Bridgend Replacement
Local Development Plan 2018-2033

Background Paper 3:

Spatial Strategy Options

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BRIDGEND REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (LDP) 2018-2033

BACKGROUND PAPER 3: SPATIAL STRATEGY OPTIONS FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF GROWTH

1.   Purpose of the Report

1.1   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. This paper therefore considers the level of growth justified in the Strategic Growth Options Background Paper (i.e. 7,575 dwellings and 7,500 jobs over the life of the Replacement LDP) and evaluates a range of options to accommodate this growth spatially. These options are summarised below for ease of reference:

- **Option 1: Continuation of the Existing LDP Regeneration Strategy**
  Prioritise the re-use of previously developed land and direct growth to sites within the Sustainable Regeneration Growth Areas and Settlement Boundaries identified in the existing LDP.

- **Option 2: Public Transport Hubs and Strategic Road Corridors Strategy**
  Direct growth to major public transport hubs and the strategic highway network (M4), supporting and enhancing the corresponding settlement centres.

- **Option 3: Prioritise Growth to the North of the M4 (Valleys Strategy)**
  Apportion the majority of growth towards the existing Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley, along with the Valleys Gateway, whilst delivering existing commitments on brownfield sites in settlements outside of these areas. This option 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 Council's regeneration objectives with the requirement to deliver the County Borough's housing needs.

1.2   Assessment of these options, as detailed within this paper, has informed selection of the preferred spatial strategy to accommodate the housing and employment growth anticipated over the Revised LDP plan period (2018-2033).

2. Introduction

2.1 The Replacement LDP's spatial strategy must be clearly expressed and underpinned by robust evidence, ensuring it is realistic in the context of a range of other reasonable alternatives. Edition 3 of the Development Plans Manual states,

> "The LPA must consider and assess a number of realistic options for the spatial distribution of development across their area. However, for revisions to adopted plans there will already be a large degree of contextual evidence and testing of options which, rather than start from scratch, would benefit from validating to understand if and/or where any new evidence for alternative options is required (WG, 2020, para 5.10).

2.2 This Background paper therefore builds on the extant evidence underpinning the existing LDP to formulate four possible and realistic spatial strategy options. As recommend by the Development Plans Manual, these options have been successively evaluated based on a number of factors, including:

- The aspirations of the Replacement LDP
- Availability and suitability of brownfield land in preference to greenfield
- Land and land of high agricultural, ecological or landscape value
- The need to minimise the need to travel, especially by private vehicles
- Capacity of existing and potential infrastructure
- Scale and location of market and affordable housing required
- Scale and location of employment opportunities
- Environmental implications, e.g. energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, flood risk, biodiversity, green infrastructure, mineral resources and ground conditions, including mine gas
- Social and cultural factors, including consideration of the Welsh language
- Accessibility to jobs, shops and services
- Viability (in terms of how different market areas can affect the viability of delivering private and affordable housing as well as associated infrastructure to support the level of development proposed)
- Deliverability of key sites and overall strategy
- National strategies and priorities, such as decarbonisation and health

2.3 The options have also been duly considered as reasonable alternatives and assessed further under the Sustainability Appraisal process. Fundamentally, allocating new housing without employment provision is less conducive to sustainable placemaking. This general assumption predicates evaluation of each spatial option and the Preferred Strategy will aim to avoid geographically distributing growth in this manner. Similarly, the Replacement LDP aims to

ensure new development is accompanied by associated infrastructure provision or enhancement as appropriate, including upgrades to transport networks, utility provision, green infrastructure, health, education and social facilities. This paper therefore uses the term 'development' to refer to the integrally related components of sustainable growth, including housing, employment and accompanying infrastructure provision.

3. Supply and Demand Factors

3.1 The Development Plans Manual (Edition 3) states that a number of supply and demand factors should influence the spatial strategy. Hence, the strategy should "draw upon a number of key pieces of evidence, such as a settlement assessment, Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) and viability assessment, to make informed policy decisions on where to locate development" (WG, 2020, para 5.14). These factors have shaped evaluation of each spatial option and proved critical in determining which is the most suitable to formulate a spatial strategy that will underpin the Replacement LDP. A summary of key supply and demand evidence is provided below in advance of the sequential assessment of each spatial option in the following chapter.

Settlement Assessment

3.2 A refreshed Settlement Assessment was completed in 2019 and revised in 2021, which analysed the components of existing settlements, their functional relationships with each other plus their current and potential future roles. This Assessment applied a tri-principle scoring matrix to analyse each settlement based on a) sustainable transport and accessibility, b) facilities and services, and, c) employment provision, respectively.

3.3 The Assessment confirmed the pre-eminent role of Bridgend as a highly accessible, major employment and retail centre with a sub-regional sphere of influence. Over a third of the administrative area's population reside in the broad settlement of Bridgend, supporting and benefiting from the range of services and facilities on offer. These inter-related factors justify classification of Bridgend as the Primary Key Settlement within the County Borough.

3.4 After Bridgend, the Assessment identified a distinct cluster of secondary Main Settlements, including Porthcawl, Maesteg, Pyle and Pencoed. All of these settlements function as sub-regional hubs, with strong employment bases, an existing concentration of businesses and a good variety of shopping and community services. These settlements also demonstrate a relatively high degree of self-containment, whilst benefitting from a range of sustainable travel opportunities that connect with neighbouring areas, Bridgend and the wider region.

3.5 The Valleys Gateway was also identified as a secondary Main Settlement, given that it forms an almost continuous urban area north of the M4 at the mouth of the Ogmore, Garw and Llynfi Valleys. However, the Valleys Gateway has accommodated substantial growth in recent years and there are now capacity issues running north to south at Junction 36 of the M4. The Settlement Assessment concluded that constraints within this area therefore render the settlement less suitable for sustainable development than the other Main Settlements.

3.6 The remaining settlements were classified as Local Settlements, performing more curtailed retail and local community facility functions. As such, the scope for Local Settlements to accommodate significant development is more limited, yet there are still opportunities for them to support smaller scale, regeneration led growth to facilitate local economic development.

3.7 The Settlement Assessment has helped identify the most appropriate locations to accommodate future development in order to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth, minimise unsustainable patterns of movement and support local services and facilities. These findings will be duly considered when evaluating the spatial options within this paper. Ultimately, the Spatial Strategy will aim to direct the majority of growth towards areas that already benefit from good infrastructure, services and facilities, or where additional capacity can be provided, in accordance with the Settlement Assessment.

Local Housing Market Assessment (LHMA) 2021

3.8 A refreshed LHMA was completed in 2021. This analysed a range of demographic, socio-economic, and property intelligence data to provide detailed insights into the mechanics of each residential market across Bridgend County Borough. It also calculated the quantitative level of housing need across each Housing Market Area (HMA) by tenure, size and type of accommodation.

3.9 The Assessment revealed notable differences in housing market characteristics, with demand, property prices and rents being highest in southern HMAs (especially Porthcawl, Pencoed and Bridgend). Even though household incomes were identified as being somewhat higher in these vicinities, average house price to income ratios were wider, as much as 7 to 10 times first time buyer incomes, respectively. Affordability is therefore a significant issue in many of the County Borough's southern housing markets. Notable shortfalls of social rented and intermediate accommodation were identified in these three aforementioned housing markets plus the grouped HMA of Pyle, Kenfig and Cornelly. Local affordability issues are likely to further exacerbate if wage inflation fails to keep pace with escalating property prices and sufficient affordable housing is not provided.

3.10 Affordability was identified as a less significant problem in the Valleys housing markets, although properties did command a slight premium in the Llynfi Valley. Notably, private rents and social rents were found to be broadly comparable in these areas, owing to the relative high, historic proportions of private rented accommodation, combined with the aforementioned stock mismatch, lower property demand and somewhat higher instances of empty homes. Tenants can therefore move almost interchangeably between these tenures in some parts of the Valleys, yet there is still a need to address the stock imbalance and instil sustainable clusters of smaller property types within these markets.

3.11 The Development Plans Manual (Edition 3) requires the LHMA to "identify the total affordable housing need extrapolated over the plan period, spatial implications and the predominant tenure mix required" (para 5.32). Hence, whilst assessing the housing market as a whole, the LHMA calculated the need for affordable housing, extrapolated over the Replacement LDP period. The LHMA identified **a total need for 5,134 affordable housing units from 2018-2033, comprising 2,839 social rented dwellings and 2,295 intermediate dwellings.** A high-level geographical tenure breakdown is provided within Table 1 for ease of reference and more detailed information is included within the LHMA itself.

Table 1: Total Housing Need by Tenure,
Replacement LDP Period (2018-33)

HMA	Social Rent Need	Intermediate Need (primarily LCHO)	Total Need
Bridgend and Surrounding	947.9	965.85	1913.75
Garw Valley	97.85	10.55	108.40
Llynfi Valley	199.9	74.5	274.40
Ogmore Valley	112.35	12.65	125.00
Pencoed and Heol y Cyw	226.15	215.15	441.30
Porthcawl	746.15	506.35	1252.50
Pyle, Kenfig and Cornelly	356.9	349.2	706.10
Valleys Gateway	151.4	161.15	312.55
Total	**2838.60**	**2295.40**	**5134.00**

Source: Local Housing Market Assessment 2021

3.12 Evidently, the LHMA identified housing need across all parts of the County Borough, although Bridgend exhibited the most significant deficit of affordable housing (1,914 units), followed by Porthcawl (1,253 units), Pyle, Kenfig and Cornelly (706 units) and Pencoed (441 units). In most of these high need areas, the tenure split is relatively even between social rent and intermediate, although in Porthcawl, there is a relatively higher need for social rent (60%) compared to intermediate (40%).

3.13 This latter trend is even more evident within Valleys housing markets, with the need for social rent being higher in relative terms (70% - 90% of the total affordable housing need identified). This is for two principal reasons. Firstly, house prices do not exceed first time buyer incomes by the same degree as within many of the County Borough's more southerly housing markets and therefore the need for intermediate products is lower. Secondly, there is a clear need to diversify the type of social rented accommodation available within these vicinities through provision of sustainable clusters of smaller 1 bedroom properties. Therefore, whilst the scale of need is lower within Valleys Housing Markets, there is still a requirement to counter-balance the predominantly larger social rented stock already in existence.

3.14 Generally speaking, 70% of market value produces a usefully affordable intermediate product in many parts of the County Borough. However, based on wider house price to income ratios, a 60% of market value intermediate product is typically required within Porthcawl in order to meet the needs of newly forming households. These findings have been taken into account in plan-wide viability testing (refer to the Plan-Wide Viability Assessment 2021).

3.15 Overall, the housing need identified in the LHMA has influenced the scale of growth in the plan and the locational housing need data will also be used to inform selection of the most appropriate spatial strategy. Focussing the majority of sustainable growth within vicinities that exhibit high levels of housing need will help maximise opportunities to secure additional affordable housing through the planning system to help combat this shortfall in provision. This will contribute to all Strategic Objectives of the Replacement LDP, particularly SOBJ1: to create high quality sustainable places (placemaking) and SOBJ2: to create active, healthy, cohesive and social communities. However, this evidence also needs to be balanced with due consideration of area-based development constraints (such as those aforementioned in the Valleys Gateway) and viability (as detailed within the Plan-Wide Viability Study).

Plan-Wide Viability Assessment (2021)

3.16 The Plan-Wide Viability Assessment analyses broad levels of development viability across eight HMAs within the County Borough. These HMAs correlate with those identified and defined within the LHMA to ensure the evidence base

is consistent and comparable. The Assessment tested viability across a range of different site typologies within each HMA, designed to reflect a locally derived housing mix and scope for an affordable housing contribution as identified by the LHMA. All appraisals were undertaken to reflect costs and values at a fixed point in time, having been informed by a series of detailed discussions with a local representative steering group.

3.16 The Assessment tested different percentages of affordable housing to gauge the level that could be supported by each notional site in each HMA. Each output indicates whether the target profit can be achieved after factoring in this level of affordable housing together with all other costs, fees, profit margins, benchmark land values, contingencies and s106 contributions. The scenarios provide a robust basis to inform policy development on this basis. As identified in Table 2, two sets of scenarios were appraised, the second factoring in the potential additional costs arising from the review of Building Regulations Part L. Ultimately, this Assessment identifies the contribution sites within different HMAs can make to the delivery of infrastructure, affordable housing and other LDP policy requirements, thereby providing a further means to inform the most appropriate Spatial Strategy. This has been supplemented by site-specific viability testing of candidate sites.

Table 2: Recommended Affordable Housing Level		
Housing Market Area	**Percentage of Affordable Housing Considered Viable** (pre Proposed Part L Amendments)	**Percentage of Affordable Housing Considered Viable** (post Proposed Part L Amendments)
Bridgend and Surrounding	20%	15%
Pencoed and Heol y cyw	20%	15%
Porthcawl	35%	30%
Pyle, Kenfig and Cornelly	10%	0%
Valleys Gateway	15%	10%
Llynfi Valley	0%	0%
Ogmore and Garw Valleys	0%	0%

<u>Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land</u>

3.14 The location and quality of agricultural land is another fundamental supply factor that will inform the spatial distribution of growth. Planning Policy Wales emphasises that agricultural land classified as Grades 1, 2 and 3a (by the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system) is considered "the best and most versatile, and should be conserved as a finite resource for the future" (WG, 2021, para 3.58). Hence,

> When considering the search sequence and in development plan policies and development management decisions considerable weight should be given to protecting such land from development, because of its special importance. Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a should only be developed if there is an overriding need for the development, and either previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades is unavailable, or available lower grade land has an environmental value recognised by a landscape, wildlife, historic or archaeological designation which outweighs the agricultural considerations. If land in grades 1, 2 or 3a does need to be developed, and there is a choice between sites of different grades, development should be directed to land of the lowest grade (WG, 2021, para 3.59).

3.15 A new Predictive ALC Map for Wales (Version 2) was released in December 2019, which uses the best available information to predict the agricultural grade of land on a national basis. This represents the first significant update since its launch in 2017 and includes detailed soil series data and an updated ALC survey layer. This provides a method for assessing the quality of farmland to enable informed choices to be made about its future use within the planning system. Welsh Government deem the ALC Map, "the first step in gathering evidence to inform the user as to whether or not Planning Policy Wales (PPW) paragraph 3.54 and 3.55 should to be taken into account" (WG, 2020, p.2). It therefore assists in targeting survey work to the right locations.

3.16 As shown in Table 1 and visually illustrated by Figure 1, there are 2,005 hectares of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land dispersed across Bridgend County Borough. It is of paramount importance to consider how different spatial distributions of growth can minimise the loss of this BMV agricultural land. However, this notion equally needs to be balanced against the other supply and demand factors already mentioned within this Paper coupled with due consideration of the opportunities available to deliver sustainable development. These points have integrally shaped evaluation of each spatial option to ensure the principle of minimising the loss of BMV agricultural land is embedded within the Replacement LDP process.

Table 1: Bridgend County Borough ALC Grading (Total, Hectares)							
Best and Most Versatile			3b	4	5	U	NA
1	2	3a					
4.40	572.03	1,428.38	4,335.85	5,170.72	5,548.31	3,948.12	4,027.62

Data Source: GIS analysis of **Version 2** of the **Predictive ALC Map, Welsh Government**

Figure 1: Bridgend County Borough ALC Grading
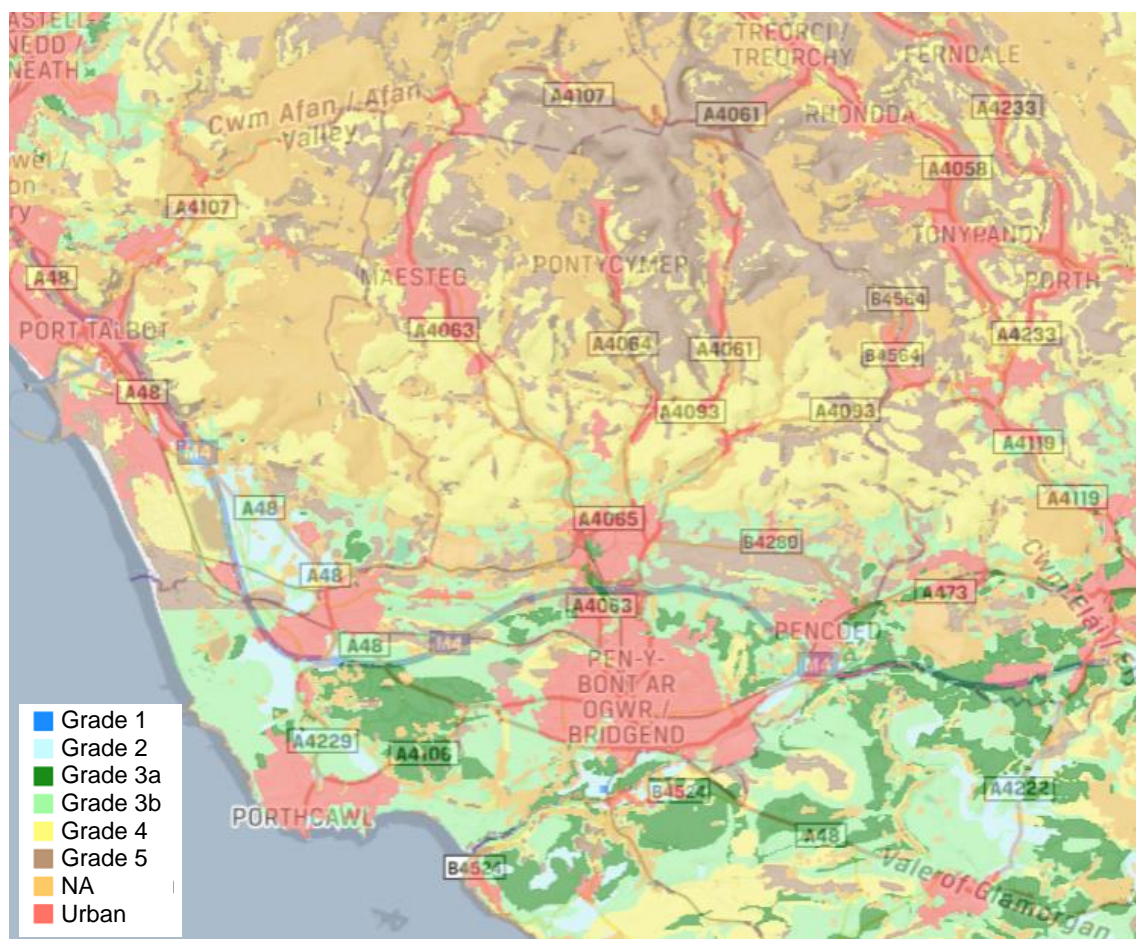
3.16 In the first instance, analysis has been undertaken to identify the total quantum of BMV agricultural land across candidate sites (submitted prior to publication of the Preferred Strategy, including uncommitted and unimplemented sites allocated within the existing LDP). The principal results of this exercise are

displayed in Table 2 below. For ease of reference, the findings of the exercise have also been categorised into BMV and non-BMV agricultural land within Figure 2.

Table 2: Spatial Analysis of Candidate Site Agricultural Land Classifications

Settlement	Agricultural Land Classification Grade (Total in Hectares)							
	Best and Most Versatile			3b	4	5	U	NA
	1	2	3a					
Bridgend*	0	50.77 (35.44)	44.56 (16.11)	161.45 (161.07)	94.30 (94.30)	70.92 (70.92)	59.73 (58.56)	41.98 (37.36)
Maesteg	0	0	0	0	0.31	15.84	17.22	0.01
Pencoed	0	29.40	41.61	20.60	0.83	6.16	5.14	6.77
Porthcawl	0	20.12	11.97	72.79	0	0	16.94	3.87
Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly	0	2.78	4.03	86.07	5.54	10.24	14.17	6.04
Valleys Gateway	0	0	13.86	30.31	0.69	140.82	29.31	4.70
Local Settlements	0	0.32	40.33	70.68	70.75	57.43	30.37	17.83
Candidate Sites Total*	0	103.39 (88.06)	156.35 (127.90)	441.91 (441.53)	172.41 (127.41)	301.41 (301.41)	172.89 (171.72)	81.19 (76.57)

Data Source: GIS analysis of **Version 2** of the **Predictive ALC Map, Welsh Government**

* Figures in brackets represent totals excluding the existing Strategic Site at Island Farm, Bridgend

Figure 2: Candidate Site BMV Agricultural Land Totals, by Settlement

Total Hectares

Legend: ■ BMV ▨ BMV (Extant Consent) ■ Non-BMV
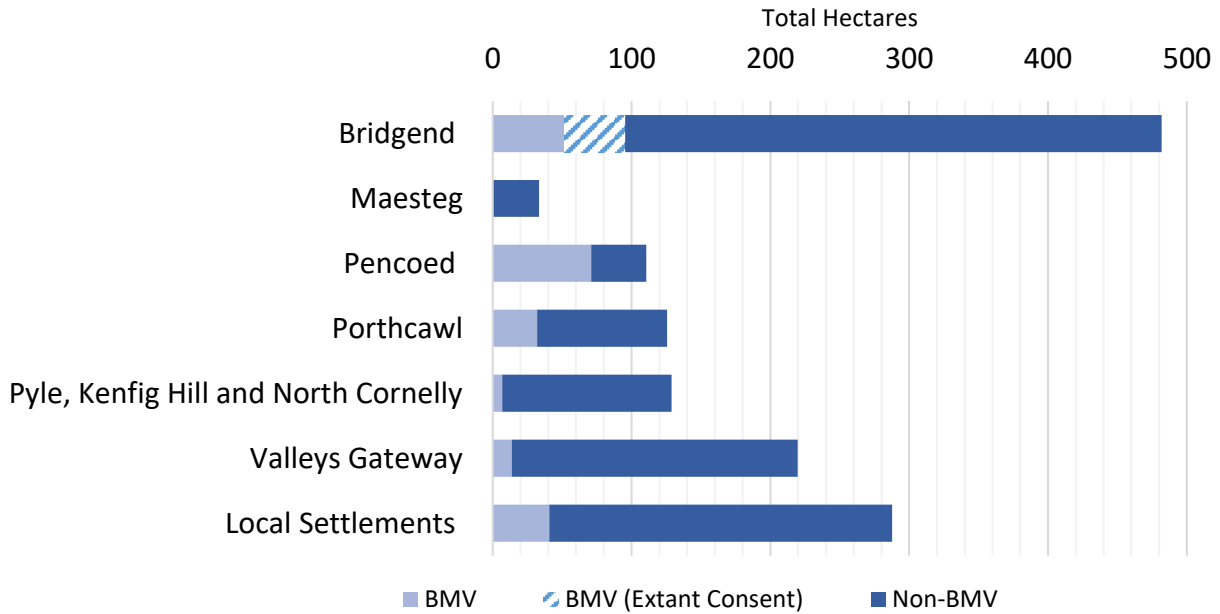
3.17 Evidently, the combined cluster of candidate sites within Bridgend contains the highest concentration of BMV agricultural land overall (over 95ha in total), although there are two important points to emphasise in this respect. Firstly, nearly 44ha of this BMV agricultural land is located on an existing LDP Strategic Site (Island Farm), which has an extant planning consent. Enabling works at this site constitute a material operation, meaning that respective reserved matters permissions have lawfully commenced. Hence, the site is already subject to development, which is signified by the revised totals in brackets within Table 2 and banded bar within Figure 2. Moreover, and secondly, the Bridgend cluster of candidate sites also contains the highest quantity of non-BMV agricultural land in comparison to the other settlement-based clusters across the County Borough. This demonstrates that Bridgend could provide significant opportunities for development to come forward in a manner that minimises the loss of this BMV agricultural land within the Primary Key Settlement of the County Borough.

3.18 The next largest spatial cluster of non-BMV agricultural land is evident within the Valleys Gateway grouping of candidate sites. In numeric terms, nearly 206ha of non-BMV land has been submitted by candidate site promoters for consideration. However, it would be inappropriate to justify a spatial strategy on this basis alone due to the aforementioned capacity issues running north to south at junction 36 of the M4 and the fact that the settlement has been considered less suitable than other settlements for sustainable development.

3.19 Significant quantities of non-BMV agricultural land have also been submitted through candidate site proposals within the grouped settlement of Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly. In total, this equates to over 122ha of non-BMV

agricultural land, accompanied by a relatively minor quantity of BMV agricultural land (under 7ha). This is a key factor in devising a spatial strategy, especially given that this accessible settlement already performs a strong employment function and contains a variety of shopping and community services. These are all important components of sustainable, placemaking-led development.

3.20 Even though the quantity of BMV agricultural land is significant within the Pencoed cluster of candidate sites (71ha) there is still a notable quantum of non-BMV agricultural land in numeric terms (nearly 40ha). This represents potential for sustainable development to support the existing district centre and capitalise on the accessible location. However, any spatial strategy that earmarks growth within Pencoed will also have to consider that there is currently a moratorium in place on further development to the west of the railway line due to restrictions around the level crossing.

3.21 Porthcawl is also a Main Settlement within the County Borough and candidate sites submitted in this area contain a significant amount of non-BMV agricultural land (nearly 94ha). However, as with other settlements, the prospect of allocating growth on these sites will have to be balanced against minimising the loss of other BMV agricultural land (over 32ha in Porthcawl) and promoting sustainable, brownfield-led development in the first instance.

3.22 This latter point is also particularly pertinent when considering the brownfield development opportunities present in Maesteg, with candidate site submissions almost entirely comprising of previously developed land. In fact, no sites containing BMV agricultural land were submitted for consideration by candidate site promoters. However, viability and deliverability factors are equally important to consider when evaluating and justifying a spatial strategy.

3.22 Finally, local settlements are summarised in a single grouping in Table 2 and Figure 2 for ease of reference, although their propensity to accommodate significant, sustainable growth is generally lower. Nevertheless, the Replacement LDP will seek to enable growth on a limited number of sustainable sites at a scale commensurate with the role and function of the respective local settlement, whilst minimising the loss of BMV agricultural land.

3.23 Overall, this analysis has been duly considered when formulating the spatial strategy. Significant weight has been given to protecting BMV agricultural land from development by seeking to promote growth in areas with considerable quantities of previously developed land or land in lower agricultural grades as appropriate. However, these factors need to be evaluated in tandem with other variables including housing need, accessibility, provision of supporting infrastructure, viability and sustainable management of the urban form.

4.   Spatial Options Assessment

<u>Option 1: Continuation of the Existing LDP Regeneration Led Strategy</u>

4.1   The existing LDP's Regeneration-Led Spatial Strategy was developed to provide a land use framework, to help realise the regeneration aspirations and priorities of the Council and to secure the most meaningful social, environmental and economic benefits for the County Borough's communities. The existing LDP considered how much development would be required to have a significant regenerative effect, considering existing settlement patterns and site availability, whilst having regard to the socio-economic function of settlements balanced against relevant environmental considerations.

4.2   This spatial option would therefore continue to prioritise the regeneration activities and needs across the County Borough by primarily re-utilising previously developed (brownfield) land and directing growth to sites within existing settlement boundaries.

4.3   A spatial overview of this option is provided overleaf in Figure 3. The four Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas (Bridgend, Porthcawl, the Valleys Gateway and Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley) would be maintained to deliver mixed-use developments to accommodate new homes, work places and facilities. These Areas would continue to be supplemented by the four existing Strategic Employment Sites to deliver a range of mixed-use developments and facilities:

- Brocastle, Waterton, Bridgend;
- Island Farm, Bridgend;
- Pencoed Technology Park, Pencoed;
- Ty Draw Farm, North Cornelly.

Figure 3: Spatial Overview of Option 1
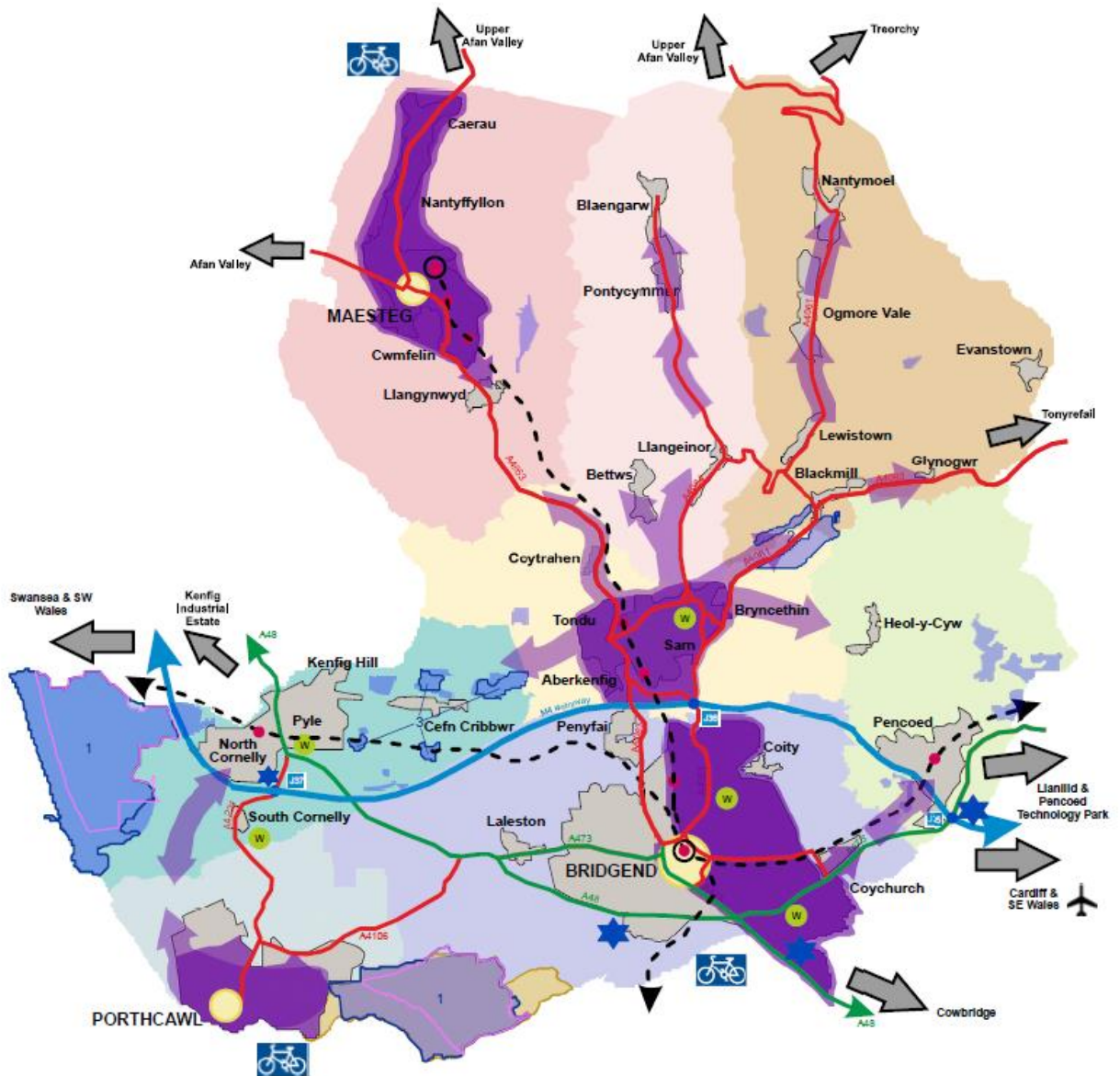
Key

Urban Areas			Llynfi Valley	Pyle/Kenfig/Cornelly
Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas	Benefits of Growth		Garw Valley	Bridgend
Strategic Employment Sites			Ogmore Valley	Porthcawl
Core Road Network	Motorway		Pencoed	Valleys Gateway
Strategic Roads Network				
Railway				
Existing Railway Stations				
Transport Hubs				
Strategic Cycling Links				
Regional Waste Management Site				
Strategic Linkages				
Town Centres				

4.4   The re-use of brownfield and under-utilised land was and is viewed by national policy as a key means of creating more sustainable patterns of development. Therefore, this spatial option would seek to pursue development of land within urban areas, especially on previously developed 'brownfield' sites, before considering the development of greenfield sites elsewhere.

4.5   The LDP Annual Monitoring Reports have shown that the Regeneration-Led Spatial Strategy that underpins the existing 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.

4.6   **Advantages**

- This option is consistent with the site search sequence outlined in Planning Policy Wales in terms of prioritising previously developed sites and underutilised land within settlements before considering land on the edge of settlements and greenfield sites.

- The regeneration objectives of the Council would continue to be promoted, with key brownfield sites retained as strategic allocations.

- There are over 755ha of non-BMV agricultural land across candidate sites submitted within these four Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas. This spatial option would therefore provide plentiful opportunities to help minimise the loss of BMV agricultural land (of which there is approximately 100ha within candidate sites in these growth areas), subject to site-specific assessment.

- Growth would be directed to sustainable urban locations close to public transport and the strategic highway network.

- This option would 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.

- This option would maintain the Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration Site allocation, which will enable delivery of social, economic and environmental benefits for the town itself and the wider area.

- This option would help maximise opportunities to secure affordable housing contributions within certain areas of high housing need. The LHMA identified notable need for additional affordable housing within Bridgend, Porthcawl, and, to a lesser extent, the Valleys Gateway. These three areas were also considered broadly viable within the Plan-Wide Viability Assessment. Residential development within these areas could support affordable housing contributions of 30%, 15%, and 10%, respectively (factoring in the additional costs arising from the proposed changes to Part L, Building Regulations).

4.7 **Disadvantages**

- The majority of existing brownfield regeneration sites identified in the existing LDP have been delivered or are already committed. Most of the remaining deliverable brownfield sites (especially those within Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway) are already expected to come forward within the next several years. There are few other unconstrained brownfield development opportunities remaining across the County Borough. This spatial option may therefore render it difficult to maintain a deliverable housing land supply throughout the life of the Replacement LDP and could trigger an early LDP Review.

- Whilst additional brownfield opportunities exist in the Valleys Gateway area, there are capacity issues at Junction 36 of the M4 which could constrain further growth without significant investment in 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 would incur a timetable for implementation that would extend far beyond the Replacement LDP period.

- The implementation of the current LDP Strategy has been less successful in the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Porthcawl and Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley. This has been largely attributable to land-ownership, assembly and viability issues. The situation at Porthcawl has recently changed now that the Council has acquired ownership of Phase 1 of the Porthcawl Regeneration Site and also

that Phase 2 will benefit from Welsh Government funding for major flood defence works. However, constraints still exist on certain undeveloped, large-scale sites within the Llynfi Valley. The complex issues around land ownership / assembly, site reclamation costs and financial viability within this environ may render it difficult to accommodate the scale of development required to deliver the growth levels projected for the County Borough. Indeed, the plan-wide viability assessment demonstrates that development is not broadly viability within the Valleys Settlements even without an affordable housing contribution. It is therefore difficult to see how the housing land supply can be primarily dependent on all of these regeneration sites, as some will require longer lead-in times, remediation-based pre-development and more detailed strategies to deliver.

- This spatial option overlooks the potential for alternative sustainable settlements to accommodate growth. In particular, the Settlement Assessment classified both Pencoed and the grouped settlement of Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly as Main Settlements based on their high accessibility, existing level of services/facilities and employment provision. Therefore, this spatial option would not strictly be in accordance with the refreshed Settlement Assessment, failing to capitalise on the propensity of these two additional settlements to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner.

- The LHMA also identified high levels of housing need within both Pencoed and the grouped settlement of Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly. This spatial option would therefore not be conducive to maximising affordable housing delivery within these Main Settlements.

Option 1: Sustainability Appraisal Assessment Summary

4.8   In accordance with Planning Policy Wales, this option prioritises the redevelopment of brownfield land and focuses on using growth to catalyse socio-economic regeneration, which if deliverable, would make the best use of available land and existing infrastructure whilst preventing urban sprawl. If successful, this would also support improved access to employment opportunities, community facilities, public services and key amenities, particularly for existing deprived communities, and therefore help to reduce inequality and poverty. The spatial option therefore performs particularly well against SA Objectives 1, 2, 4, 12 and 14. However, land ownership, site contamination and viability issues in Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley may prevent this option from meeting identified housing and employment needs. This could render the Replacement LDP ineffective in directing development to sustainable locations

and achieving the preferred growth level, which would prevent the County Borough from reaching its full economic potential. The spatial option would therefore have particularly uncertain or potentially negative effects on SA Objectives 3, 5 and 6.

<u>Summary of Option 1</u>

4.9   Option 1 prioritises the re-use of previously developed land and directs growth to sites within existing settlement boundaries, continuing the existing LDP Regeneration-Led Strategy. This option could minimise the need to allocate development sites on BMV agricultural land. However, whilst the existing Strategy has been successful in delivering sites within the Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway, it has been less successful in Maesteg, the Llynfi Valley and Porthcawl. This has largely been attributed to land-ownership, assembly and viability issues especially within the upper areas of the Llynfi Valley. Proceeding with Option 1 (continuation of the existing LDP strategy) would render it very difficult to deliver the County Borough's future housing requirements. This option also overlooks the role of sustainable settlements in other parts of the County Borough (i.e. Pencoed and Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly) in accordance with the Settlement Assessment and would equally fail to maximise scope for affordable housing delivery in these high housing need areas. It is likely that such a strategy would be considered unsound at examination.

<u>Option 2: Public Transport Hubs and Strategic Road Corridors</u>

4.10 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. Figure 2 provides an illustrative overview of how this option would seek to accommodate growth spatially.

4.11 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.

4.12 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 Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill, respectively. These road linkages represent a significant pull factor for development to take place within the County Borough.

4.13 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).

Figure 2: Spatial Overview of Option 2

Key
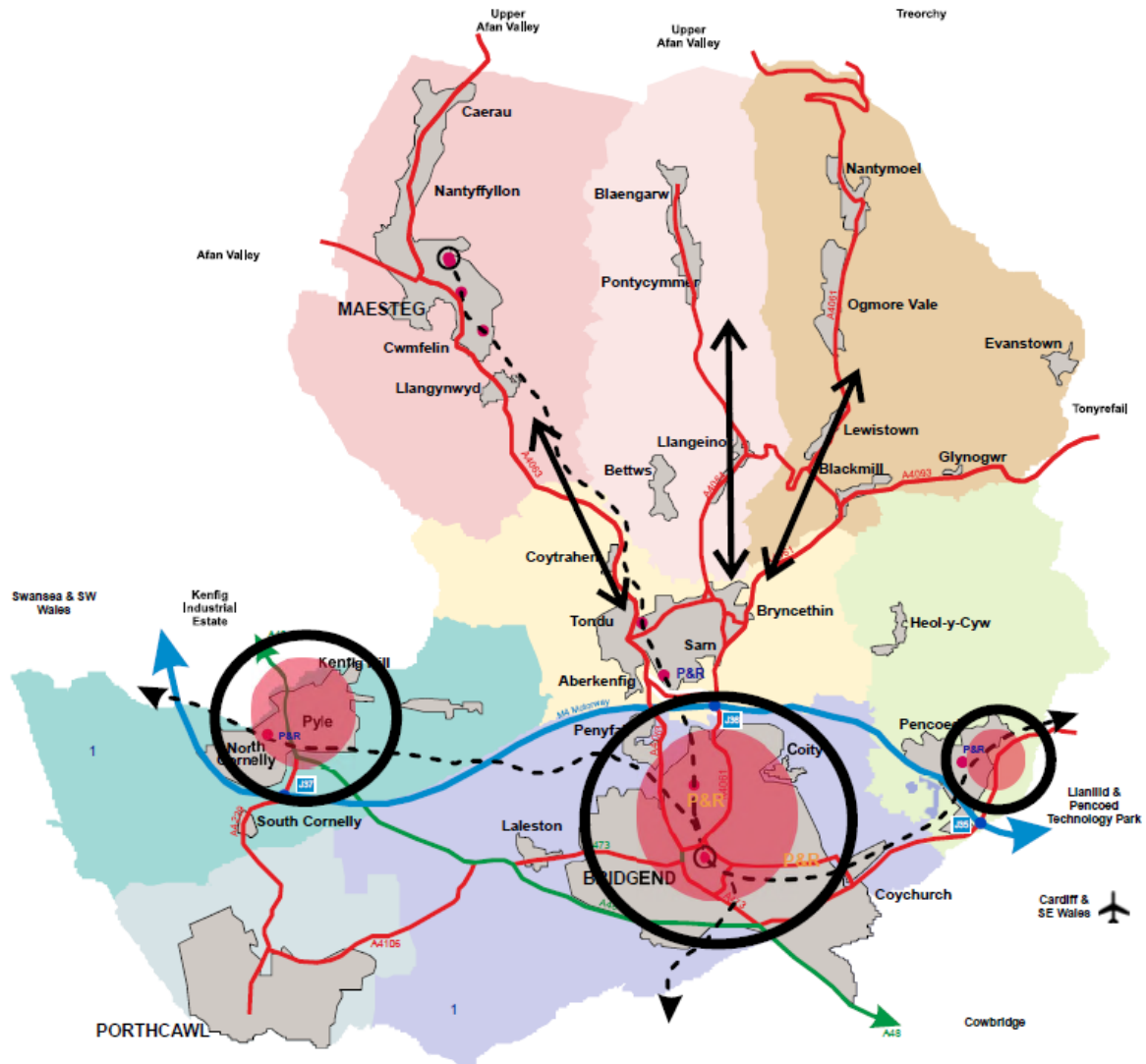
Urban Areas		Llynfi Valley	Pyle/Kenfig/Cornelly
P&R	Existing Park and Ride	Garw Valley	Bridgend
P&R	Proposed Park and Ride	Ogmore Valley	Porthcawl
	Motorway	Pencoed	Valleys Gateway
	Core Road Network		
	Strategic Roads Network		
	Railway		
	Existing Railway Stations		
	Transport Hubs		

4.14 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:

Settlements with Stations on main Railway Corridors:
- Bridgend
- Pencoed
- Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill

Settlements located on the Key Strategic Road Network (M4)
- Bridgend (Junction 36)
- Pencoed (Junction 35)
- Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill (Junction 37)

4.15 This option therefore aims to closely align growth with active travel routes and public transport links in accordance 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. at Bridgend, Pencoed and Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill), all of which already benefit from existing services, facilities and employment clustered around the railway stations.

4.16 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.

4.17 Advantages

- The three broad 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 are sometimes 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.

- This option would help maximise opportunities to secure affordable housing contributions within certain areas of high housing need. The LHMA identified notable need for additional affordable housing within Bridgend, Pencoed and Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly. The first two of these areas were also considered broadly viable within the Plan-Wide Viability Assessment. Residential development within Bridgend and Pencoed could support affordable housing contributions of up to 15% respectively (factoring in the additional costs arising from the proposed changes to Part L, Building Regulations). The financial impacts of Part L have reduced the broad propensity for Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly to support an affordable housing contribution based on broad development values. However, site-specific viability work in this area suggests that significant sites could support an affordable housing contribution of up to 15%, which could make a significant contribution to addressing housing need issues (see Affordable Housing Background Paper).

- There are over 580ha of non-BMV agricultural land across candidate sites submitted within these three potential growth areas. This spatial

option would therefore provide plentiful opportunities to help minimise the loss of BMV agricultural land (of which there is approximately 130ha within candidate sites in these growth areas), subject to site-specific assessment.

4.18 Disadvantages

- Development may not accord with market demand and result in a proliferation of sites being advertised based on their proximity to the major highway network in the first instance. 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 less concerned with accessing existing local centres and instead place more emphasis on finding the fastest routes onto the major road networks. This could 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.

- There are few unconstrained brownfield development opportunities remaining within these parts of the County Borough, which would render it difficult for the strategy to prioritise previously developed sites. The regeneration objectives of the Council would therefore be difficult to achieve without retention of key brownfield strategic allocations in other settlements (i.e. Porthcawl and Maesteg).

- 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. It would also fail to address the Council's regeneration objectives.

- This spatial option would not maximise affordable housing delivery within Porthcawl, a Main Settlement and area of high housing need as identified by the LHMA.

Option 2: Sustainability Appraisal Summary

4.20   Whilst meeting identified housing and employment needs in accessible locations, this option would not spread the benefits of growth or support less accessible communities in the Valleys. This option could maximise accessibility, although this would need to be supported by substantial public transport investment to avoid increased car dependency. Over-development of specific corridors could also exacerbate congestion at key points of the road network. This option therefore performs particularly well in relation to SA objectives 3, 5, 6, and 14, yet depending on implementation factors, uncertain or potentially negative effects could occur in relation to SA Objectives 4, 7, 8 and 12.
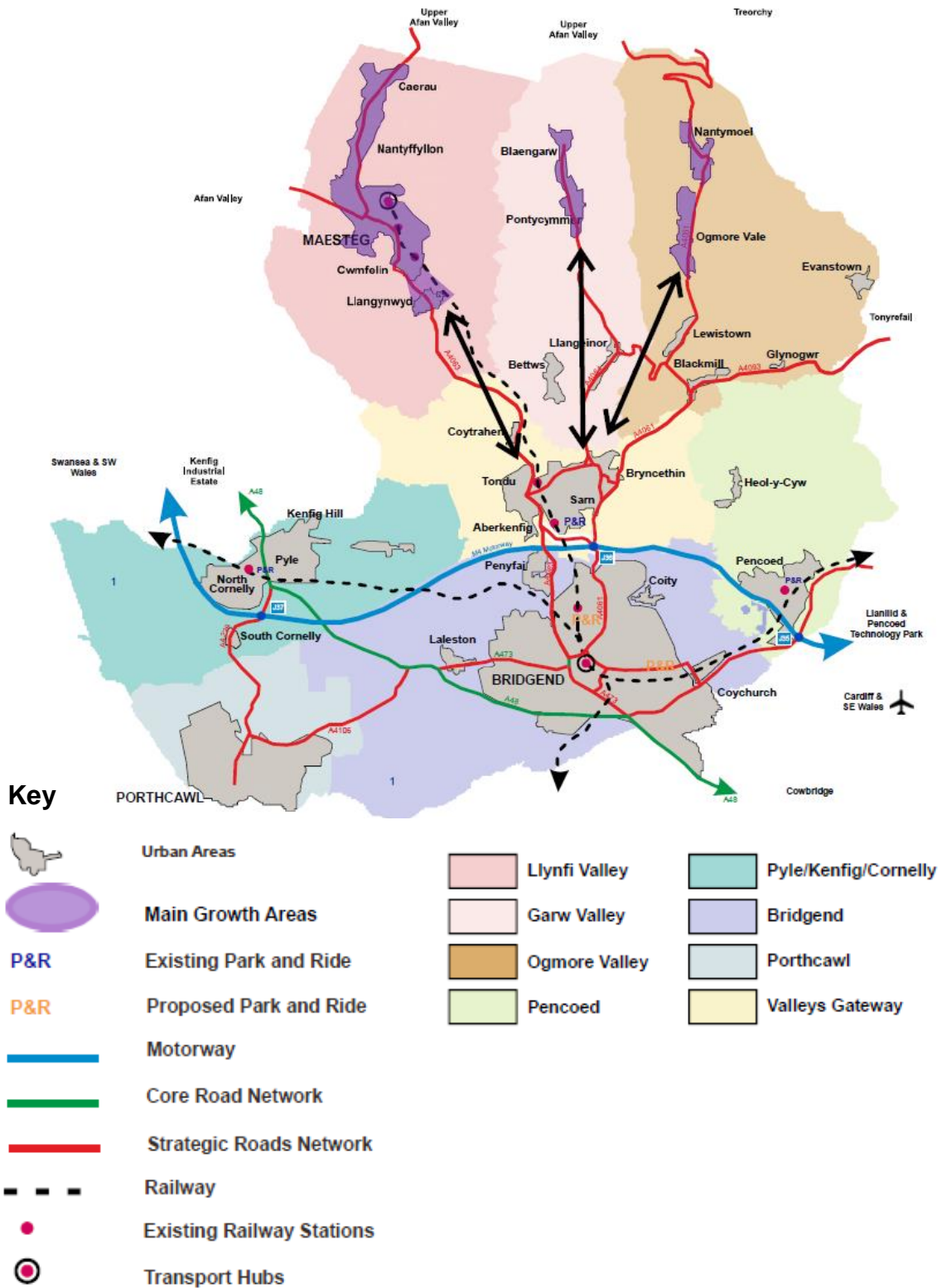
Summary of Option 2

4.21   Overall, this option is based on promoting sustainable development by focussing on established transport hubs at Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill, 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.

4.22   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.

4.23   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. It also minimises opportunities to secure affordable housing within these environs, especially given the high housing need identified within Porthcawl by the LHMA. Therefore, whilst there are certainly aspects 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.

Option 3: Prioritise Growth to the North of the M4 - Valleys Led Strategy

4.24 This option aims to prioritise the existing Strategic Regeneration Growth Areas of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley along with the Valleys Gateway. Outstanding commitments would be delivered on brownfield sites in settlements outside of these areas, although the main focus for development would be in the communities to the north of the M4 that are most in need of social, economic and environmental regeneration. A Strategic Hub would also be identified in the north of the Borough in accordance with the Welsh Government's Ministerial Valleys Taskforce.

4.25 This option builds on existing regeneration activities and programmes in the County Borough, providing opportunities to enhance the range and quality of local services aimed at reducing levels of social exclusion. A large proportion of future growth would be directed towards the Llynfi Valley, especially the Upper Llynfi Valley and Maesteg, where there is scope for significant delivery. Site capacity exists on numerous brownfield sites including the Maesteg Washery, the former Cooper Standard site and the former Coegnant Colliery reclamation area, east of Caerau and Nantyffyllon. Such developments would promote and sustain Maesteg as the principal settlement that serves and benefits the surrounding areas. Existing infrastructure is also in place, notably in terms of the South Wales Metro prospectus to enhance the Bridgend to Maesteg railway line. This could potentially include increased frequency of services and enhancement of heavy rail sections of the route, accompanied by other infrastructure improvements to accommodate growth. Figure 3 overleaf provides a geographic illustration.

4.26 This Option would also provide the opportunity to build on the strategic potential of the Valleys Gateway area by directing further development to this highly accessible, central location within the County Borough. Considerable scope and capacity exists in settlements such as Tondu, Sarn, Aberkenfig and Bryncethin, where large sites have the potential of coming forward as mixed–use schemes. This grouped settlement was indeed identified as a Main Settlement within the Assessment and there is a moderately high level of need for additional affordable housing within the Valleys Gateway as identified by the LHMA. A number of opportunities could be enabled be re-assessing existing redundant, underutilised employment sites, identifying priorities through the school modernisation process and progressing suitable candidate site submissions.

Figure 3: Spatial Overview of Option 3

Key

Urban Areas	
Main Growth Areas	
P&R	Existing Park and Ride
P&R	Proposed Park and Ride
——	Motorway
——	Core Road Network
——	Strategic Roads Network
- - -	Railway
•	Existing Railway Stations
⊙	Transport Hubs

	Llynfi Valley		Pyle/Kenfig/Cornelly
	Garw Valley		Bridgend
	Ogmore Valley		Porthcawl
	Pencoed		Valleys Gateway

4.27 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 would require the relaxation of certain settlement boundaries, where topographically feasible, and provision for the release of some urban fringe or greenfield sites immediately adjacent to existing settlements within these communities. The varied landscape of the Garw and Ogmore Valleys would also be utilised by identifying opportunities for cultural and tourism related developments.

4.28 In addition, there would be close alignment with 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 plan identifies seven strategic hubs across the South Wales Valleys as a focus for targeted public investment and means of levering in private sector investment with a primary focus on job creation, skills development and entrepreneurship. This option 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.

4.29 **Advantages**

- This option could strengthen the vitality of the Valley settlements and reduce patterns of social exclusion and isolation.

- The option is similar to that of the existing LDP, seeking to deliver regeneration benefits through the allocation of new housing developments on previously developed sites. There are several notable sites in the Upper Llynfi Valley, which have not yet been delivered, and this option would seek to enable their development. Progression of a brownfield strategy accords strongly with the site search sequence outlined in Planning Policy Wales and would simultaneously minimise development pressure on BMV agricultural land elsewhere.

- This option would assist with the deliverability of affordable housing in some moderately high need housing market areas as identified by the LHMA (most notably, the Valleys Gateway).

- The option would 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.

- The resulting pattern of development would build on the success of the existing Valleys Gateway Strategic Regeneration Growth Area. It would continue to recognise the strategic potential of this area and provide further opportunities for development and delivery of facilities serving the whole of the County Borough.

- Council-wide carbon reduction targets and climate change mitigation would be supported by working with local communities to identify suitable locations for local authority-scale renewable energy projects in the Ogmore and Garw Valleys and to continue to promote the Upper Llynfi Valley Heat Network Project.

4.30 **Disadvantages**

- The majority of existing brownfield regeneration sites identified in the Valleys Gateway 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 without significant investment in the associated infrastructure. 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 beyond the plan period.

- 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 and there is not potential to extend the route to serve additional new stations or the Ogmore and Garw Valleys.

- The implementation of the existing LDP Strategy has not proved as successful in the Strategic Regeneration Growth Area of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley as in other parts of the County Borough. None of the residential allocations in the existing Strategic Regeneration Growth Area of Maesteg and Llynfi Valley have been delivered under

the existing LDP thus far (existing Policy COM 1 refers). This is due to complex land ownership / assembly issues, significant site reclamation costs and a lack of financial viability. Such issues are particularly prevalent on larger scale sites in this vicinity that are considered strategic in nature. It is difficult to see how these blockages could be removed without significant financial investment over the life of the Replacement LDP. Indeed, the Plan-Wide Viability Assessment demonstrates that development is not broadly viable within the Valleys Settlements even without an affordable housing contribution (notwithstanding developmental 'hot spots'). Pursuit of this spatial option may therefore render it difficult to deliver the level of growth (i.e. 505 dwellings per annum) justified in the Strategic Growth Options Background paper.

- As such, additional viable and deliverable greenfield sites may 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 in recent years. The scope to do this in the settlements to the north of the M4 is severely restrained by geographical and topographical constraints. This is especially apparent in the Ogmore and Garw Valleys, where settlements are linear in nature and have limited existing services and facilities. As a minimum measure, extension and/or relaxation of settlement boundaries would be required to accommodate this growth, which could lead to the allocation of unsustainable greenfield sites located away from main transport hubs. This could entrench existing patterns of disconnection between homes and jobs, which is at odds with the Placemaking approach advocated by Planning Policy Wales.

- This option would not seek to allocate new strategic residential sites in the Main Settlements of Bridgend, Porthcawl, Pencoed or Pyle (as defined by the Settlement Assessment). These vicinities are recognised as having important roles in the settlement hierarchy of the County Borough, given that they are the principal centres of services, jobs and community facilities. Their sub-regional to regional roles may be weakened by a lack of growth over the plan period, which may hamper County Borough's capability to deliver significant levels of high quality residential and employment land to contribute to the wider Cardiff Capital Region.

- This spatial option would not be conducive to maximising affordable housing delivery within the Main Settlements of Bridgend, Porthcawl,

Pencoed or Pyle, all of which were identified as high housing need areas by the LHMA.

Option 3: Sustainability Appraisal Summary

4.31   This option would support brownfield land redevelopment within Maesteg, the Llynfi Valley and the Valleys Gateway, but by directing development away from major settlements, it would not maximise the redevelopment of brownfield land in overall terms. Most critically, this option would result in a spatial mismatch between rural areas (where new development would be directed to) and existing urban areas (that can more readily accommodate growth). This option would therefore fail to meet population needs within existing major settlements. Moreover, without substantial expansion of Valley settlements into environmentally sensitive and topographically challenging areas (which is unlikely to prove viable), this option could result in insufficient land being made available to meet identified housing and employment needs. As with Option 1, this could render the Replacement LDP ineffective in directing development to sustainable locations and achieving the preferred growth level, which would prevent the County Borough from reaching its full economic potential. This option therefore performs particularly well in relation to SA objectives 1 and 2, but depending on implementation factors, uncertain or potentially negative effects could occur in relation to SA Objectives 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12 and 14.

Summary of Option 3

4.32   This option 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.

4.33   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, thereby minimising pressure on BMV agricultural land. However, the Valleys settlements have traditionally had low market demand, higher developer costs (associated with land reclamation) and more limited physical and social infrastructure. There is little evidence to suggest that house prices will increase in these areas to offset the physical and topographical viability challenges present on sites of all sizes located within this part of the County Borough. This was identified by the Plan-Wide Viability Assessment. This spatial option would therefore be dependent on substantial capital investment and require innovative public/private partnership approaches to succeed.
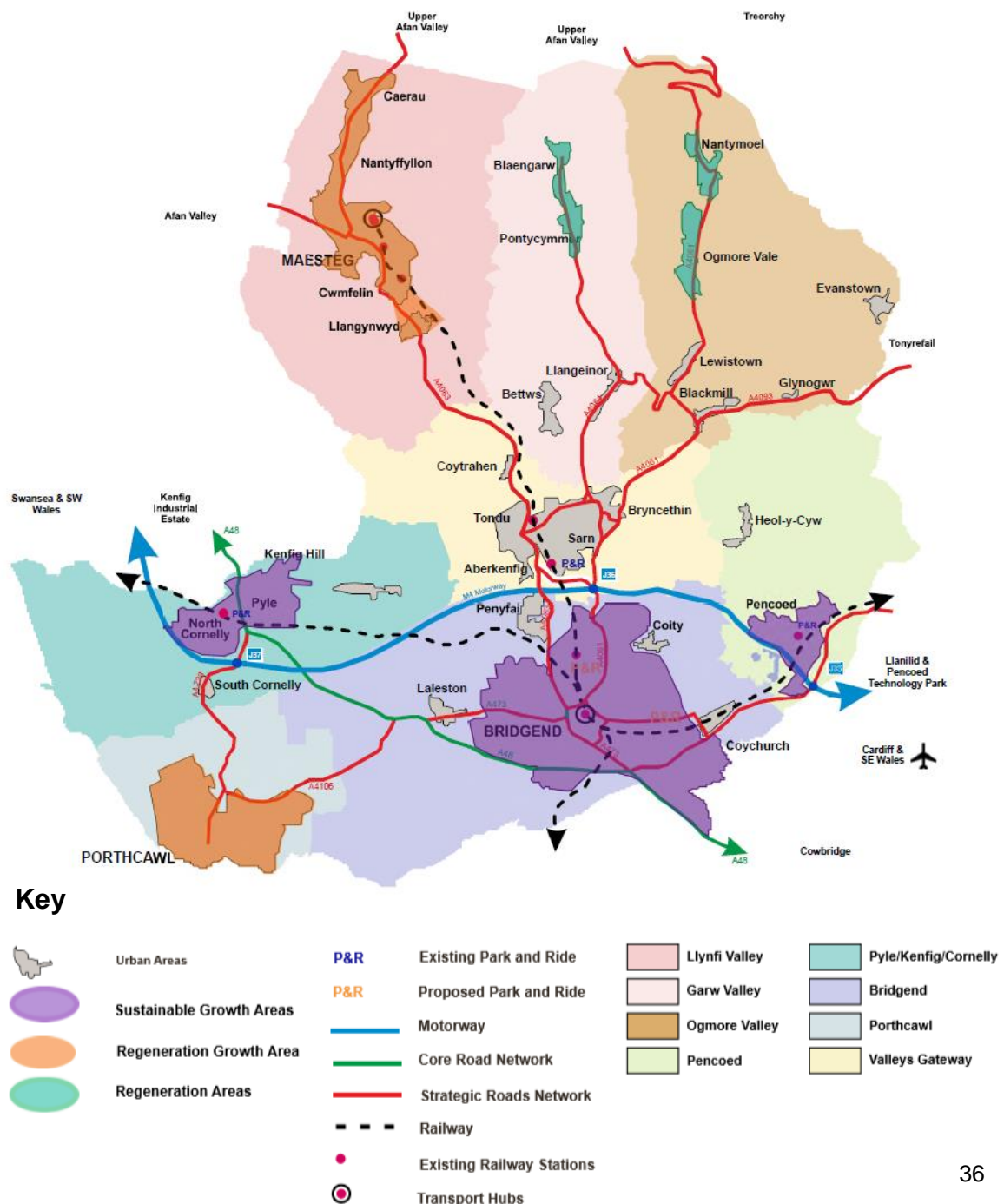
4.34   If the Council decided to proceed with Option 3, delivery of the County Borough's future housing requirements would prove highly challenging. Such a strategy would be likely to be considered unsound at the LDP public examination, as it would prove difficult to incorporate sufficient deliverable sites within the strategy. Demonstration of site viability is considered a critical issue in the LDP process and the failure to do so would hamper the Council's ability to sustain a deliverable housing land supply. Pursuing this spatial option would ultimately not address the failings of the existing LDP, overlook the potential for other Main Settlements to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner and fail to contribute to affordable housing delivery in many high need settlements.

<u>Option 4: Regeneration and Sustainable Urban Growth Led Strategy</u>

4.35 This option is effectively a hybrid of the preceding three options and would seek to continue to provide a land use framework that helps realise the regeneration aspirations and priorities of the Council, whilst balancing the need to deliver future housing requirements up to 2033. The undeveloped brownfield regeneration allocations identified in the existing LDP would be retained and supplemented with sustainable urban growth in settlements that demonstrate strong employment, service and transportation functions. This would help to minimise pressure on BMV agricultural land and maximise opportunities to deliver affordable housing in high-need areas as identified by the LHMA.

4.36 This spatial option would prioritise the development of land within or on the periphery of urban areas, especially on previously developed brownfield sites. Porthcawl, Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley would therefore continue to remain regeneration priorities. The continued commitment to brownfield development opportunities within these settlements would therefore accord with the site-search sequence outlined in Planning Policy Wales and reduce developmental pressure on BMV agricultural land. However, given the existing LDP's success in delivering development on brownfield land in other settlements (notably Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway), further regeneration opportunities are now somewhat limited. Additional viable and deliverable sites (including some greenfield sites) would therefore be required to implement this spatial option and ensure the County Borough's future housing requirements could be delivered.

4.37 For these reasons, accompanying growth would be channelled towards Bridgend, Pencoed and Pyle, North Cornelly and Kenfig Hill in recognition of their positions in the Settlement Hierarchy, high levels of need for affordable housing and capacity to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner. This would provide a means of supporting their existing services and facilities, enabling delivery of associated infrastructure and capitalising upon their location on the strategic road and rail network. Collectively, there are over 580ha of non-BMV agricultural land across candidate sites submitted within these three potential growth areas. This spatial option would therefore provide plentiful opportunities to help minimise the loss of BMV agricultural land (of which there is approximately 130ha within candidate sites in these growth areas), subject to site-specific assessment.

4.38 This spatial distribution of growth would also be best placed to maximise delivery of affordable housing in alignment with the housing need identified. The LHMA revealed significant shortfalls of affordable housing provision within Bridgend, Pencoed, Porthcawl and Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly. Moderate housing need was also identified in Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley, as was the need to diversify the dwelling stock within Valleys Settlements. This spatial option would therefore optimise the means to spatially address these

shortfalls in provision and contribute towards counter-balancing the mismatch between supply and demand. Indeed, the Plan-Wide Viability Assessment demonstrated that these broad areas could support nil-grant affordable housing contributions of 30% in Porthcawl and 15% in Bridgend/Pencoed (factoring in the additional costs arising from the proposed changes to Part L, Building Regulations). The financial impacts of Part L have reduced the broad propensity for Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly to support a nil-grant affordable housing contribution based on broad development values. However, site-specific viability work in this area suggests that significant sites could support an affordable housing contribution of up to 15%, which could make a significant contribution to addressing housing need issues (see Affordable Housing Background Paper).

Figure 4: Spatial Overview of Option 4

Key

Urban Areas	**P&R** Existing Park and Ride	Llynfi Valley	Pyle/Kenfig/Cornelly
Sustainable Growth Areas	**P&R** Proposed Park and Ride	Garw Valley	Bridgend
Regeneration Growth Area	Motorway	Ogmore Valley	Porthcawl
Regeneration Areas	Core Road Network	Pencoed	Valleys Gateway
	Strategic Roads Network		
	Railway		
	Existing Railway Stations		
	Transport Hubs		

36

4.39   As shown in Figure 4, development would therefore be directed to settlements and parts of the County Borough which would benefit the most and where there are opportunities for securing the greatest positive impacts and benefits of growth. Regeneration Growth Areas would be identified at Porthcawl and Maesteg, which, together, would deliver a range of mixed-use developments and facilities, accompanied by more community based Regeneration Areas within the Ogmore and Garw Valleys. Three Sustainable Growth Areas would also be identified at Bridgend, Pencoed and Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill, ensuring a deliverable supply of housing land. This approach would seek to make the most meaningful contribution to securing social, environmental and economic benefits for the communities of the County Borough.

4.40   There are three key elements to this spatial option are detailed further as follows:

- **Regeneration Growth Areas**
  These areas would broadly include settlements that would benefit from appropriate growth to address a broad range of socio-economic issues within their vicinity, whilst demonstrating capacity to accommodate that growth in a sustainable manner. A number of (primarily brownfield) sites in need of redevelopment and investment would be earmarked for development within these Areas as part of a broader driver to complement more significant community based regeneration. There would be a particular aim to revitalise Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley by enabling the area to fulfil its potential as an important service and cultural centre by providing new homes, retail provision and local job opportunities, including those related to tourism. In addition, Porthcawl would be allocated for regeneration led growth that balances the interests of tourism with those of economic development and environmental considerations, catalysed by redevelopment of the Waterfront Regeneration Area.

- **Regeneration Areas**
  Regeneration Area designations would seek to capitalise on the rural surroundings of the Ogmore and Garw Valleys by aiming to promote active lifestyles, grow the tourism industry and facilitate smaller-scale development on (primarily brownfield) sites within their vicinity. There would be a recognition that distinctive approaches are required to bring forward development in these areas, which could include initiatives such as co-operative housing, self-build plots and custom build opportunities. Development would be enabled at a scale and nature tailored to community needs, whilst diversifying and strengthening local economies, connecting communities to wider opportunities and protecting their high quality environments.

- **Sustainable Growth Areas**
  These Areas would seek to complement the Council's regeneration priorities by allocating additional sustainable urban growth in settlements most conducive to logical expansion to ensure the County Borough's housing requirements can be met. Bridgend would continue to be the main focus for regeneration and sustainable development, whilst Pencoed and Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly would also be identified as areas that could accommodate sustainable growth. These settlements would be prioritised for growth based on their identified local housing need, accessibility, availability of amenities and employment provision in the context of their existing population bases and position in the settlement hierarchy. Specific site allocations would stringently follow the Site Search Sequence outlined in Planning Policy Wales, recognising that some greenfield sites may need to be allocated for development given a distinct lack of remaining undeveloped brownfield sites within these vicinities. However, growth would primarily be enabled through delivery of under-utilised sites within each settlement's functional area and/or on their periphery to facilitate sustainable patterns of development, recognising that accompanying infrastructure would also need to be provided.

Ultimately, this option would seek to build on the successes of the existing LDP strategy and provide enough flexibility to address the elements that have underperformed (i.e. Porthcawl, Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley), whilst facilitating sustainable growth.

4.41 **Advantages**

- This option would continue to focus on the delivery of brownfield regeneration sites allocated in the existing LDP, although acknowledge that some of these allocations may require longer lead-in times, remediation-based pre-development and more detailed strategies to deliver. Maintaining the majority of these allocations as regeneration sites would therefore still seek to enable their development, yet clarify that the housing land supply would not be dependent on all of them coming forward. This would provide a means of safeguarding against under-delivery of the identified housing requirements.

- Allocation of a limited number of viable, deliverable and sustainable greenfield sites within Sustainable Growth Areas would help ensure maintenance of a deliverable housing land supply over the life of the

Replacement LDP, thereby helping to meet the County Borough's future housing needs. The existing capacities of settlements and associated infrastructure would also be considered to ensure appropriate and necessary improvements would be secured alongside new development.

- Apportioning sustainable growth into the key settlements of Bridgend, Pencoed and Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly 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 these areas would increasingly be seen as attractive places for business to locate, given the growing employment base and availability of skilled labour.

- This option would maximise opportunities to secure affordable housing contributions within the highest housing need areas. The LHMA identified notable need for additional affordable housing within all Main Settlements earmarked to accommodate growth through this spatial option.

- This option is consistent with the site search sequence outlined in Planning Policy Wales in terms of prioritising previously developed sites and underutilised land within settlements before considering land on the edge of settlements and greenfield sites. Regeneration-led strategies for Porthcawl and Maesteg would minimise pressure on BMV agricultural land within these environs. Equally, there are over 580ha of non-BMV agricultural land across candidate sites submitted within Bridgend, Pencoed and Pyle, Kenfig Hill and North Cornelly, thereby also providing plentiful opportunities to minimise the loss of BMV agricultural land within Sustainable Growth Areas.

- This option would 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. Whilst recognising several constraints associated with a number of large regeneration sites in the Maesteg and the surrounding parts of the Llynfi Valley, this option could explore potential 'hotspots' on the edge of the Regeneration Growth Area of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley, particularly in the south of which may present viable opportunities to accommodate sustainable development.

- This option would maintain the Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration Site allocation, which will enable delivery of social, economic and environmental benefits for the town itself and the wider area.

- New sustainable allocations could contribute towards the energy needs of Wales with a focus on promoting renewable and low carbon energy, particularly building on the Local Area Energy Strategy that identifies suitable locations for District Heating Networks.

- Multi-functional green infrastructure would be promoted with an emphasis on its integration with existing and new development.

- Growth located in close proximity to key transport hubs and the strategic road network/corridors would help ensure new development is located and designed in accordance with the transport hierarchy (PPW). This option would therefore seek 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.

4.42 Disadvantages

- The Plan-Wide Viability Assessment identified challenges in delivering development with Valleys Settlements and this spatial option cannot alter these extant challenges alone. However, the goal would be to maintain a clear framework to facilitate sustainable, regeneration based development, thereby complementing opportunities to secure enabling funding and investment in Valleys settlements.

- This option would not immediately resolve the capacity issues at Junction 36 (M4) meaning growth opportunities would be limited within the Valleys Gateway (refer to Background Paper – Junction 36, M4). However, this option would have a longer-term aim to resolve localised capacity issues at Junction 36 and also the Penprysg Road Railway Bridge, Pencoed to improve extant traffic flow issues and enhance sustainable growth opportunities within the respective settlements in the future.

- Most of the remaining deliverable brownfield sites (especially those within Bridgend and the Valleys Gateway) are already expected to come forward within the next several years. There are few other

unconstrained brownfield development opportunities remaining across the County Borough. It is therefore likely that a number of additional viable and deliverable greenfield sites would be required to deliver future housing requirements for the County Borough up to 2033. However, growth would primarily be enabled through delivery of under-utilised sites within each settlement's functional area and/or on their periphery to facilitate sustainable patterns of development, recognising that accompanying infrastructure would also need to be provided.

Option 4: Sustainability Appraisal Summary

4.43   This option seeks to combine the advantages of each other option whilst minimising delivery risks. As such, the option identifies the major settlements of Bridgend, Porthcawl, Pencoed and Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill as the areas most able to accommodate strategic scale housing growth and thus implement the preferred growth level. Simultaneously, the need to prioritise brownfield land redevelopment across the County Borough and deliver socio-economic renewal in The Valleys is also recognised. The main risk is that by seeking to address a wider range of priorities in tandem, the resulting planning policy framework could be weaker, with the location of development driven more by market forces. To address this, the option includes the identification of specific Strategic Growth Areas and Sustainable Regeneration Areas to guide particular types of development to specific areas and ensure a managed approach to growth across the County Borough. The option therefore performs particularly well in relation to SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12 and 14 by providing a credible strategy to meet the preferred growth level in a manner consistent with sustainable development. It is also likely to support most other SA objectives, although specific effects would depend on implementation factors and therefore cannot be determined at this stage.

Summary of Option 4

4.44   This option builds on the successes of the existing LDP strategy and provides enough flexibility to address the elements that have underperformed i.e. Porthcawl and Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley. This option seeks to prioritise the development of land within or on the periphery of urban areas, especially on previously developed 'brownfield' sites. Porthcawl, Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley would therefore continue to remain regeneration priorities through their designation as Regeneration Growth Areas. There may be viable opportunities to accommodate sustainable development on the edge of the Regeneration Growth Area of Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley, recognising the longer lead times of several regeneration sites within Maesteg and the Llynfi Valley. This would enable delivery of a range of mixed-use developments and facilities,

accompanied by more community based Regeneration Areas within the Ogmore and Garw Valleys. However, given the existing LDP's success in delivering development on brownfield land in other settlements, this option would also seek to identify viable, deliverable and sustainable sites elsewhere including some greenfield allocations. Accompanying growth would therefore be channelled towards Bridgend, Pencoed and Pyle / North Cornelly / Kenfig Hill in recognition of their positions in the Settlement Hierarchy, high levels of need for Affordable Housing and capacity to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner. Designation of these settlements as Sustainable Growth Areas would provide a means of supporting their existing services and facilities, enabling delivery of associated infrastructure and capitalising upon their location on the strategic road and rail network. This will help facilitate sustainable, transit orientated development grounded in placemaking principles.

5   Preferred Spatial Strategy Option

5.1   The Vision of the Replacement LDP seeks to continue to transform the County Borough, resulting in the development of a safe, healthy and inclusive network of communities that connect more widely with the region to catalyse sustainable economic growth. There is clear emphasis on achieving sustainable patterns of growth that support existing local services and facilitates in addition to catalysing sustainable regeneration within Porthcawl and the Valleys Settlements.

5.2   Based on the detailed assessment above, **Option 4** is identified as the Preferred Spatial Strategy. This is considered the best option to align with this Vision and also the Key Issues, Drivers, Strategic Objectives and Specific Objectives the Replacement LDP is seeking to address. This option is considered most conducive to accommodating the level of growth identified in the Strategic Growth Options Background Paper and also delivering this growth through sustainable patterns of development that accord with the Planning Policy Wales' placemaking principles. It will maximise affordable housing delivery in high-need areas, promote viable sustainable development, enable delivery of significant remaining brownfield sites in accordance with the site search sequence and seek to minimise pressure on BMV agricultural land, subject to site-specific assessment.