

## **APPENDIX C**

### **BRIDGEND REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2018-2033**

#### **TECHNICAL REPORT 3: SPATIAL STRATEGY OPTIONS**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To report the Spatial Strategy options for the Replacement LDP (2018-2033).

#### **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 In addition to setting out the level of growth needed over the plan period (refer to Technical Report 2 - Appendix B), the Replacement LDP must put forward a clear spatial strategy for where this development should take place within the County Borough.

- 2.2 The consideration of 'realistic' growth and spatial options is an important part in the preparation of the LDP and are intended to facilitate discussion and inform the 'Preferred Strategy' consultation document. Each spatial option will need to have regard to legislation, national planning policy, local and regional strategies. Furthermore, the Plan must take account of the specific characteristics, assets and issues which are prevalent and form a development plan which promotes and guides development in the best way for the County Borough of Bridgend.

- 2.3 Therefore, this paper puts forward 4 possible Spatial Strategy options for accommodating the distribution of housing and employment growth anticipated over the Revised LDP plan period (2018-2033):

- **Option 1: Continuation of the existing LDP Regeneration Strategy** - Prioritise the re-use of previously developed land and direct growth to sites within the SRGA's and existing settlement boundaries (SDB).
- **Option 2: Public Transport Hubs and Strategic Road Corridors Strategy** – growth is directed to major public transport hubs and the strategic highway network (M4).
- **Option 3: Prioritise growth to the North of the M4 (Valleys Strategy)** - new development would focus on the existing Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas (SRGAs) of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley and the Valleys Gateway, with the delivery of existing commitments on brownfield sites being the focus in settlements outside of these areas. The strategy would also identify a Strategic Hub in the north of the Borough in accordance with the Welsh Government's Ministerial Valleys Taskforce.
- **Option 4: Regeneration and Sustainable Urban Growth-led Strategy** – this is hybrid of options 1, 2 and 3 which would balance the requirement to deliver

the County Borough's housing requirement and Council's regeneration objectives.

### **3. BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

#### **3.1 Evidence Base**

3.2 The ongoing review of data, statistics and information is key to the LDP review process. Work has commenced on data gathering and collation and the findings shall be published throughout the preparation of the Revised LDP. Of particular relevance at this early stage in the process is the:

- Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) that monitor the progress of the existing LDP;
- The existing LDP Review Report (approved by full Council in June 2018) that highlights a number of principle reasons for the review and concludes that a 'full revision' of the Plan is necessary';
- Bridgend Public Services Board Well-being Plan (2018);
- The draft Vision and Objectives Technical Paper (Appendix A) - which sets out the key considerations for the County Borough and identifies a clear vision of what the County Borough should look like in 2033 and the objectives to deliver that vision (2033 is the Replacement LDP expiry date); and
- Strategic Growth Options Technical Paper (Appendix B) which sets out the projected growth requirements for the County Borough of Bridgend.

#### **Political Engagement**

3.3 To date, there has been extensive consultation undertaken with Elected Councillors through LDP training sessions and Development Control Committee. The Development Control Committee (LDP Steering Group) primary purpose is to take political ownership of the Revised LDP and ensure that the plan making process is managed in accordance with those relevant procedures and protocols. The Development Planning Section will also continue to liaise with Town and Community Councils through this Forum and on an individual basis as required.

#### **3.4 Consultation with Key Stakeholders**

3.5 The process for preparing the Replacement LDP encourages a wide range of organisations and groups to work with the Council to help set the broad strategy of the plan from a very early stage of preparation. While the Council as Local Planning Authority (LPA) is responsible for producing the plan (and the Development Control Committee provides the political steer) it is essential that its preparation is undertaken

in conjunction with our key stakeholders (A full list of consultation bodies is set out in Replacement LDP Delivery Agreement).

#### **4. SPATIAL STRATEGY OPTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF GROWTH**

- 4.1 In addition to setting out the level of growth needed over the plan period, the Replacement LDP must put forward a clear spatial strategy for where this development should take place within the County Borough.
- 4.2 A separate technical paper has been published as part of the LDP evidence base setting out projected population and household change up until 2033 (attached as Appendix B). This paper has been informed by the 'Bridgend Demographic Forecasts 2019' Report prepared by Edge Analytics and is a key piece of evidence in identifying how much growth is required in the County Borough for the Replacement LDP plan period (2018-2033).
- 4.3 In accordance with Welsh Government guidance it is important that only realistic and achievable options to accommodate growth are set out rather than list all eventualities. The Options for Growth have established that growth is required to sustain the County Borough of Bridgend area. A no growth option is therefore not possible and is not presented within this paper.
- 4.4 The options identified assume that housing development without employment / jobs in the same broad location, and vice versa, is less sustainable and is to be avoided. Similarly, infrastructure improvements need to be aligned with new development, including improvements to transport networks, utilities, green infrastructure, health, education and social facilities. **Consequently, the term 'development' is used in the Spatial Options for Growth to refer to the balance of housing, employment and the accompanying infrastructure.**
- 4.5 No single option is considered preferable at this stage and there remains scope and flexibility for the options to be adapted to take account of additional factors.
- 4.6 The Strategic Environmental Assessment – Sustainability Appraisal (SEA-SA) will assess the anticipated impacts of each Spatial Option against the Objectives of the LDP.
- 4.7 Therefore, the 4 possible Spatial Strategy Options for accommodating the distribution of housing and employment growth anticipated over the Revised LDP plan period (2018-2033) are discussed below.
- 4.8 **Option 1: Continuation of the existing LDP Regeneration led Strategy.**
- 4.9 This option is broadly a continuation of the existing LDP regeneration led strategy and proposes to prioritise the re-use of previously developed land (brownfield) and direct growth to land within existing settlement development boundaries.

- 4.10 In terms of background context, the existing Regeneration-Led Spatial Strategy was developed to provide a land use framework, to help realise the regeneration aspirations and priorities of the Council, and make the most meaningful contribution with respect to securing social, environmental and economic benefits for the communities of the County Borough. Taking into account the spatial distribution of regeneration activities and needs, development is directed to settlements and parts of the County Borough which will benefit the most and where there are opportunities for securing the greatest positive impacts and benefits of growth.
- 4.11 In line with the above, four Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas (SRGAs) at: Bridgend; Porthcawl; Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley; and The Valleys Gateway together with four Strategic Employment Sites at: Brocastle, Waterton, Bridgend; Island Farm, Bridgend; Pencoed Technology Park, Pencoed; and Ty Draw Farm, North Cornelly were identified to deliver a range of mixed-use developments and facilities. The re-use of brownfield and under-utilised land in this way at the time (and still is) viewed by national policy as a key way to creating a more sustainable pattern of development. Therefore the overall preference of the existing LDP Strategy has been for the development of land within urban areas, especially on previously developed 'brownfield' sites, before considering the development of greenfield sites. The level of development and growth identified in the LDP has taken into account how much development would be required to have a significant regenerative effect, the availability of sites for development in that area, existing settlement patterns, having regard to the social and economic function and identity of settlements and to relevant environmental considerations.
- 4.12 A review of the LDP Annual Monitoring Reports has shown that the Regeneration-Led Spatial Strategy that underpins the LDP has been broadly successful, especially in bringing forward a number of residential and mixed-use allocated sites (primarily on brownfield land) within the County Borough. The delivery of sites has been especially successful within the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway. The implementation of the LDP Strategy has however been less successful in the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley and Porthcawl. This has largely been attributed to land-ownership issues and assembly and viability issues especially within the upper areas of the Llynfi Valley. The advantages and disadvantages of continuing with this strategy are set out below.
- 4.13 Advantages
- This option promotes the development of land within urban areas, especially on previously developed 'brownfield' sites, before considering the development of greenfield sites and direct growth to sites within existing settlement development boundaries. This option would broadly be consistent with Planning Policy Wales (National Planning Guidance) in terms of prioritising 'brownfield' sites.
  - The regeneration objectives of the Council would continue to be promoted.

- Growth would be directed to sustainable urban locations close to public transport and the strategic highway network.
- The strategy will continue to seek to revitalise Maesteg by recognising its role as the principal settlement serving the Llynfi Valley which has the potential capacity and infrastructure to accommodate future growth; and deliver the Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration Site.

#### 4.14 Disadvantages

- the majority of existing brownfield regeneration sites identified in the existing LDP have been delivered or are committed (and expected to come forward within the next few years especially within Bridgend and the Valley's Gateway Growth Areas). Whilst additional brownfield opportunities exist in the Valley's Gateway area, there are capacity issues at Junction 36 of the M4 which could constrain further growth being delivered without significant investment in the associated infrastructure to relieve these constraints. In particular, north-south movements across the Junction are at capacity, which affects the connectivity of the Valleys Gateway (and the Valleys beyond) with jobs and services in Bridgend. Any potential solution to this bottleneck is likely to require a level of financial investment that is larger than local in scale and will incur a timetable for implementation that will extend far beyond the plan period.
- The implementation of the LDP Strategy has been less successful in the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley and Porthcawl. This has largely been attributed to land-ownership issues and assembly and viability issues especially within the upper areas of the Llynfi Valley. This is due to complex land ownership / assembly issues, significant site reclamation costs and a lack of financial viability. This is particularly prevalent on larger scale sites that are considered strategic in nature and of a size required to accommodate the scale of new house building required to fulfil the amount of growth indicated by the population projections. Without significant policy interventions, it is difficult to envisage how these blockages can be removed. The delivery of such sites will be rigorously tested during the LDP review process.
- As such additional viable and deliverable sustainable greenfield sites are required to deliver future housing requirements for the County Borough up to 2033, especially given that the housing land supply within the County Borough has fallen below the 5 year minimum requirement. The scope to do this in the settlements to the north of the M4 is severely restrained by geographical and topographical constraints – especially in the Ogmere & Garw Valleys, where settlements are linear in nature and have limited existing services and facilities (Option 3 discusses this issue in more detail).

#### 4.15 **Conclusion**

- 4.16 Option 1 prioritises the re-use of previously developed land and directs growth to sites within existing settlement boundaries (SDB) and is a continuation of the existing LDP Regeneration-led Strategy. A review of the Annual Monitoring Reports has shown that the Regeneration-Led Spatial Strategy that underpins the LDP has been broadly successful, especially in bringing forward a number of residential and mixed-use allocated sites (primarily on brownfield land) within the County Borough. The delivery of sites has been especially successful within the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway.
- 4.17 It is important to recognise that the implementation of the LDP Strategy has however been less successful in the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley and Porthcawl. This has largely been attributed to land-ownership issues and assembly and viability issues especially within the upper areas of the Llynfi Valley. If the Council decided to proceed with Option 1 (continuation of the existing LDP strategy) it would not be able to deliver the County Borough's future housing requirements and it is likely that such a strategy would be considered unsound at the LDP public examination.
- 4.18 **Option 2: Public Transport Hubs and Strategic Road Corridors:** growth is directed to major public transport hubs and the strategic highway network (M4).
- 4.19 This Option proposes to locate new development within key settlements and functional corridors along main, established transport routes. Sites would be allocated for development based on their geographical proximity to public transport hubs (including existing train stations and bus routes) and the strategic highway network (M4), where there is current or planned infrastructure in place to accommodate the levels of growth required. This Option would aim to improve local to regional connectivity and develop sustainable multi-modal transport environments that benefit from public transport, walking and cycling opportunities alongside road links.
- 4.20 Bridgend has a unique geographical position between the two city-regions in South Wales. In particular, there are strong historical transport links to Cardiff, which will only become more deeply entrenched as the Cardiff Capital Region develops, providing plentiful opportunities for the County Borough to exploit a wider regional market.
- 4.21 The transportation network in Bridgend is dominated by highways, which total 793 kilometres in length and carry approximately 1.3 billion vehicle kilometres of traffic. The 18 kilometres of the M4 motorway running through the County Borough provide three key gateways at junctions 35, 36 and 37, which naturally align with established settlements at Pencoed, Bridgend and North Cornelly / Pyle, respectively. These road linkages represent a significant pull factor for development to take place within the County Borough.

- 4.22 In addition, Pencoed, Bridgend and Pyle Railway Stations are all on the South Wales Main Line, served by the Swansea to Cardiff regional train service. This provides a frequent service from the east to the west of the County Borough itself in addition to the two cities. Bridgend and Pencoed Stations also benefit from the Manchester to Carmarthen service, with Bridgend also connecting directly to London Paddington. There are Council-owned park and ride sites at Pencoed and Pyle stations and a private park and ride site at Bridgend Station, with medium term plans to upgrade the capacity of the Pyle park and ride facility (as identified in the Local Transport Plan).
- 4.23 The three motorway junctions and key train stations operating on the South Wales Main Line align with existing settlements to pinpoint relatively natural growth corridors, summarised below for ease of reference:
- 4.24 **Settlements with Stations on main Railway Corridors:**
- Bridgend
  - Pencoed
  - North Cornelly / Pyle
- 4.25 **Settlements located on the Key Strategic Road Network (M4)**
- Bridgend (Junction 36)
  - Pencoed (Junction 35)
  - North Cornelly / Pyle (Junction 37)
- 4.26 This Option aims to closely align growth with sustainable development principles. Developing new homes in close proximity to good public transport networks means that these forms of travel should be naturally perceived as straightforward and attractive by residents from the outset. New developments would also be integrated within established communities (i.e. Bridgend, Pencoed and North Cornelly / Pyle), all of which already benefit from existing services, facilities and employment clustered around the railway stations.
- 4.27 The three M4 Junctions also act as significant gateways into the County Borough, with existing infrastructure in place to help facilitate development of a range of uses. Focussing growth around these Junctions could lead to enhancement of multi-modal transport corridors to stimulate development by providing direct links between the main residential areas and employment centres. This approach should facilitate complementary transport uses to ensure growth can be incorporated in an integrated and co-ordinated way.
- 4.28 Advantages
- The three settlements are well placed to offer service and employment opportunities to ensure that new developments are not functionally separate, isolated settlements.
  - Providing realistic public transport options will incentivise residents to utilise these services as viable and realistic alternatives to the car. This will especially

be apparent if the services are frequent, reduce travel time overall and combat parking problems near employment and within busy town and city centres. Improvements to public transport along these key growth corridors will also provide an equitable basis for access and mobility.

- In addition to the train stations, new developments close to existing settlements will prove far easier to serve by bus. This can be facilitated through extensions and tweaks to the existing bus network as opposed to establishing new routes, which habitually prove costly and perhaps unfeasible, especially with reduced availability of subsidy.
- Sustainable growth in these areas would necessarily be accompanied by safe walking and cycling linkages alongside green infrastructure to provide logical routes grounded in Active Travel principles. This could help promote more active lifestyles, combat social isolation and provide close linkages to the key places (i.e. employment, education or recreation) residents will need to travel to.
- Channelling growth into these areas would induce a local multiplier effect to increase revenue for and therefore viability of local business and services. This would sustain economic development and incite job creation as the hubs would increasingly be seen as attractive places for business to locate, given the growing employment base and availability of skilled labour.

#### 4.29 Disadvantages

- Development may not accord with market demand and lead to a number of sites being advertised primarily based on their proximity to the major highway network. This could encourage high levels of car usage, place pressure on settlements with infrastructure related constraints and lead to local traffic increasingly slowing down long distance traffic as a consequence.
- New residents may be far less concerned with accessing existing local centres and instead place more emphasis on finding the fastest routes onto the major road networks. This could therefore lead to an unintended preponderance of car-based housing estates with little else to offer in terms of Active Travel, place making and connectivity opportunities.
- There could be capacity issues at the three motorway junctions (35, 36 and 37), which is crucial for the efficient operation of this stretch of the M4. There are currently limitations at Junction 36 in particular, where current and future development pressures are predicted to lead to the generation of excessive car traffic. These pressures are beginning to turn the M4 into a distributor of local traffic, which should not be the case. Additional growth will therefore be hindered around this particular section of the strategic road corridor without significant action being taken initially.

- It is questionable whether the rail network could accommodate the level of growth that would be channelled into these hubs, especially at Pencoed and Pyle Stations, to meet the movement requirements of the new residents.
- Sustainable settlements elsewhere would be overlooked in terms of their ability to accommodate growth. This Option would also fail to address the socio-economic needs of the Llynfi, Garw and Ogmore Valleys, Porthcawl and other rural areas across the County Borough.

#### 4.30 Conclusion

4.31 Overall, this Option is based on promoting sustainable development by focussing on established transport hubs at North Cornelly / Pyle, Pencoed and Bridgend. It aims to channel growth towards these key settlements through enhancement of multi-modal transport corridors that promote public transport and access to the major highway network. This Option would provide opportunities to closely link new residential development to employment, recreation and education uses through active travel principles, thereby promoting healthier, more socially inclusive lifestyles. It could also help boost the local economies of these existing key settlements by rendering the centres more attractive for development and increasing the pool of labour.

4.32 However, improvements to rail infrastructure and expansion of services could be restricted by capacity constraints, especially at Pyle and Pencoed Stations along with Junction 36. This Option would be largely dependent on investment decisions across the region, which is beyond local decision making alone.

4.33 Elements of this Option are similar to the existing LDP's strategy in that it is based on directing growth to sustainable urban locations. However, a key difference is that this proposed Option overlooks large parts of the County Borough, notably Porthcawl, Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley, thereby ignoring the role of such sustainable settlements elsewhere.

4.34 Whilst there are certainly elements of this Option that would promote sustainable forms of development and catalyse positive socio-economic change, it arguably fails to provide a comprehensively robust rationale to justify a spatial strategy alone. However, it is perhaps suitable to provide useful high level context to inform the chosen spatial strategy.

#### 4.35 **Option 3: Prioritise growth to the North of the M4 - a Valleys led Strategy**

4.36 By following this spatial option, new development would focus on the existing Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas (SRGAs) of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley and the Valleys Gateway, with the delivery of existing commitments on brownfield sites being the focus in settlements outside of these areas. The strategy would also identify a Strategic Hub in the north of the Borough in accordance with the Welsh Government's Ministerial Valleys Taskforce.

- 4.37 This Spatial Strategy concentrates new development in those communities to the north of the M4 that are most in need of social, economic and environmental regeneration. It builds on existing regeneration activities and programmes and provides the opportunity to enhance the range and quality of local services aimed at reducing levels of social exclusion.
- 4.38 This Strategy would direct a large proportion of future growth to the Llynfi Valley, especially the Upper Llynfi Valley and Maesteg where there is scope and site capacity on existing brownfield land associated with Maesteg Washery, the former Cooper Standard site and the former Coegnant Colliery reclamation area, straddling the settlements of Caerau and Nantyllyn. Such development would sustain and promote Maesteg's role as the principal settlement serving and benefiting surrounding settlements. Maesteg also has the infrastructure to accommodate further growth, notably with respect to proposals in the South Wales Metro prospectus to enhance the Bridgend – Maesteg rail line. This could potentially include increased frequency of services and enhancement of heavy rail sections of the route.
- 4.39 There is also the opportunity to build on the strategic potential of the Valleys Gateway area by directing further development to this most accessible and central location within the County Borough. This area also offers considerable scope and capacity most notably in the settlements of Tondu, Sarn, Aberkenfig and Bryncethin where large sites have the potential of coming forward for mixed-use schemes, by means of the re-assessment of existing redundant, underutilised employment sites and through the priorities of the schools' modernisation process and candidate site submissions.
- 4.40 In view of the area's pivotal role in serving the valleys there may be a requirement for the release of further land for employment purposes, especially if as a result of the re-assessment process of underutilised existing sites for mixed-use, there is potentially less land available specifically for employment purposes.
- 4.41 Some settlements, particularly in the Garw and Ogmore Valleys, which are in need of regeneration, have fewer development opportunities. Settlements in this location are particularly constrained by difficult topography and inadequate infrastructure. Therefore, pursuit of this spatial option may require the relaxation of certain settlement boundaries, and provision for the release of some urban fringe or greenfield sites immediately adjacent to existing settlements within these communities. However, there are also a number of brownfield redevelopment opportunities, especially within the settlements of Bettws, Blackmill, Blaengarw and Nantymoel, which have the potential of delivering mixed-use schemes for the benefit of the wider community. The strategy will seek to exploit the varied landscape of the Garw and Ogmore Valleys by identifying opportunities for cultural and tourism related developments.
- 4.42 This Strategy would recognise the work of the Welsh Government's Ministerial Valleys Taskforce which has identified Northern Bridgend as one of its Strategic Hubs in its Our Valleys, Our Future Delivery Plan. The key priorities of the plan are: good quality jobs and the skills to do them; better public services; and my local community. The plan identifies 7 strategic hubs to be created across the South Wales Valleys as a focus for targeted public investment to provide opportunities for the private sector to

invest with a primary focus on job creation, skills development and entrepreneurship. The specific issues leading to the areas designation as a hub are the transport connectivity challenges faced by this part of the borough which promotes a sense of isolation from Bridgend and Pencoed. This Strategy would promote measures to improve the A4063 between Sarn and Maesteg, increase capacity of Junction 36 of the M4 to cater for additional north to south movements, and encourage Active Travel schemes to link new development to existing travel hubs. The implementation of any such improvements would depend on the identification of sufficient financial resources to fund them.

#### 4.43 Advantages

- This option could strengthen the vitality of the Valley settlements, and assist with the deliverability of affordable housing in areas and settlements of greatest need, reducing patterns of social exclusion and isolation.
- The strategy is similar to that of the existing LDP, seeking to deliver regeneration benefits through the allocation of new housing developments on previously developed sites particularly those in the Upper Llynfi Valley which have not yet been delivered. A brownfield strategy accords with the goals of Planning Policy Wales.
- The strategy will continue to seek to revitalise Maesteg by recognising its role as the principal settlement serving the Llynfi Valley which has the potential capacity and infrastructure to accommodate future growth.
- It will build on the success of the existing Valleys Gateway SRGA and will continue to recognise the strategic potential of this area providing opportunities for further development and the delivery of facilities serving the whole of the County Borough.
- The strategy will support Council-wide carbon reduction targets and promote climate change mitigation by working with local communities to identify suitable locations for local authority-scale renewable energy projects in the Ogmere and Garw Valleys and to continue to promote the Upper Llynfi Valley Heat Network Project.
- Will seek to address the challenges posed by poor connectivity between Pencoed and Bridgend and the Valley communities through finding and funding solutions to the capacity issues of north to south movements at Junction 36 of the M4, the improvements required to the A4063 and planned investment to the rail line between Bridgend and Maesteg.

#### 4.44 Disadvantages

- The majority of existing brownfield regeneration sites identified in the Valleys Gateway SRGA in the existing LDP have been delivered or are committed and expected to come forward within the next few years. Whilst additional brownfield opportunities exist in this area, there are capacity issues at Junction 36 of the M4 which could constrain further growth being delivered without significant investment in the associated infrastructure to relieve these constraints. In particular, north-south movements across the Junction are at capacity, which affects the connectivity of the Valleys Gateway (and the Valleys beyond) with jobs and services in Bridgend. Any potential solution to this bottleneck is likely to require a level of financial investment that is larger than local in scale and will incur a timetable for implementation that will extend far beyond the plan period.
- The implementation of the LDP Strategy has been less successful in the Strategic Regeneration Growth Area of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley. Of housing completions on allocated sites across the borough, only 0.2% have been in the Maesteg and Llynfi Valley SRGA. This is due to complex land ownership / assembly issues, significant site reclamation costs and a lack of financial viability. This is particularly prevalent on larger scale sites that are considered strategic in nature and of a size required to accommodate the scale of new house building required to fulfil the amount of growth indicated by the population projections. Without significant financial intervention from Welsh Government, it is difficult to envisage how these blockages can be removed. The delivery of such sites will be rigorously tested during the LDP review and could see it fail at the first hurdle.
- As such additional viable and deliverable sustainable greenfield sites will be required to deliver future housing requirements for the County Borough up to 2033, especially given that the housing land supply within the County Borough has fallen below the 5 year minimum requirement. The scope to do this in the settlements to the north of the M4 is severely restrained by geographical and topographical constraints – especially in the Ogmore & Garw Valleys, where settlements are linear in nature and have limited existing services and facilities. At a minimum, this would require the extension and/or relaxation of settlement boundaries and lead to the allocation of unsustainable greenfield sites located away from main transport hubs. This will entrench existing patterns of disconnection between homes and jobs and will be at odds with the Placemaking agenda advocated by Planning Policy Wales.
- The level of growth that will need to be identified to fulfil the LDP Strategy may be considered unsustainable in terms of the capacity of existing and proposed transport links. In addition to capacity issues at Junction 36 of the M4, the delivery of improvements to the A4063 between Sarn and Maesteg is dependent on securing the necessary level of investment despite being programmed in the Local Transport Plan. The only train service north of the M4 is a single track route linking Bridgend to Maesteg, with zero potential to extend

the route to serve additional new stations on the Ogmere and Garw Valleys. Financial decisions relating to measures to increase the frequency of services on the Bridgend to Maesteg train line reside with the Welsh Government and are not seen as a short term measure in the development of the South Wales Metro.

- No new strategic residential sites would be allocated in the key settlements of Bridgend, Porthcawl, Pen-coed or Pyle. These are recognised as having an important sub-regional or regional role in the Settlement hierarchy of the Borough, and being the principal centres of services, jobs and community facilities. This continuing role may be weakened by the lack of growth over the plan period, calling into question the Borough's capability to deliver significant levels of high quality residential and employment land for the wider Cardiff Capital Region.

#### 4.45 Conclusion

- 4.46 This Spatial Strategy concentrates new development in communities in need of social, economic and environmental regeneration. It builds on existing regeneration activities and programmes and provides the opportunity to enhance the range and quality of local services aimed at reducing levels of social exclusion.
- 4.47 Pursuit of this strategy would focus growth on those locations that have previously seen little in the way of private sector investment. This could improve the built environment, especially in the north of the County Borough, by encouraging the regeneration of previously developed land. However the Valley settlements have traditionally had low market demand, increased costs associated with land reclamation and limited physical and social infrastructure. There is little evidence to suggest house prices have shown any indication of improving in recent times, whilst the physical and topographical characteristics of this part of the borough present a viability challenge for sites of all sizes. This Strategy will therefore require innovative public/private partnership approaches to succeed.
- 4.48 If the Council decided to proceed with Option 3 it would not be able to deliver the County Borough's future housing requirements such a strategy would be considered unsound at the LDP public examination, as it would be difficult to demonstrate a sufficient quantity of deliverable sites could be allocated to accommodate the population growth indicated. Demonstrating site viability is recognised as a critical issue in the LDP process and the failure to do so would leave the Council at high risk of failing to sustain a 5 year housing land supply, which in turn could lead to Developer's submitting proposals for greenfield sites throughout the Borough. Pursuing this Spatial Option would not address the failings of the existing Bridgend LDP.

4.49 **Option 4: Regeneration and Sustainable Urban Growth - led strategy**

4.50 This options proposes to continue to focus growth on Bridgend, Porthcawl, Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley recognising that some 'greenfield' sites may be required to deliver future housing requirements for the County Borough up to 2033.

4.51 Pencoed and Pyle are identified as areas that could accommodate sustainable growth in recognition of their strategic locations on the M4 and proximity to railway stations – **Officers are liaising with Transport for Wales to assess the impacts of additional growth on the rail network.**

4.52 Sustainable growth in the Llynfi, Ogmore and Garw Valleys will be stimulated to stem decline and maintain viable communities but without compromising the landscape, which is seen as a key regeneration driver in terms of encouraging tourism. This strategy could also allow for a Strategic Hub north of the M4 to be developed (subject to the identification of a suitable site).

4.53 Finally, sustainable growth in the County Borough's 'Local Service Settlements' will be encouraged by flexibly defining the Settlement Development Boundaries where practical, to accommodate a range of sites thus enabling them to be considered for sustainable development provided that it does not detrimentally impact the historic and natural environment.

4.54 **Advantages**

- Builds on the successes of existing LDP strategy and provides enough flexibility to address the elements that have underperformed i.e. Porthcawl and Maesteg the Llynfi Valley.
- Continues to focus on the delivery of existing brownfield regeneration sites allocated in the existing LDP but also and identifies viable, deliverable and sustainable greenfield sites to help meet the County Borough's future housing needs.
- New sustainable growth will help deliver Welsh Government's placemaking agenda.
- New sustainable allocations could will contribute towards the energy needs of Wales with a focus on the promotion of renewable and low carbon energy in particular building upon the Local Energy Strategy that identifies suitable locations for District Heating Networks.
- This option will promote multi-functional green infrastructure with an emphasis on its integration with existing and new development.
- This strategy will bring about growth based on key transport hubs and the strategic road network/corridors (as such new development will be located and designed in accordance with the transport hierarchy (PPW) to prioritise the use

of sustainable transport, reduce related airborne pollution, reduce the need to travel, reduce the dependency on private vehicles and help deliver Active Travel routes in the County Borough.

- Growth centred on key transport hubs and strategic road network will assist and sustain economic development and job creation in accordance with sustainable development objectives.

#### Negatives

- This strategy unfortunately cannot change the current viability challenges in the Valley settlements, however the plan will continue to put a framework in place that would allow sustainable development to come forward (if viable) in line with the Council's regeneration objectives and sends a clear message that the Valley settlements are not being overlooked.
- This strategy does not resolve the capacity issues at Junction 36 (M4) and prevents development to the east of Bridgend and Valley's Gateway area.

#### 4.55 Conclusion

- 4.56 This option builds on the successes of existing LDP strategy and provides enough flexibility to address the elements that have underperformed i.e. Porthcawl and Maesteg the Llynfi Valley. Crucially, this options continues to focus on the delivery of existing brownfield regeneration sites allocated in the existing LDP but would also need to identify viable, deliverable and sustainable greenfield sites. In addition, Pencoed and Pyle are identified as areas that could accommodate additional sustainable development in recognition of their location on strategic road and rail network to help meet the County Borough's future housing needs.
- 4.57 In line with the Council's existing regeneration agenda, sustainable growth in the Llynfi, Ogmore and Garw Valleys will be stimulated to stem decline and maintain viable communities but without compromising the landscape, which is seen as a key regeneration driver in terms of encouraging tourism. This strategy could also allow for a Strategic Hub north of the M4 to be developed (subject to the identification of a suitable site).
- 4.58 Finally, sustainable growth in the County Borough's 'Local Service Settlements' will be encouraged by flexibly defining the Settlement Development Boundaries where practical, to accommodate a range of sites thus enabling them to be considered for sustainable development provided that it does not detrimentally impact the historic and natural environment.

**4.59 Preferred Spatial Strategy Option**

4.60 Based on the appraisal above and current evidence, Option 4 is likely to be identified as the preferred spatial strategy that will enable the Council to achieve the most sustainable form of development, meet the Replacement LDP Objectives and address existing infrastructure capacity issues.

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