

Newport City Council  
Local Development Plan

Council Response to Matters Arising

Hearing Session 19: Council's Response to LDP Shortfall  
of 274 Units



**1. Council's response to shortfall of 274 units**

1.1 The Inspector concluded that the Plan currently falls short of its housing target by 274 units. The Council proposes to meet this shortfall by allocating 4 new housing sites to the Plan:

- Postal Exchange H1(61) - 70 units
- Queens Hill School H1(62) - 92 units
- Telford Depot H1 (63) - 60 units
- Uskside Paint Mills H1 (64) - 53 units

**Total - 275 units**

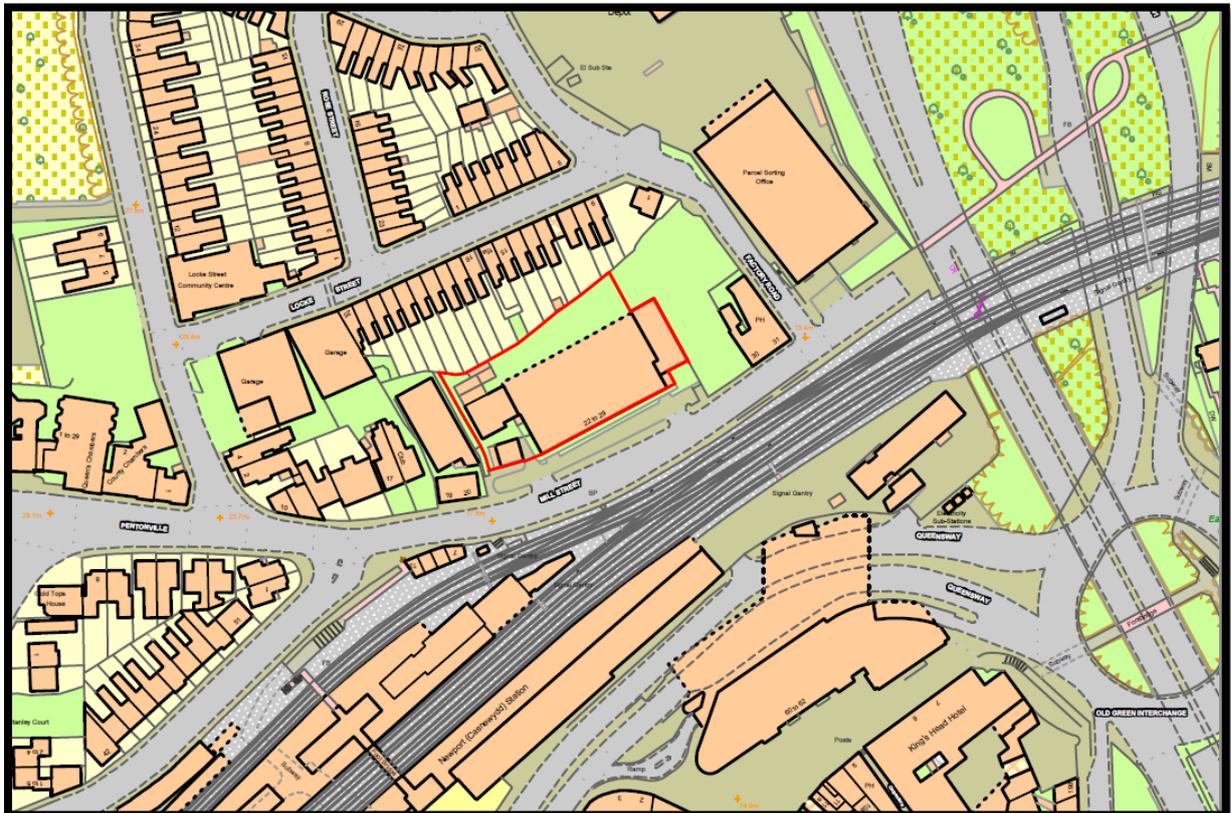
1.2 The additional 275 units would take the total housing figure within the Plan to 11,623 units. This would provide a flexibility of 12.3% over the 10,350 requirement.

## 2. Postal Exchange H1 (61) – 70 units (0.2ha)

### Background

2.1 The Postal Exchange building is within Central Newport and located within the Allt-yr-Yn ward. The building is behind Newport Railway Station and is considered to be a highly sustainable location. Welsh Government funding has recently been announced for a new footbridge over the railway, making access to the station, bus stops and City Centre even easier. The site is vacant and has had no interest for the reuse of the building for office purposes due to the age of the premises. The Council's ELR confirms that office enquiries in Newport consist mainly of businesses seeking good quality modern premises with flexible accommodation that can be subdivided. The eaves should be 6-8m to meet the requirements of modern business and dedicated car parking and loading areas are important. The Postal Exchange building is dated and the lack of interest from businesses suggests the site is no longer attractive for employment use.

2.2 The location of the site is shown below:



2.3 The majority of the units will be 1 or 2 bedroom flats, along with 6 town houses. The Council is currently in pre-application discussions with the applicant who is proposing 89 units. The Council believes 89 units is optimistic and is proposing 70. The applicant has produced a computer graphic image to demonstrate what the scheme will look like.



### **The Plan's Strategy**

- 2.4 The site is brownfield and within the Newport urban boundary. It is therefore considered to meet the Plan's Strategy.

### **Constraints**

- 2.5 There are few constraints associated with this site. The site is within an archaeologically sensitive area however the scheme is to refurbish the existing building and replace the facades. Therefore there will be minimal demolition and construction that will impact on archaeology.
- 2.6 The site is not within a flood zone.

### **Delivery**

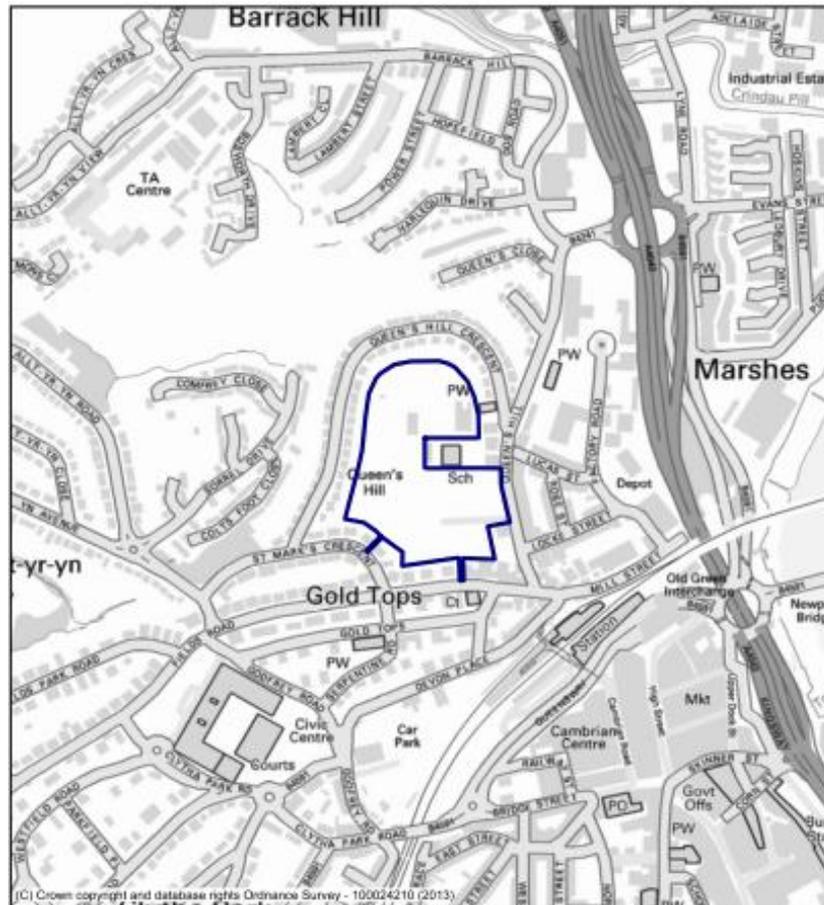
- 2.7 Pre-application discussions are underway. The developer intends to submit a full planning application by the end of 2014. As noted above, the proposal will involve a complete refurbishment of the building and replacement facades. The developer believes that the scheme will only take 12 months to complete. On this basis, it is expected that all 70 units will be completed by 2017.

## **3. Queens Hill School H1(62) – 92 units (4.4ha)**

### **Background**

- 3.1 Queens Hill School is within Central Newport and located within the Allt-yr-Yn ward. The site is a former education site and therefore is brownfield. The Council requested candidate sites in March 2009 and this site was put forward at that stage (1232.C1). It was the subject of a sustainability appraisal and scored well, however, the site was not taken forward by the Council as the school was open at the time and there was uncertainty with regard to the release of the land.

3.2 The site was put forward again as part of the Revised Deposit LDP consultation in June 2013 and subsequently consulted upon as part of the Alternative Sites consultation (RAS(N)053) in September 2013. The plan from the Alternative Sites Assessment is shown below:



3.3 As part of the Alternative Sites, the Council assessed the site and concluded:

“Contrary to some of the replies from representors, this site has not been put forward as a proposed gypsy/traveller site, but has been suggested for residential development. It is unnecessary to include this proposal in the Revised Deposit LDP because the Plan already identifies sufficient land for residential development. A proposal of this nature — which, given the urban location, may be acceptable in principle — would have to be the subject of an application for planning permission”.

3.4 Since the above assessment, the site has become available and a residential planning application has been submitted (14/0386). The school site has now closed and there is confidence that the site can be delivered for housing. The St Mary’s Catholic School at the rear of the site remains in operation and the Council will ensure appropriate provision is made for this to continue. As part of the planning application, it is likely that land in the northeast corner of the site will be transferred to the St Mary’s School for parking, a drop off area and sports pitch. These facilities will improve the remaining school and help it to keep

operating into the future. This land transfer has been taken into account in the planning application and will not impact on the proposed dwelling numbers. The application, for 'up to 92 dwellings' is expected to be determined by the Council's Planning Committee within the next two months. The application is submitted by the owner of the majority of the site. The remainder of the site belongs to the Council. The application has been submitted in liaison with the Council as part of its land disposal programme.

### **The Plan's Strategy**

- 3.5 The site is brownfield and within the Newport urban boundary. It is therefore considered to meet the Plan's Strategy.

### **Constraints**

- 3.6 There are no Tree Preservation Orders on site, but a number of trees are considered to be worthy of retention by the Council's Tree Officer. These are not considered to prejudice site delivery, and have been considered alongside the indicative site layout which shows that the site can accommodate 92 dwellings comprising a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses and a small number of apartments (up to 3 storeys in height) indicated as being for over 55s. The site is within close proximity to a listed building (Shire Hall). Neither of these issues are considered insurmountable.
- 3.7 The site is not within a flood zone and has no other significant constraints.

### **Delivery**

- 3.8 The site is currently the subject of an outline application which is expected to be determined by Planning Committee over the summer. The outline application is for 92 dwellings. On the proviso that that application is approved, the agent intends to submit a reserved matters application promptly and expects first completions in 2016. The site is expected to be completed within 5 years of commencement, therefore entirely within the Plan period.

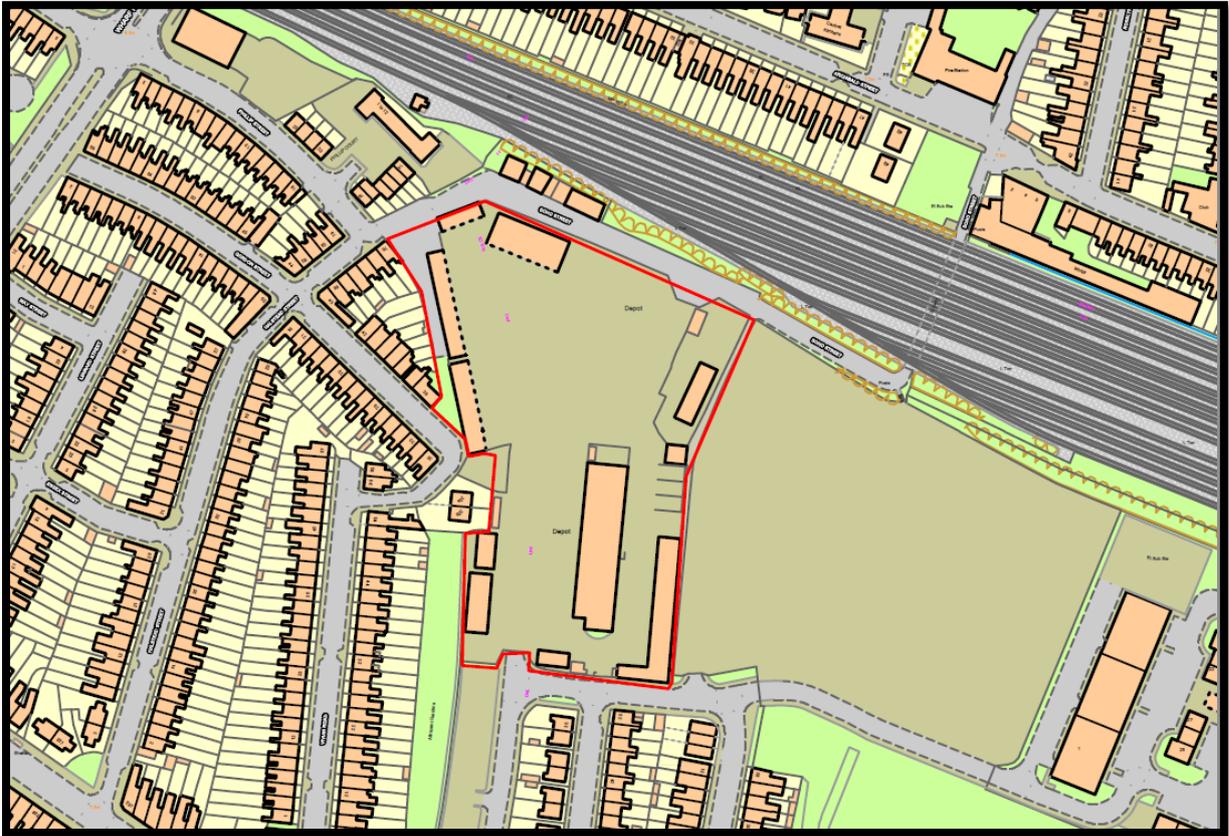
## **4. Telford Depot H1 – 60 units (1.6ha)**

### **Background**

- 4.1 This site is within Central Newport, Lliswery ward. It is owned by Newport City Council and is currently used as office space and a depot for vehicle storage.
- 4.2 The site has been identified by the Council's Strategic Asset Management Group for disposal as part of the Council's property disposal scheme. It is expected to be disposed of and demolished by 2019. The Council's Property Service is in the process of transformation and will be run as a joint venture with a company called Norse. Norse is based at the Telford Depot and has a 5 year lease from the Council with a break clause after year 3. Once this lease expires, proceedings will commence to demolish and dispose of the site.
- 4.3 The site is expected to be fairly densely developed consisting of apartments and terraced/semi-detached houses. The higher density is considered to be in keeping with the

surrounding residential areas. Nearby land to the south east is to be developed by the Seren Group comprising a mix of market and affordable homes and apartments: this is the Pirelli Cables site H1 (4).

4.4 The site is shown below:



### **The Plan's Strategy**

4.5 The site is brownfield and within the Newport urban boundary. It is therefore considered to meet the Plan's Strategy.

### **Constraints**

4.6 The site contains an underground petrol tank which is used to refuel Council vehicles. Therefore this contamination will need to be treated accordingly. The site is also within a C1 flood zone. Natural Resources Wales were content with sites at East Usk Yard (formerly H1 (35)) and Pirelli (H1 (4)), which are both in the immediate vicinity of this site. Therefore any flood risk issues at this site are unlikely to be insurmountable.

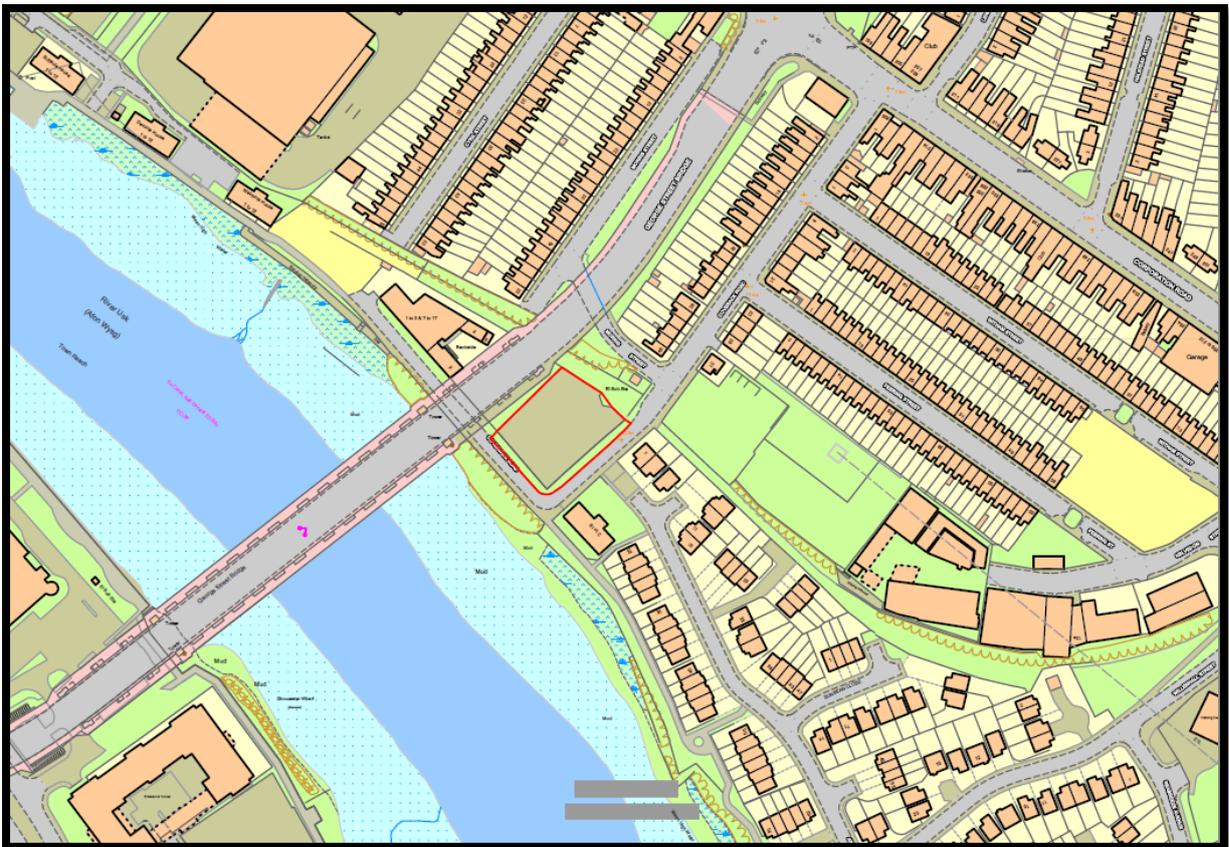
### **Delivery**

4.7 As noted above, the site is expected to be disposed of and demolished by 2019. The whole site would be anticipated to be completed by the end of 2022.

## 5. Uskside Paint Mills H1 (64) - 53 units (0.2ha)

### Background

- 5.1 The site is within Central Newport, Victoria ward.
- 5.2 An application for 77 apartments on this site (planning ref 12/0666) has recently been refused by Planning Committee. The application was refused solely on design grounds as a result of the proposed 14 storey apartment block. Committee Members accepted the need to regenerate this area but had concerns over the scale of development. They requested a scheme more sensitive to the surrounding residential development and more in keeping with the newly built river-front development in the vicinity which is typically 7 storeys in height.
- 5.3 Based on the floor plans accompanying the previous application, reducing the 14 storey apartment block with 94 parking spaces to 7 storeys with an associated reduction in parking provision would result in a scheme that can accommodate 53 units. Committee Members were satisfied with all other aspects of the application, including parking (which was a previous concern which has now been resolved). Therefore the Council is seeking the inclusion of this site within the LDP for 53 units
- 5.4 The site is shown below:



## **The Plan's Strategy**

- 5.5 The site is brownfield and within the Newport urban boundary. It is therefore considered to meet the Plan's Strategy.

## **Constraints**

- 5.6 The site is a former paint works and comprises mainly hard surfaced areas in tarmac and concrete. Storage tanks were known to be on-site but it is not clear what these tanks contained, although it is likely to be chemical based. Therefore contamination will need to be addressed.
- 5.7 Natural Resources Wales did not object to the planning application for this site. Despite the site being adjacent to the riverbank, it is not C1 or C2. It is located outside of the extreme flood outline being 10.80 metres AOD. Therefore flood risk is not considered to be an insurmountable issue.
- 5.8 The site is adjacent to the Grade 2\* George Street Bridge, which is listed for its engineering interest. The Council's Conservation Officer had no objections to the previously proposed 14 storey block.

## **Delivery**

- 5.9 It is expected that an amended outline planning application for 53 units will be made soon and could potentially be determined by the end of this year. Reserved Matters application would then be required, however commencement on site is anticipated in 2017. The whole site is expected to be completed by 2021.

## **6. Final Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Council believes that the above sites are sound deliverable sites and invite the Inspector to consider adding these sites to the Plan to make up the identified shortfall.
- 6.2 As previously discussed in Session 19, the Council's windfall figure of 95 units per annum is based on historic deliveries of smaller sites of less than 50 units. As all of the above sites are above 50, they will not double count with windfall predications.
- 6.3 In addition to the identified sites above, the Council is aware that built rates are progressing faster than expected at Monmouthshire Bank Sidings (H1 (14)). Table H1 only allows for 390 dwellings to be completed at this site, with 185 outside of the Plan period. There are 30 dwellings already completed and 103 dwellings currently under construction on this site. If this rate continues, as it is expected, all 575 units are likely to be completed within the Plan period. The Council has primarily relied on the 2013 JHLAS to support its delivery rates for housing sites and stands by this, however, it is fully expected that the 2014 JHLAS for Monmouthshire Bank Sidings will show increased delivery rates and the site will probably be completed much sooner than expected.