



Caerphilly County Borough
2nd Replacement Local Development Plan 2020-2035

EB3: Urban Capacity Study

October 2026

Caerphilly County Borough
2nd Replacement
Local Development Plan 2020-2035

EB3 Urban Capacity Study

October 2026

1. Introduction

This paper is one of a series produced as part of the evidence base for the 2nd Replacement Local Development Plan, 2020-2035 (2RLDP). Each topic paper can be read in isolation or together to gain a wider understanding of how the policies and/or allocations in the 2RLDP have been developed to address issues facing Caerphilly County Borough.

This Evidence Base Paper provides the strategic and legislative context for the Urban Capacity Study (UCS) undertaken for Caerphilly County Borough.

The purpose of the study is to identify the development potential of the county borough's most sustainable settlements and to assist in determining an appropriate spatial distribution of growth within the 2RLDP for the plan period 2020- 2035.

2. Background

To establish the amount of housing land needed to accommodate the planned number of dwellings, the various components of housing supply have been assessed, as set out in EB7: Housing Land Supply and Affordable Housing Target. This Paper analyses housing completions, existing land bank commitments, and the anticipated contribution from large and small windfall sites over the plan period. Consideration of each of these supply elements has informed the determination of the 2RLDP overall dwelling requirement.

The Development Plan Manual (DPM) highlights the value of an Urban Capacity Study in understanding the potential contribution of windfall sites, by identifying locations within the existing urban area where such development may reasonably come forward. This assessment is also useful when considering greenfield or edge-of-settlement candidate sites, helping determine whether they are justified in the context of other potentially available land within the settlement boundary.

The Design Commission for Wales provided practical support to the Council, through the Strategic Placemaking Project, to embed placemaking in the 2RLDP. The approach focused on making the most of existing infrastructure and facilities by identifying opportunities for infill, densification and redevelopment within existing settlements.

The identification of sites within this Study does not imply that any future planning application would automatically be supported. Instead, it simply indicates that these locations fall within areas where, in principle, development may be acceptable. The detailed suitability of any site can only be determined through the formal planning application process, taking full account of all relevant material considerations. Inclusion within the Study does not confer any positive weight in favour of development. Likewise, the absence of a site from this Study does not preclude it from being considered acceptable for windfall development in future.

3. Policy context

Preparation of the 2RLDP and its evidence base is undertaken in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires local development plans to be based on robust evidence and to contribute to sustainable development.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 further requires public bodies to consider long-term outcomes, prevention, integration, collaboration and involvement in decision-making. This Urban Capacity Study directly contributes to these duties by assessing how future growth can support sustainable, resilient and healthier communities.

Future Wales: The National Plan (2040)

Future Wales sets out the national spatial strategy for development across Wales and identifies the regionally significant growth pressures and opportunities. Caerphilly County Borough lies within the Southeast Wales National Growth Area, which is expected to accommodate a substantial proportion of national housing and employment growth.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW)

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets the national sustainable development framework. The key requirements shaping this study include directing growth to sustainable locations with strong accessibility, promoting brownfield development, and supporting the viability of the town centre.

PPW emphasises that “infill and windfall sites can make a useful contribution to the delivery of housing” (Welsh Government, 2021) and states that such proposals should be supported within settlement limits where they align with national sustainable placemaking outcomes. PPW also stresses that planning authorities should set locally determined targets for housing delivery on small sites, to broaden delivery options and support provision by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the custom and self-build sector (Welsh Government, 2021).

Technical Advice Notes (TANs)

Additional National Planning Policy considerations influencing this UCS include:

- TAN2—affordable housing requirements.
- TAN 12—placemaking and design quality.
- TAN 18—transport, parking, accessibility.
- TAN 15 (2023 updated)—flood risk and climate resilience.

These documents guide how constraints, opportunities and placemaking principles must be embedded into the assessment of the capacity of the principal settlements.

4. Windfall Sites

'Windfall' development refers to proposals that may come forward on land within the county borough that is not specifically allocated for a particular use in the adopted Development Plan, but where the proposal nonetheless aligns with the wider policy framework. While it is difficult to predict exactly where windfall housing sites will emerge, projections can be informed by historic trends and past delivery rates.

Large Windfall Sites

Large windfall sites are defined as sites that have a capacity of 10 or more units that have been developed but were not allocated for housing at the time the application was submitted in the Adopted LDP or any previous plans.

As evidenced in EB7: Housing Land Supply and Affordable Housing Target, from analysis of past trends and recognising that during the early years of the plan period, there will be greater development of allocated sites, and more development of windfall sites during the latter years of the plan period, it is considered that a large windfall completion rate of **73 dwellings per annum** is an appropriate assumption for the plan.

To avoid double counting with committed sites, the windfall allowance assumption will only be applied to the remaining years of the plan period following the adoption of the 2RLDP, the first full year of which is likely to be 2029/30. Overall, this would mean a large windfall assumption of **438 dwellings**, to be delivered over the last 6 years of the plan period.

Small Windfall Sites

Small windfall sites are developments of less than 10 dwellings and include individual and small groups of dwellings, self-build dwellings, net gains from conversions of a single dwelling into two or more units and conversions of non-residential buildings such as shops into residential units.

As evidenced in EB7: Housing Land Supply and Affordable Housing Target, for the purposes of the housing land supply calculation, a 20-year average figure of **60 small site completions per annum** will be used, as this period covers a full plan period and includes an economic cycle including the economic boom and recession and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on recent delivery.

To avoid double counting with the units that have already been completed during the first 6 years of the 2RLDP period, up to 2026, the small windfall allowance assumption will only be applied to the remaining 9 years of the plan period. Overall, this would mean a small windfall assumption of **540 dwellings**, to be delivered over the last 9 years of the plan period.

Total Windfall Assumption

The 2RLDP includes a total windfall assumption of 978 dwellings.

5. Methodology

The methodology applied in this UCS is informed by the requirements of the Development Plan Manual (DPM). This provides a robust framework for identifying land within existing settlements that may be capable of accommodating future windfall development.

The Study does not allocate land for development, nor does it make any judgement on the planning acceptability of individual sites. Its purpose is to provide a clear, robust and proportionate evidence base demonstrating the potential scale and broad distribution of theoretical urban capacity that would support the 2RLDP.

The methodology is broken down into four stages:

Stage 1 - Defining the Study Area.

Stage 2 - Identifying Sources of Urban Capacity.

Stage 3 - Surveying Potential Capacity.

Stage 4 - Discounting Unsuitable Opportunities.

Stage 1: Defining the Study Area

The 2RLDP defines a hierarchy of settlements which takes account of sustainability, location and suitability to accommodate growth. The settlement hierarchy is defined as follows:

Tier 1 Settlements - exhibit the highest level of services, facilities and employment opportunities and have the greatest level of sustainable transport.

Tier 2 Settlements - a moderate level of services and facilities and/or significant employment opportunities and which are accessible by sustainable transport.

Tier 3 Settlements - a lower level of services and facilities and less well located in terms of accessibility to the higher-level settlements and rail and bus stations.

Tier 4 Settlements - a low level of services and facilities and are not sustainably located in terms of accessibility to the higher-level settlements and rail and bus stations. These settlements are only suitable for accommodating small-scale infill and logical rounding-off development.

Tier 5 Settlements - all other settlements located outside of defined settlement boundaries.

The Tier 1 Settlements represent the highest-ranking settlements in the Council's Settlement Hierarchy, reflecting their relative accessibility, service provision, commercial functions, and strategic role in supporting wider communities.

Understanding their capacity to accommodate future development is essential to ensuring that the 2RLDP delivers a sustainable, plan-led approach to growth for the period 2020–2035.

The Tier 1 Settlements are:

- Rhymney
- Bargoed and Gilfach
- Ystrad Mynach (including Penallta and Tredomen)
- Nelson
- Blackwood (including Cefn Fforest and Pontllanfraith)
- Newbridge
- Risca and Pontymister
- Caerphilly
- Bedwas and Trethomas.

Bargoed and Gilfach; Ystrad Mynach; Blackwood; Risca and Pontymister and Caerphilly all contain Principal Town Centres. Rhymney; Nelson; Newbridge; and Bedwas and Trethomas contain smaller Local centres.

The UCS focuses on land within the five Tier 1 Settlements containing the largest Principal Town Centres. This ensures that the study focuses on areas crucial to the 2RLDP, in locations where development is already acceptable in principle and where opportunities for intensification, redevelopment, or the reuse of under-utilised land are most likely to occur.

The Principal Settlements to be explored within this study are as follows:

- Bargoed (including Gilfach)
- Ystrad Mynach (including Tredomen and Penallta)
- Blackwood (Including Cefn Fforest and Pontllanfraith)
- Risca and Pontymister
- Caerphilly

Stage 2: Identifying Sources of Urban Capacity

The Study utilises a combination of spatial datasets and planning records to identify potential development opportunities. Key data sources include:

- The Council's GIS layers (e.g., settlement boundaries, land use, constraints);
- Aerial photography;
- Candidate Site data; and
- Planning application histories.

Site visits and a structured desktop assessment were undertaken to identify parcels of land within the study area that may have capacity for windfall development. This assessment considered:

- Empty Homes
- Sub-division of existing homes
- Redevelopment of Car Parks
- Vacant and Derelict Buildings and Land
- Open Space Surplus to Housing Requirements
- Land Previously Allocated for Employment Uses; and,

A visual street survey was conducted for the following category:

- Vacant Units Above Commercial Premises

Stage 3: Surveying Potential Capacity

A full range of potential opportunities has been captured, without pre-empting any future decisions on site specific acceptability. These are detailed within Section 6.

Stage 4: Discounting Unsuitable Opportunities

By completing the above stages, sites with the potential to deliver development have been identified. This represents the ‘unconstrained’ capacity figure—the theoretical maximum number of developments that could be developed. However, this figure does not consider various factors that influence whether a site is realistically likely to come forward. Reporting the unconstrained figure alone would therefore not provide a reliable basis for the Council’s windfall assumptions.

One of the key aims of this assessment phase was to identify any major environmental or sustainability constraints affecting individual sites, using a comprehensive set of GIS criteria. Such constraints may hinder a site’s deliverability or prevent its allocation from contributing positively to sustainable development. In particular, the following criteria were identified:

- Sites within an international or nationally important area for biodiversity;
- Sites that are within a high-risk flood risk area.

A high-level assessment of sites was undertaken against key constraints that would be fundamental considerations at the planning application stage. The way in which each constraint was treated depended on whether mitigation measures could realistically address it in line with national policy.

6. Results

Empty Homes

A certain level of empty homes is necessary for the normal function of any housing market. However, significant numbers of long-term empty properties can represent a valuable source of urban capacity, as recognised within the DPM. Bringing these dwellings into beneficial use can contribute to overall housing supply and can meet housing requirements in much the same way as the construction of new homes. It is acknowledged that most long-term empty properties are privately owned, and their return to use lies largely outside the direct control of the planning system.

Table 1 identifies the number of empty properties within Caerphilly County Borough, and those that have been returned to occupation through direct action by the Council.

Table 1: Empty Homes

Financial Year	Empty Homes 6 month + (Welsh Government definition of long-term empty)	Empty Homes Returned to Occupation (through direct action by the Local Authority)
2021/22	1380	76
2022/23	1314	104
2023/24	1476	105
2024/25	1613	113
2025/26	1629	152

The Council is piloting a dedicated empty homes team underpinned by a new Empty Homes Strategy and Action Plan that will focus on new tools to bring empty homes back into use, to increase the supply of housing and extend choice, improve housing conditions and meet housing need.

As shown in Table 1, an average of 110 homes has been returned to occupation per annum, following direct action by the Local Authority over a five-year period, since formation of the empty homes team. With the Council's ongoing commitment, it is reasonable to expect a similar number to be returned into use over the remainder of the 2RLDP plan period.

It could be argued that all empty homes could come back into occupation over the plan period. However, this fails to consider that other homes may become empty during this time and that there may be underlying issues with these buildings that mean it would not be possible to bring them back into occupation. Therefore, it is considered more realistic to consider the number of homes brought back into use.

It is estimated that this strand of urban capacity could contribute 990 homes over the remaining 9 years of the LDP period.

Sub-division of existing homes

Since the beginning of the plan period in 2020, a total of 9 additional dwellings have been created as the result of the sub-division of existing housing.

Table 2: Sub-division

Monitoring Year	Number of completions for sub-division of existing houses
2021/22	1
2022/23	1
2023/24	1
2024/25	4
2025/26	2

Table 2 identifies an average of less than 2 dwellings per annum for this source of capacity. Whilst there is capacity to surpass these historic trends, it is robust and justifiable to assume that the number of completions from this source of capacity will remain similar over the lifetime of the 2RLDP. It is therefore assumed that a total of 18 dwellings will be created through subdivision of existing dwellings over the remaining 9 years of the plan period.

Redevelopment of car parks

Car parks can occupy significant space within urban areas, with their uses often limited to certain times of the day. This occupation of large areas of urban land and the inherent underutilised nature of such due to opening times, and other factors, means there is significant provision for the conversion of car parks into potential residential development. Car parks also encourage car dependency and discourage active travel opportunities.

The significant provision for the conversion of car parks forms a key part of this UCS and the identification of potential capacity. A thorough assessment of all free and paid car parks within the Study Area Tier 1 Settlements has been undertaken to evaluate their potential for redevelopment and capacity to form part of the windfall allowance for the 2RLDP. A full breakdown of both free and paid car parks can be found in Tables 3 and 4. A total potential dwelling yield is detailed at the bottom of both tables, with a total potential dwelling yield for both free and paid car parks detailed in Table 5.

Table 3: Free Car Parks

Town	Site Name	Town Centre	Potential Dwelling Yield	Constraints
Bargoed	Bristol Terrace	No	1	None
Bargoed	Gateway	Yes	6	None
Bargoed	Hanbury Road	Yes	12	None
Bargoed	Bargoed Station (P&R)	No	8	None
Blackwood	Montclair Avenue	No	2	None
Caerphilly	Caerphilly Station (P&R)	No	11	None
Caerphilly	Energlyn & Churchill Park (P&R)	No	2	None
Caerphilly	White Street	No	3	None
Pontymister	Foundry Road	No	2	None
Pontymister	Herbert Avenue	No	5	None
Pontymister	Mill Street	No	4	None
Risca	Longbridge	No	2	None
Risca	Rifleman Street	No	2	FZ 2/3
Risca	Tredeggar Terrace	No	8	FZ 3
Risca	Raglan Street	No	6	FZ 3
Ystrad Mynach	Ystrad Station (P&R)	No	4	None
Total Potential Dwelling Yield (Minus Constraints)	-	-	62	-

Table 4: Paid Car Parks

Town	Site Name	Town Centre	Potential Dwelling Yield	Constraints
Bargoed	Emporium	Yes	7	None
Bargoed	St Gwladys	Yes	4	None
Caerphilly	Twyn	Yes	7	None
Caerphilly	Crescent Road SS	No	8	None
Caerphilly	Crescent Road LS	No	14	None
Caerphilly	Bedwas Road	No	2	FZ 3

Caerphilly	Bedwas Road (Loading Zone)	No	9	FZ 3
Caerphilly	Station Terrace	No	14	None
Caerphilly	Lawrence Street	No	1	FZ 3
Blackwood	Court House	No	3	SSSI/6 – 2 metre proximity
Blackwood	Thorncombe Road No. 2	No	4	None
Blackwood	Thorncombe Road No. 3	Yes	15	None
Blackwood	Cliff Road	Yes	27	None
Blackwood	Wesley Road	No	5	None
Blackwood	High Street	Yes	24	None
Blackwood	Woodbine Road	Yes	5	None
Blackwood	Bus Station	Yes	5	None
Blackwood	Market Traders	Yes	21	None
Blackwood	Libanus Road (non-residents)	No	1	None
Blackwood	Libanus Road (residents)	No	1	None
Blackwood	Highland Terrace (residents)	Yes	1	None
Blackwood	Gordon Road (residents)	No	4	None
Ystrad Mynach	Oakfield Street	Yes	9	None
Total Potential Dwelling Yield (Minus Constraints)	-	-	176	-

Table 5: Total potential car park dwelling yield

Total Potential Dwelling Yield	238
---------------------------------------	------------

Vacant units above Commercial premises

Vacant spaces above commercial premises provide significant potential to create new homes within existing buildings in principal town centres. These units accord strongly with established placemaking principles due to the nature of their location; within existing buildings and their established relationship with the town centre therein. Providing homes within vacant units can help to increase footfall in principal town centres due to a greater number of individuals residing within them, boosting the local economy and helping to reduce the number of vacant units, which contributes to the town centre's overall character and appeal.

A visual street survey of the Principal Town Centres was conducted in September 2026: Bargoed, Ystrad Mynach, Blackwood, Risca and Pontymister and Caerphilly. The findings of this retail survey and the identified vacant units are detailed in Table 6.

Table 6: Vacant units located within the principal town centres

Principal Town	Vacant Units Identified
Bargoed	8
Ystrad Mynach	4
Blackwood	14
Risca/Pontymister	4
Caerphilly	9
Total	39

Blackwood has been identified as having the greatest capacity to accommodate potential windfall development in the form of vacant units, with Caerphilly and Bargoed also comprising a significant percentage of total units identified. The other surveyed towns possess limited capacity; however, this could change throughout the period of the 2RLDP due to changing retail and economic landscapes. It has been assumed that one residential property can occupy one vacant unit, as such the total potential dwelling yield for this category of the UCS is 39, which has been incorporated into the total potential dwelling yield for all categories within the county borough.

Other sources of capacity

Vacant and Derelict Buildings and Land

Aerial photography and local knowledge were used heavily to identify potential capacity on vacant and derelict buildings and land within settlements.

The derelict buildings that are located within town centres were assessed based on whether the existing use could remain the same or be reallocated to another use that would benefit the area the most.

This source of urban capacity generally aligns with common definitions of 'brownfield land'. It encompasses a wide range of sites, including underused or derelict employment land, petrol stations, vacant or derelict buildings, and unused community facilities. These sites vary significantly in size and character by their very nature. Owing to the overlap between definitions, commercial buildings located within settlement limits that are considered suitable for residential redevelopment have also been included within this category.

Open Space Surplus to Housing Requirements

Intensification is essentially making more efficient use of land in a certain area, especially in lower density neighbourhoods with existing garage courts, considerably large gardens and/or backlands. Such areas can sometimes be unsightly, prone to anti-social behaviour or may simply be underutilised and well located to accommodate new development.

Whilst intensification of existing housing areas has not been fully considered within the UCS, a number of candidate sites have been submitted for land within a housing estate within Caerphilly. The potential capacity of these sites has been recorded for further analysis.

Land allocated in the Adopted LDP that has not been developed

All Adopted LDP allocations will be reconsidered and only those sites that can evidence that they are deliverable and viable will be allocated. This approach will mean that there will be sites that are currently allocated in the Adopted LDP that will not be allocated, but remain within settlement limits, where the principle of development is acceptable. There will be a number of sites within this category, and these sites could make an important contribution to the windfall contribution if delivered in the future.

Land Previously Allocated for Employment Uses

There have been no surplus sources of potential capacity from previous employment land identified within this UCS.

Study Areas

The key considerations for identifying sites within the Study Area Tier 1 Settlements, have been considered in the context of the Placemaking Wales Charter's six placemaking principles.

Bargoed and Gilfach

Bargoed is a former mining town, with a strong industrial heritage rooted in coal mining and iron production. The town expanded rapidly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as mining developed in the surrounding valleys, shaping both its physical form and closeknit community identity. Bargoed has a strong sense of local history, reflected in its street pattern and urban form.

Bargoed is set within a steep-sided valley landscape and is well connected by road via the A469 and A468, and by rail through the Rhymney Valley Line, providing links to Cardiff and other valley towns.

Bargoed provides a range of facilities and services that support both residents and the wider area. The town centre includes a mix of shops, supermarkets, cafés, alongside leisure facilities such as Bargoed Park. Public services include schools, health centres, a library, and community venues, reflecting Bargoed's role as an important service hub to the wider area.

Potential Sites

Bargoed has a linear urban form, which runs along the length of the valley. Topography therefore plays a key role in its development and has a determining factor on making sites viable for development.

There are several sites throughout the town, which are yet to be developed, or have fallen into disuse without suitable re-development proposals coming forward at the time of writing. There are number of brownfield and greenfield sites throughout the town which have the potential to be redeveloped for housing.

Within the residential areas of the town there are several underused greenspaces which have the potential to be developed. There are some constrained sites within the denser terraced streets of the town, and a larger site within the lower density housing estate on the western edge of the town.

Bargoed is a small and compact town where local services and facilities are within walking and cycling distance for most residents. It is key therefore to ensure potential sites maximise these factors to ensure accessibility across Bargoed continues at a high level.

Bargoed typologies include: -

- Brownfield Sites – The brownfield sites on the edge of the town centre offer the best opportunity to provide a range of housing. Due to their prominent location, they also offer the opportunity to create gateways into the town and be aspirational in their design.
- Underused spaces - In the past, housing estates were not built with efficiency in mind and so result in a lot of underused greenspaces. This is often poorly overlooked and can be attractors of anti-social behaviour. Redevelopment of these spaces can help support local facilities and concentrate better used public space into more appropriate areas.

A total of 18 sites have been identified in Bargoed; with each site falling into one or more of the typologies that have been identified above, including 1 site that has received planning permission approval for 3 dwellings, indicating the acceptability of the site and its contribution to Caerphilly's housing targets.

Three of these sites lie within restricted flood zone areas, and as such are not suitable for consideration towards the windfall target for the county borough. A full

breakdown of the potential sites is detailed within Table 7 below, with a total potential dwelling yield.

As part of the 2RLDP review, this paper demonstrates that there are potential sites within Bargoed. Any wider investigations on the suitability of any sites, would need to be considered at allocation and/or at planning application stage.

Table 7: Bargoed

Settlement	Site Name	Town Centre	Potential Dwelling Yield	Constraints
Bargoed	The Cottage, Commercial Street, Gilfach	No	2	None
Edge of Settlement	Land at Station Road	No	5	FZ 3
Bargoed	47-48 High Street	Yes	3	None
Bargoed	Bowls Club, Gilfach	No	9	FZ 2/3
Bargoed	William Street, Gilfach	No	2	None
Bargoed	Former Blisters	Yes	3	None
Bargoed	Former Gigabytes	Yes	4	None
Bargoed	Unit adjacent to Savers	Yes	4	None
Bargoed	Land adjacent to St Marys Street	No	61	FZ 2/3
Bargoed	Land behind Angel Lane	No	21	None
Bargoed	Land behind allotments, Eastview Terrace	No	4	None
Bargoed	Telephone Exchange, Baldwin Street	No	5	None
Bargoed	Land adjacent to Llancayo Street	No	7	None
Bargoed	Land adjacent to Upper North Road	No	17	None
Bargoed	Land at Heol Fargoed	No	110	None
Total Potential Dwelling Yield (Minus Constraints)	-	-	182	-

Design Principles for Bargoed

People and Community

The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

A site located at the entrance to the town has the potential to influence perceptions of Bargoed as a whole, offering an opportunity to redefine a key gateway and enhance the town's overall image. Redevelopment of the western residential site could also help meet the needs of residents by supporting nearby shops and community facilities, reinforcing the role of this area as a local centre. Many of the potential sites are in proximity to existing residential properties, meaning careful consideration will need to be given to privacy and residential amenity. This includes appropriate back-to-back distances, window positioning and building heights to minimise overlooking. These issues may be exacerbated by Bargoed's topography, where development sites can sit above neighbouring properties.

Movement

Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Despite Bargoed's rugged natural terrain, it is well supported by active travel methods, particularly that of two train stations; Bargoed station located north of the town centre and Gilfach Fargoed station located south. Bargoed also benefits from multiple bus routes along its high street and residential areas. The town centre itself is relatively small, so is easily accessible by foot from potential nearby sites. These potential sites should be focused in and around these active travel nodes, ensuring that residents possess easily accessible opportunities to visit shops, local facilities and the wider region via train or bus.

Public Realm

Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Bargoed is defined by a few natural landscape boundaries, which help shape the form and limits of the town. The Rhymney River corridor along the eastern edge is a particularly important feature, and site selection should be focused within these boundaries to help maintain a compact and clearly defined settlement pattern. Bargoed Park and the Heolddu Leisure Centre sit to the west of the town centre and are easily accessible to residents. Existing landscape features, including mature trees and hedgerows, should be retained wherever possible, with development designed to respond positively to such features. Ecologically sensitive areas should be protected and, where appropriate, incorporated into development as high-quality public open spaces that contribute to the wider green infrastructure network.

Location

Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Several potential sites are located within or close to the town centre, benefiting from good access to local facilities, sustainable transport options and the wider road network. A key site at the entrance to the town off the A469 is within easy walking distance of the town centre and Gilfach Fargod railway station, making it a highly sustainable and accessible location for development. Due to the compact nature of Bargoed, most residential areas are within approximately a 20-minute walk of the town centre. Site identification should therefore consider how easily development can connect to the town centre by foot or bike. Given the town's topography, routes into the centre are generally easier downhill than the return journey, highlighting the importance of safe, direct and accessible walking and cycling connections.

Mix of Uses

Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Identifying the location of key local facilities and services provides a strong basis for narrowing down potential development sites. In Bargoed, priority should be given to sites located within a 5–10-minute walk of the town centre, where services and facilities can be easily accessed on foot or by cycle, supporting sustainable patterns of living. The underused land on the western edge of the town is located

close to several existing services. Development in this area could help strengthen the role of these facilities and, where appropriate, introduce additional complementary uses as part of a mixed-use scheme. This approach can support more vibrant neighbourhoods and ensure potential developments contribute to the long-term sustainability of local services.

Identity

The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes are identified and responded to.

The scale, massing and character of Bargoed varies across the town. The denser town centre may be capable of accommodating higher-density and, where appropriate, taller development, particularly where this supports regeneration and reinforces the role of the town centre. Sites at the entrance and edges of the town centre offer opportunities to strengthen Bargoed's identity and improve first impressions. In contrast, sites located within established residential areas will need to respond carefully to existing character. For example, development within terraced streets should reflect prevailing building forms and patterns, ensuring new development integrates seamlessly with its surroundings while contributing positively to local identity.

Ystrad Mynach, including Tredomen and Penallta

Ystrad Mynach is located in the Rhymney Valley within Caerphilly County Borough and serves as a key retail and employment centre.

Ystrad Mynach is surrounded by rugged valley slopes. A town with a strong coal mining heritage, the town is characterised by narrow residential streets in the town centre, with more residential suburbs comprising its outer boundaries.

Ystrad Mynach is well serviced by a train station located south of the town centre and frequent bus services to the wider region. Ystrad Mynach town centre is host to many shops and local facilities, including a post office, leisure centre, library, pharmacies and two supermarkets. Within the town, there also exists a major hospital, multiple schools, a sports facility and a college for further education students.

Potential Sites for Ystrad Mynach

Ystrad Mynach's position as a principal town and key employment hub means that any potential development would benefit greatly from existing facilities and contribute to the economy of the wider region.

Ystrad Mynach's typologies include: -

- **Brownfield Sites** – The brownfield sites on the edge of the town centre offer the best opportunity to provide a range of housing. Due to their prominent location, they also offer the opportunity to create gateways into the town and be aspirational in their design.
- **Underused spaces** - In the past housing estates were not built with efficiency in mind and so result in a lot of underused greenspaces. This is often poorly overlooked and can be attractors of anti-social behaviour. Redevelopment of these spaces can help support local facilities and concentrate better used public space into more appropriate areas.
- **Redundant education facilities** – These sites have an importance to the community and are typically found in areas with good transport links and public transport provision, so are prime for redevelopment.

Five sites have been identified in Ystrad Mynach; with each site falling into one or more of the typologies that have been identified above, including one site that has received planning permission approval for 33 affordable dwellings, indicating the acceptability of the site and adding to CCBC housing stock. A full breakdown of the potential sites identified within Ystrad Mynach is detailed in Table 8 below, with a total potential dwelling yield detailed at the bottom of the table.

As part of the 2RLDP review, this paper demonstrates that there are potential sites within Ystrad Mynach. Any wider investigations on the suitability of any sites, would need to be considered at allocation and/or at planning application stage.

Table 8: Ystrad Mynach

Settlement	Site Name	Town Centre	Potential Dwelling Yield	Constraints
Ystrad Mynach	Greyhound Track	No	54	FZ 3
Ystrad Mynach	Winding Wheel Lane	No	187	None
Ystrad Mynach	Lewis Girls School	No	264	Partly FZ 3
Ystrad Mynach	Land adjacent to Troed-y-Rhiw	No	20	None
Ystrad Mynach	Land at New Road	No	19	None
Total Potential Dwelling Yield (Minus Constraints)	-	-	358	-

Design Principles for Ystrad Mynach

People and Community

The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

Some of the potential sites identified in Ystrad Mynach comprise brownfield land, including the former Penallta Colliery listed buildings. Regeneration of such spaces may may require early and meaningful engagement to demonstrate how sensitive development can deliver tangible community benefits. This may include the enhancement of remaining greenspaces, increased activity and the provision of new or improved local services and facilities.

Movement

Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Residents from both within the town centre and further afield can easily access necessary facilities, be it by foot, bike or through public transport, which is readily available across the town. The train station is located within walking distance of the town centre. The concentration of key facilities in and around the town centre makes active travel easily accessible and seeks to reduce car-borne trips. Any potential developments that may come forward as a result of this UCS must take careful consideration to ensure the accessibility of residents to local facilities is continued at a high level.

Public Realm

Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Ystrad Mynach town centre is in the very heart of the wider settlement and is defined by winding streets which are well-connected to the residential fringes of the town. The network of streets within the town relate well to the surrounding

topography, with all essential facilities located on the flat valley floor where the town is situated. Any potential developments should seek to maximise their relationship with the town centre to ensure the coherent relationship between street networks and residential neighbourhoods continues.

Location

Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Several potential sites are located within or close to the town centre, benefiting from good access to local facilities, sustainable transport options and the wider road network.

Due to the compact nature of Ystrad Mynach, most residential areas are within walking distance to the town centre. Site identification should therefore consider how easily development can connect to the town centre by foot or bike.

Mix of Uses

Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Ystrad Mynach is a key employment hub within the county borough. The hospital, college, sports facility and council offices provide excellent job opportunities in proximity of the town centre. These key employment sites are well serviced by bus routes and the wider road network, allowing key workers to easily access these sites if they live outside of the town limits.

Identity

The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes are identified and responded to.

Ystrad Mynach is characterised by terraced streets within and around the town centre, and larger residential suburbs further afield. The denser town centre

provides limited capacity for infill, however neighbouring brownfield land provides greater capacity for windfall development, subject to constraints.
--

Blackwood, including Cefn Fforest and Pontllanfraith

Blackwood forms a major commercial centre in the heart of the county borough, which is well supported by a range of amenities, facilities and active travel opportunities, which can all support sustainable living. Such facilities include schools, health care, supermarkets, shops and cultural facilities.

Blackwood does not possess a train station, which limits the settlement's ability to provide opportunity to its residents to reach neighbouring communities and larger cities like Cardiff. The town is well serviced, however, by bus routes, and possesses a large bus station located just south of the town centre. This transport hub provides regular services both up and down and across the valleys, providing Blackwood residents with ample opportunity to visit neighbouring towns via bus as opposed to train.

Blackwood town centre is the second largest within the county borough, behind Caerphilly. Blackwood High Street offers a wide range of retail options, both independent and national retailers. Blackwood serves the centre of the county borough as a bustling hub for shopping, entertainment, and culture, featuring Maxime Cinema, Blackwood Miner's Institute and regular open-air markets.

Potential Sites for Blackwood

Within the housing estates surrounding the town centre, there are areas of underused land, or greenspaces that could be better used for residential development.

The key to accommodating growth within Blackwood is to focus on the redevelopment and optimisation of existing brownfield land and underused sites located within the town's boundaries.

Blackwood's typologies include: -

- **Brownfield Sites** – The brownfield sites on the edge of the town centre offer the best opportunity to provide a range of housing. Due to their prominent location, they also offer the opportunity to create gateways into the town and be aspirational in their design.
- **Underused spaces** - In the past, housing estates were not built with efficiency in mind and so result in a lot of underused greenspaces. This is often overlooked and can be attractors of anti-social behaviour. Redevelopment of these spaces can help support local facilities and concentrate better used public space into more appropriate areas.

Four sites have been identified in Blackwood; with each site falling into one or more of the typologies that have been identified above. The three sites have been allocated for housing and are surrounded by existing residential properties. None of the identified sites are located within a high-risk flood zone. A full breakdown of the potential sites for Blackwood is detailed in Table 9 below, with a total potential dwelling yield for Blackwood detailed at the bottom of the table.

As part of the 2RLDP review this paper demonstrates that there are potential sites within Blackwood. Any wider investigations on the suitability of any sites, would need to be considered at allocation or at planning application stage.

Table 9: Blackwood

Settlement	Site Name	Town Centre	Potential Dwelling Yield	Constraints
Blackwood	Pencoed Avenue	No	65	None
Blackwood	Land east of Bryn Road	No	24	None
Blackwood	Land at St. David's Avenue	No	5	None
Blackwood	Former Pontllanfraith School	No	100	None
Total Potential Dwelling Yield (Minus Constraints)	-	-	194	-

Design Principles for Blackwood

People and Community

The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

Many of the potential sites identified in Blackwood are near existing residential properties. As such, careful consideration must be given to ensure privacy and residential amenity of the neighbouring communities are adhered to. This includes ensuring adequate back-back dwelling distances, considered window placement, and suitable building heights to minimise overlooking and overbearing qualities.

Movement

Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Blackwood town centre is largely flat compared to settlements located in the north of the county borough, which allows for greater accessibility for residents by foot and bike. Neighbouring residential streets do feature elevated topography, however regular bus services along these routes help to promote active travel to and from the town centre and reduce car dependency.

Public Realm

Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Blackwood benefits from limited natural boundaries surrounding the settlement, due to the town's naturally flat topography. The town sits on the lower elevations of surrounding valleys, which provides greater opportunity for potential sites to come forward which benefit from this natural topography. Careful consideration must still be given to how these potential sites will operate in relation to Blackwood town centre and existing active travel routes and public transport links.

Location

Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Several potential sites are located within proximity to public highways and/or walking distance to several bus stops.

Blackwood town centre covers a large area, and most existing residential areas are not within walking distance of the town centre. Site identification must therefore consider how easily potential developments can connect to the town centre by foot or bike.

Mix of Uses

Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Blackwood possesses a wide range of community facilities, which adequately service the existing residential and visitor population. Careful consideration must be taken to ensure that any new developments that may come forward as a result of this UCS do not overload existing facilities, with adequate consideration to the implementation of new facilities being undertaken to ensure Blackwood can continue to service its population if new developments arise.

Identity

The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes are identified and responded to.

As with the other Principal settlements across the county borough, the scale, massing and character of Blackwood varies widely across the town. The denser town centre can accommodate high-density and taller developments, whereas potential sites located outside of the town centre must take careful consideration of the character and features of the local area, such as building forms and patterns. Ultimately, any developments that may come forward within Blackwood must be in keeping with the character of the local area.

Risca and Pontymister

Risca and Pontymister, situated in the Ebbw Valley of South Wales, share a heritage shaped by heavy industry, including coal mining, ironworking, and tinplate manufacturing.

Risca and Pontymister are known for their steep topography and deep mining heritage, most notably the Black Vein Colliery. The town expanded rapidly in response to increased mining capabilities, with rows of terraced housing constructed to accommodate a growing population.

Risca and Pontymister are both serviced by a good level of local facilities, including a train station, multiple bus stops and frequent train and bus services both up and down and across the neighbouring valleys. Commercial Street straddles both areas and is host to many local facilities, including shops, health care, religious buildings and supermarkets. Wider Risca and Pontymister is well serviced by multiple schools and a college located in the neighbouring village of Crosskeys.

Potential Sites for Risca and Pontymister

Risca and Pontymister form a continuous settlement in the Ebbw Valley, shaped by the River Ebbw and the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal. The area functions as a valley corridor framed by forested hills such as Mynydd Machen and Twmbarlwm and serves primarily as a residential and commuter hub.

There are several sites located throughout Risca and Pontymister, all of which are brownfield, located either within or in proximity of the town centre.

The most effective way to support growth in Risca and Pontymister is by prioritising the redevelopment and better utilisation of existing brownfield land and underused sites within the town's boundaries.

Risca and Pontymister typologies include: -

- **Brownfield Sites** – The brownfield sites on the edge of the town centre offer the best opportunity to provide a range of housing. Due to their prominent location, they also offer the opportunity to create gateways into the town and be aspirational in their design.
- **Underused spaces** - In the past housing estates were not built with efficiency in mind and so result in a lot of underused greenspaces. This is often poorly overlooked and can be attractors of anti-social behaviour. Redevelopment of these spaces can help support local facilities and concentrate better used public space into more appropriate areas.
- **Redundant employment and or leisure facilities** – These sites have an importance to the community and are typically found in areas with good transport links and public transport provision, so are prime for redevelopment.

Seven sites have been identified within Risca and Pontymister; with each site falling into one or more of the above typologies. Two of the sites have come in as candidate sites as part of the 2RLDP Call for Candidate Sites. However, all but two of the proposed sites are located within a high-risk flood zone. This significantly limits Risca and Pontymister's ability to provide potential sites that could contribute towards the windfall allowance for the county borough. A full breakdown of the potential sites identified within Risca and Pontymister is detailed in Table 10 below, with a total potential dwelling yield detailed at the bottom of the table.

As part of the 2RLDP review, this paper demonstrates that there are potential sites within Risca and Pontymister. Any wider investigations on the suitability of any sites, would need to be considered at allocation and/or at planning application stage.

Table 10: Risca

Settlement	Site Name	Town Centre	Potential Dwelling Yield	Constraints
Risca	106 Commercial Street	No	1	None

Edge of settlement	Land next to Pontymister Youth Centre	No	63	FZ – Defended Zone
Edge of settlement	Land adjacent to Newport Road	No	88	FZ – Defended Zone
Risca	Eastern part of land adjacent to River Ebbw	No	48	FZ – Defended Zone
Risca	Suflex Factory	No	74	FZ – Defended Zone
Risca	Land at Station Approach	No	18	FZ – Defended Zone
Risca	Land South of Ty Glyn	No	4	None
Total Potential Dwelling Yield (Minus Constraints)	-	-	5	-

Design Principles for Risca and Pontymister

People and Community

The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

All the potential sites identified in Risca and Pontymister comprise brownfield land located within existing residential areas. Regeneration of such spaces may require early and meaningful engagement to demonstrate how sensitive development can deliver tangible community benefits. This may include the enhancement of remaining greenspaces, increased activity and the provision of new or improved local services and facilities within the estate.

Movement

Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Risca and Pontymister lies at the bottom of steep neighbouring valleys, however the town centre is largely flat and is easily accessible by foot or bike. Residents living in and around the town centre can easily access the facilities they require,

and are well serviced by active travel methods, including frequent bus services to nearby towns and other residential communities. It is essential that any potential sites that may come forward as a result of this UCS take careful consideration to ensure accessible walking and cycling routes are maintained, whilst being located in proximity of active travel nodes.

Public Realm

Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Risca and Pontymister's network of streets is well defined due to the natural topography of the area with the high street located to the south of the settlement on the valley floor, and residential areas on the edges of the town gradually rising the valley incline. These streets are well connected to local facilities, and it is essential that any potential developments continue this trend.

Location

Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Risca and Pontymister town centre, characterised by dense development and narrow terraced streets, offers limited opportunities for further infill. The town's railway station represents a key hub for sustainable movement at both the local and regional scale. This hub should therefore play a central role in guiding the identification of development sites, with priority given to land within easy walking distance of public transport nodes.

Mix of Uses

Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Risca and Pontymister's location in the south-east corner of the county borough means that there are sufficient existing facilities to support the surrounding population. The town's proximity to the city of Newport outside of county borough lines provides excellent job opportunities which can influence potential development within the area. It is essential that any potential sites seek to make best use of existing infrastructure and possess the capacity to increase public service facilities if they come forward throughout the 2RLDP adoption period.

Identity

The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes are identified and responded to.

Risca's town centre, including Tredegar Grounds Park, is a defining element of the town's identity, and any development sites within or close to the town centre must be designed with sensitivity in mind. The town is surrounded by both rugged and rolling hills which add to the town's character and local distinctiveness, so any potential sites must take careful consideration of the impact that they may have on the surrounding landscape.

Caerphilly

Caerphilly comprises the largest town centre and residential area within the county borough, and as such, is the heart of commercial and economic output.

Caerphilly is well serviced by three train stations, (Caerphilly, Energlyn and Aber), park and ride provision, a large bus station, and plentiful local facilities including multiple schools, supermarkets, health care, shops and a leisure centre. Caerphilly Castle sits within the very heart of the town and serves as a major heritage and tourism hub for the county borough and South Wales as a whole. Caerphilly town has historically been built with the Castle at its core, and the topography of the town in present day reflects this.

As mentioned above, the three train stations servicing Caerphilly offer frequent train services to the north of the valleys and south to Cardiff and Newport.

Potential Sites for Caerphilly

The linear nature of the town centre and close-knit neighbouring terraced streets leaves little opportunity for further infill development. Possibilities therefore need to be sought on the edges of the town centre and within nearby housing estates.

Within the housing estates surrounding the town centre, there are areas of underused land and greenspaces that could be better used as residential development.

The key to accommodating growth within Caerphilly is to focus on the redevelopment and optimisation of existing brownfield land and underused sites located within the town's boundaries.

Caerphilly typologies include: -

- **Brownfield Sites** – The brownfield sites on the edge of the town centre offer the best opportunity to provide a range of housing. Due to their prominent location, they also offer the opportunity to create gateways into the town and be aspirational in their design.
- **Underused spaces** - In the past housing estates were not built with efficiency in mind and so result in a lot of underused greenspaces. This is often poorly overlooked and can be attractors of anti-social behaviour. Redevelopment of these spaces can help support local facilities and concentrate better used public space into more appropriate areas.
- **Redundant leisure and education facilities** – These sites have an importance to the community and are typically found in areas with good transport links and public transport provision, so are prime for redevelopment.

18 sites have been identified in Caerphilly; with each site falling into one or more of the typologies that have been identified above. Three of the potential sites have been allocated for housing, and three of the sites are located within a high-risk flood zone. Full details of these potential sites are detailed in Table 11 below, with a total potential dwelling yield for Caerphilly detailed at the bottom of the table.

This paper demonstrates that there are potential sites within Caerphilly. Any wider investigations on the suitability of any sites, would need to be considered at allocation and or if any sites come in off the back of future planning applications.

Table 11: Caerphilly

Settlement	Site Name	Town Centre	Potential Dwelling Yield	Constraints
Caerphilly	Caerphilly Leisure Centre	No	31	Partly
Caerphilly	Former Tar Plant	No	150	None
Caerphilly	Hendre Infants School	No	14	None
Caerphilly	Land west of Mill Close	No	8	None
Caerphilly	Land at Alexander Court	No	5	None

Caerphilly	Land at Attlee Court	No	6	None
Caerphilly	Land at Buxton Court	No	4	None
Caerphilly	Land at Haldane Court	No	16	None
Caerphilly	Land at Hartshorn Court	No	4	None
Caerphilly	Land at Wedgewood Court	No	9	None
Caerphilly	Land at Graham Court	No	4	None
Caerphilly	Land at Snowden Court	No	5	None
Caerphilly	Mill Road	No	6	None
Caerphilly	Crown Building, Claude Road	No	6	None
Caerphilly	Cardiff Road	Yes	20	None
Caerphilly	Land at Castle Court	Yes	104	FZ 2
Caerphilly	Land at Pontygwindy Road	No	4	FZ 3
Caerphilly	Land south of Bedwas Industrial Estate	No	137	FZ 3
Total Potential Dwelling Yield (Minus Constraints)	-	-	288	-

Design Principles for Caerphilly

People and Community

The local community are involved in the development of proposals. The needs, aspirations, health and well-being of all people are considered at the outset. Proposals are shaped to help to meet these needs as well as create, integrate, protect and/or enhance a sense of community and promote equality.

Some of the potential sites identified in Caerphilly comprise greenspaces located within existing residential areas. While the loss of such spaces may initially be perceived negatively by residents, early and meaningful engagement will be essential to demonstrate how sensitive development can deliver tangible community benefits. This may include the enhancement of remaining greenspaces, increased activity and the provision of new or improved local services and facilities within the estate.

Movement

Walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised to provide a choice of transport modes and avoid dependence on private vehicles. Well designed and safe active travel routes connect to the wider active travel and public transport network and public transport stations and stops are positively integrated.

Caerphilly also benefits from a naturally flat topography in the town centre and most of the surrounding neighbourhoods. Caerphilly's extensive public transport network promotes active travel in all areas of the town and reduces dependency on car-borne trips. Walking and cycling is also considered favourable within Caerphilly, again much due to the naturally flat topography. Any potential sites that come forward as a result of this UCS must still take significant consideration for the promotion of active travel routes and safe and accessible walking and cycling routes into and from the town centre and neighbouring communities.

Public Realm

Streets and public spaces are well defined, welcoming, safe and inclusive with a distinct identity. They are designed to be robust and adaptable with landscape, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage well integrated. They are well connected to existing places and promote opportunities for social interaction and a range of activities for all people.

Caerphilly's network of streets in and around the town centre are well defined due to the history of the town's formation around Caerphilly Castle. Residential areas are also well defined and provide a safe and inclusive network of road and pedestrian routes. It is essential to ensure that any potential sites continue this trend and relate well to the existing safe and accessible routes. Green infrastructure must also be actively incorporated into any new developments to ensure the character of the local area is upheld.

Location

Places grow and develop in a way that uses land efficiently, supports and enhances existing places and is well connected. The location of housing, employment and leisure and other facilities are planned to help reduce the need to travel.

Caerphilly's compact town centre, characterised by dense development and narrow terraced streets, offers limited opportunities for further infill. In contrast, the

newer residential estates to the eastern edge of the town are generally lower density and contain areas of underused or residual greenspace that present strong opportunities for sensitively located development. Importantly, many of these areas remain within walking distance of the town centre, and additional housing could help support local services, facilities and the viability and frequency of public transport.

The town's railway stations and bus interchange are key hubs for sustainable movement at both the local and regional scale. These locations should therefore play a central role in guiding the identification of development sites, with priority given to land within easy walking distance of public transport nodes.

Mix of Uses

Places have a range of purposes which provide opportunities for community development, local business growth and access to jobs, services and facilities via walking, cycling or public transport. Development density and a mix of uses and tenures helps to support a diverse community and vibrant public realm.

Caerphilly's position as the main settlement within the county borough pertains to a good level of community facilities being present across the town. It is essential, however, that these services are maintained and are not threatened to be overloaded by new development. Careful consideration must be taken therefore to ensure that any potential new developments that may come forward are able to be serviced by existing facilities, without overloading them, or include provision for the construction of new facilities that can benefit both the new development and existing residential areas.

Identity

The positive, distinctive qualities of existing places are valued and respected. The unique features and opportunities of a location including heritage, culture, language, built and natural physical attributes are identified and responded to.

Caerphilly Castle is a defining element of the town's identity, and any development sites within or close to the castle and town centre must be designed with sensitivity in mind. Proposals should respond positively to the historic setting, respecting important views, scale, materials and the wider character of the town to ensure new development reinforces, rather than detracts from, Caerphilly's distinct sense of place.

In contrast, sites within the residential estates on the edges of the town offer greater scope for a more creative and aspirational design approach. Well-designed developments in these locations can act as a catalyst for regeneration, helping to

improve the quality of the built environment and establish new, positive identities for local neighbourhoods while remaining grounded in the overall context and character of Caerphilly.

Total Potential Capacity

The sites identified within this UCS, through the redevelopment of car parks, potential candidate sites, vacant and derelict land and vacant units above commercial premises has provided the Council with a windfall estimate of 1400 dwellings that could potentially come forward throughout the 2RLDP period. A breakdown of these figures is contained within Table 12 below:

Table 12: Total Windfall Estimate

Category	Potential Dwelling Yield
Empty homes	990
Sub-division	18
Car Parks	238
Vacant Units	39
Bargoed Sites	182
Ystrad Mynach Sites	358
Blackwood Sites	194
Risca and Pontymister Sites	5
Caerphilly Sites	288
Total	2,312

7. Conclusion

Small and large windfall sites form important components of housing supply and provide flexibility to help accommodate different forms of residential development and contribute towards the Council's housing targets for the period of 2020-2035, as part of the 2RLDP framework.

The 2RLDP includes an assumption of 978 units on small and large windfall sites, up to 2035.

The sites identified within this UCS provide a windfall estimate of 2,312 dwellings that could potentially come forward throughout the 2RLDP period.

This identified capacity includes a number of brownfield sites that require significant remediation, and therefore there is some doubt around development of these sites within the plan period. However, and whilst the list should not be considered exhaustive, it does serve to demonstrate more than sufficient scope to accommodate the small and windfall site allowance within the proposed settlement boundaries.

It must also be reiterated that the identification of these sites does not guarantee their potential development but rather is a showcase of the potential capacity the county borough has to offer regarding windfall sites. Any proposed developments that may come forward on these identified sites will be subject to thorough analysis at planning application stage.