

Candidate Site

Assessment Methodology

This guidance note provides information on what to consider before submitting Candidate Sites and how they will be assessed once submitted.

■ What is a Candidate Site?

A Candidate Site is a site submitted to the Council by an interested party (e.g. developer or landowner) for potential inclusion as an allocation in the Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP).

It is important to note that the submission of a Candidate Site does not represent a commitment on the part of the Council to take sites forward into the Replacement LDP.

Sites will be subject to a robust assessment and only those that score highly in respect of sustainability, deliverability and are in accordance with the Replacement LDP Strategy will be allocated. **Land allocated in the current LDP may not automatically be included in the Replacement LDP.** Consequently, these sites should also be submitted as Candidate Sites.

■ What type of site can be submitted?

You are welcome to submit sites for a range of uses that the LDP makes provision for, this could include:

- Housing;
- Employment;
- Retail;
- Community facilities;
- Tourism and recreation;
- Renewable energy;
- Minerals;
- Gypsy and Traveller sites ¹;
- Transport infrastructure;
- Waste;
- Education;
- Health and social care;
- Biodiversity; and
- Green infrastructure.

If you are unsure if your submission is relevant please contact a member of the team to discuss using the contact details at the end of this document.

¹ <http://www.planningaidwales.org.uk/gtguide>

The size threshold for sites

For a site to be considered as a Candidate Site it must meet one of the following site thresholds:

- For residential development (excluding proposals for multiple self-build and custom build housing) - A site must be able to accommodate 10 or more residential units or have a minimum gross site area of 0.5 Hectares (ha);
- For non-residential development - A building must have a minimum floorspace of 1,000m² or a site has a minimum gross site area of 1ha; or
- There is no minimum threshold for sites which seek to protect current land uses and proposed green space, promote active travel type uses, propose Gypsy and Traveller accommodation sites and/or propose multiple self-build/custom build housing.

Sites below these thresholds are considered small sites and may not be accepted for the purposes of this exercise. Where a site is proposed for a mix of development types the threshold which corresponds with the primary form of development should be utilised.

Self-build and custom build housing is housing where the initial owner has primary input into its final design and layout. This includes homes in which the owner is involved in building or managing the construction, together with housing which the owner commissions and designs to their own specification and which is built for them to occupy, but not a home which is built to a builder's plan without design and layout input from the owner. Off-plan housing, homes purchased at the plan stage prior to construction and without input into the design and layout from the buyer, are not considered to meet the definition of self-build and custom build housing.

The Council may also put forward Candidate Sites, given that it is also a landowner within Newport. Any such submissions will be treated on the same basis as all other site submissions.



Key considerations before submitting a site

The Council will only allocate sites that adhere to national planning guidance as set out in Welsh Government Planning Policy. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Para. 3.41 – 3.48²) requires the authority to adhere to the following search sequence when identifying appropriate sites:

- Prioritise suitable and sustainable previously developed land (brownfield) and/or underutilised sites within settlements in the first instance;
- Sites which are suitable and sustainable previously developed land (brownfield) and/or underutilised sites on the edge of settlements should then be considered;
- If there is a demonstrated need for sites and clear evidence that that no previously development land (brownfield) or underutilised sites are available, suitable and sustainable greenfield sites within or on the edge of settlements can be considered.
- Sites in the open countryside must only be considered in exceptional circumstances.
- New settlements should only be proposed as part of a joint LDP as required by PPW.

The information sought at the call for Candidate Sites will reflect the need for information to be provided in order for the authority to assess a site against the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes (see Figure 5 of PPW³).

In order for the Council to support a Candidate Site we require evidence to be supplied to allow us to assess whether:

- The site is located in a sustainable location and can be freed from all constraints;
- The site is capable of being wholly or partly delivered within the plan period; and
- The site is viable.

Therefore, you should be aware of the following key considerations:

- New house building and other new development (retail, employment etc) in the open countryside, away from established settlements, should be strictly controlled. Sites proposed in isolated locations away from defined settlements are unlikely to be acceptable.
- Proposals for highly vulnerable development (which includes housing, public buildings and emergency services) within the highest risk areas of the flood plain will not be permitted.
- An initial site viability assessment is required for all site submitted for development⁴.



² https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021_02/planning-policy-wales-edition-11_0.pdf

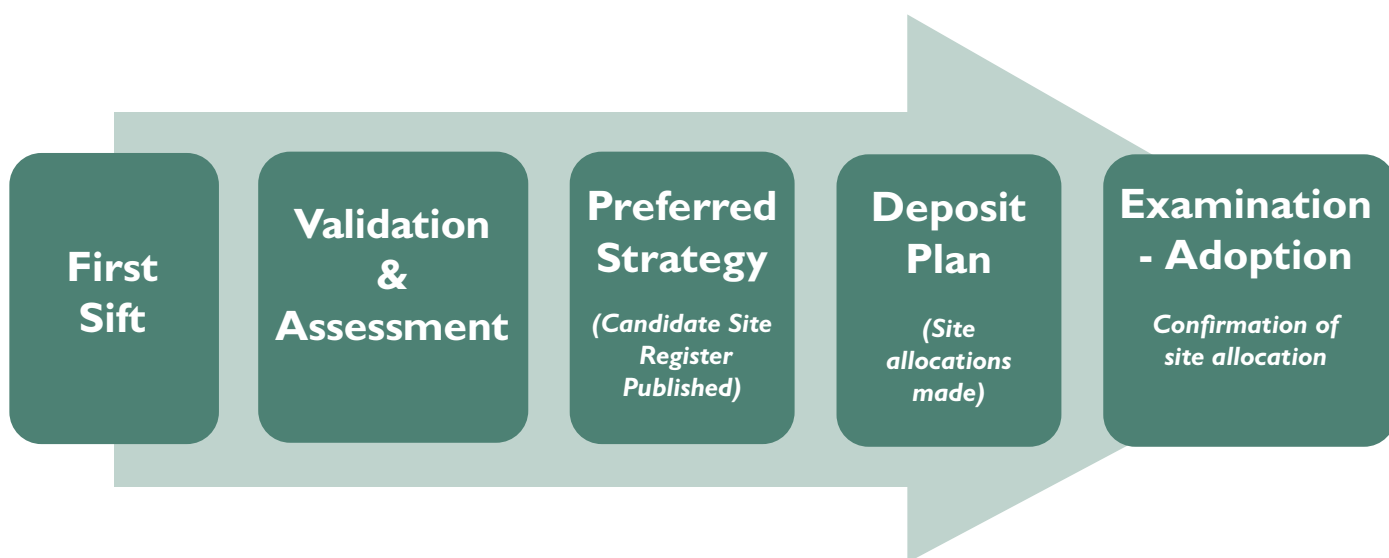
³ https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021_02/planning-policy-wales-edition-11_0.pdf

⁴ For protection sites a viability assessment is not required.

Sites included in the Replacement LDP must be realistic, appropriate and be founded on a robust and credible evidence base, and therefore, the more information that can be submitted to demonstrate that a site is suitable and sustainable, the greater the likelihood of a site being included.

Where insufficient information has been submitted, the Council may request additional information such as ecological surveys, arboricultural surveys, strategic flood consequences assessments, drainage studies, traffic impact assessments, air quality impact assessments, and any other information that may be required to demonstrate that a site is deliverable. The responsibility of undertaking relevant technical work to support the inclusion of a site in the LDP, including financial costs, resides with the site proposer.

■ How will a Candidate Site be assessed?



A first sift:

Sites that are proposed for built development (e.g. housing, employment, retail) will all be subject to the following assessment. If sites are put forward for protection, these will be subject to a separate assessment as relevant, for example considered as part of the green infrastructure assessment, renewable energy work or transport assessments.

The first sift will consider:

- The size of site, to ensure it meets the minimum threshold set out above;
- Relationship to existing settlement; is the site within at the edge of or out of settlement;

If the site is out of or is not closely related to settlement(s) for employment, housing or retail it is highly unlikely to progress because it would be contrary to national planning policy i.e. unsustainable development in the countryside. There are some uses that can be considered acceptable for development in the countryside (e.g. renewable energy, tourism etc.) and these will make it through to the next stage of assessment.

- Conflict with national planning policy – Is the site for highly vulnerable development within a high flood risk zone? (i.e. Flood Risk Zone C2 or Flood Zone 3)
- Does the site for built development have a viability assessment submitted with it? If the site doesn't have such a viability assessment it is unlikely to make it through to the next stage of assessment⁵.

⁵ For protection sites a viability assessment is not required.

Only sites that meet these high-level policy considerations will proceed to Stage 2.

The results of the first sift will be made public as part of the publication of the Candidate Sites Register (see below).

A detailed assessment

Assessment methodology:

The information provided by each site promoter will be verified by the planning policy team, in consultation with other service areas of the Council and where necessary external organisations (e.g. Natural Resources Wales, Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust, utilities etc.)

A ‘traffic light’ coding system will be used by officers in order to identify which sites are more desirable and which sites are less so. The ‘traffic light’ coding system i.e. green, amber and red will be judged against the scoring methodology set out in Table 1 below. This should be read in conjunction with the guidance note on how to complete the Candidate Site form.

Green	Positive
Amber	Further consideration required
Red	Negative
Grey	Not enough information or not applicable

The Council considers that the level of information submitted at the call for Candidate Sites stage should be proportionate and, at this initial site submission stage, it is not expected that the Candidate Site submission should be accompanied by the level of information that would be expected to support a planning application; although inclusion of such detail at this point will assist in the processing of the submission.

However, if a site promoter is aware of a significant constraint, for example, part of the site is within the flood plain, or the site has ecological value, it is within the site promoter’s interests to submit information in respect of this constraint alongside their site submission. The early identification of any issues will help the proposer, the Council and statutory consultees to identify appropriate mitigation measures to alleviate potential problems.

TABLE 1: SCORING METHODOLOGY

Site Information	Scoring Methodology
Section 3: Site Details	
3.1 – 3.3 Site name, location	No assessment-for information purposes
3.3 Site area – Greenfield/ Brownfield	
3.4 – 3.6 Current & proposed uses	
3.7 Planning history	
3.8. Previous Candidate Site of LDP allocation	

Section 4: Ownership

4.1 – 4.2 Public ownership	<p>Green – site is in a published disposal strategy.</p> <p>Amber – site is not yet within a published disposal strategy.</p> <p>Red – there is uncertainty regarding the disposal of the land.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
4.3- 4.4 Landownership	<p>Green – site is owned by a single landowner who supports the site proposal or if in multiple ownership there is evidence of an agreement to the site proposal.</p> <p>Amber – site is owned by multiple landowners with no evidenced agreement to work together.</p> <p>Red – there is uncertainty regarding ownership of all or part of the site and/or landowners do not support the site proposal.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
4.5 Developer	<p>Green – there is evidence of developer interest.</p> <p>Amber – there is no developer interest identified at this stage.</p> <p>Red – N/A.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
4.6 Additional ownership	For information purposes.
4.7 Multiple landownership	For information purposes.
4.8 Legal covenants	<p>Green – no restrictive covenants are in place.</p> <p>Amber – a restrictive covenant is in place on part or all of the land, but it is unlikely to affect its allocation in part or as whole.</p> <p>Red – a covenant is in place that will restrict the development of the site for its proposed use.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>

Section 5: Site Suitability

5.1 Location	<p>Green – the site is within the urban or village settlement boundary(s).</p> <p>Amber – the site is adjoining or closely related to the urban or village boundary(s).</p> <p>Red – the site is not closely related to the urban or village boundary(s).</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
5.2 Physical constraint	<p>Green – site is free from physical and designated constraints.</p> <p>Amber – there are constraints and/or designations on site, but this is unlikely to preclude development.</p> <p>Red – site has significant constraints and/or designations that are likely to preclude development.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
5.3 Flood risk	<p>Green – site within a TAN 15 low flood risk area (Zone 1 shown on Flood Map for Planning).</p> <p>Amber – in a higher flood risk area (Flood Zone 2 or TAN 15 Defended Zone shown on Flood Map for Planning) and acceptable in accordance with TAN 15.</p> <p>Red – wholly within Flood Zone 3 shown on the flood map for planning and not acceptable in accordance with TAN 15.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>

5.4 Ecology	<p>Green – no impact or potential damaging operation to relevant SAC/ SPA/RAMSAR, protected species, SSSI or LNR/NNR or SINC and ecological enhancement.</p> <p>Amber – impact upon SAC/SPA/RAMSAR, protected species, SSSI or LNR/NNR or SINC but appropriate mitigation and enhancement could be achieved so as not to affect the features of the site.</p> <p>Red – development will significantly affect an area of international, national or local importance for nature conservation and/or protected species.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
5.5 Historic environment	<p>Green – the site does not have, or is not within close proximity to, a historic asset, the setting of an historic asset and/or archaeologically sensitive area.</p> <p>Amber – the site has, or is in close proximity to, a historic asset, the setting of a historic asset and/or archaeologically sensitive area, and appropriate mitigation can likely be achieved.</p> <p>Red – the site has, or is in close proximity to, a historic asset, the setting of a historic asset and/or archaeologically sensitive area, and would result in harm to the significance of the historic asset or appropriate mitigation is unlikely to be achieved.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
5.6 & 5.7 Neighbour impacts	<p>Green – no amenity concerns from noise, odour, light or dust pollution.</p> <p>Amber – concerns regarding noise, odour, light and/or dust pollution from one or more sources, but likely that effects can be mitigated.</p> <p>Red – noise, odour, light and/or dust pollution from one or more sources is a significant constraint to development and appropriate mitigation is unlikely to be achievable.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
5.8 Contamination	<p>Green – site is not contaminated.</p> <p>Amber – part or all of the site is contaminated, but it is considered that remediation would be possible and viable.</p> <p>Red – contamination is a significant constraint and would be difficult to deal with/unlikely to be viable.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>



5.9 Air quality	<p>Green – the site is not within an AQMA or AQMA buffer, or there is no net increase in vehicular traffic.</p> <p>Amber – the site is within an AQMA or AQMA buffer, and there is a net increase in vehicular traffic but an AQIA has been submitted and the impact on air quality can be addressed through appropriate mitigation.</p> <p>Red – impact on air quality is a significant constraint that is unlikely to be resolved through mitigation.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
5.10 Community facilities	<p>Green – provision of new or no loss of formal leisure, community facilities, environmental or play space.</p> <p>Amber – the proposal would result in a loss of formal leisure, community facilities, environmental or play space, but they are surplus to requirements or it is considered that provision can be enhanced or replaced elsewhere.</p> <p>Red – the proposal would result in an unacceptable loss of formal leisure, community facilities, environmental or play space.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
5.11 & 5.12 Other constraints	The assessment of this will depend on the nature of the matters raised.
Section 6: Infrastructure Requirements and Delivery	
6.1 Service connection	<p>Green – existing or evidence of suitable connections.</p> <p>Amber – existing or proposed services would be suitable subject to local improvements.</p> <p>Red – existing or proposed services are a significant constraint to development.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
6.2 Highway access	<p>Green – existing or proposed access point is suitable.</p> <p>Amber – existing or proposed access would be suitable subject to local improvements.</p> <p>Red – existing or proposed access points are a significant constraint to development.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
6.3 Sustainable travel	<p>Green – site is proposing sustainable travel options and connections for all types of active travel and shows how this will be implemented.</p> <p>Amber – site is proposing sustainable travel options and connections for all types of active travel but does not indicate how this will be implemented.</p> <p>Red – there are no sustainable travel options or connections proposed.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
6.4 Infrastructure capacity/needs	<p>Green – existing or evidenced infrastructure capacity or delivery.</p> <p>Amber – existing or evidenced infrastructure capacity or delivery suitable subject to local improvements.</p> <p>Red – existing or evidenced infrastructure capacity or delivery a significant constraint to development.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
6.5 Other infrastructure	The assessment of this will depend on the nature of the matters raised.

7: Sustainability and Placemaking

7.1 Search sequence	<p>Green – the proposal provides a mix of uses, inclusive design and meets an adequate density (30 or 50dph in central accessible locations).</p> <p>Amber – N/A.</p> <p>Red – the proposal does not provide a mix of uses, inclusive design or meets an adequate density (30 or 50dph in central accessible locations)</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
7.2 Sustainable placemaking	<p>Green – the proposal is able to meet all the requirements of the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes of PPW and the Strategic Placemaking Principles of Future Wales.</p> <p>Amber – N/A.</p> <p>Red – the proposal is not able to meet all the requirements of the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes of PPW nor the Strategic Placemaking Principles of Future Wales.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
7.3 Well-being goals	The ability of the site to deliver against the well-being goals will be judged against the sites ability to meet the placemaking objectives set out in question 7.2.
7.4 Protection and enhancement opportunities	<p>Green – the proposal is able to deliver protection and enhancement opportunities on the site in terms of environmental features.</p> <p>Amber – the proposal is able to deliver only limited protection and enhancement opportunities on the site in terms of environmental features.</p> <p>Red – N/A.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
7.5 Access to facilities <i>N.B. This should be considered as a functional distance i.e. along road, cycle networks that than as the crow flies.</i>	<p>Green – site has shown it is accessible (800m) to a number of facilities including schools, shops, health services within walking distance or is providing them on site.</p> <p>Amber – site has shown it is accessible to a number of facilities including schools, shops, health services by sustainable forms of transport.</p> <p>Red – the site will rely on private vehicular transport to access key services.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
7.6 Engagement	For information purposes.
7.7 Climate change	<p>Green – development proposed to be zero carbon.</p> <p>Amber – some low or zero carbon energy generating technologies proposed above Building Regulations.</p> <p>Red – development is simply going to meet Building Regulations.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>

Section 8: Site Deliverability and Viability

The **Viability Assessment** information supplied will be checked. Where sites progress through the LDP development process additional information and assessments will be required to ensure the site can meet policy requirements and remain viable and deliverable.

8.1 & 8.2 Timescales	<p>Green – site is currently available and can be wholly/partly delivered within the plan period.</p> <p>Amber – site is currently occupied, but it is anticipated that it will be available during the plan period.</p> <p>Red – site is currently occupied, and it is not clear whether it will be available during the plan period.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
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8.3 Delivery	For information purposes.
8.4 Site survey requirements	For information purposes.
8.5 Self/custom build	For information purposes.
8.6 Affordable housing provision	<p>Green – site will provide for more than the current affordable housing threshold.</p> <p>Amber – site will provide up to the current affordable housing threshold.</p> <p>Red – site will not provide affordable housing.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>
8.7 Gypsy and Traveller accommodation and use class	No assessment – for information purposes.
8.8 Non-residential use class	For information purposes.
8.9 Job creation	<p>Green – the site will provide new economic floor space and news jobs.</p> <p>Amber – the site will sustain economic floorspace and/or jobs.</p> <p>Red – the site will result in the loss of economic floorspace and/or jobs.</p> <p>Grey – insufficient information submitted.</p>

Sites will also be assessed through the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal. The Initial Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Report outlines the methodology applied to assessing alternative Candidate Sites.

Additional sites proposed at the Preferred Strategy stage are expected to replicate this assessment.

■ **When will I be able to see what sites have been submitted?**

A Candidate Site Register has been published alongside the Preferred Strategy. This will be updated to support the Deposit Plan and will be published alongside this in late 2024.

■ **What happens after the Preferred Strategy consultation?**

At this stage it may be necessary for the Council to ask for further information, including a review of viability information previously submitted. The planning policy team shall contact site representatives as necessary.

■ **What if I have a new site after the Preferred Strategy?**

Every effort should be made to avoid submitting new sites after the Preferred Strategy stage as it will be difficult for the Council to assess these and they may be considered as alternative or challenge sites.

■ **When will I know if my site allocated in the LDP?**

The Preferred Strategy stage is when the Council sets out its direction for growth which may include the identification of strategic sites. It is at the Deposit Plan stage where the Council will identify those sites which they consider to be suitable for allocation.

Please note that the LDP will go through an examination process and it is only at the formal adoption stage of the LDP that site allocations are finally confirmed.

Do you have any questions?

Please get in touch with a member of the planning policy team, email ldp.consultation@newport.gov.uk or call a member of the Planning Policy Team on 01633 656656.

We would be happy to talk through the process or provide a presentation on this specific stage.

