The data collected shows that 214 dwellings have been built in the Secondary Growth Area between the start of the Plan period and April 2014.</p> <p>In order to meet the target of between 280 and 320 completions by 2016, approximately 30 completions a year are now required in the Secondary Growth Area. This is considered both realistic and in line with the aspirations of the LDP strategy, and as a result, a green scoring has been introduced.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required at present.</p>				

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW3 AS3	Number of new homes built in other growth areas.	Between 200 and 240 net completions by April 2016	--	43 completions by 2014
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>The data collected shows that 43 dwellings have been built in the Other Growth Areas of the County Borough between the start of the Plan period and April 2014. This indicates that the Other Growth Areas now require a significant rise in completions in order to meet the 2016 target.</p> <p>The majority of completions in the Other Growth Areas will take place on Project Riverside,</p>				

Merthyr Vale which at the time of writing is beginning to progress. Infrastructure works including the construction of an access road and flood defences are due to be completed by April 2015.

In order to meet the target of between 200 and 240 completions by 2016, over 70 completions a year are now required in the Other Growth Areas. Owing to the activity currently taking place on Project Riverside, this is considered a possibility and a yellow scoring has been introduced, albeit with a degree of caution as no house builder is associated with the site at present.

### **Recommendations**

Whilst the number of homes being constructed in the LDP's Secondary and Other Growth Areas may not give cause for immediate concern, the delivery of Project Riverside is fundamental to the 2016 target being met in the Other Growth Areas.

Close monitoring should therefore continue but should be in conjunction with a review of the LDP where housing strategy and delivery is likely to be integral to the process.

### **3.2.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved**

The level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO2 is based on the performance of 4 separate LDP policies as outlined above.

Whilst the number of homes being constructed in the LDP's Secondary and Other Growth Areas indicates that the Plan's future aspirations have a realistic prospect of being realised in these locations, the lower than required number of homes being constructed in the LDP's Primary Growth Area is inextricably linked and cannot be ignored. The Primary Growth Area contains the vast majority of the LDP's allocations and all undelivered allocated housing sites should be revisited as part of the wider four year LDP review.

**3.3 SO3: To promote regeneration through the use of suitable and appropriate brownfield land rather than greenfield sites.**

**3.3.1 Contextual Changes**

No significant contextual changes relating to this strategic objective have been introduced during the monitoring period.

**3.3.2 Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Amount of development permitted on previously developed land as a percentage of all development permitted (N.B. this would exclude householder applications and change of use from one non-residential use to another) (ha)	Maintain a percentage of at least 80% over the plan period	Less than 80% for 2 consecutive years	2013/14 – 88% permitted on previously developed land.
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b>            10.6ha. of development was permitted during the period under review. 9.36ha of this was on brownfield sites which equates to 88% of development being permitted on previously developed land.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b>            No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.</p>				



LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Amount of greenfield land lost as a result of inappropriate development on sites not allocated in the LDP	No land lost	1 or 2 developments permitted for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments permitted in 1 year	1 development permitted
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>During the period under review, permission was granted for a single dwelling outside settlement limits and within a green wedge. The application was recommended for refusal by the case officer but was granted consent by Full Council due to the circumstances of the site (previously having outline consent, and having a dwelling constructed or permitted on 2 adjacent plots).</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>The implementation of Policies BW4 and AS5 needs to be closely monitored to ensure that further inappropriate development is not granted permission.</p>				

### 3.3.3. Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO3 is based on compliance with the LDP's land-use strategy, particularly, the Plan's spatial distribution of development allocations.

It is considered that the strategic objective is currently being achieved and there is no requirement for action other than to continue close monitoring over the next 12 months.

3.4 **SO4: To support the principle of sustainability via an energy efficient land use/transport strategy.**

3.4.1 **Contextual Changes**

No significant contextual changes relating to this strategic objective have been introduced during the monitoring period

3.4.2 **Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW4	Percentage of new residential development within 400m of bus stop and 600 m of primary facilities including a shop and school	Maintain a percentage of at least 80% over the plan period	Less than 80% for 2 consecutive years	94%
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Over the monitoring period, 32 new residential developments were granted planning permission with 94% located within close proximity to local facilities. It is therefore considered that Policy BW4 is functioning effectively, guiding new residential development to sustainable locations where local facilities can be accessed by foot or bicycle.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.</p>				
LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Percentage of new dwellings completed at:			
	(1) less than 20 dph;	Approximately 12%		11%
	(2) 20 dph or greater and less than 25 dph;	Approximately 13%		8%
	(3) 25 dph or greater and less than 30 dph;	Approximately 25%	More than 25% of new dwellings at less than 25 dph for 2 consecutive years	55%
	(4) 30 dph or	Approximately		15%

	greater and less than 50 dph; and  (5) 50 dph or greater	48%  Approximately 2%		11%
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### **Analysis**

The figures collected for the monitoring period show that dwellings were constructed broadly in line with the indicator's targets and that the majority of dwellings in the County Borough are constructed at approximately 25 to 35 dwellings per hectare (dph).

The fact that over 50% of completions were between 25 and 30 dph is largely attributable to a significant proportion of dwellings being completed on LDP site allocation H48 in Trelewis which has a density of just under 30 dph.

### **Recommendations**

No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance	
-	Percentage of allocated sites developed (ha)	Approximately 65% of allocations developed by the end of 2016	Less than 25% of phased delivery rate for 2 consecutive years	Approximately 29% of allocations developed by March 2014	Delivered approximately 34% (6ha)  (Trigger level 25% / approximately 4.5 ha)

### **Analysis**

Over the monitoring period, approximately 6ha of allocated development sites have been delivered. When combined with the amount of previously developed first and second phase sites, this equates to 29% of allocated development sites developed by the end of the current monitoring period.

Whilst it is encouraging that allocated development sites continue to come forward, the anticipated phased delivery rate is not currently being met. It is however above the trigger level of 4.5 ha and, as such, a detailed assessment is not considered necessary at this stage. A brief overview of the delivery of different types of development is provided below.

In respect of community facilities, Merthyr Tydfil's new college opened in the autumn of

2013. This continues the successful delivery of community facilities as anticipated.

In terms of housing, a further 4.18ha of allocated housing sites has been developed over the monitoring period. This includes contributions from 4 LDP second phase allocated housing sites and an LDP first phase allocated housing site that is being developed at a slower rate than anticipated. The delayed delivery of the first phase site is considered to relate to the poor condition of the housing market and the wider economic climate rather than the LDP's strategy and/or policy framework.

With regard to employment, no allocated employment sites were completed during the period under review. It should however be noted that site allocation E6 (Rhydycar) – a first phase site, is currently under construction and is anticipated for completion during the next monitoring period (April 2014 – March 2015). Whilst no development has begun on the LDP second phase allocated employment sites, namely E4 (Goatmill Road) and E8 (Former Hoover car park), neither are anticipated to be developed until 2016.

In previous monitoring reports, recommendations were made in respect of encouraging and supporting the development of additional business units for small to medium sized enterprises. In this regard, progress has recently been made towards the delivery of another incubation unit similar to the existing Orbit Centre, either for new start ups or for smaller growing companies to move into. Funding through the '*Vibrant and Viable Places*' (VVP) initiative has been secured to assist with the delivery of this project and it is anticipated that a new unit will be built within the town centre with several existing vacant buildings within the town centre also being considered for bringing back into beneficial use for the same purpose.

### **Recommendations**

The Council's Economic Development Department should continue to investigate opportunities for development on allocated employment sites and continue to focus on marketing and targeted funding.

All undelivered allocated housing and employment sites should also be reviewed as part of the wider four year LDP review.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Percentage of total development permitted on allocated sites (ha)	Maintain a target of approximately 85% over the plan period	Less than 80% for 2 consecutive years	Approximately 59%

### **Analysis**

Over the monitoring period, approximately 59% of the total development permitted was on allocated sites. Whilst this figure is a significant improvement on last year's performance of

approximately 36%, the trigger level of less than 80% for 2 consecutive years has now been reached. This indicates that allocated sites are not coming forward as anticipated and that there are implications for the delivery of the LDP Strategy.

The delayed delivery of allocated development sites is considered to be primarily the result of the economic downturn. Whilst the economy has grown steadily since 2013, output from the construction sector still remains below the levels experienced at the pre-downturn peak in 2008 and there is little anecdotal evidence of any significant increase in local construction activity over the monitoring period.

The delivery of allocated development sites should improve as construction activity continues to increase alongside economic growth. However, this cannot be solely relied upon given the extent to which anticipated delivery timescales have been missed. A more proactive approach is therefore required involving a review of undelivered allocations. This will enable the identification of any unforeseen development constraints and the potential need for alternative sites.

### **Recommendations**

To consider undelivered allocated development sites as part of the wider four year LDP review.

<b>LDP Policy</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Trigger Level</b>	<b>Performance</b>
AS10	Highway network improvements  (1) Aberfan – Merthyr Vale Link (T1)	Deliver by the end of 2011	No planning consent	Not delivered within 2013 /14

### **Analysis**

This highway network improvement is directly linked to the redevelopment of the former Merthyr Vale Colliery site (Project Riverside) which benefits from an extant planning consent and is included in the adopted LDP as housing allocation H39. There has been some progress during the last monitoring period with regard to the advancement of the development; contractors are now on site conducting site preparation works.

### **Recommendations**

The situation still requires close monitoring in order to ensure that the development, including the highways improvements, comes forward. The Council's Estates, Planning, Regeneration and Housing Departments should continue to work collaboratively to facilitate progress of the development as early as possible.

### **3.4.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved**

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO4 is based on the performance of 2 separate LDP policies and compliance with the LDP's land-use strategy, particularly, the Plan's spatial distribution of development allocations.

Whilst the objective is partially being met, the following are of concern:

- the fact that an identified core highway network improvement remains to be realised
- the failure to deliver allocated sites at the level anticipated (in particular, the development of employment allocations)
- the fact there have been 2 consecutive years where the total development permitted on allocated sites has fallen below the stipulated threshold of 80%.

In terms of the core highway network improvement, it is considered that the associated Project Riverside development, on which, site preparation works have now commenced, will help kick start the scheme within the next few months.

In terms of allocations delivered and the amount of development taking place on allocated sites, the Council will continue to investigate opportunities for development and will continue to focus on marketing and targeted funding for employment sites. The above should be progressed alongside the four year LDP review.

**3.5 SO5: To manage natural resources wisely avoiding irreversible damage in order to maintain and enhance their value for future generations.**

**3.5.1 Contextual Changes**

Waste

In February 2014, the Welsh Government published Edition 6 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and a new version of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 21 to reflect changes in national policy and guidance on waste.

In respect of development plans, PPW indicates that local development plans will need to have particular regard to the Collections, Infrastructure and Market Sector Plan (CIMS Plan), waste planning monitoring reports, and waste management priorities relevant to the local area (paragraph 12.6.1). In addition, LDPs should identify suitable locations for accommodating sustainable waste management facilities (paragraph 12.6.2) and secure opportunities to reduce or recycle waste as part of the design, construction and operation of buildings (paragraph 12.6.3). These policies are expanded on in TAN 21: Waste (February 2014).

The existing waste management policy framework of the LDP is considered to be broadly compatible with the above changes to the PPW and TAN 21 for the following reasons. Firstly, the 'areas of search' for waste management facilities identified under LDP Policy AS7 continue to make a sufficient contribution towards meeting regional infrastructure capacity requirements identified for south east Wales within CIMS Plan. Secondly, no significant changes to local waste management priorities have occurred since the Plan was adopted in May 2011 and new regional monitoring arrangements are yet to be established. Finally, LDP Policy BW7 and the Sustainable Design SPG (adopted July 2013) provide an adequate policy framework for securing sustainable waste management objectives in the design of new developments.

Minerals

In October 2013, a public consultation exercise began on the draft Regional Technical Statement (RTS) on Aggregates 1<sup>st</sup> Review document. The RTS plays an important role in ensuring that an adequate supply of primary aggregates can be maintained, which meets local, regional and UK needs. It forms a key delivery mechanism for implementing national planning policy for minerals contained in Minerals Planning Policy Wales (2000) and Minerals Technical Advice Note 1: Aggregates (2004).

The RTS provides recommendations to each mineral planning authority regarding the quantities of aggregate which need to be supplied from their area (apportionments) and the total tonnage of any new allocations which may need to be made in their Local Development Plan to ensure that adequate provision is maintained throughout the relevant plan period. In terms of joint apportionment<sup>1</sup> for the future provision of

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<sup>1</sup> Merthyr Tydfil and Brecon Beacons National Park have been joined together for commercial confidentiality reasons.

land-won primary aggregates in Merthyr Tydfil and Brecon Beacons National Park, the annualised amount for crushed rock is 0.82 million tonnes per year. This equates to 20.5 million tonnes of crushed rock over the 25 year period covered by the RTS 1<sup>st</sup> Review. A comparison with the joint existing land bank of 94 million tonnes for crushed rock indicates that there is a surplus of existing permitted crushed rock reserves, and as such, no further allocations for crushed rock are required to be identified within the Merthyr Tydfil or Brecon Beacons LDPs.

### 3.5.2 Policy Monitoring

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance	
BW10	The tonnage (Mt) of primary land-won aggregates produced in accordance with the Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates	Minimum of 8.8 Mt produced by the end of 2016  (N.B. targets are based on joint production with Caerphilly CBC)	Less than 1.1 Mt per annum for 2 consecutive years	Approximately 3 Mt of primary aggregates jointly produced in Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly since 2009	Approximately 0.2 Mt of primary aggregates jointly produced in Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly in 2013
	Aggregates land bank	Minimum 10 year land bank maintained throughout the plan period	Land bank falling below target	Adequate current land bank	

#### **Analysis**

The monitoring framework contains two indicators which relate to Policy BW10, namely the annual production of aggregates and maintenance of a minimum 10 year land bank. Each indicator is considered separately below.

With regard to the tonnage of primary land-won aggregates produced, the combined aggregates production for Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly was approximately 0.2 Mt in 2013. When combined with the amount of primary aggregates jointly produced since 2009, the cumulative total is approximately 3 Mt. This continues to be below the anticipated level of aggregate production set out in the South Wales Technical Statement for Aggregates (2008).

Aggregate production is directly influenced by aggregate use or demand. The poor economic



climate and depressed levels of activity in the building and construction industry has resulted in a general fall in the sales of crushed rock within the South Wales region, reflecting a weakening in demand. This general fall in sales of crushed rock has been continuously recognised in the South Wales Regional Aggregates Working Party Annual Reports since 2008. It is therefore considered that the failure to produce the expected amount of aggregates in 2013 is a result of the economic downturn and that there are no policy constraints impeding the production of aggregates at the quarries within Merthyr Tydfil.

In respect of the aggregates land bank, Merthyr Tydfil's current land bank is sufficient to maintain a minimum 10 year land bank throughout the plan period. It is considered that Policy BW10 is functioning effectively and that there are no policy constraints that would hinder future aggregates production.

### **Recommendations**

No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.

<b>LDP Policy</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Trigger Level</b>	<b>Performance</b>
BW8	Amount of development (by TAN 15 paragraph 5.1 development category) permitted in C1 and C2 floodplain areas not meeting all TAN 15 tests (paragraph 6.2 i-v)	No development permitted	1 or more developments permitted	No developments granted planning permission in C1 or C2 floodplain areas that do not meet all TAN 15 tests
	Developments incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS)	All developments to include SuDS where appropriate  (N.B. Excludes developments that have not incorporated SuDS for environmental or practical reasons)	1 or 2 developments permitted without SuDS for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments permitted without SuDS in 1 year	All developments granted planning permission incorporate SuDS where appropriate

### **Analysis**

The monitoring framework contains two indicators which seek to monitor separate elements

of Policy BW8, namely reducing flood risk and securing the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems in new developments. Each element is considered separately below.

In respect of flood risk, 7 developments were granted planning permission in zone C over the monitoring period. In all instances, the developments were justified in their location and the consequences associated with flooding were acceptable. As no developments were permitted in zone C that did not meet TAN 15 tests, it is considered that Policy BW8 is functioning effectively in respect of this matter.

In terms of securing SuDS in new developments, no developments have been granted planning permission without incorporating SuDS into the design of the scheme unless there have been environmental or practical reasons for not doing so. As such, it is considered that Policy BW8 is also functioning effectively in respect of securing SuDS in new developments.

### **Recommendations**

No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.

<b>LDP Policy</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Trigger Level</b>	<b>Performance</b>
AS7	Amount of new licensed waste management facilities permitted	Between 1.1 and 3.2 hectares of B2 employment land developed for waste management facilities  (N.B. New facilities will be delivered in partnership Rhondda Cynon Taf)	No new facilities granted planning permission by the end of 2012	Anaerobic digestion facility granted planning permission by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC in October 2013
	Landfill capacity at Trecatti	To maintain spare capacity over the Plan period	Input at the maximum of 625,000 tpa for 3 consecutive years	Input below maximum in 2012

### **Analysis**

The monitoring framework contains two indicators which seek to monitor separate elements of Policy AS7, namely the delivery of waste management facilities on B2 employment sites and the safeguarding of Trecatti landfill site for continued disposal of residual waste.

With regards to the delivery of waste management facilities on B2 employment sites, no new waste management facilities have been granted planning permission during the monitoring

period. Waste management facilities have however been granted planning permission in previous monitoring periods and it remains considered that Policy AS7 is functioning effectively in respect of this matter.

The LDP recognises that a number of Merthyr Tydfil's municipal waste streams will be treated at regional waste management facilities anticipated to be located within the neighbouring authority of Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT). In terms of food waste streams, planning permission was granted for an anaerobic digestion facility on land at the Bryn Pica landfill site, Llwydcoed, in October 2013. The proposed facility will have the capacity to process 22,500 tonnes per annum of food waste and generate 1MW per annum of renewable electricity. The facility is anticipated to be operational in early 2015.

Slower progress is being made on the delivery of a waste management facility to treat residual waste streams with the procurement process still being undertaken. An update on the progress of the delivery of a residual waste management facility will be provided in future annual monitoring reports.

In respect of the continued disposal of residual waste in Trecatti landfill site, the amount of waste inputted in 2012 was below the maximum permitted for that year. Consequently, there are currently no concerns over maintaining spare capacity during the Plan period.

#### **Recommendations**

No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.

### **3.5.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved**

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO5 is based on the performance of 3 separate LDP policies.

Whilst the tonnage of land-won aggregates produced in Merthyr / Caerphilly continues to be less than expected during the period under review, it is considered that the depressed circumstances across the construction industry (and across the economy generally) causes a decreased demand for such aggregates.

The failure to win the anticipated amount of aggregates does not derive from any policy constraints and there is no requirement for action other than to continue close monitoring over the next 12 months.

- 3.6. ***SO6: To provide a range of dwelling sizes and types, including affordable and special needs housing, which support the needs of the local community, attract new inhabitants to the area and create mixed and socially inclusive communities.***

### 3.6.1 Contextual Changes

There have not been any significant changes in regard to planning policy that would have a direct effect on Strategic Objective 6. The most important issue in terms of placing the performance of SO6 in context is the wider economic situation, which the LDP is limited in its ability to have a direct effect. The data collected indicates that levels of house building in the County Borough decreased from 159 units in 2012/13 to 135 units in 2013/14. This is well below the level of house building required in order to meet the Enhanced Growth Strategy of the LDP, although there was an increase in the number of market dwellings built (from 95 to 115).

Consultation on changes to Technical Advice Note (TAN) 1: Joint Housing Land Availability Studies may affect housing land supply calculations in the coming years.

### 3.6.2 Policy Monitoring

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Housing Land Supply	Maintain a minimum of 5 years supply (ha)	Less than a 5 year supply for 1 year	2.9 years
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Merthyr Tydfil's 5 year land supply is now calculated using the residual method rather than the past build rates method that was used when no adopted development plan was in place. Since 2001, the only years when Merthyr Tydfil had a 5 year supply of housing land were 2007 and 2008 (6.4 and 5.6 years respectively). Those years aside, the land supply had steadily decreased up until 2011 when there were 611 dwellings, resulting in a 3.2 year land supply.</p> <p>After the LDP's adoption in May 2011, newly allocated sites were able to be included in the land supply calculations. This resulted in over 400 units being added to the 5 year supply during 2011/12, and with 1062 units included overall, this gave an increased supply of 3.6 years. However, the 2013 Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) has seen a further decrease in supply to 2.9 years.</p> <p>At the time of writing, work is still being carried out on the 2014 JHLAS; however, early indications are that land supply will continue to decrease to around 2.5 years. This is due partly to the residual method causing the overall housing requirement to increase year on year when the required rate of delivery is not met, but also due to some sites falling out of the 5 year supply owing to the fact that they have not progressed as quickly as initially</p>				

anticipated (the wider economic situation also needs to be taken into consideration on this matter).

TAN 1 states that where there is a land supply below the 5 year requirement, local planning authorities must take steps to increase the supply of housing land. This may include releasing land in the Local Authority's ownership or securing infrastructure for particular sites.

The Council was recently successful in its bid for *Vibrant and Viable Places* (VVP) funding from Welsh Government and one of the projects included in the programme is aimed at bringing forward some of the housing allocations on land owned by the Council. The funding will be used to gain outline planning consent on seven sites which together could potentially contribute some 700 dwellings to the overall supply. Once outline consent has been gained, developers will benefit from more certainty in respect of the issues each site has, and this should result in the sites becoming more marketable and easier to progress.

### **Recommendations**

Given that there has been a much lower level of housing delivery than that required by the adopted LDP strategy and the fact that housing land supply is decreasing, it is highly unlikely that the housing strategy of the plan can be met without changes being affected. All undelivered allocated housing sites should therefore be revisited as part of the wider four year LDP review.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Number of all dwellings built	Between 2400 and 2720 net completions by April 2016	20% less or greater than LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive years	1435 completions at April 2014

### **Analysis**

The level of completions has dropped during 2013/14 with 135 units being built in comparison with 159 units in 2012/13. This results in the indicator scoring 'red' as the figure is still well below that which is required to fulfil the LDP's growth strategy.

### **Recommendations**

Given that there has been a much lower level of housing delivery than that required by the adopted LDP strategy, it is highly unlikely that the housing strategy of the plan can be met without changes being affected. All undelivered allocated housing sites should therefore be revisited as part of the wider four year LDP review.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Number of new general market dwellings built	Between 2110 and 2390 net completions by April 2016	20% less or greater than LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive years	1174 completions by April 2014
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Despite a reduction in completions overall, the number of market dwellings completed actually increased from 95 in 2012/13 to 115 in 2013/14. However, this has still resulted in the indicator scoring 'red' as the level of completions remains well below that which is required in order to fulfil the LDP's growth strategy.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>Given that there has been a much lower level of housing delivery than that required by the adopted LDP strategy, it is highly unlikely that the housing strategy of the plan can be met without changes being affected. All undelivered allocated housing sites should therefore be revisited as part of the wider four year LDP review.</p>				

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Number of affordable dwellings built	Between 225 and 255 net completions by April 2016	20% less or greater than LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive years	261 completions by April 2014
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>The data collected shows that 261 affordable dwellings were completed in the County Borough by April 2014. This indicates that there has been a slightly higher level of affordable housing built than initially anticipated and has resulted in the indicator scoring 'yellow' as this is beyond the build rate proposed by the LDP.</p> <p>As the overall affordable housing target in the monitoring framework is "at least 350 net completions by 2021", the fact that there has been more affordable housing built than anticipated is not considered a matter for concern.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required at present.</p>				

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance	
AS22	Number of affordable dwellings secured as a planning obligation	Approximately 130 by April 2016	<b>10% Area:</b> delivering less than 7.5% or more than 12.5%  <b>5% Area:</b> delivering less than 2.5% or more than 7.5%	36 dwellings by April 2014	10% delivered
					No applicable development

#### **Analysis**

2013/14 saw on-site affordable housing secured on one development at Brondeg, Heolgerrig which achieved the policy target of 10% and scores 'green'. However, with only 36 dwellings delivered across the County Borough to date, it is highly unlikely that the LDP target of approximately 130 dwellings will be delivered by 2016. Consequently, the cell has been split and a yellow added to reflect concern over the rate of delivery.

#### **Recommendations**

Securing affordable dwellings through planning obligations should be closely monitored as delivery is dependent upon large housing sites coming forward, which previous indicators have highlighted as an issue in the County Borough.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
TB13	Number of affordable dwellings secured through affordable housing exceptions policy	Approximately 10 by April 2016	No planning application submitted by the end of 2014	N/A

#### **Analysis**

The affordable housing exceptions policy has a target of 10 units to be delivered by April 2016. As no application has been submitted to date, and the trigger point has not been reached, no further analysis is currently required.

**Recommendations**

It is noted that the trigger level for the submission of a planning application falls at the end of 2014. This will need to be monitored closely and reported in the next AMR.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
AS22	Average house price (Baseline: Approximately £86,900 at 2010, amended in line with Land Registry Data to £73,153)	-	+/- 10% change from base level	£67,528

**Analysis**

House prices have dipped slightly over the monitoring period with an average decrease of around £2,000 over the 12 month period. However, the average price is still within 10% of the baseline data.

Whilst the trigger level has not been reached, the Council is nearing completion of a revised Local Housing Market Assessment which will present an up-to-date view of need and affordability across the County Borough.

**Recommendations**

The new Local Housing Market Housing Assessment will be published towards the end of 2014 and will feed into the subsequent 4 year review of the LDP.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Average income (gross weekly pay) (Baseline: Approximately £380 at 2009, amended in line with NOMIS data to £392)	-	+/- 10% change from base level	£430



**Analysis**

Average income has risen to £430.70 per week during this monitoring period whilst still being within 10% of the baseline situation.

Whilst the trigger level has not been reached, the Council is nearing completion of a revised Local Housing Market Assessment which will present an up-to-date view of need and affordability across the County Borough.

**Recommendations**

The new Local Housing Market Housing Assessment will be published towards the end of 2014 and will feed into the subsequent 4 year review of the LDP.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Vacancy rates of existing housing stock (Baseline: 6% at 2010)	--	Vacancy rate increasing for 1 year or remaining static for 2 consecutive years	4.9% - 2013/14

**Analysis**

2013/14 has seen a small decrease in the vacancy rate of existing stock from 5.3% to 4.9%. This decrease can be linked to an improving housing market in the County Borough where properties are being purchased more quickly, partially due to increased confidence in buy to let/investment properties, as well as the fact the prices remain relatively affordable. Over the last year, grant funding has also been available which has been aimed at bringing empty properties and empty space above shops back into use.

**Recommendations**

No action is required at present.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
-	Preparation and adoption of Affordable Housing SPG	By the end of 2011	-	Adopted March 2012
	Percentage of			All relevant

	relevant planning applications complying with SPG	All (Post SPG adoption)		applications complying with SPG.
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>All relevant applications have complied with the Affordable Housing SPG.</p> <p>Whilst this year has not provided any commuted sums, on-site provision has been secured, or applicants have been able to successfully demonstrate that a planning contribution would likely render their development unviable.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>With the SPG now adopted, it will be important to continue to maintain accurate records of all planning applications where there is an identified requirement for affordable housing.</p>				

### 3.6.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO6 is based on the performance of 2 separate LDP policies, Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing, and compliance with the LDP's land use strategy, particularly, the Plan's spatial distribution of development allocations.

Concern continues in relation to the failure to achieve a 5-year housing land supply and also the low number of dwellings built including general market dwellings. In turn, this also has the potential to affect the amount of affordable housing delivered through planning obligations.

For these reasons, it is considered that the above objective is only partially being achieved, and that the housing strategy of the plan can only be fully realised if changes are affected. Consequently, all undelivered allocated housing sites should be revisited as part of the wider four year LDP review.

This review will need to take into account the context of the wider economic situation and the fact that the LDP may be constrained in its ability to have a direct influence on the economic downturn or the current state of the market.

**3.7 S07: To improve and diversify the economy, safeguarding existing jobs and creating a range of new job opportunities in a sustainable manner.**

**3.7.1 Contextual Changes**

The Welsh Government revised the economic development chapter of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) in February 2014 alongside the production of a new Technical Advice Note (TAN) 23: Economic Development. Both the TAN and PPW have been updated to align planning policy on economic development more closely with the Welsh Government's broader economic policies and to ensure that the planning system in Wales facilitates economic renewal more effectively.

**3.7.2 Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance	
BW14 AS14 AS24	New B1 floor space delivered	Between 28,500 and 30,790 sq m net floor space delivered by April 2016	Greater than 7,120 sq m per annum or less than 890 sq m per annum for 2 consecutive years	10,661 sq m built from 2006 – 2013/14	57sq m for one year
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>This performance indicator contains 2 elements, namely, a net target floor space figure by 2016 and an associated trigger level figure.</p> <p>The overall delivery of new B1 floor space has again failed to reach the level required by the 2016 target figure and has scored 'red' for the second consecutive year. But, in contrast to the previous AMR, the delivery of B1 floor space within the last year has also fallen short of the trigger threshold. A 'yellow' scoring has been introduced owing to the fact that the monitoring framework requires measurement over a 2 year period rather than a single year.</p> <p>This year's worsening situation is of some concern. Moreover, it leads to an assumption that if current rates of delivery continue, the forthcoming target of between 28,500 sq m – 30,790 sq m of B1 floor space to be delivered by 2016 will not be met.</p>					
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>The following should be considered to increase the delivery rate of B1 floor space in future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Improved Marketing</u></b> – Market awareness of many of Merthyr Tydfil's available employment sites/units remains low. In part, this can be attributed to the fact that some sites are not being actively marketed. There is a need to raise awareness of available sites within the County Borough and to promote Merthyr Tydfil as a suitable location for employment, particularly B1 uses.</li> </ul>					

- Provide further B1 office incubation space – The Orbit Centre at Rhydyar was built to foster smaller, start-up businesses and provides varying size B1 office space for companies to rent in the initial years of their business development. The intention is that these companies grow and eventually move to larger premises within the County Borough. The occupation rate of the Orbit Centre is high and the development has been very successful in fostering new enterprise. However, once companies are sufficiently established, there has been no facility available locally for them to graduate into.

Therefore, during this monitoring period, progress has been made towards the delivery of a second unit, similar to the existing Orbit Centre, either for new start ups or for smaller growing companies to move into. Funding from the 'Vibrant and Viable Places' (VVP) initiative has been secured to assist with the delivery of this project by 2016/17.

- LDP four year review

It will also be prudent to undertake further analysis of the employment market including site delivery / market requirements as part of the four year LDP review.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance	
BW14 AS14 AS24	New B2/B8 floor space delivered	Between 7,920 and 9,680 sq m net floorspace delivered by April 2016	Greater than 7,540 sq m per annum or less than 940 sq m per annum for 2 consecutive years.	15601.2 sq m by April 2014	1330.2 sq m

### Analysis

This performance indicator contains 2 elements, namely, a target floor space figure by 2016, and an associated trigger level figure. Detailed analysis of the relevant data shows these elements to be performing differently; the performance of each is considered below.

The target floor space has been met early as the provision of B2/B8 floor space up to April 2014 has already exceeded the amount required by 2016. Whilst the amount of B2/B8 floor space delivered during this AMR period has slightly reduced compared to the previous year, this is not necessarily a problem as the total floor space provided remains within the range stipulated in the trigger level.

As per the previous AMR, the data collected shows that the employment land delivered has been on existing business / employment sites, often as extensions to existing buildings, rather than on allocated LDP sites. This is also not a problem as the LDP's employment allocations remain available, not being programmed to come on stream until the mid and final phases of the plan period (2012-2021).

Whilst there is a risk that the development which has already occurred may prejudice the fulfilment of LDP allocations in future, evidence suggests that it is smaller units and

extensions which are being built at the present time, and which are more reflective of the current needs of the market. The LDP's employment allocations are primarily large sites aimed at single, large employers, and with their associated infrastructure costs, may only prove to be more attractive when market conditions improve and/or when specialist users are found.

### **Recommendations**

This matter will continue to be closely monitored in future AMRs, and given its interrelationship with the previous indicator on B1 floor space delivery, will likely be considered as part of the four year LDP review.

<b>LDP Policy</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Trigger Level</b>	<b>Performance</b>	
BW14 AS14 AS24	Minimum number of net additional jobs delivered (B class uses only)	Between 1,800 and 1,980 jobs delivered by April 2016	Greater than 592 jobs per annum or less than 74 jobs per annum for 2 consecutive years.	1061.5 jobs up to 2013/2014	61.5 jobs for 1 yr (2013/2014)

### **Analysis**

This performance indicator contains 2 elements, namely, a target jobs figure by 2016, and an associated trigger level figure. Detailed analysis of the relevant data shows these elements to be performing similarly with each being considered further below.

The target number of net jobs to be delivered by April 2011 was met a year late during the 2012/2013 monitoring period with just over 1000 jobs being created from the start of the plan period to April 2013. At this moment in time, mid way through the second target period, significant progress will be needed to meet the target of between 1,800 – 1,980 jobs by 2016.

With the delivery of only 61.5 jobs during the 2013/14 period, this year's AMR records a less favourable situation compared with last year, and with a failure to satisfy the thresholds of the stipulated trigger level (albeit over a single year rather than the full 2 years), this dictates the introduction of a 'yellow' scoring as opposed to a 'green' scoring in 2012/13.

The delivery of jobs associated with B class uses has reduced significantly since the previous AMR; this is perhaps to be expected when considering the reduced levels of new B1 floor space being delivered over the same period. The delivery of future jobs will need to move towards the upper limit of the target level for the next few years to compensate for the initial shortfall during the early years of the plan and to compensate for the trends being established in this year's performance indicators.

It should be noted that although there was sufficient delivery of B2/B8 uses, the job density

associated with B2/B8 uses is lower than the number of jobs associated with B1 uses.

### **Recommendations**

The ability of the LDP to directly affect the number of net additional jobs delivered is limited. However, it is considered that the AMR's recommendations to help deliver improvements to employment floor space provision elsewhere under Strategic Objective SO7, will assist in improving the number of jobs being created across the County Borough.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
AS24	Developments granted planning permission that result in a loss of employment land within employment sites protected under Policy AS24	No loss of employment land on protected employment sites except where justified within the terms of the policy	1 or 2 developments granted planning permission for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments granted planning permission in 1 year	No protected employment land lost
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Within this monitoring period only one application came forward that could potentially result in the loss of protected employment land; this was a change of use application from a general industrial use to a sui generis use. Upon request, the applicant supplied the necessary evidence / information to justify approving application.</p> <p>Although there has only been one such application submitted during this monitoring period, the use of Policy Clarification Note pertaining to LDP Policy AS24 is proving invaluable in providing decision-makers with further clarity on the evidence that is required to be submitted as part of any change of use application that would result in the loss of protected employment land/ units.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.</p>				
LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance

AS14 AS24	Percentage of economically active people in employment (Baseline: 64% at 2009)	Approximately 74% by the end of 2016	Reduction of 5% or failure to increase for 2 consecutive years.	64.9%	Increase of 2.1% from last year.
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### **Analysis**

The percentage of economically active people in employment is highly dependent on external factors such as the current economic climate. The relevant data shows that 64.9% of the County Borough's economically active population are currently engaged in employment, which represents an increase of 2.1% compared with 2012-2013.

Despite this, the 2011 target figure of 67% has still not been met and it will be increasingly difficult to achieve the 2016 target of 74% in the next 2 and a half years.

### **Recommendations**

The ability of the LDP to directly affect the percentage of economically active people is limited. However, it is considered that the AMR's recommendations to help deliver improvements to employment floor space provision elsewhere under Strategic Objective SO7 will assist in improving the situation across the County Borough.

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW14 AS14 AS24	Vacancy rates of existing employment buildings  (Baseline vacancy figures as of 2009: B1= 5.6%; B2/B8 = 9.7%)	Maintain vacancy rate within range of 5-10% of existing stock	+ or – 2.5% beyond range for 2 consecutive years	B1 – 0.6% B2/B8 – 10%

### **Analysis**

Data has been gathered and inputted into the Joint Employment Land Availability Database (JELAD) for the second year in succession. Survey work has involved noting the Use Class Order category of each employment unit, the vacancy rates on each industrial / business park, and a general assessment of the appearance / upkeep of each facility. It was found that overall, vacancy rates for B1 uses have decreased from 4.3% at the time of the last AMR to 0.6% at the time of writing. Vacancy rates for B2/B8 units have also decreased from 10.8% last time to 10.0% now.

As a consequence of the above, the vacancy rate for B1 uses easily surpasses the target range set out in the monitoring framework, whilst the B2/B8 vacancy rate falls just within the acceptable vacancy margin.

As a direct result of the JELAD, it is proving possible to maintain a detailed, accurate and up-to-date record of vacant employment land across the County Borough. This will not only assist in future LDP monitoring and LDP review, but will also provide an ability to compare the ongoing performance of the employment market / policy in Merthyr Tydfil with that of neighbouring authorities and others across Wales. The composition of each employment site is able to be monitored and, over time, any trends or potential issues will be able to be identified and appropriate action taken.

### **Recommendations**

No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.

### **3.7.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved**

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO7 is based on the performance of 3 separate LDP policies and compliance with the LDP's land use strategy, particularly, the Plan's spatial distribution of development allocations.

A shortfall in the delivery of B1 employment floor space has been identified as the primary issue of concern, particularly, as the same issue was highlighted in the last AMR.

A variety of recommendations are set out above, but it is recognised that the LDP may be constrained in its ability to have a direct influence on the economic downturn or the current state of the market which are the main factors at play.

Continued close monitoring will be necessary to help ensure the failure to fully meet the requirements of the strategic objective does not become a longer-term trend. However, it is also timely to undertake further analysis of the employment market including re-assessing the requirements of business and industry in the area and considering any site delivery issues as part of the four year LDP review.



**3.8 SO8: To promote social inclusion and ensure equality of opportunity through reducing the need to travel and providing better access by sustainable means to employment opportunities, community facilities and services.**

**3.8.1 Contextual Changes**

No significant contextual changes relating to this strategic objective have been introduced during the monitoring period.

**3.8.2 Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW15	Number of community facilities lost through change of use	No loss of viable community facilities below identified need  (except where justified within the terms of the policy)	1 or 2 community facilities lost for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more community facilities lost in 1 year	0 community facility lost in one year
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Since the previous AMR, the Planning Policy Team has formulated a process flow chart to aid the consideration of planning applications involving the potential loss of community facilities. The flow chart provides further clarity as to what constitutes a community facility and the evidence that will be required from applicants when a development proposal proposes the loss of such a facility.</p> <p>As a result of the flow chart being introduced, the performance of LDP Policy BW15 has improved. Whilst the data collected shows that some community facilities were lost over this monitoring period, the loss of these facilities was justified within the terms and requirements of the policy, demonstrating that awareness and understanding of the policy's aims and objectives has increased.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.</p>				

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
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BW17 AS17	Amount of planning obligations secured on allocated housing developments	Secure contributions on 33 (67%) of the allocated housing developments	1 or 2 sites failing to secure planning obligations for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more sites failing to secure planning obligations in 1 year	No allocated sites failing to secure identified contributions
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Continuing to secure planning contributions on all identified sites is an important part of the LDP's strategy; however, negotiating obligations is currently proving problematic owing to the poor economic climate.</p> <p>Whilst no allocated sites failed to secure identified contributions during 2013/14, it is of concern that only one allocated site actually came forward. Consequently, the delivery of community benefits / infrastructure has been at a much lower level than expected.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required as this element of policy is currently being achieved. However, there are wider concerns over the delivery of the LDP's housing strategy (see recommendations under Strategic Objective 6).</p>				

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW17	Percentage of relevant planning applications complying with SPG	All (Post SPG adoption)	-	All applications complying.
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Since the last AMR, the Planning Policy Team has produced two further SPGs taking the total number of adopted SPGs to four. The two most recently adopted SPGs concern 'Shopfront Design' (adopted May 2013) and 'Sustainable Design' (adopted July 2013).</p> <p>All qualifying applications have been assessed against the relevant adopted SPGs and either found to comply or amended to comply.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>All qualifying applications received should continue to be assessed against the relevant adopted SPGs.</p>				

### 3.8.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO8 is based on the performance of 3 separate LDP policies as outlined above.

Whilst the strategic objective is being realised satisfactorily, there are wider concerns over the delivery of the LDP's housing strategy which is unlikely to be fully realised unless changes are affected to the Plan as part of the four year review.

**3.9 SO9: To promote health and wellbeing by providing accessible and varied opportunities for leisure and recreational activities.**

**3.9.1 Contextual Changes**

No significant contextual changes relating to this strategic objective have been introduced during the monitoring period.

**3.9.2 Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW7 BW16	Amount of public open space, including play space and informal recreational areas, lost to development (ha) which is not allocated in the development plan	No loss below identified need	-	0ha
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>During the period under review, no public open space, including play space and informal recreational areas were lost. A contributing factor to the success of this policy is the on-going work towards producing an Open Space Strategy (OSS) for Merthyr Tydfil. The OSS has identified and surveyed all accessible open space with the County Borough and assigned it a 'typology'. The number and type of identified spaces will be analysed against the population demographic to identify its suitability and supply at a ward level.</p> <p>The ability to reference the emerging OSS over the past 12 months has already proved invaluable to the planning policy team both for pre-application discussions and during the planning application process. The detailed analysis contained within the strategy has helped provide a solid evidence base when raising objections to proposals that would entail the loss of open space and when highlighting the need to provide additional facilities to make up the identified shortfall of such spaces across the County Borough.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>Continue the strict implementation of LDP Policy BW16, and in the first instance, discourage any proposals that involve the loss of open space. No further action required as this policy is currently performing as intended.</p>				

### **3.9.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved**

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO9 is based on the performance of 2 separate LDP policies as outlined above.

It is clear that this strategic objective is being achieved and there is no immediate requirement for action other than to continue close monitoring over the next 12 months.

3.10 **SO10: To ensure good quality design of new development and the creation of safer communities.**

3.10.1 **Contextual Changes**

No significant contextual changes relating to this strategic objective have been introduced during the monitoring period.

3.10.2 **Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW7	Percentage of relevant schemes incorporating “secured by design principles”	All major applications	-	All major applications granted planning permission incorporated “secured by design principles”
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Over the monitoring period, all major developments incorporated “secured by design principles”. It is therefore considered that Policy BW7 is functioning effectively in respect securing safe built environments.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.</p>				

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW7	Preparation and adoption of Sustainable Design SPG	By the end of 2012	-	SPG adopted July 2013

	Percentage of planning applications complying with design SPG	All (post SPG adoption)	-	All relevant applications complying with SPG
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4 relating to sustainable design was adopted by the Council's Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committee in July 2013. All relevant applications have complied with the adopted sustainable design SPG, resulting in key elements of sustainable design being incorporated into new developments.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.</p>				

### 3.10.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO10 is based on the performance of a single LDP policy as outlined above.

Whilst the Sustainable Design SPG was not adopted by the end of 2012 as originally intended, the document was subsequently progressed to adoption in July 2013, and therefore, this does not give rise for concern.

It is considered that the strategic objective continues to be achieved overall.

**3.11 SO11: To ensure continued protection and enhancement of the natural, cultural, built and historic environment.**

**3.11.1 Contextual Changes**

No significant contextual changes relating to this strategic objective have been introduced during the monitoring period.

**3.11.2 Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW6	Developments granted planning permission that do not preserve or enhance scheduled ancient monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, listed buildings or conservation areas	No developments that would fail to preserve or enhance heritage features granted planning permission	1 or 2 developments failing to preserve or enhance features for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments failing to preserve or enhance features in 1 year	No developments granted planning permission failed to preserve or enhance heritage features

**Analysis**

Policy BW6 seeks to preserve or enhance various elements of Merthyr Tydfil's built heritage, including scheduled ancient monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, listed buildings and conservation areas. Over the monitoring period, a total of 56 developments were granted planning permission that impacted on built heritage assets. These developments can be broken down as follows: 2 developments impacted on a scheduled ancient monument; 6 developments impacted on a historic park and garden; 21 developments impacted on a listed building and 47 developments impacted on a conservation area.

1 permission concerned the redevelopment and extension of Cyfarthfa Retail Park. Impacts of varying degrees included those affecting the setting of a scheduled ancient monument, those affecting a listed building, those affecting a historic park and garden; and those affecting the character and appearance of a conservation area. Certain mitigation measures were secured to help reduce the impacts on these built heritage assets and on balance, other material considerations were considered to weigh heavily in favour of approving the scheme.



It is considered that Policy BW6 continues to function as intended and that the above approval does not give rise for any concern over the policy's effectiveness.

### **Recommendations**

No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.

<b>LDP Policy</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Trigger Level</b>	<b>Performance</b>
BW5  AS6	Developments granted planning permission that cause harm to the overall nature conservation value of SINC's or the LNR	No development that would cause harm to the overall nature conservation value of SINC's or the LNR granted planning permission	1 or 2 developments resulting in overall harm for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments resulting in overall harm in 1 year	All developments granted planning permission do not cause harm to the overall nature conservation value of SINC's or the LNR
	Developments granted planning permission that cause harm to a SSSI	No developments that would cause harm to a SSSI granted planning permission	1 or more developments resulting in harm to a SSSI	All developments granted planning permission do not cause harm to a SSSI

### **Analysis**

The monitoring framework contains two indicators which relate to Policy BW5, namely, the number of developments causing harm to the overall nature conservation value of a SINC or LNR (the indicator also relates to Policy AS6), and the number of developments causing harm to a SSSI. Each indicator is considered separately below.

With regard to the impact of development on a SINC, 10 developments were granted planning permission over the monitoring period that had the potential to negatively affect this nature conservation designation. In all instances, the overall nature conservation value of the SINC was safeguarded. In relation to the impact of development on a LNR, no developments were granted planning permission over the monitoring period that had the potential to affect this nature conservation designation.

In respect of the impact of development on a SSSI, 3 developments were granted planning permission over the monitoring period that had the potential to negatively affect Cwmglo/ Glyndyrus SSSI. In all instances, it was demonstrated that the proposed development would not cause harm to the SSSI.

As a consequence of the above, it is considered that Policies BW5 and AS6 are functioning effectively.

**Recommendations**

No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.

**3.11.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved**

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO11 is based on the performance of 3 LDP policies as outlined above.

It is considered that the strategic objective is being achieved and there is no requirement for action as policy is functioning effectively.

**3.12 SO12: To contribute towards reducing the impact of climate change through reduced carbon dioxide emissions in new developments.**

**3.12.1 Contextual Changes**

The previous AMR highlighted the Welsh Government's public consultation exercise on proposed changes to Part L (Conservation of Fuel and Power) of the Building Regulations and indicated that further consideration of this matter would be provided in future AMRs. The finalised changes to Part L of the Building Regulations were not however confirmed during the current monitoring period, and as such, the full implications for planning policy remain unknown. It is anticipated that the changes to Part L of the Building Regulations will come into force during the next monitoring period and associated national policy changes and guidance will be published at the same time. A further update on this matter will therefore be provided in next year's AMR.

**3.12.2 Policy Monitoring**

LDP Policy	Indicator	Target	Trigger Level	Performance
BW7	Preparation and adoption of Sustainable Design SPG	By the end of 2012	-	SPG adopted July 2013
	Percentage of planning applications complying with design SPG	All (post SPG adoption)	-	All relevant applications complying with SPG
<p><b><u>Analysis</u></b></p> <p>Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4 relating to sustainable design was adopted by the Council's Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Committee in July 2013. All relevant applications have complied with the adopted sustainable design SPG, resulting in key elements of sustainable design being incorporated into new developments.</p>				
<p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>No action is required. This element of policy is currently being achieved.</p>				

**3.12.3 Overall summary on policy performance and conclusion on whether the strategic objective is being achieved**

For the purposes of this annual monitoring report, the level of achievement towards Strategic Objective SO12 is based on the performance of a single LDP policy as outlined above.

Whilst the Sustainable Design SPG was not adopted by the end of 2012 as originally intended, the document was subsequently progressed to adoption in July 2013, and therefore, this does not give rise for concern.

It is considered that the strategic objective continues to be achieved overall.

## **4.0 Sustainability Performance**

- 4.1 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires local authorities to undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as an integral part of their plan preparation. In addition, the LDP Regulations require that local authorities undertake Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of their plan. It is recognised as best practice for local authorities to undertake SEA and SA together as an iterative part of the development plan process throughout plan preparation. In preparing its LDP, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council commissioned a joint SEA and SA and produced and published its SEA/SA Report in conjunction with the publication of the LDP.
- 4.2 The SEA Directive also requires that the Council monitors the state of the environment through monitoring the sustainability objectives set out in the SEA/SA Report. Table 7.1 of the Final SA Report for the LDP (May 2011) sets out potential SA targets and indicators with reference to the relevant topic area in the SEA directive and each of the 15 SA objectives identified the plan preparation process. The table refers to potential targets rather than confirmed / absolute targets owing to the fact that the Council recognises changes to the monitoring framework may be necessary in future. Notwithstanding, the table set out in the Final SA Report remains the basis of sustainability monitoring for the LDP at this point in time.
- 4.3 The targets were set as aspirations to be reached by the end of the plan period rather than being achievable milestones during particular periods of the LDP. Consequently, it is recognised that they may not always be measurable, and even where they are, they may not always provide a direct indication of whether the LDP is having the intended benefit for the environment as a whole as it is unlikely that the LDP will have realised these aspirational targets during the early part of the plan period. As a result, SA Monitoring will consider whether there is movement towards the target rather than the absolute position of whether the target has been reached, and this will require a significant level of officer interpretation to the background information / indicators.
- 4.4 Furthermore, whilst the AMR sets out a variety of objectives and targets to assess performance, the Council has found that monitoring each of the background indicators (not published in this document) has often proved difficult owing to the availability and /or timeliness of various data sources. In addition, there are often conflicting results from certain background indicators that may have the effect of masking any notable trends or movements. In circumstances such as these, where there are large, diverse and potentially conflicting sources of information, it has proved difficult to draw an overall picture of the effect of the plan on the environment. The inherent tension between certain indicators does not lend itself to the production of meaningful results.
- 4.5 To help overcome the above difficulties and to present an assessment of sustainability performance in the most coherent and meaningful manner, the Council has restricted its AMR evaluation to a simple commentary on each of the 15 SA Objectives. This commentary is subdivided into the relevant SA targets and its composition is guided / informed by the background indicators wherever possible. In

this way, the AMR avoids dwelling overly on the intricacies or inadequacies of the various data sets.

- 4.6 Given that SEA Monitoring should take a strategic view of the effects of the plan on the environment, the Council considers it entirely appropriate for the SEA Monitoring to use the Strategic Objectives as the top tier measuring unit for the process. The effect of some background indicators can be aggregated together to form a more comprehensive and more balanced method of assessment which should help overcome potential conflicts and aid performance evaluation across a wider perspective.
- 4.7 The traffic light system used in policy evaluation has not been taken forward to this section owing to the fact that many of the SEA targets and indicators are aspirational and much less specific than their policy equivalents. Evaluation of success is therefore likely to be less quantifiable, and though the degree of progress toward a target is explained in commentary, this does not translate sufficiently readily into a quick-reference colour-coded assessment.

## 5.0 Sustainability Assessments

5.1 The following pages set out the sustainability assessments with reference to the relevant sustainability objectives.

SA Objective Number	Sustainability Objective
1 - Housing	<p><b>SA Objective 1: Meet the overall housing requirement through a mix of dwelling types catering for all needs to promote integrated and thriving communities.</b></p> <p>7 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target : Reduce discrepancies between housing requirement, especially for affordable and special need housing and stock.</b>  1435 new dwellings have been built in the County Borough since 2006. However, this rate of house building is well below the level required to fulfil the strategy of the LDP.</p> <p>2013/14 has seen further affordable housing delivered with the completion of 15 flats at Vulcan House and 4 affordable dwellings as part of the Redrow development in Trelewis. Work is currently progressing on several affordable housing developments that will contribute to next year's completion total.</p> <p>There has been a decrease in the average house price during the monitoring period and an increase in wages, and accordingly, the Local Housing Market Assessment is being updated in order to gain a more accurate picture of issues such as housing need and affordability.</p> <p>The standard of existing housing stock has been improved with nearly all social housing in the County Borough now meeting Welsh Housing Quality Standard, and the largest Registered Social Landlord in the County Borough (Merthyr Valley Homes) now being able to construct new dwellings after improving the quality of its existing stock to an appropriate standard. Merthyr Valley Homes is currently constructing its first new-build site at Marigold Close, Gurnos which will deliver 28 units over the next 2 years.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Some progress continues to be made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
2 - Cultural Heritage	<p><b>SA Objective 2: Promote and protect Welsh Culture and Heritage including landscape and archaeology.</b></p> <p>6 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target: Increase proportion of new development that protects or enhances sites of historical and cultural interest.</b>  All relevant developments granted planning permission during 2013/14 either protected or enhanced heritage features as part of that permission.</p>

	<p>Work has recently been completed on the Dowlais Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP) and the Thomastown Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. These documents, both of which were subjected to public consultation before being adopted by the Council, will act as up-to-date guides for property owners and occupiers in each of the conservation areas as well as a guide for those contemplating undertaking development. The CAAMPs will help inform planning decisions and raise the profile of these designations with a view to more sensitive management in the longer term.</p> <p>The percentage of residents that can speak Welsh has seen an increase to 22% during the last year.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Progress continues to be made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
3 - Communities	<p><b>SA Objective 3: Encourage population retention and growth; and promote integrated and distinctive communities with opportunities for living, working and socialising for all.</b></p> <p>6 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: All people to have access to a GP, post office, play area, pub and village hall.</b></p> <p>The availability of local services is an integral part of the decision-making process on the location of new residential development. For this reason, all residential allocations within the LDP have been located within defined settlement limits and situated within close proximity to existing services and facilities.</p> <p>100% of residential development undertaken in the County Borough during this monitoring period lies within 400m of a bus stop and within 600m of primary facilities including a shop and school.</p> <p>The Council's draft Open Space Strategy (OSS) provides comprehensive data for the percentage of the population with access to various types of open space including those with access to a play area. The OSS has found that 37% of the County Borough's households have access to a play area within 400m of their home.</p> <p>Statistics for accessibility to pubs and village halls do not exist at a local authority level or above.</p> <p>Car ownership figures contained within the previous monitoring report were taken from the 2011 Census; with the next release of comparable data being planned for 2021, there is no new relevant data available for this AMR.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Increase percentage of people with qualifications and improve skills.</b></p> <p>Increasing the proportion of the population with qualifications is not directly</p>



	<p>related to land use planning policy, although access to improved education and skills facilities remains a fundamental part of the LDP's strategy which is being fulfilled via a number of policies under Strategic Objective SO8.</p> <p>In facilitating a more holistic approach to social regeneration, the Community Services Directorate of the Council has developed learning opportunities for adults and young people who are not in a formal learning environment such as college, school or university. Activities that enhance learning within the community are the focus for the service.</p> <p><b>SA Target 3: Reduce the number of wards that are among the 100 most deprived in Wales.</b>  Figures from the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation are released every 3 years, with the next data release not due until November 2014. This being the case, there is no new relevant data available for this AMR.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Progress has been maintained towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
4 - Health	<p><b>SA Objective 4: Promote services and facilities that encourage a healthy and safe lifestyle.</b></p> <p>9 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Increase access to physical recreation facilities.</b>  LDP Strategic Objective SO9 seeks to promote health and wellbeing by providing accessible and varied opportunities for leisure and recreational activities. Seven LDP policies flow from this objective including Policy BW16 to protect and enhance the County Borough's network of leisure facilities, and Policy AS17 to provide new outdoor sport / play space in helping to meet Fields in Trust Standards.</p> <p>Recently adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance on Planning Obligations and the emerging Open Space Strategy will assist in working towards national play space, sport and recreation standards across the County Borough.</p> <p>StatsWales data from the 2013 State of the Environment Report represents the most up-to-date information for this indicator; thus, no further comparison is able to be made since the last AMR. However, during 2013/2014, the Council's Open Space Strategy (OSS) has progressed to a point where similar data can be provided both at a County Borough level and a ward level. Data from the OSS shows that 56% of households within Merthyr Tydfil currently live within 400m of a natural / semi natural green space.</p> <p>No new air quality data for Wales appears to have been published since 2012. Therefore, an air quality update is not possible at this time; should more contemporary data become available, it will be assessed in the next AMR.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Design to encourage walking and cycling.</b>  The close proximity of housing, employment, retail and other land uses has been</p>

	<p>a major consideration in the pattern of land allocation in the LDP, and will assist in minimising the need to travel whilst helping to ensure there is sufficient incentive to undertake journeys by means other than the car.</p> <p>Equally important is the need to provide sustainable links between communities including better use of the existing footpath/cycle network and the creation of new routes and links.</p> <p>During 2013/2014, approximately 0.28kms of new bridleway/ cycleway were created in Merthyr Tydfil. This compares with 1.2kms created last year. In terms of new footpaths, 2.34kms were created in 2013/2014 compared with 0.23kms in the previous monitoring period.</p> <p>People will only walk or cycle within the local and wider area if they feel safe to do so; the National Survey of Wales (released May 2014) shows that 70% of the population of Merthyr Tydfil feel safe walking alone in the local area after dark. Despite being a decrease of 4% since last year, this is still one of the lowest figures when compared with other Welsh local authorities.</p> <p><b>SA Target 3: Decrease in the number of people with limiting long-term illness or general health 'not good'.</b></p> <p>There is no longer an available indicator that accurately reflects this element of the SA target. The 2011 Census amended the previous categorisation so that data now reflects "the County Borough's population describing their health as 'good.'"</p> <p>Since the 2011 Census, the National Survey for Wales has continued to record the County Borough's residents' description of their health. The most recent data (released May 2014) shows that 35% of the County Borough's population describe their health as 'good'. This figure is marginally higher than the Welsh average and represents an increase of 3.9% compared with last year.</p> <p>The National Survey of Wales also shows that 40% of residents reported having a 'limiting long term illness.' This is the first year that this data has been gathered.</p> <p>The data for 'cause of death' has yet to be updated by either StatsWales or the NHS Wales Information Service. As the update is due in Autumn 2014, further analysis is not currently possible and will need to wait until the next AMR.</p> <p>Life expectancy data is published by ONS every two years with the next update due in late Autumn 2014. Data comparison is therefore precluded as part of this AMR.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Further progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
5 - Economy & Employment	<p><b>SA Objective 5: Encourage a thriving and sustainable economy with a diverse range of job opportunities.</b></p> <p>16 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for</p>

	<p>the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Broaden economic base.</b></p> <p>LDP Strategic Objective SO7 seeks to improve and diversify the economy, safeguarding existing jobs and creating a range of new job opportunities in a sustainable manner. Nine LDP policies flow from this objective including those covering employment land allocations, existing and proposed leisure developments, and retail development (both within and outside Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre). The preference of each of these policies has been assessed and results published in Section 3 of this AMR.</p> <p>The data collected shows the relationship of economically active persons by sector to be constantly changing over the past 5 years. The proportion of people working in higher level managerial, director and professional roles (Soc 2010 major group 1-3) is still the highest employment sector within the County Borough, and showed an increase over the past year to a high of 32.1%. The Wales average figure for this employment sector marginally decreased over the same period.</p> <p>The proportion of those within skilled trades or administrative work (Soc 2010 major group 4-5) has been fluctuating for the past 5 years, with a slight increase of 0.2% over the past 12 months, increasing to 22.4%.</p> <p>The proportion of those working within the caring, leisure &amp; sales, and customer service areas (Soc 2010 major group 6-7) remains the lowest employment sector in the County Borough, but the proportion of those employed within this sector has risen for the first time in 3 years to 20.2% during this monitoring period.</p> <p>The proportion of people working in elementary occupations and as plant / machine operatives remains the second highest employment sector within the County Borough. Whilst the proportion of those employed within this sector has fallen for the first time in 2 years, the figure for Merthyr Tydfil is still higher than the Welsh average.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Increase opportunities to work within the County Borough.</b></p> <p>The amount of employment floor space built in the LDP's Primary Growth Area between April 2013 and March 2014 equated to 1330 sq m. which is within the target range set out in the LDP Monitoring Framework.</p> <p>The take up of LDP land from the start of the plan period to the end of the period under review equates to 29% of the total allocated. This figure being lower than the target range set out within the Monitoring Framework.</p> <p>Recent figures released by the 'Local Data Company' show that the UK average shop vacancy rate for February 2014 was 13.9%, with the Welsh average vacancy rate being 15.7%. The current vacancy rate within Merthyr Tydfil is 14.6% i.e. 0.7% higher than the UK average, but 1.1% lower than the Welsh average. Although the vacancy rate is not as low as desired, it is not considered a cause for immediate concern given the current economic situation which is outside the control of the Plan.</p>
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	<p><b>SA Target 3: Decrease unemployment.</b></p> <p>The number of economically active people in employment in the County Borough has increased for the third consecutive year, from 59.9% (April 2011 – March 2012) to 62.8% (April 2012 – March 2013), and then to 64.9% for this monitoring period. This is possibly a sign that the health of the local economy is beginning to improve.</p> <p>Data for the percentage of people living as well as working within the County Borough is only available every 10 years owing to the fact that it is collected through the Census; there is no new data to allow comparison during this monitoring period, therefore.</p> <p>Data for household disposable income is only available at a regional level, but for the 'Central Valleys' area (within which Merthyr Tydfil is located), this data shows the Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) has steadily increased over recent years. The most recently available information shows that in 2012, the Central Valleys had the highest GDHI since 2005.</p> <p>For the fourth year running, there has been an increase in the number of people of working age being qualified to NVQ Level 4 or above, growing from 18.4% in 2009 to 26% in 2013. Despite the encouraging increase, this figure is once again below that of the Welsh average (31.4%).</p> <p>The percentage of people of working age receiving benefits within the County Borough has fallen for the third consecutive time from 27.5% (in February 2012) to 24.3% (in December 2012), and then to 23.4% (in February 2014). Those claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) that have been out of work for more than a year within Merthyr Tydfil has also decreased over this monitoring period, from 2.2% (in March 2013) to 1.5% (in July 2014).</p> <p><b>SA Target 4: Support the rural economy.</b></p> <p>Three farm diversification proposals were submitted during this monitoring period. Two each proposed a single 0.5MW wind turbine, whilst the third proposed the conversion of an agricultural barn to 16 stables. The barn conversion and one of the wind turbine applications were permitted.</p> <p><b>SA Target 5: Support potential funding to provide basic infrastructure, develop human resources, and invest in research, innovation and the information society.</b></p> <p>Between 2007 and 2013, the Council's Physical Regeneration Department secured European funding totalling approximately £51,886,010 for 31 different projects. This funding has been for, amongst other things, Town Centre regeneration projects, gypsy traveller learning, rural services and tourism, and schemes assisting people into employment (Jobmatch and Genesis Cymru 2).</p> <p>In 2014, the Department has again been successful in securing European funding. Notwithstanding the 'Vibrant and Viable Places' funding identified in the Policy Assessments under Strategic Objective SO7, information on the amount and type of funding secured is not currently available.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Some progress has been made towards meeting this</p>
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	SA objective.
6 - Transport	<p><b>SA Objective 6: Assist in reducing the need to travel and promote more sustainable modes of transport.</b></p> <p>4 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Promote more sustainable modes of transport.</b> The requirement to reduce the need to travel is one of the guiding principles of the LDP's spatial development strategy. Where travel remains necessary, it is proposed that a greater proportion of journeys are undertaken by public transport than previously.</p> <p>Last year's AMR compared data from the 2001 and 2011 Censuses which showed an increase in the use of public transport over the 10 year period. The next data will not be published until the Census of 2021; thus, a meaningful comparison is unlikely to be possible until that time.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Locate new development in sustainable locations, reducing the need to travel</b> In taking into account the inter-relationship between land use planning and transport, the LDP focuses the majority of new development within or adjacent to established settlements where services and facilities already exist, or where they can realistically be provided as part of new development.</p> <p>The assessment of car usage in the previous AMR was made using Census data from 2001 and 2011. With no new data expected to be published until the next Census in 2021, a meaningful comparison is likely to be difficult before then.</p> <p>Data is now available to compare rail passenger numbers using the five stations within the County Borough (Merthyr Tydfil, Pentrebach, Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Vale and Quakers Yard). This data shows that, in general, all stations have seen an increase in passenger numbers since 2011, with the biggest increase being at Merthyr Tydfil station which experienced an increase of over 44,000 passengers during that period. This is a positive sign that suggests people are changing their chosen mode of transport in favour of rail. Bus passenger figures are unavailable, so a comparison of bus and rail passenger figures is not possible at this time.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
7 – Built Environment	<p><b>SA Objective 7: Encourage a high quality built environment that promotes community pride.</b></p> <p>4 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Seek a high standard of design in all new development.</b> Due to requirements such as current Building Regulations and BREEAM</p>

	<p>standards, all relevant approved developments now incorporate measures that contribute towards improving energy and water efficiency. As of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014, the Code for Sustainable Homes has been abolished and issues previously covered by the code are now included in Part L of Building Regulations.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Increase opportunities for community participation in design of new development.</b> All non-householder planning applications that are deemed to require a Design and Access Statement are not registered unless an appropriate statement is submitted. There are types of application that are exempt from submitting Design and Access statements, including applications for change of use where there are no alterations proposed to the building, applications for advertising consent, and applications for engineering works.</p> <p><b>SA Target 3: Improve public spaces.</b> 2013/14 has seen progress on a number of developments that will result in an overall improvement to the public realm. A significant amount of work has taken place in Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre including environmental enhancements at Penderyn Square to create new public /event space outside the former Town Hall, and construction of the new Merthyr Tydfil College. Work is also proceeding on the River Taff Central Link with all construction work due to finish by December 2014.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Significant progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
8 - Landscape	<p><b>SA Objective 8: Facilitate the protection and enhancement of the countryside and landscape character.</b></p> <p>7 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target: Achieve favourable conditions of nationally and locally important landscape designations.</b> During the monitoring period, no nationally or locally important land has been given over to inappropriate development, and no developments have been granted consent that would have an adverse affect on either of the SSSIs in the County Borough.</p> <p>2013/14 has seen revised figures published for fly-tipping which show an increase from 1128 incidents in 2011/12 to 1416 incidents in 2012/13. The figures for 2013/14 have not yet been published and it will be important to monitor this data to ascertain if the trend continues.</p> <p>There is still a lack of available data regarding levels of night blight.</p> <p>The monitoring period saw no inappropriate development granted on common land, and there was no loss of protected trees and woodlands during 2013/14.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>

9 - Biodiversity	<p><b>SA Objective 9: Protect and enhance the diversity and abundance of wildlife habitats and native species.</b></p> <p>8 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Protect and enhance biodiversity.</b></p> <p>There are 5248 ha of LBAP priority habitats in Merthyr Tydfil including broadleaf woodland, grassland, heath land, wetland, inland rocks and mineral spoil habitat. The above figure represents an increase from last year, indicating that the Merthyr Tydfil LBAP is having a positive impact.</p> <p>There has been no net loss of habitat as a result of development, and there has been no change in the total area of SINC within the County Borough.</p> <p>Taf Fechan SSSI remains at an unfavourable conservation status but is under favourable management, meaning that it should be heading towards favourable status given time. Cwm Glo &amp; Glyndyrus SSSI has not yet been assessed but is currently under favourable management.</p> <p>In terms of non-native species, 0.45 ha of Knotweed has been visibly eradicated during this AMR period. This figure is identical to last year as the same areas of Knotweed were re-treated to ensure eradication. No new areas were treated as funding to help facilitate the eradication of non-native species has ceased. No data on the eradication of other non-native species has been identified.</p> <p>Regarding LBAP selected local characteristic species; the Lapwing population at Ffos-y-Fran is in decline, whilst the population of Great Crested Newt is increasing. However, there is no contextual information available to make a judgement as to the particular significance of these changes.</p> <p>Of the 27 relevant planning applications granted permission, 10 incorporated ecological mitigation measures, equating to 37%. Despite a lower number of relevant applications this year (reflected in the decrease in application numbers overall), a higher proportion of relevant applications included ecological mitigation. This was either as a result of observations made by the Council's ecology officer, or through voluntary actions by the applicant. In terms of the latter, this may suggest a greater awareness of the natural environment by the public.</p> <p>No new areas of linear habitat have been created, maintained or enhanced within this monitoring period due to alternative external funding priorities in 2013/14.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Achieve an improvement in the water environment.</b></p> <p>The water environment is considered under SA Objective 10 below as there is no relevant background indicator under SA Objective 9.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Further progress has been made towards meeting</p>

	this SA objective.
10 - Water	<p><b>SA Objective 10: Ensure the protection and enhancement of the water environment.</b></p> <p>6 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Improve water quality.</b></p> <p>Two indicators have been identified which relate to this target. The first monitors river quality by looking at the percentage of total classified river length of “good status”, while the second considers development within groundwater source protection zones.</p> <p>The European Water Framework Directive (WFD) requires that all inland and coastal water bodies reach at least “good status” by 2015, subject to certain exemptions. The term “good status” means the status achieved by a surface water body when both its ecological status and its chemical status are at least good.</p> <p>As indicated in the last AMR, no rivers in Merthyr Tydfil currently meet “good status”, nor are they expected to achieve it by 2015. The current overall objectives are for all water bodies within Merthyr Tydfil to meet “good status” by 2027.</p> <p>It should be noted that the status of water bodies were updated by Natural Resources Wales in December 2013. As a result, the status of four out of the five water bodies within Merthyr Tydfil remains unchanged. However, the Nant Morlais has seen its status downgraded from moderate in 2009 to poor in 2013. Whilst the overall objective is not to meet “good status” until 2027, the current deterioration in status is a matter of concern.</p> <p>Natural Resources Wales’ Local Evidence Package for Merthyr Tydfil (October 2013) provides an overview of the confirmed or suspected reasons for water bodies failing to meet “good status” in 2013. Here, it indicates that sewerage discharge is the likely reason for the current failure of the Nant Morlais to meet “good status.” The information does not however provide a detailed explanation of why the status of the water body is declining, and as such, this matter requires further exploration with Natural Resources Wales and potentially Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water.</p> <p>If it is found that sewerage discharge is the principal reason for the deterioration in water body status, the Local Planning Authority will undertake the following actions: work with developers, Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water, and Natural Resources Wales when reviewing the LDP to ensure sufficient sewerage capacity exists for current and future needs; and ensure that planning permissions granted help to deliver the required water quality.</p> <p>Only a relatively small area of land in the north east extremity of the County Borough falls within a groundwater source protection zone. No developments</p>



	<p>have occurred within this zone over the monitoring period.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Flood risk to be mitigated or avoided.</b> Over the monitoring period, no developments were granted planning permission in flood zone C that did not meet TAN15 tests. The avoidance of development within the floodplain allows these areas to continue to fulfil their flood flow and water storage functions, preventing physical changes to water bodies.</p> <p><b>SA Target 3: New development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems.</b> Over the monitoring period, no developments have been granted planning permission without incorporating SuDS into the design of scheme unless there have been environmental or practical reasons for not doing so. This increase in the use of SuDS will contribute to reducing risks of flooding and the pollution of surface waters during high rainfall events.</p> <p><b>SA Target 4: Encourage more efficient water use.</b> Two indicators have been identified that relate to this target. The first relates to the number of water efficient developments, and the second to water consumption per household.</p> <p>The number of water efficient developments has increased over the monitoring period due to the promotion of water conservation/efficiency measures promoted through Policy BW7 and the national sustainable design standards set out in Planning Policy Wales (Edition 6, February 2014). Reducing the amount of water consumption in new developments will assist in minimising additional pressures on the water environment.</p> <p>In respect of water consumption per household in Wales, the last update of data provided by StatsWales was in 2010/2011. It is not therefore currently possible to provide an update on changes to the amount of water consumption per household in Wales. Further consideration will be given to this matter when new data becomes available.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
11 - Climate Change	<p><b>SA Objective 11: Help to minimise the cause and effects of climate change.</b></p> <p>5 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Decrease greenhouse gas emissions.</b> Two indicators have been identified which relate to this target. The first monitors the emissions of greenhouse gases and the second tracks the ecological footprint of Merthyr Tydfil.</p> <p>In respect of the emissions of greenhouse gases, previous AMRs considered the total basket of estimated greenhouse gas emissions<sup>2</sup> in Wales. This data has not</p>

<sup>2</sup>'Basket' of six greenhouse gases includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride.

	<p>however been updated since 2010 and as a consequence, the decision has been taken to use more readily available data relating to per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Whilst it would be preferable to consider all greenhouse emissions, CO<sub>2</sub> is the main greenhouse gas, accounting for about 82 per cent of the UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2012. It is therefore considered an adequate indicator for monitoring the causes of climate change.</p> <p>Between the start of the Plan period (2006) and the most recently available data (2012), Merthyr Tydfil's per capita emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> has reduced from 7 to 5.7 tonnes. This general decline in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will help mitigate the effects of climate change.</p> <p>It should however be noted that per capita emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> rose slightly by 0.4 tonnes between 2011 and 2012. This annual increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions does not necessarily indicate that the favourable trend for a decline in emissions has been arrested. Fluctuations can occur between years and further monitoring is required before any new trend can be established.</p> <p>As indicated in the last AMR, the ecological footprint of Merthyr Tydfil was last calculated by the Stockholm Environment Institute in 2006. It is currently not possible to assess whether the ecological footprint of Merthyr Tydfil is being successfully reduced towards the global average, due to the infrequency of data updates. This indicator will be considered at a later stage when further data becomes available.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Decrease impacts from the effects of climate change.</b> Two indicators have been identified under this target which both relate to flooding. The first considers the number of properties at risk from flooding, while the second tracks the number of flood incidents. Climate change is anticipated to affect flood risk in Merthyr Tydfil by increasing levels of rainfall over winter months and increasing the frequency of extreme weather conditions.</p> <p>As indicated in previous annual monitoring reports, the Authority's Engineering Department has been undertaking further analysis of the number of properties at risk of flooding in the County Borough. This work has now been completed and the number of properties at risk of flooding has reduced from 4371 (preliminary figure) to 2283.</p> <p>In respect of flood incidents, no significant flooding occurred in the County Borough between 2013 and 2014.</p> <p>Both positive outcomes demonstrate that the County Borough is coping well with the effects of Climate Change.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Further progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
12 - Energy	<b>SA Objective 12: Encourage the supply of renewable energy and a reduction in energy consumption.</b>

	<p>5 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Encourage energy efficient design in development.</b> Three indicators have been identified under this target. Two relate to the proportion of developments meeting BREEAM and Code for Sustainable Homes standards respectively, while the third considers energy consumption.</p> <p>Changes to Planning Policy Wales, which took effect in 2009 and 2010, require new dwellings and certain non-residential developments<sup>3</sup> to meet Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and BREEAM 'Very Good' standards respectively. Higher standards have also been set for energy and carbon emissions. All new-build residential and relevant non-residential developments granted planning permission over the monitoring period have met the required national sustainable design standards, mitigating the causes of climate change by minimising carbon dioxide emissions.</p> <p>In respect of Merthyr Tydfil's total energy consumption, sub-national total final energy consumption data for 2012 had not been published by the Department of Energy &amp; Climate Change at the time of writing. An update on this indicator will therefore be provided in the next AMR.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Maximise the use of renewable energy.</b> Two indicators have been identified which relate to this indicator. The first considers the amount of energy generated from renewable sources, while the second measures the proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources.</p> <p>Whilst there has been a significant take up of renewable energy technologies in buildings as part of the national sustainable design standards, there has only been limited standalone renewable energy developments granted planning permission over the monitoring period. The latter include an array of solar panels on an office building with a generating capacity of 0.09 MW, and a single 0.5 MW wind turbine.</p> <p>With regard to the proportion of energy needs met from renewable energy sources, reference to renewable energy within the energy consumption data provided by the Department of Energy and Climate Change was removed from the dataset of 2011. As indicated above, energy consumption data for 2012 was not available at the time of writing, and as such, it is not possible to determine whether the data relating to renewable energy has been permanently removed. An update in respect of this matter will be provided in the next AMR.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Further progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
13 – Land and Soils	<p><b>SA Objective 13: Promote efficient use of land and soils.</b></p> <p>4 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the</p>

<sup>3</sup> Non-residential development which will either have a floorspace of 1000m<sup>2</sup> or more, or will be carried out on a site having an area of one hectare or more.

	<p>LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Percentage of development on previously developed land.</b> Promoting an efficient use of land is one of the key elements of the LDP's strategy as outlined at Para 2.5.22 of the LDP Written Statement. At least 75% of the total land allocated for development in the Plan can be categorised as brownfield.</p> <p>In 2013/14, 88% of all development permitted occurred on previously developed land. This continues to exceed the 80% target set for the whole of the plan period. However, only 55% of new dwellings in Merthyr Tydfil were constructed on previously developed land during 2013/14. This represents a 28 percentage point decrease compared with the previous monitoring period but is due to a significant number of completions on a single, large, greenfield allocation in Trelewis which should also be viewed within the context of a lower level of housing completions across the County Borough overall. Over 60% of these completions were at a density of between 25-35 dwellings per hectare, which is in accordance with the targets included in the LDP monitoring framework.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Decrease percentage of contaminated land.</b> The LDP recognises that primarily because of Merthyr Tydfil's industrial legacy, certain areas of land in the County Borough are potentially contaminated. Furthermore, that the remediation of such land may be required before it can be brought back into beneficial use.</p> <p>The schedule of allocated housing sites listed at Appendix 4 of the LDP Written Statement recognises that potential ground conditions on many sites will require appropriate technical investigation prior to the submission of any planning application. However, as such sites continue to be developed during the course of the plan period, the Council considers that more and more contaminated land will be remediated in accord with the requirements of Policy BW18.</p> <p>The onus to identify site contamination rests with the developer but no data is currently available to quantify progress towards this target.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Continued progress has been made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
14 - Waste	<p><b>SA Objective 14: Promote the minimisation of waste, especially waste to landfill.</b></p> <p>6 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Move up the waste hierarchy.</b> Five indicators have been identified under this target. The first indicator considers municipal waste recycling/composting rates (percentage); the second considers municipal reuse/recycling/composting rates (percentage); the third considers municipal waste arisings; the fourth considers waste service access to</p>

	<p>households; and the final indicator measures the quantity of commercial waste produced, recycled and landfilled. The latter will only be considered when further data updates become available.</p> <p>The amount of recycling and composting has been steadily increasing in the County Borough for a number of years. However, the recycling/composting rate for 2013/14 has marginally reduced to 48% (provisional figure) from 49% in 2012/13. Whilst the figure for 2013/14 is only provisional, at the very least, recycling/composting rates appear to be stagnating. This underperformance cannot continue, particularly given that Merthyr Tydfil's combined reuse, recycling and composting rate of 49% for 2012/13 was below the statutory target of 52%.</p> <p>In order to address this issue, Merthyr Tydfil has recently received a £2m funding package from the Welsh Government in order to improve recycling services. The funding will enable the Council to invest in new vehicles, containers, depots and equipment to move to a kerbside sort system of recycling. This should both increase the quantity and improve the quality of materials recycled and enable the Council to meet national targets.</p> <p>In terms of access to waste service provision, 100 per cent of households in Merthyr Tydfil have access to a weekly recycling and composting service with a fortnightly general waste service. This kerbside waste collection service encourages residents to manage waste more effectively and increases the amount of waste being reused, recycled and composted.</p> <p>Merthyr Tydfil's municipal waste arisings have declined year on year since 2008/09 and this trend is expected to continue as waste policies take effect. However, municipal waste arisings appear to have remained stationary between 2012/13 (29, 500 tonnes) and 2013/2014 (29,600 tonnes – provisional figure). Whilst the provisional figure for 2013/2014 is unexpected, further data is required in order to determine whether the general decline in waste arisings has halted. This matter will be considered further in the next AMR.</p> <p><b>SA Target 2: Reduce tonnage of waste to landfill/incineration.</b> Unfortunately, data relating to the amount of waste diverted from landfill and incineration in 2012/2013 and 2013/14 is not currently available on the StatsWales database. As such, it is not possible to determine whether the trend of increasing waste diversion, experienced between 2006 and 2012, is continuing. This matter will be considered further in the next AMR.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Some progress continues to be made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
15 - Minerals	<p><b>SA Objective 15: Promote efficient and appropriate extraction and use of minerals in a manner that minimises social and environment impacts.</b></p> <p>2 background indicators informed this SA Objective in the Final SA Report for the LDP (2011).</p> <p><b>SA Target 1: Increase percentage use of aggregates from secondary and</b></p>

	<p><b>recycled sources.</b></p> <p>Over the monitoring period, two housing developments were granted planning permission within the buffer zone of the Ffos-y-Fran land reclamation scheme. Whilst these developments represent sensitive land uses, the respective sites are located within an existing built up area which already encroaches into the buffer zone. As such, the developments are in accordance with the guidance set out in paragraph 40 of Minerals Planning Policy Wales and it is considered that the percentage of land that has been taken up by sensitive development is zero.</p> <p><b>SUMMARY ASSESSMENT:</b> Progress continues to be made towards meeting this SA objective.</p>
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## 6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

- 6.1 Paragraph 4.43 of LDP Wales sets out seven questions that the AMR must seek to address. Whilst all of the issues have been considered and addressed throughout the report, they have not been set out specifically to address the questions. In order that the AMR complies with its statutory requirements, the following section sets out the conclusions and recommendations in a manner that directly responds to the LDP Wales questions.

### **Does the basic strategy remain sound?**

- 6.2 The evidence collected through the AMR process indicates that whilst many aspects of the LDP strategy are being achieved, certain fundamental elements of the Plan are currently not being realised. Particularly, it is evident that the LDP's housing strategy and employment strategy are not being delivered as required. However, there is little doubt that the prevailing economic climate continues to significantly influence to this situation and poor economic conditions since the first AMR have affected the degree to which the Plan has been able to remain sound.

### **What impact are the policies having globally, nationally, regionally and locally?**

- 6.3 It should be noted that the SEA monitoring contains a high proportion of indicators that have not provided results, either because of the requirement for time-series data, or due to relevant data sources being amended, or due to information now being completely unavailable. It will therefore be appropriate to continue to refine / adjust certain background indicators to provide more realistic results, thus leading to the publication of more comprehensive and meaningful assessments in future.
- 6.4 Globally, the SEA Monitoring identifies that the Plan is maintaining a balanced effect on the environment, whilst the LDP policy framework continues to contribute toward meeting sustainable development targets.
- Nationally, the LDP policy framework is providing development to help meet national requirements and projections, particularly in respect of affordable housing.
  - From a regional perspective, the LDP is assisting in meeting regional objectives through selected site delivery and policy implementation.
  - Locally, policy intervention and the delivery of allocations are assisting with the process of regeneration and helping to meet local social needs.

- 6.5 The SEA monitoring found the overall effects of the plan on sustainability and the environment to be in balance.

### **Do any policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy?**

- 6.6 Changes to national policy or guidance that may have an effect or impact upon the planning responsibilities of the LDP are set out in Section 3 of this AMR as necessary and appropriate. Having reviewed the relevant documents and strategies, the Council

has concluded that, in themselves, these changes do not require the LDP and its associated policy framework to be amended or changed.

**Are the policies and related targets being met or is progress being made towards meeting them (including publication of relevant SPG)?**

- 6.7 Information collected through the AMR process indicates that many of the Plan's policies are being met and that there continues to be positive movement towards related targets. In terms of LDP policy, Para 6.12 below summarises the policy areas that have been triggered for consideration; some of these have mitigating circumstances and do not reflect a failure of the policies or the policy framework, whilst others (including certain LDP allocations) are now worthy of reconsideration as part of the four year review of the Plan.
- 6.8 From a SEA/SA perspective, Chapter 5 sets out the results of the SEA Monitoring process which concludes that the overall effects of the plan are in balance. A number of competing negative and positive results cancel each other out, suggesting a stable position overall. The only note of concern emanating from the assessment was the number of background indicators that continue to fail in producing information to provide meaningful results for the commentary under each SA Objective (see 6.3 above).
- 6.9 Four SPG documents have been published and adopted by the Council since the adoption of the LDP in 2011; these relate to Affordable Housing, Planning Obligations, Shopfront Design, and Sustainable Design. A Policy Clarification Note has been produced in respect of the requirements of LDP Policy AS24 – Employment Site Protection, and a process flow chart also prepared to aid the consideration of planning proposals involving the potential loss of community facilities against LDP Policy BW15 – Community Facilities.

**Where progress has not been made, what are the reasons for this and what knock on effects may it have?**

- 6.10 Between 2011 and 2014, clear trends have emerged as to which policies are performing as expected and which are not. Some policies and allocations are clearly progressing slower than intended or may even be static, whilst a handful may be progressing at a faster rate than originally envisaged.
- 6.11 A variety of recommendations are set out in the relevant sections of this AMR, and these include undertaking further research and analysis of pertinent issues as part of the four year LDP review. Continued close monitoring will also be necessary in helping to ensure identified under-performance in certain areas does not become a more acute, extensive, and longer-term trend. However, it is recognised that the LDP may be constrained in its ability to have a direct influence on the economic downturn or the state of the market which are the main factors at play.



**Do any aspects of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and / or sustainable development objectives?**

6.12 The monitoring process has identified several aspects of the plan and its strategy that are not working or are not progressing towards their stated objectives. These are:

- The number of housing completions in the Primary Growth Area
- The vacancy rate for retail premises in Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre
- The % of LDP land allocations delivered
- The % of total development permitted on allocated sites
- The delivery of the Aberfan – Merthyr Vale highway improvement
- The level of production of land-won aggregates
- The supply of housing land
- The number of dwellings being built including general market dwellings
- The delivery of B1 employment floor space

**If policies or proposals need changing, what suggested actions are required to achieve this?**

6.13 A variety of recommendations are set out in the relevant sections of this AMR, and these include undertaking further research and analysis of pertinent issues as part of the four year LDP review. The extent of this review process is yet to be determined and will be considered more fully as part of a future LDP Review report. It is likely that even though only certain aspects of the plan are under-achieving, the process of revisiting them or adjusting / replacing them may have wider ranging implications for the LDP as a whole. There is a close interrelationship between many strands of the LDP's strategy, and the advancement towards a particular outcome at a particular time is dependent on a number of factors coming together in a measured and co-ordinated manner.

**Recommendations**

6.14 As a result of the above, the Annual Monitoring Report for 2014 concludes and recommends as follows:

1. AMR recommendations should be followed to help ensure identified under-performance in certain areas does not become a more acute, extensive, and longer-term trend. Close monitoring will also be necessary in this regard.
2. Amongst the AMR recommendations is the need for further research and analysis of pertinent issues as part of the four year LDP review. This process will commence with the publication of an LDP Review report.

## Quick-reference to policy achievements

SO1: To capitalise on Merthyr's strategic position, further developing its role as the main commercial, service and employment centre in the Heads of the Valleys area by focusing development within the main town of Merthyr Tydfil.					
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level		
<u>Core</u> Number of new homes built in the primary growth area.  (Linked to SO6)	Between 1,890 and 2,110 net completions by April 2016	1178 completions by April 2014		R	
	At least 3,020 net completions by April 2021	--		N/A	
<u>Core</u> New employment floorspace built in the primary growth area  (Linked to SO7)	Between 36,490 and 40,470 sq m net floorspace by April 2016		Greater than 14,700 sq m per annum or less than 1,834 sq m per annum for 2 consecutive years.	Y	Y
	At least 110,080 sq m net floorspace by April 2021			N/A	
<u>Local - Town Centre Health Checks</u> i) Total annual vacant floor space in Town Centre  (Vacancy rate currently at 13% - Retail, Commercial and Leisure Capacity Study, 2009)	Vacancy rate to reduce to 9% (UK average)		Vacancy rate increasing for 1 year or remaining static above target for 2 consecutive years	R	Y

ii) Percentage of A1 retail uses in primary shopping area	Maintain a percentage of at least 83%		Percentage less than 83%	Y	Y
<u>Core</u> New social and community infrastructure				G	
i) Merthyr Tydfil Health Park	Deliver by the end of 2013	Delivered	No planning application registered by the end of 2011		
ii) Merthyr College	Deliver by the end of 2016	Delivered	No planning application registered by the end of 2014		
iii) Ysgol Santes Tudful (Linked to SO8)	Deliver by the end of 2010	Delivered			

SO2: To focus appropriate levels of development within the County Borough's smaller valley communities to create affordable and attractive places to live with good access to jobs and services.					
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level		
<u>Core</u> Number of new homes built in secondary growth area	Between 280 and 320 net completions by April 2016	214 completions by April 2014		G	
	At least 550 net completions by April 2021	--		N/A	
(Linked to SO6)					

<u>Core</u> Number of new homes built in other growth areas.  (Linked to SO6)	Between 200 and 240 net completions by April 2016	43 completions by April 2014		<b>Y</b>
	At least 245 net completions by April 2021	--		<b>N/A</b>
<u>Core</u> New social and community infrastructure  (i) Primary Health Care at Treharris  (ii) Ynysowen Community Primary School  (Linked to SO8)	Deliver by the end of 2010  Deliver by the end of 2010	Delivered  Delivered		<b>G</b>

SO3. To promote regeneration through the use of suitable and appropriate brownfield land rather than greenfield sites.				
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level	
<u>Core</u> Amount of development permitted on previously developed land as a percentage of all development permitted (N.B. this would exclude householder applications and change of use from one non-residential use to another) (ha)	Maintain a percentage of at least 80% over the plan period	2013/14 – 88%	Less than 80% for 2 consecutive years	<b>G</b>
<u>Core</u> Amount of greenfield land lost	No land lost	1 development permitted	1 or 2 developments permitted for 2	<b>Y</b>

as a result of inappropriate development on sites not allocated in the LDP			consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments permitted in 1 year	
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SO4. To support the principle of sustainability via an energy efficient land use/ transport strategy.				
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level	
<u>Local</u> Percentage of new residential development within 400m of bus stop and 600m of primary facilities including a shop and school. (Linked to SO8)	Maintain a percentage of at least 80% over the plan period	94% of new residential developments that were granted planning permission over the monitoring period were within specified distances to local facilities	Less than 80% for 2 consecutive years	<b>G</b>
<u>Local</u> Percentage of new dwellings completed at: (1) less than 20 dph; (2) 20 dph or greater and less than 25 dph; (3) 25 dph or greater and less than 30 dph; (4) 30 dph or greater and less than 50 dph; and (5) 50 dph or greater (Linked to SO6)	Approximately 12% Approximately 13% Approximately 25% Approximately 48% Approximately 2%	11% 8% 55% 15% 11%	More than 25% of new dwellings at less than 25 dph for 2 consecutive years	<b>G</b>
<u>Core</u> Percentage of allocated sites developed (ha)	Approximately 65% of allocations developed by the end of 2016	Delivered approximately 6 ha over the monitoring period (Trigger	Less than 25% of LDP phased delivery rate for 2 consecutive years	<b>R</b> <b>G</b>

		level approximately 4.5 ha)			
	Approximately 100% of allocations developed by the end of 2021	--			N/A
<u>Core</u>					
Percentage of total development permitted on allocated sites (ha)	Maintain a percentage of approximately 85% over the plan period	Approximately 59% of total development permitted on allocated sites over the monitoring period	Less than 80% for 2 consecutive years		R
<u>Local</u>					
Highway network improvements					
(1) Aberfan – Merthyr Vale Link (T1)	Deliver by the end of 2011		-		R
(2) Pentwyn Road, Quakers Yard (T2)	Deliver by the end of 2021		No planning application registered by the end of 2019		N/A
(3) A472 at Fiddlers Elbow (T3)	Deliver by the end of 2021		No planning application registered by the end of 2019		N/A
<u>Local</u>					
Remodelling of Merthyr Tydfil Central Bus Station	Deliver by the end of 2016		No planning application registered by the end of 2014		N/A

SO5. To manage natural resources wisely avoiding irreversible damage in order to maintain and enhance their value for future generations.					
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level		
<u>Core</u>	Minimum of 3.3 Mt	Approximately 3 Mt	Less than 1.1 Mt	R	Y

The tonnage (Mt) of primary land-won aggregates permitted in accordance with the Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates	produced by the end of 2011	produced since 2009	per annum for 2 consecutive years		
	Minimum of 8.8 Mt produced by the end of 2016  Minimum of 14.3 Mt produced by the end of 2021  (N.B. targets are based on joint production with Caerphilly CBC)	Approximately 0.2 Mt produced in 2013		N/A	
<u>Core</u> Aggregates landbank	Minimum 10 year land bank maintained throughout the plan period	Current land bank sufficient to maintain a minimum 10 year land bank throughout the plan period	Landbank falling below target	G	
<u>Core</u> Amount of development (by TAN 15 paragraph 5.1 development category) permitted in C1 and C2 floodplain areas not meeting all TAN 15 tests (paragraph 6.2 i-v)	No developments permitted	No developments granted planning permission in C1 or C2 floodplain areas that do not meet all TAN 15 tests	1 or more developments permitted	G	
<u>Local</u> Developments incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS)	All developments to include SuDS where appropriate  (N.B Excludes developments that have not incorporated SuDS for environmental or practical reasons)	All developments granted planning permission over the monitoring period incorporate SuDS where appropriate	1 or 2 developments permitted without SuDS for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments permitted without SuDS in 1 year	G	
<u>Core</u> Amount of new licensed waste management facilities permitted	Between 1.1 and 3.2 hectares of B2 employment land developed for waste management facilities. (N.B. New facilities	Anaerobic digestion facility granted planning permission by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC in October 2013	No new facilities granted planning permission by the end of 2012	G	

	will be delivered in partnership with Rhondda Cynon Taf)			
	New civic amenity site in the south of the Borough to be delivered by the end of 2016		No planning application registered by the end of 2014	N/A
<u>Local</u> Landfill capacity at Trecatty	To maintain spare capacity over the Plan period	Input below maximum in 2012	Input at the maximum of 625,000 tpa for 3 consecutive years	G

SO6: To provide a range of dwelling sizes and types, including affordable and special needs housing, which support the need of the local community, attract new inhabitants to the area and create mixed and socially inclusive communities.				
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level	
<u>Core</u> Housing Land Supply	Maintain a minimum of 5 years supply (ha)	2.9 yrs	Less than a 5 year supply for 1 year	R
<u>Core</u> Number of all dwellings built	Between 2,400 and 2,720 net completions by April 2016	1435 completions by April 2014	20% less or greater than LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive years	R
	At least 3,800 net completions by April 2021	--		N/A
<u>Core</u> Number of new general market dwellings built	Between 2,110 and 2,390 net completions by April 2016	1174 completions by April 2014	20% less or greater than LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive- years	R
	At least 3,330 net completions by April 2021	--		N/A



<u>Core</u> Number of affordable dwellings built	Between 225 and 255 net completions by April 2016	261 completions by April 2014	20% less or greater than LDP strategy build rate for 2 consecutive- years	Y	
	At least 350 net completions by April 2021	--		N/A	
<u>Local</u> Number of affordable dwellings secured as a planning obligation	Approximately 130 by April 2016	36 dwellings by April 2014	<b>10% Area:</b> delivering less than 7.5% or more than 12.5%	Y	G
	Approximately 240 by April 2021	--	<b>5% Area:</b> delivering less than 2.5% or more than 7.5%	N/A	
<u>Local</u> Number of affordable dwellings secured through affordable housing exceptions policy	Approximately 10 by April 2016	--	No planning application submitted by the end of 2014	N/A	
	Approximately 20 by April 2021	--		N/A	
<u>Local</u> Average house price (Baseline: Approximately £86,900 at 2010, amended in line with Land Registry data to £73,153)	--	£67,528	+/- 10% change from base level	G	
<u>Local</u> Average income (gross weekly pay) (Baseline: Approximately £380 at 2009, amended in line with NOMIS data to £392)	--	£430	+/- 10% change from base level	G	
<u>Local</u> Vacancy rates of existing housing			Vacancy rate increasing for 1	G	

stock (Baseline: 6% at 2010)	--	4.9%	year or remaining static for 2 consecutive years	
<u>Local</u> Preparation and adoption of Affordable Housing SPG  Percentage of relevant planning applications complying with SPG	By the end of 2011  All (post SPG adoption)	SPG adopted March 2012  All applications complying		<b>G</b>

SO7. To improve and diversify the economy, safeguarding existing jobs and creating a range of new job opportunities in a sustainable manner.					
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level		
<u>Core</u> New B1 floorspace delivered	Between 28,500 and 30,790 sq m net floorspace delivered by April 2016	10,661 sq m built from 2006 – 2013/14	Greater than 7,120 sq m per annum or less than 890 sq m per annum for 2 consecutive years	<b>R</b>	<b>Y</b>
	At least 53,400 sq m net floorspace delivered by April 2021			<b>N/A</b>	
<u>Core</u> New B2/B8 floorspace delivered	Between 7,920 and 9,680 sq m net floorspace delivered by April 2016	15601.2 sq m built from 2006 – 2013/2014	Greater than 7,540 sq m per annum or less than 940 sq m per annum for 2 consecutive years	<b>Y</b>	<b>G</b>
	At least 56,500 sq m net floorspace delivered by April 2021			<b>N/A</b>	

<u>Core</u> Minimum number of net additional jobs delivered	Between 1,800 and 1,980 jobs delivered by April 2016	1061.5 jobs up to 2013/2014	Greater than 592 jobs per annum or less than 74 jobs per annum for 2 consecutive years	Y	Y
	At least 4,440 jobs delivered April by 2021			N/A	
<u>Local</u> Developments granted planning permission that result in a loss of employment land within employment sites protected under Policy AS24	No loss of employment land on protected employment sites except where justified within the terms of the policy	No protected employment land lost	1 or 2 developments granted planning permission for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments granted planning permission in 1 year	G	
<u>Local</u> Percentage of economically active people in employment  (Baseline: 64% at 2009)	Approximately 74% by the end of 2016	64.9% for 2013/14	Reduction of 5% or failure to increase for 2 consecutive years.	Y	G
	Approximately 80% by the end of 2021			N/A	
<u>Local</u> Vacancy rates of existing employment buildings  (Baseline vacancy figures as of 2009: B1 = 5.6%; B2/B8 = 9.7%)	Maintain vacancy rate within range of 5-10% of existing stock	B1 – 0.6% B2/B8 – 10% Combined	+ or – 2.5% beyond range for 2 consecutive years	G	

SO8. To promote social inclusion and ensure equality of opportunity through reducing the need to travel and providing better access by sustainable means to employment opportunities, community facilities and services.

Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level	
<u>Local</u>				

Number of community facilities lost through change of use	No loss of viable community facilities below identified need	0 community facilities lost in one year	1 or 2 community facilities lost for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more community facilities lost in 1 year	<b>G</b>
<u>Local</u> Amount of planning obligations secured on allocated housing developments	Secure contributions on 33 (67%) of the allocated housing developments	No allocated sites failing to secure identified contributions.	1 or 2 sites failing to secure planning obligations for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more sites failing to secure planning obligations in 1 year	<b>G</b>
Percentage of relevant planning applications complying with SPG	All (Post SPG adoption)	All applications complying	-	<b>G</b>

SO9. To promote health and wellbeing by providing accessible and varied opportunities for leisure and recreational activities.				
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level	
<u>Local</u> Amount of public open space, including play space and informal recreational areas, lost to development (ha) which is not allocated in the development plan.	No loss below identified need.	0 ha loss	-	<b>G</b>

SO10. To ensure good quality design of new development and the creation of safer communities.				
SO12. To contribute towards reducing the impact of climate change through reduced carbon dioxide emissions in new developments.				
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level	
<u>Local</u> Percentage of relevant schemes	All major applications	All major applications	-	<b>G</b>

incorporating “secured by design principles”		granted planning permission incorporate “secured by design principles”		
<u>Local</u>  Preparation and adoption of Sustainable Design SPG	By the end of 2012	SPG adopted July 2013	-	<b>Y</b>
<u>Local</u>  Percentage of planning applications complying with design SPG	All (Post SPG adoption)	All relevant applications complying with SPG	-	<b>G</b>

SO11. To ensure the continued protection and enhancement of the natural, cultural, built and historic environment.				
Core and Local Indicators	Policy Targets	Policy Achievement	Trigger Level	
<u>Local</u> Developments granted planning permission that do not preserve or enhance scheduled ancient monuments, registered historic parks and gardens, listed buildings or conservation areas	No developments that would fail to preserve or enhance heritage features granted planning permission	1 development granted planning permission failed to preserve or enhance heritage features	1 or 2 developments failing to preserve or enhance features for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments failing to preserve or enhance features in 1 year	<b>G</b>
<u>Local</u> Developments granted planning permission that cause harm to the overall nature conservation value of SINC's or the LNR	No developments that would cause harm to the overall nature conservation value of SINC's or the LNR granted planning permission	All developments granted planning permission do not cause harm to the overall nature conservation SINC's or the LNR	1 or 2 developments resulting in overall harm for 2 consecutive years, or, 3 or more developments resulting in overall harm in 1 year	<b>G</b>
<u>Local</u> Developments granted planning	No developments that would cause	No developments that would cause harm to a SSSI	1 or more developments	<b>G</b>

permission that cause harm to a SSSI	harm to a SSSI granted planning permission	granted planning permission	resulting in harm to a SSSI	
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