



Powys County Council

Powys Replacement Local Development Plan (2022-2037)

Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report
Appendix D





Powys County Council

Powys Replacement Local Development Plan (2022-2037)

Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report Appendix D

Type of document (version) Public

Project no. 62280832

Our Ref. No. 808795-WSP---10_P05.01

Date: July 2024

WSP

Kings Orchard

1 Queen Street

Bristol

BS2 0HQ

Phone: +44 117 930 6200

WSP.com



Quality control

Issue/revision	First issue	Revision 1	Revision 2	Revision 3
Remarks	Full Draft for client review	Final for consultation		
Date	03/07/2024	22/07/2024		
Prepared by	Ellie Abbott Robert Deanwood	Ellie Abbott Robert Deanwood		
Checked by	Alastair Peattie	Alastair Peattie		
Authorised by	Robert Deanwood	Robert Deanwood		
Project number	UK-62280832	UK-62280832		
Report number	01	02		



Contents

ISA of the Preferred Strategy (including Strategic Policies)	1
Method	1
ISA of the Preferred Strategy (including Strategic Policies)	3
ISA Topic: Population & Communities	3
ISA Topic: Economy & Employment	5
ISA Topic: Equality, Diversity & Inclusion	7
ISA Topic: The Welsh Language	9
ISA Topic: Health & Well-Being	11
ISA Topic: Land Use, Soils & Geology	14
ISA Topic: Water	16
SEA Topic: Air	18
ISA Topic: Waste & Resource Use	21
ISA Topic: Climate Change (Adaptation)	23
ISA Topic: Climate Change (Mitigation)	25
ISA Topic: Transport & Movement	28
ISA Topic: Historic Environment	31
ISA Topic: Biodiversity, Green Infrastructure & Geodiversity	33
ISA Topic: Landscape & Townscape	36

Appendix D

**ISA of the Preferred Strategy
(including Strategic Policies)**



ISA of the Preferred Strategy (including Strategic Policies)

This appendix presents the appraisal of the likely significant effects of the Preferred Strategy (including Strategic Policies).

Method

An appraisal matrix is presented in the following section under each of the 15 ISA Topics. The performance of the RLDP Preferred Strategy and Strategic Policies is scored accordingly, with a narrative provided in the appraisal commentary column. Proposed mitigation and/ or enhancement measures are also provided at the end of each appraisal table.

The scoring system used in the appraisal and guidance on determining significant effects is summarised in Table D-1 below. Specific definitions have also been developed for what constitutes a significant effect, a minor effect or a neutral effect for each of the 15 ISA objectives; these can be found in Appendix A of this report.

Table D-1 - ISA key and summary guide for the assessment of significance

Symbol	Score	Description
++	Significant positive effect	The proposed option/policy contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective.
+	Minor positive effect	The proposed option/policy contributes to the achievement of the objective but not significantly.
0	Neutral/no effect	The proposed option/policy does not have any effect on the achievement of the objective
-	Minor negative effect	The proposed option/policy detracts from the achievement of the objective but not significantly.
--	Significant negative effect	The proposed option/policy detracts significantly from the achievement of the objective.
?	Uncertain effect	The proposed option/policy has an uncertain relationship to the objective or the relationship is dependent on the way in which the aspect is managed. In addition, insufficient information may be available to enable an appraisal to be made.

~	No Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the proposed option/policy and the achievement of the objective or the relationship is negligible.
---	-----------------	---



ISA of the Preferred Strategy (including Strategic Policies)

ISA Topic: Population & Communities

ISA Objective 1: To provide good quality homes and community infrastructure to meet identified needs

Will the policy or proposal:

- Meet the identified housing needs, including affordable and specialist requirements?
- Ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of all sectors of the community?
- Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?
- Promote the development of a range of high quality, accessible community facilities, including specialist services?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A Wales of cohesive communities; A healthier Wales; A more equal Wales

Table D-2 – ISA Topic Population & Communities

Score	++/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>Strategic Policies SP1, SP4, SP6 and SP7 set out the levels of growth to be delivered, making provision for sustainable levels of growth in the period 2022-2037 to support the projected increase in housing and employment levels within the County. Strategic Policy SP3 outlines the distribution of housing and employment according to the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy and tiers of settlement as defined by SP2. The Preferred Strategy directs the majority of housing and employment growth (55%) to the Regional Growth Area Clusters, with lower levels of growth (25%) planned for Local Cluster settlements. Development in the rural area or non-cluster settlements will be delivered to meet identified needs to support those communities. Similarly, SP7 directs employment growth towards commercial market areas in accordance with the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy directs growth to where it is needed most, in the larger settlements, and also allows for the needs of rural communities to also be met. This will</p>

	<p>have a significant long-term positive effect on this ISA objective through the delivery of housing, including affordable housing, and associated community infrastructure.</p> <p>The RLDP includes policies (Strategic Policy SP5) that seek to optimise the delivery of new affordable dwellings and support the development of specialist needs accommodation. All residential schemes will follow placemaking principles to provide a suitable mix of housing tenures, types, sizes, and suitable design. Furthermore, Strategic Policy SP6 will make provision for 12 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the Welshpool area, determined by a 2021 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.</p> <p>All proposals will need to comply with National Policy, particularly TAN 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities, and TAN 23: Economic Development and other policies contained in the RLDP.</p> <p>Overall, it is predicted that the Preferred Strategy will have a significant long-term positive effect on this ISA objective. It seeks to meet identified needs (including affordable homes) and deliver a suitable a mix of homes in accessible locations to meet a range of different needs.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Adherence to strategic policies outlined in the RLDP will help facilitate sustainable levels of growth within the County.</p>
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could affect the delivery of new homes.</p>



ISA Topic: Economy & Employment

ISA Objective 2: To create and support a strong, diverse and resilient economy and workforce

Will the policy or proposal:

- Provide sufficient land for businesses to grow?
- Support the creation of accessible new jobs and training opportunities?
- Ensure the capacity of educational facilities keep pace with population growth?
- Enhance the vitality and resilience of communities?
- Safeguard existing employment areas?
- Create opportunities for and promote sustainable tourism, sensitively capitalising on environmental, cultural, heritage and leisure assets?
- Create opportunities for enhancements to the rural economy and rural diversification (including agriculture, forestry, small and medium sized employers (SMEs), micro businesses and the development of digital connectivity)?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A prosperous Wales; A resilient Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities

Table D-3 – ISA Topic Economy & Employment

Score	++/?
Appraisal commentary	Strategic Policy SP7 outlines the requirement to meet employment needs over the RLDP period 2022-2037, identifying 40 hectares of employment land for B1, B2 and B8 employment uses, in accordance with the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy. The requirement is derived from an Employment Needs Assessment undertaken in 2024 to gauge the supply and demand for employment land within Powys, providing sufficient land for businesses to grow and supporting the creation of jobs and training opportunities. SP7 adequately supports the creation of accessible new jobs and training opportunities, and creates opportunities for enhancements to the economy.

	<p>Future Wales recognises the need for healthy and vibrant town centres to reflect their multi-functional nature, from retail and leisure to education and offices, which is addressed by SP9, which acts to support the County’s existing town centres through the protection and encouragement of retail provision in tier 1 and tier 2 settlements.</p> <p>Furthermore, Strategic Policy SP10 supports development proposals for sustainable tourism, highlighting the requirement for development proposals to not have any type of unacceptable adverse impact on existing tourism or the Powys landscape, which aligns with the sustainable tourism guide question outlined under ISA objective 2.</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP8 incorporates findings from a Retail Needs Assessment carried out in 2024, which identified that there is no requirement to allocate new sites for retail development, and instead, vacant floorspace should be brought back into retail use. This is likely to have a minor positive impact on businesses, local employment and the local economy as it provides opportunities to meet the retail needs of Powys by returning vacant floorspace into use, which should encourage economic and employment growth.</p> <p>Considering the above, it is predicted that the Preferred Strategy would have a significant long-term positive effect on this ISA objective through encouraging investment in businesses, people, and infrastructure within Powys.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Adherence to RLDP policies would facilitate economic and employment growth within Powys.</p>
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could affect the delivery of employment growth and re-use of vacant retail floorspace.</p>



ISA Topic: Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

ISA Objective 3: To reduce poverty and inequality; tackle social exclusion and promote community cohesion

Will the policy or proposal:

- Assist with providing employment and training opportunities for those most in need?
- Help to tackle poverty and inequality to support well-being?
- Address directly and indirectly areas suffering deprivation and/or decline?
- Help to provide better education opportunities and attainment?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A healthier Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities

Table D-4 – ISA Topic Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>The RLDP sets out Powys Council's strategic policies and proposals for the development and use of land within Powys for the period 2022 - 2037. The RLDP is expected to support the aims of the Powys Corporate and Strategic Equality Plan 2023-2027; which seeks to create a stronger, fairer, and greener county that aims to make people's lives better, both as individuals and as communities.</p> <p>The RLDP is designed to be in the public interest, offering a variety of benefits to the people, businesses, and organisations with interest in Powys. The Preferred Strategy proposes the delivery of new homes, employment opportunities and associated community infrastructure. The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, with a greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside.</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP5 seeks to optimise the delivery of new affordable dwellings and support the development of specialist needs accommodation. All residential schemes will follow placemaking principles to provide a suitable mix of housing tenures, types, sizes,</p>

	<p>and suitable design. Furthermore, Strategic Policy SP6 will make provision for 12 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the Welshpool area, determined by a 2021 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.</p> <p>Strategic policies outlined with the RLDP seek to reduce health inequalities and improve social cohesion by ensuring development proposals are as inclusive as possible and adaptable to a range of needs (SP17). Any development proposal that results in the unjustified loss of community, leisure, or recreation facilities will not be permitted.</p> <p>Other strategic policies that could impact equality, diversity and inclusion include Strategic Policy SP16, which seeks to design and achieve high quality development and public spaces that promote prosperity, health, happiness, and wellbeing.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered unlikely that the scale and distribution of growth proposed through the Preferred Strategy will result in any significant negative effects. The RLDP is not expected to discriminate or differentially impact anyone based on any protected characteristic, and seeks to provide a suitable mix of housing and employment opportunities to meet the diverse needs of Powys' population, offering an overall minor long-term positive impact.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Adherence to RLDP strategic policies that enhance equality, diversity, and inclusion.</p>
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors outside the influence of the RLDP that could affect equality, diversity and inclusion.</p>



ISA Topic: The Welsh Language

ISA Objective 4: To protect, promote and enhance the Welsh language and culture

Will the policy or proposal:

- Affect the number who can speak Welsh and/or opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language daily (both positive and/or adverse effects)?
- Affect the sustainability of Welsh speaking communities (both positive and/or adverse effects)?
- Affect Welsh medium education and Welsh learners of all ages, including adults (both positive and/or adverse effects)?
- Affect services available in Welsh (both positive and/or adverse effects)? (e.g. health and social services, transport, housing, digital, youth, infrastructure, environment, local government etc.)

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language; A Wales of cohesive communities

Table D-5 – ISA Topic The Welsh Language

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>Approximately 16% of the population of Powys speak Welsh and the 2021 Census found that the number of Welsh speakers in Powys had decreased slightly over the ten-year period 2011-2021. Despite this, the number of Welsh speakers is predicted to increase as studies show that a growing number of people are speaking and understanding Welsh within Wales.</p> <p>Nationally, the Welsh Government has created the ‘Welsh Language Strategy – Cymraeg 2050’, which aims to increase the number of Welsh speakers and use of Welsh across the country. Additionally, TAN20 stipulates that applications for large developments on windfall sites in Welsh language strongholds must be subject to a Welsh Language Impact Assessment.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy seeks to deliver new homes and employment opportunities appropriately and proportionately within Welsh language strongholds in the north and</p>

	<p>south-west of Powys. The development will also seek to support the Welsh language within rural areas of Powys by allowing development to meet needs and through the provision of affordable housing. This will allow local people to remain in their communities, where the Welsh language is an integral part of the social fabric. Depending on the scale of growth, this could also help to deliver new or enhanced bilingual community facilities or services in areas of higher density linguistic significance.</p> <p>Furthermore, Strategic Policy SP23 within the RLDP details that all development proposals must safeguard and promote the Welsh language and culture across Powys. Any proposal that may have a negative impact on the Welsh language and culture will not be permitted unless suitable mitigations are put in place. This will support the National Well-being goal: A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.</p> <p>Overall, it is anticipated that the RLDP will likely have a minor positive impact on the Welsh Language in the long-term.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Adherence to policies that ensure the Welsh language is a material consideration in planning applications. Additional mitigation measures could be implemented, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promotion of local distinctiveness through requirement of Welsh language signage. ■ Encouragement of assimilation of new occupants through phased development of homes. ■ Provision of affordable housing for local need to help retain local people. ■ Safeguarding of local facilities in Welsh language strongholds to encourage local focal points and meeting places where Welsh language can be heard. ■ Encouragement of use of Welsh Language in tourism marketing material. ■ Gathering of information of occupants of new developments to monitor the impact of new development on the Welsh language.
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could affect the Welsh language outside the influence of the RLDP.</p>



ISA Topic: Health & Well-Being

ISA Objective 5: To improve the health and well-being of all sectors of society

Will the policy or proposal:

- Contribute towards an improvement in access to health and social care services especially in isolated/rural areas?
- Contribute towards a reduction in health inequalities amongst different groups in the community including specifically children and older people?
- Contribute towards healthy lifestyles and promote well-being including walking and cycling?
- Contribute towards improving access to natural green space, wildlife, open space including opportunities for play, leisure and recreation?
- Contribute towards an increase in green infrastructure?
- Ensure new development is designed to reduce crime and the fear of crime?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A prosperous Wales; A resilient Wales; A healthier Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities

Table D-6 – ISA Topic Health and Well-Being

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>The life expectancy at birth for Powys’ men and women is one of the highest across the entirety of Wales, alongside high levels of healthy life expectancy. However, in areas of deprivation, women and males are estimated to live 5.6 years and 6.5 years less than their less-deprived counterparts. Additionally, Powys suffers from a range of mental health disorders across all age ranges.</p> <p>The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, informed by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, identified Regional Growth Area Clusters, Local Clusters and Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed</p>

	<p>towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside. The majority of growth is being directed to higher order settlements, where there is better accessibility to existing health facilities. Furthermore, the delivery of new homes and employment provides an opportunity to deliver new health facilities as well as multi-functional green infrastructure and open space for recreation. However, this will be dependent on a number of factors including the scale of growth being delivered at each settlement.</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP17 encourages the creation of healthy places and aims to facilitate access to healthy food choices and protect and support the creation of new community and healthcare facilities, that will benefit both the physical and mental health of the Powys population. SP17 stipulates that development proposals should be designed to facilitate accessible healthy environments, considering the concept of “living locally”, and making facilities as inclusive as possible. Furthermore, any development proposal that results in unjustified loss of community, leisure, and recreation facilities will not be approved.</p> <p>SP24 acts to protect social and community facilities by maintaining and improving the quality of life for all residents, and prevents the total loss or closure of any social and community facility without appropriate justification. However, at a strategic level, there is no mention of reducing crime through appropriate measures, which should be a consideration in the design of the development. However, this is likely to be addressed through development management policies in the Deposit Plan.</p> <p>Access to green infrastructure is stipulated under SP20, whereby developments must maximise the amount of green infrastructure on site and improve interconnectedness of green infrastructure assets around the site.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy is predicted to increase access to healthy environments, healthy food, and social care services across Powys, which will be particularly beneficial to those living in isolated/ rural areas. As a result, a minor long-term positive effect is predicted with an element of uncertainty.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>RLDP policies relating to design should include reference to community safety and crime prevention in line with TAN 12 (Design).</p>



Assumptions & Uncertainties

There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could affect health and well-being that are outside the influence of the RLDP.



ISA Topic: Land Use, Soils & Geology

ISA Objective 6: To make the best use of previously developed land and existing buildings and protect higher grade agricultural land

Will the policy or proposal:

- Create opportunities to develop previously developed land where this will have no adverse impacts on Open Mosaic Habitats?
- Protect the Best and Most Versatile land from development?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A healthier Wales

Table D-7 – ISA Topic Land Use, Soils & Geology

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>Despite Powys having a high percentage of land considered very poor agricultural quality (95% is Grade 4 or 5 according to the Agricultural Land Classification System of England and Wales), agriculture is an important part of Powys’ economy, culture, and landscape. The soil is better suited to grazing livestock than growing crops, and is therefore an important resource within Powys. The County also benefits from considerable geological resources, with 101 Regionally Important Geodiversity Sites (RIGS) and 55 Geological Conservation Review Sites (GCRs), together with many designated SSSIs.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy policies (SP2, SP3 and SP7) focus the majority of growth towards the larger settlements in the Regional Growth Area Clusters and Local Clusters where there is more availability of brownfield land. This will therefore help to encourage the update of previously developed land; however, this is uncertain at this stage as the precise location of development is not known.</p> <p>Policy SP19 requires that development proposals must protect and enhance the natural environment, preventing development which will have an adverse impact on the quality of the area’s natural resources, which includes the soil and peat resources. Policy SP22</p>

	<p>also protects and safeguards the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, and 3a).</p> <p>Overall, the plan encourages development on brownfield land, protects higher quality agricultural land and seeks to protect important geological sites. As a result, it is considered likely that the Preferred Strategy will have minor long-term positive effect on this ISA objective.</p>
Mitigation	Adherence to RLDP policies will ensure the protection of Powys' important soil resources and ensure the appropriate type of land is used for development, avoiding areas of high agricultural quality.
Assumptions & Uncertainties	There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that the precise location of development is not known at this stage. There are also numerous other factors that could affect the quality of soil that are outside the influence of the RLDP.



ISA Topic: Water

ISA Objective 7: To conserve, protect and enhance water quality and water resources

Will the policy or proposal:

- Reduce water consumption?
- Ensure an adequate supply of water can be provided considering current and future projections of water availability and water use?
- Be delivered without causing deterioration in water quality in rivers and streams?
- Lead to an improvement in water quality in the SAC river catchments?
- Reduce the potential for agricultural practices to contribute towards nutrient-based pollution of waterbodies and courses?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A healthier Wales

Table D-8 – ISA Topic Water

Score	0/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, informed by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, identified Regional Growth Area Clusters, Local Clusters and Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside.</p> <p>New development in Powys is likely to place additional pressure on the local water environment through demand for increased water resources and impacts on water quality during construction and operation. However, given the small scale of growth proposed in the Preferred Strategy above existing commitments and windfall sites, it is unlikely to significantly impact water supply and water quality. Strategic Policy SP12 provides mitigation measures as it outlines the need to incorporate water efficiency measures and minimise any adverse impacts on water resources and quality.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, alignment of policies within the Western Wales District River Basin Management Plan (2015) will ensure that planning applications adhere to policies designed to conserve and enhance water quality. Within the RLDP, SP19 requires that all development proposals must protect and enhance the natural environment and proposals that have a negative impact upon designated land or the quality of natural resources such as water, it will be rejected.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that the Preferred Strategy will have a neutral effect against this ISA objective, it is unlikely to improve or adversely effect the water environment.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Adherence to policies designed to conserve and protect waterbodies.</p>
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could affect water resources and quality that are outside the influence of the RLDP.</p>



SEA Topic: Air

ISA Objective 8: To minimise or reduce the sources and effects of air pollution

Will the policy or proposal:

- Reduce the need to travel?
- Encourage journeys to be made by sustainable means (active travel or public transport)?
- Avoid any adverse effects on air quality and for people exposed to poor air quality?
- Improve air quality in areas identified as of concern?
- Promote and facilitate the use of electric vehicles?
- Promote and facilitate enhancements to green infrastructure networks to facilitate increased absorption and dissipation of NOx and other pollutants?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A healthier Wales; A more equal Wales; A globally responsible Wales

Table D-9 – ISA Topic Air

Score	0/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>In terms of the scale of growth, the Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policies SP1 and SP2) makes provision for 4,810 homes during the plan period (2022-2037). This is predominantly comprised of completions (603 dwellings), commitments (1,410 dwellings) and windfall sites (1,454 dwellings). It will therefore need to identify and allocate new sites to deliver 1,343 dwellings over the 15-year plan period.</p> <p>The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, informed by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, identified Regional Growth Area Clusters, Local Clusters and Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside.</p>

	<p>Development in Powys may lead to a slight decrease in air quality due to energy-intensive construction and an increase in traffic, congestion, and emissions. At present, vehicle emissions are the main cause of air pollution in Powys. However, across Wales, agricultural ammonia emissions are increasing which have an impact on sensitive ecosystems. A 2022 Powys County Council study¹ on air quality concluded that Powys is currently below NO₂ concentration objectives (noting that PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} are not monitored by Powys County Council). Given that there are currently no air quality issues and the small scale of development proposed (1,343 dwellings over the plan period over and above existing commitments and windfall), it is unlikely to have a significant negative impact on air quality in Powys.</p> <p>Alongside national and locally policy, strategic policies within the RLDP (SP19) outline that all development proposals must protect and enhance the natural environment and will not be permitted if they have an adverse impact on air quality in the area. Additionally, Policy SP13 encourages the use of sustainable travel, aiming to reduce the reliance on private vehicles and increasing the number of electric vehicle charging points, helping to reduce transport related airborne pollution.</p> <p>Overall, taking the above policy and mitigation into account, it is considered unlikely that the scale and distribution of growth proposed through the Preferred Strategy would result in a negative effect on air quality within Powys. Similarly, it is considered unlikely that the Preferred Strategy would result in positive effects on air quality despite the ambition to increase sustainable travel, reduce travel times, and promote the use of electric vehicles.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Adherence to policies designed to minimise/decrease air pollution. Encouraging the use of electric vehicles, public transport, and car sharing.</p>

¹ Powys County Council Air Quality Progress Report 2023, page 16. Available at: <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/7201/Air-Quality>. [Accessed 02/07/2024]



Assumptions & Uncertainties

There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could impact air quality that are outside the influence of the RLDP. This includes uncertainty in terms of the uptake of sustainable transport modes and active travel.



ISA Topic: Waste & Resource Use

ISA Objective 9: To minimise waste generation, encourage re-use and recycling and promote efficient use of mineral resources

Will the policy or proposal:

- Promote the remediation of contaminated land and prevention of further contamination?
- Create opportunities to increase the proportion of waste recycling and re-use?
- Promote opportunities to use recycled and secondary materials in construction?
- Promote the use of locally sourced sustainable materials?
- Safeguard mineral resources?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A healthier Wales; A globally responsible Wales

Table D-10 – ISA Topic Waste & Resource Use

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>In terms of the scale of growth, the Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policies SP1 and SP2) makes provision for 4,810 homes during the plan period (2022-2037). This is predominantly comprised of completions (603 dwellings), commitments (1,410 dwellings) and windfall sites (1,454 dwellings). It will therefore need to identify and allocate new sites to deliver 1,343 dwellings over the 15-year plan period.</p> <p>The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, informed by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, identified Regional Growth Area Clusters, Local Clusters and Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside.</p> <p>Development in Powys may lead to an increase in waste, putting pressure on existing waste facilities in Powys, although it is not expected to impact trends in waste production</p>

	<p>and recycling rates. Powys County Council have a ‘Towards Zero Waste’ strategy which aims to prevent growth of residual waste by increasing rates of recycling and composting, and encouraging waste prevention initiatives. Adherence to these policies by the RLDP will ensure less waste is generated within Powys.</p> <p>Strategic policies outlined within the Preferred Strategy, namely SP26 and SP27, aim to facilitate the sustainable management of mineral resources and waste. SP26 aims to provide a continuous supply of minerals for local and regional need, whilst safeguarding known/potential land from permanent development that would unnecessarily sterilise the land or hinder future extraction. The policy also encourages the use of secondary and recycled aggregates as an alternative to primary land won resources.</p> <p>SP27 focuses on the sustainable management of waste, ensuring that proposals conform to waste hierarchy and waste production is minimised where possible. Additionally, SP27 supports an integrated and adequate network of waste facilities on appropriate land. Overall, the policy aims to increase the proportion of recycling and re-use of materials, safeguard mineral resources, and promote the use of sustainable resources.</p> <p>Due to the mining and agricultural history of Powys, it contains many long-term contaminated sites. While contaminated land is not referenced in the strategic policies it is understood that this will be addressed through a development management policy in the Deposit Plan.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered likely that the Preferred Strategy will have a long-term minor positive effect on waste and resource use.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Waste issues can be addressed by adherence to policies promoting efficient resource use, such as sourcing sustainable materials, using local materials, and increasing the rate of recycling and re-use.</p>
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could affect waste and resource use outside the influence of the RLDP.</p>



ISA Topic: Climate Change (Adaptation)

ISA Objective 10: To support the resilience of Powys to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding and other extreme events

Will the policy or proposal:

- Avoid development in areas at risk of flooding, taking into account the likely future effects of climate change?
- Increase resilience of the built and natural environment to the effects of climate change?
- Ensure that the potential risks associated with climate change are considered in new developments?
- Improve and extend green infrastructure networks to support climate change adaptation?
- Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing surface water runoff?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities; A globally responsible Wales

Table D-11 – ISA Topic Climate Change (Adaptation)

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>It is projected that the climate of Powys will continue to change; experiencing hotter and drier summers, warmer and wetter winters, and more extreme weather events.</p> <p>SP12 outlines a number of requirements for development proposals to help adapt to the effects of climate change; from taking a risk-based approach to flooding and incorporating nature-based solutions, to incorporating water efficiency measures and green infrastructure solutions. Flood risks are further detailed in SP15, where development is required to be directed away from flood risk areas and must not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. This is expected to have a positive impact on developments within Powys, bolstering their resilience against climate change.</p> <p>Overall, the RLDP can act to support the resilience of Powys against climate change and ensure that any new development responds to the objectives of the Mid Wales Area Statement.</p>



Mitigation	Adherence to policies that promote adaptability against extreme weather events (such as flooding) caused by climate change.
Assumptions & Uncertainties	There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are many uncertainties with regard to the scale and timing of climate change impacts.



ISA Topic: Climate Change (Mitigation)

ISA Objective 11: To reduce the contribution to climate change from greenhouse gas emissions

Will the policy or proposal:

- Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?
- Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable sources?
- Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?
- Reduce the need to travel or the number of journeys made?
- Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?
- Ensure that development does not contribute towards further increases in high energy use and unsustainable travel?
- Improve the provision of nature-based solutions to adapt and mitigate climate change?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities; A globally responsible Wales

Table D-12 – ISA Topic Climate Change (Mitigation)

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	<p>In terms of the scale of growth, the Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policies SP1 and SP2) makes provision for 4,810 homes during the plan period (2022-2037). This is predominantly comprised of completions (603 dwellings), commitments (1,410 dwellings) and windfall sites (1,454 dwellings). It will therefore need to identify and allocate new sites to deliver 1,343 dwellings over the 15-year plan period.</p> <p>Development proposed through the RLDP will contribute to increase greenhouse gas emissions. However, there are opportunities to reduce/ limit greenhouse gas emissions and encourage energy efficient and sustainable design. Alongside national policy on climate change, progressive Building Regulations will help ensure that new development is designed to mitigate the effects of climate change where possible.</p>

	<p>The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, informed by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, identified Regional Growth Area Clusters, Local Clusters and Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside. The distribution of development seeks to create “walkable” towns whereby essential services and facilities are in walking distance of homes, this will help facilitate a reduction in the use of private vehicles, encourage active transport and public transport use which will reduce vehicle emissions.</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP12 outlines a number of requirements for development proposals to help mitigate the effects of climate change. The RLDP will ensure that developments contribute to decarbonisation, follow the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy, include sustainable building design principles, and promote the principles of a circular economy. Additionally, major developments will be required to be accompanied by Energy Reports, and where existing buildings are demolished instead of reused, Whole Life Carbon Assessments will be required.</p> <p>Furthermore, SP13 and SP14 outline the need for sustainable transport within Powys, highlighting the need for settlements in Regional Growth Area Clusters and Local Clusters to be designed and located in ways that minimise the need for travel and enable sustainable access to employment and services. Development must be supported by appropriate transport measures and infrastructure to facilitate this.</p> <p>Overall, taking the above policy and mitigation into account, it is anticipated that Preferred Strategy will have a long-term minor positive effect, as development is being directed to higher order settlements improving opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes and active travel. Ultimately, climate change mitigation is a global issue and the RLDP is unlikely to have significant effects.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Adherence to strategic policies outlined in the RLDP that focus on climate change mitigation.</p>



Assumptions & Uncertainties	There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that climate change mitigation is a global issue.
--	---



ISA Topic: Transport & Movement

ISA Objective 12: To promote sustainable transport use and reduce the need to travel

Will the policy or proposal:

- Reduce the need to travel through sustainable patterns of land use and development?
- Encourage modal shift to more sustainable forms of travel?
- Enable transport infrastructure improvements?
- Support the uptake of low carbon transport?
- Contribute towards the electric vehicle (EV) charging network?
- Facilitate working from home and remote working?
- Provide improvements to and/or reduce congestion on the existing highway network?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities; A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language; A globally responsible Wales

Table D-13 – ISA Topic Transport & Movement

Score	+/?
Appraisal commentary	The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, informed by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, identified Regional Growth Area Clusters, Local Clusters and Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside.

	<p>The 2021 Census² highlighted that the residents of Powys had a higher average travel distance than the England and Wales average, likely due to the rural and dispersed nature of the County.</p> <p>In 2021, Powys County Council successfully bid for £27m in funds to promote active travel, improve Public Rights of Way, and complete extensive highway resurfacing across Powys. The RLDP incorporates these existing goals, alongside ensuring that the new development is in a suitable location to reduce the need to travel and enable a choice of sustainable travel options, which provides several benefits to the local community.</p> <p>Strategic policies SP13 and SP14 respond to the need for sustainable transport within Powys, taking into consideration the rural nature of the plan area, and recognising challenges of the application of the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy to some development proposals.</p> <p>SP13 aims to improve local transport in Regional Growth Area Clusters and Local Cluster Settlements by providing appropriate transport measures and infrastructure according to the Welsh Governments’ Sustainable Transport Hierarchy for Planning. The distribution of development seeks to create “walkable” towns whereby essential services and facilities are in walking distance of homes, this will help facilitate a reduction in the use of private vehicles, encourage active transport and public transport use which will reduce vehicle emissions.</p> <p>SP14 focuses on sustainable transport in Non-Cluster/Rural Settlements and Open Countryside. Furthermore, it stipulates that where access to public transport is limited, appropriate transport measures and infrastructure will be required in-line with the Welsh Government Sustainable Transport Hierarchy.</p>
--	--

²ONS (2022) ‘Census 2021’. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS058/editions/2021/versions/1> [Accessed 02/07/2024]

	Overall, Strategic Policies within the RLDP have been designed to improve Powys' transport infrastructure and improve connectivity to other parts of Wales. Considering the above policy and mitigation, the Preferred Strategy is likely to have a minor long-term positive effect as it seeks to reduce the need to travel and encourages the use of sustainable transport.
Mitigation	Adherence to RLDP policies that promote sustainable travel and reduce average travel times to work.
Assumptions & Uncertainties	There is an element of uncertainty given the strategic nature of the RLDP and that there are numerous factors that could affect traffic and transport outside the influence of the RLDP. The extent of the uptake of sustainable transport is uncertain due to the unknown requirements/ needs of the local community. Additionally, due to the rural dispersed population of Powys, the ability to reduce reliance on the private vehicle is uncertain.



ISA Topic: Historic Environment

ISA Objective 13: To preserve and enhance the Powys’ heritage resource, including built and archaeological assets

Will the policy or proposal:

- Conserve and enhance the significance of buildings and structures of architectural, historic and cultural interest, both designated and non-designated, and their setting?
- Ensure that Welsh place names are recognised as integral features of the cultural and historic landscape of Wales?
- Conserve and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of Conservation Areas and their settings?
- Conserve and enhance archaeological remains, and archaeologically sensitive areas?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A resilient Wales; A more equal Wales; A Wales of cohesive communities; A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language

Table D-14 – ISA Topic Historic Environment

Score	?
Appraisal commentary	<p>Powys contains 13% of Wales’ Listed Buildings and 22% of Wales’ Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The majority of these buildings (81.64%) are not considered to be at risk; however, it is important to enhance/ conserve Powys’ historic assets (designated and non-designated) to benefit the local community and promote tourism.</p> <p>While the RLDP does not propose a significant level of growth, there is still the potential for new homes and employment to have a significant effect on the historic environment via erosion of character of historic settlements. Strategic Policy SP2 provides mitigation by ensuring that new development is shaped by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy and the identified Regional Growth Clusters, Local Clusters, and Rural Area / Non-Cluster Settlements, reflecting the role and function of places. Additionally, SP21 ensures that new developments respect the local identity, heritage and distinctiveness of Powys, and development must protect, conserve, and enhance historic assets and their settings, and is designed in line with Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment. Similarly, SP16 has been designed to ensure new developments comply</p>

	<p>with the local distinctiveness, character, and cultural identity of existing developments within Powys, enforcing good-quality design.</p> <p>Adherence of new developments to policies outlined within the RLDP will protect heritage assets and act to conserve and enhance historic character within Powys. It can therefore be anticipated that the preferred strategy will provide several long-term benefits in the context of preserving historic assets, and the local identity, heritage, and distinctiveness of Powys. However, ultimately the nature and significance of effects will depend on the precise scale and location of development as well as implementation at the project level. The requirement for the delivery of an overall net benefit for the historic environment could result in a long-term positive effect; however, this is uncertain at this stage and dependent on implementation at the project level.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>The protection of heritage assets and conservation and enhancement of historic character will be ensured via implementation of policies stated within the RLDP. The RLDP will also ensure that new developments follow good quality design and reflect local distinctiveness.</p>
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>The nature and significance of effects will depend on the precise scale, location and design of development, which is not known at this stage, as well as implementation at the project level.</p>



ISA Topic: Biodiversity, Green Infrastructure & Geodiversity

ISA Objective 14: To conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity and promote improvements to the multifunctional green infrastructure network

Will the policy or proposal:

- Minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net benefits where possible?
- Protect and enhance ecological networks, including those that cross administrative boundaries?
- Protect geologically valuable sites, including their setting?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A Resilient Wales; A Healthier Wales; A Globally Responsible Wales

Table D-15 – ISA Topic Biodiversity, Green Infrastructure & Geodiversity

Score	?
Appraisal commentary	<p>In terms of the scale of growth, the Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policies SP1 and SP2) makes provision for 4,810 homes during the plan period (2022-2037). This is predominantly comprised of completions (603 dwellings), commitments (1,410 dwellings) and windfall sites (1,454 dwellings). It will therefore need to identify and allocate new sites to deliver 1,343 dwellings over the 15-year plan period.</p> <p>The Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policies SP1 and SP7) also makes provision for 40 hectares of land for Class B employment and economic development uses. This will be delivered through 8.16 hectares in the committed supply and 32 hectares of new employment sites across the following commercial market areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A483 Spine North – 14.84 hectares; • Border Areas – 6.23 hectares; • Central Powys – 6.72 hectares; • Rural West – 5.45 hectares; • South of BBNP – 6.28 hectares; and

- Other – 0.64 hectares.

Additionally, the Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policy SP6) makes provision for 12 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the Welshpool area.

The broad distribution of growth is set out in Strategic Policies SP2 and SP3, informed by the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy, identified Regional Growth Area Clusters, Local Clusters and Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside.

The scale and distribution of growth proposed through the Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policies SP1, SP2, SP6 and SP7), could have significant effects on the designated (including National Sites Network Sites and SSSIs) and non-designated sites within and surrounding settlements, particularly those designated and non-designated sites, habitats, and species within the Regional and Local Growth Cluster areas.

Strategic Policy SP18 seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity, requirement development proposals to demonstrate how they protect, positively manage and enhance biodiversity, including the restoration of ecosystems and improving the resilience of biodiversity through enhanced connectivity. It requires development to demonstrate an overall net benefit for biodiversity, incorporate green infrastructure and nature-based solutions. It also requires development to be directed away from areas of high ecological value and protect the integrity of statutory and non-statutory designate sites as well as UK/ European protected species and habitats. Further to this, Strategic Policy SP19 requires development proposals to protect and enhance the natural environment and will not permit development where there will be an unacceptable adverse impact upon the plan area’s biodiversity and habitats.

Other Strategic Policies that could have an impact on biodiversity include SP25, which encourages proposals for renewable and low carbon development in suitable locations. However, significant effects are considered unlikely given the policy mitigation outlined above, including the requirement in SP25 that proposals demonstrate that there will be no

	<p>unacceptable impacts on international and statutory designated sites for nature conservation, protected habitats and species.</p> <p>Taking the above policy and mitigation into account, it is considered unlikely that the scale and distribution of growth proposed through the Preferred Strategy would result in a significant negative effect. However, ultimately the nature and significance of effects will depend on the precise scale and location of development as well as implementation at the project level. The requirement for the delivery of an overall net benefit for biodiversity could result in a long-term positive effect; however, this is uncertain at this stage and dependent on implementation at the project level.</p>
Mitigation	The protection and enhancement of biodiversity, green Infrastructure & geodiversity will be ensured via implementation of policies stated within the RLDP.
Assumptions & Uncertainties	The nature and significance of effects will depend on the precise scale, location and design of development, which is not known at this stage, as well as implementation at the project level.



ISA Topic: Landscape & Townscape

ISA Objective 15: To protect the quality and diversity of designated and local landscapes and townscapes

Will the policy or proposal:

- Ensure that Powys' valued landscapes and townscapes are conserved and enhanced?
- Ensure that Welsh place names are recognised as integral features of the cultural and historic landscape of Wales?
- Ensure that design quality is considered as part of all development activity?

Supporting National Well-Being Goals: A Prosperous Wales; A Resilient Wales; A Healthier Wales; A More Equal Wales; A Wales of Cohesive Communities; A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language; A Globally Responsible Wales

Table D-16 – ISA Topic Landscape & Townscape

Score	?
Appraisal commentary	<p>Powys is home to high-quality landscapes that are highly valued by local residents and tourists. Powys currently has no UK-recognised landscape designations, despite LANDMAP and Registers of Outstanding and Special Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales recognising that Powys has specific areas of interest at a Welsh level.</p> <p>In terms of the scale of growth, the Preferred Strategy (Strategic Policies SP1 and SP2) makes provision for 4,810 homes during the plan period (2022-2037). This is predominantly comprised of completions (603 dwellings), commitments (1,410 dwellings) and windfall sites (1,454 dwellings). It will therefore need to identify and allocate new sites to deliver 1,343 dwellings over the 15-year plan period. A greater proportion of the growth is being directed towards the Regional Growth Area Cluster Settlements (at least 55%) and Local Cluster Settlements (approximately 25%), with smaller scale development directed towards the Rural Area/ Non-Cluster Settlements and open countryside.</p> <p>Development will likely be placed in an area considered of high or outstanding value, given that 97% of land in Powys falls within those categories, which may put pressure on the landscape of Powys. However, given the small scale of development, and the fact that there are no UK-recognised landscape designations where growth is being directed, it is</p>

	<p>unlikely to have any significant negative impacts on the landscape and townscape of Powys.</p> <p>Maintaining the landscape of Powys and protecting its most important assets, such as Dark Skies, National Parks, and designated sites, is a material consideration irrespective of whether a development plan is put in place. However, the RLDP could continue to protect the natural beauty and natural resources of Powys under various strategic policies.</p> <p>Strategic Policy SP19 seeks to enhance and protect the natural environment, and will not permit any development proposals that will have an unacceptable adverse impact on designated land, the character and quality of the Powys landscape, biodiversity and habitats, and the quality of the area’s natural resources.</p> <p>Taking the above policy and mitigation into account, it is considered unlikely that the scale and distribution of growth proposed through the Preferred Strategy would result in a significant negative effect. However, ultimately the nature and significance of effects will depend on the precise scale and location of development as well as implementation at the project level. The local landscape will be protected under SP19, and good quality design will be enforced via SP21, which will mitigate any negative impacts from the small-scale development.</p>
<p>Mitigation</p>	<p>Development will adhere to RLDP policies and the Mid Wales Landscape Statement which protect the quality and diversity of the local landscape and townscape within Powys.</p>
<p>Assumptions & Uncertainties</p>	<p>The nature and significance of effects will depend on the precise scale, location and design of development, which is not known at this stage, as well as implementation at the project level.</p>



Kings Orchard
1 Queen Street
Bristol
BS2 0HQ

wsp.com

WSP UK Limited makes no warranties or guarantees, actual or implied, in relation to this report, or the ultimate commercial, technical, economic, or financial effect on the project to which it relates, and bears no responsibility or liability related to its use other than as set out in the contract under which it was supplied.