Lydney Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2043

Lydney
Town Council

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Lydney Neighbourhood Plan (Review)

2025-2043

With thanks to Lydney Steering Group and the members of Lydney Town Council who have given their time to shape the content of this plan. Thank you also for the contributions of local people from Lydney Forward Project and beyond.

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Contents

Foreword 4

Summary of The Plan – Quick Read 5

Protecting and Enhancing the Environment 5

Meeting the Needs of Our Community 5

Supporting and Building Our Local Economy 5

Promoting Safe and Sustainable Local Travel 5

1. Introduction and Background 7

1.1 Introduction 7

1.2 Neighbourhood Planning Policy Context 7

1.3 How Lydney Neighbourhood Plan 2 has been produced 12

1.4 Introduction to Lydney 13

1.5 Pre-application Community Engagement Protocol 17

2. Vision and Objectives 20

2.1 An Updated Vision for Lydney 20

2.2 Neighbourhood Plan Objectives 21

3. Development Policies 23

3.1 Built and Natural Environment 25

LYD ENV1:Location of new development (alternative) 28

LYD ENV2: Protecting and enhancing Lydney's Natural Environment 33

LYD ENV3: Protecting Lydney's Heritage 39

LYD ENV4: High quality design and local distinctiveness 41

LYD ENV5: Low-carbon and renewable energy generation 45

LYD ENV6: Flooding and water management 48

3.2 Housing and Community Infrastructure 51

LYD HC1: Housing Choice for Everyone 54

LYD HC2: Protecting and providing community facilities 56

3.3 Economy and Tourism 58

LYD ET1: Employment 60

LYD ET2: Supporting Lydney Town Centre 64

LYD ET3: Lydney Harbour Regeneration 68

LYD ET4: Promoting local tourism 70

3.4 Accessibility and Transport 72

LYD TRAN1: Sustainable and Active Travel and Improvements to transport infrastructure 75

LYD TRAN2: Public rights of way and wildlife corridors 77

4. Community Projects 79

5. Delivering the Plan 81

Foreword

Lydney has an important role to play in the economic, social and cultural success of the Forest of Dean. The second Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), and the policies contained within it, set out how we believe the demands that come with this role can be positively accommodated whilst meeting the needs of the local community.

This means planning for positive growth, whilst ensuring that what is most special and distinctive about Lydney: its rural nature, green space and heritage, are protected and where possible further enhanced.

This Plan, its policies and supporting statements are the Lydney community response to how we can plan to positively address the challenges and meet community needs in the coming eighteen years. It is a plan for growth and improved infrastructure to ensure that Lydney is socially integrated and economically viable, whilst also retaining its heritage and natural environment. Our updated plan is also now supported by three detailed studies into our local housing needs, Lydney's distinct character and a master plan to guide the improvement of the town centre.

The plan has been developed from listening to local voices expressed in a series of local consultations, beginning with the Lydney Forward exercise in 2020/21 and followed by consultations as the plan developed.

This may be the point to thank everyone who has made a contribution to the development of the plan, and particularly to thank members of the steering group who have given their time and expertise to the production of the final plan, and to Place Studio who have guided us through this process.

Summary of The Plan – Quick Read

Neighbourhood Planning is a right given to communities by the Localism Act to write plans that give them increased influence in planning for the future of their communities.

Lydney's NDP review builds upon the vision, objectives and policies in our first Lydney Neighbourhood Plan. The review brings the Plan up to date and extends its life to 2043. It has been prepared by a group of local volunteer residents with the support of the Town Council and Forest of Dean Council.

It responds to our current and future local issues and priorities, meeting the needs and aspirations of the whole community.

It prioritises:

Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

- Protecting our green and natural environment
- Conserving Lydney's heritage and character
- Promoting good design and a safe and low crime community
- Supporting local renewable energy
- Preventing and Managing Local Flood Risk

Meeting the Needs of Our Community

- Encouraging appropriate sustainable development
- Supporting and developing local housing for all
- Protecting and Improving community facilities

Supporting and Building Our Local Economy

- Helping grow local employment opportunities
- Supporting Lydney's tourism
- Promoting Lydney Town Centre vitality
- Modernising and improving infrastructure

Promoting Safe and Sustainable Local Travel

- Supporting low carbon and healthy travel
- Supporting enhanced wildlife corridors

When it is "made" or adopted, it will replace our first Neighbourhood Plan. It will be used by applicants and land owners, local people and Forest of Dean Council when determining planning applications within Lydney Town Council area to help ensure Lydney is protected and improved and local people get the development we need and want in the right place.

1. Introduction and Background

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1.1 Introduction

Lydney Neighbourhood Plan

Lydney Town Council was designated as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of creating a Neighbourhood Plan on 17 January 2013. Lydney's first Neighbourhood Plan was formally made, or adopted in 2014. It planned for the period up to 2024. Our Neighbourhood Plan area follows the Parish boundary as shown on map 1 overleaf.

Why Update Lydney's Neighbourhood Plan?

The Neighbourhood Plan for Lydney gives those who live and work here a positive and proactive format to influence planning and development decisions. Our first plan has provided strong local policy support, but it is now at the end of its plan period life. It is therefore important that our new neighbourhood plan provides an updated set of strong policies that, alongside the Forest of Dean Local Plan, address the needs and wishes of Lydney's community today and for the next 18 years.

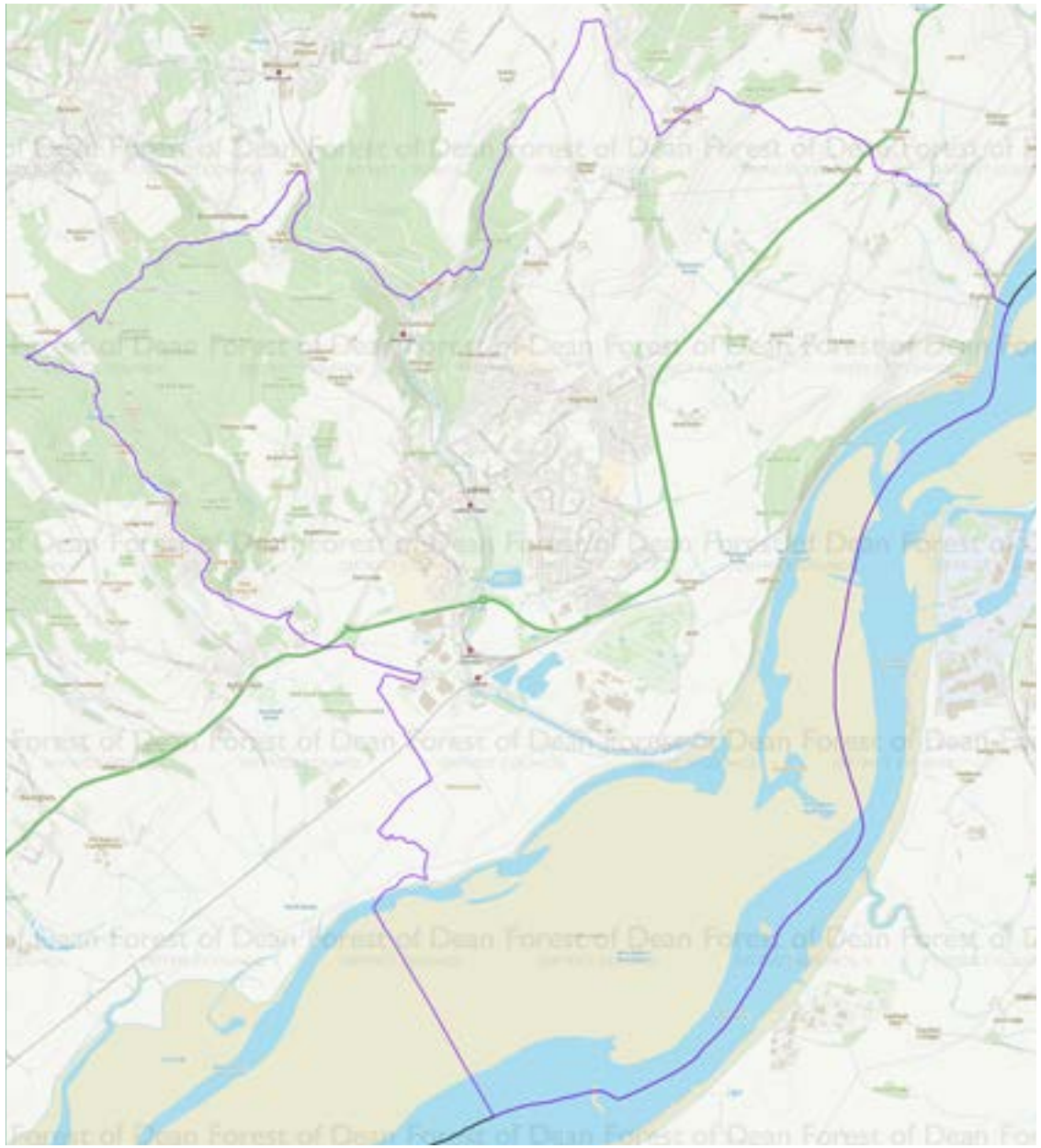
The review of the first plan will refresh and strengthen the policies that address matters that you have told us are still important like Lydney's housing, environment, and our town centre. It will include new policies that step up to new local issues and circumstances including how we can address climate change locally.

Our Neighbourhood Plan will work alongside the Forest of Dean Local Plan which will address strategic town planning matters that go beyond our local boundaries like large scale housing development. On this basis the Plan period is 2025 to 2043.

1.2 Neighbourhood Planning Policy Context

National Legislation and Policy

The Localism Act 2011[1] introduced the rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development and promote better land use in their community by preparing Neighbourhood Plans. The aim is to empower local communities to use the planning system to promote appropriate and sustainable development in their area.



Map 1: Our Neighbourhood Plan Area (source: Forest of Dean District Council)
Our Neighbourhood Plan area follows the Parish boundary shown by the purple line

Neighbourhood Plans must meet a number of legal requirements: they must have appropriate regard to national policy in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework[2]; they must support local development needs as set out in the Adopted Forest of Dean Development Plan (The Local Plan) and must also satisfy a number of other basic conditions ensuring it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

Regulations set out a number of formal steps that must be taken in preparing this Neighbourhood Plan. This includes two rounds of consultation, as well as independent examination and a parish referendum where our community can vote to approve it. If more than 50% of those who vote approve the Plan, it will be adopted – the formal term is “made” – and the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Forest of Dean Development Plan and be used for determining planning applications in Lydney Parish.

Forest of Dean Local Plan

The current Local Plan consists of a number of documents, which set out an overall strategy to guide development across the District, but only until 2026.

The Core Strategy[3] is the principal document and contains:

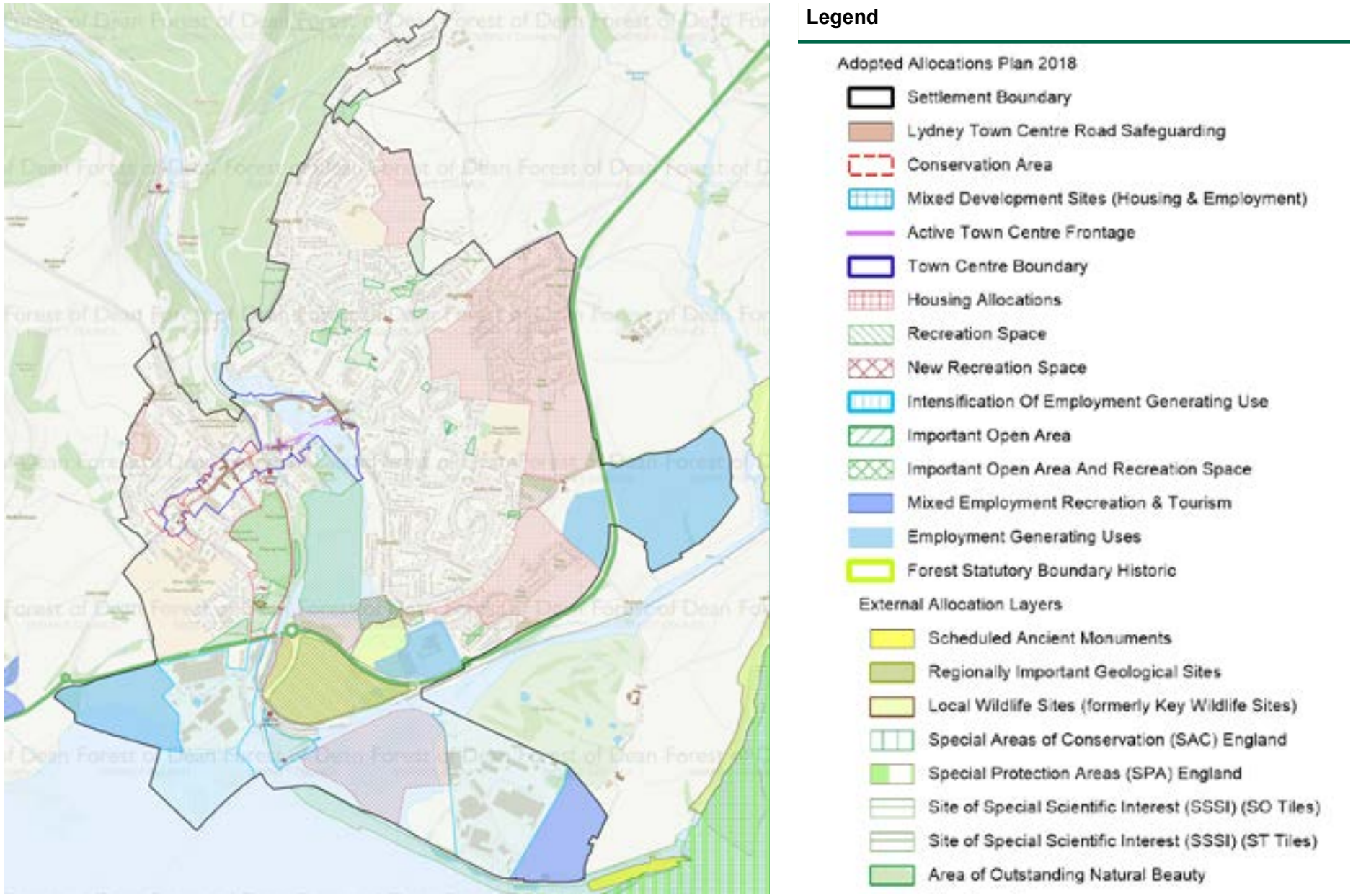
- an overall vision setting out how the whole district and places within it should evolve
- strategic objectives for the area focusing on key issues including housing and employment

The Allocations Plan[4] that was adopted in June 2018 contains:

- housing development requirements
- allocation sites for development
- protected land designations
- detailed guidance for development

The adopted Local Plan allocated land for about 1,900 new dwellings at Lydney, the largest amount in the Forest area. It also identified about 30 hectares of employment land and additional retail floor space for the town centre.

The adopted LP allocated approximately 36% of new housing and more than 50% of its employment provision to Lydney. Much of the housing land is in the process of being developed and some of the employment land has been taken up. Within the town centre the most important site that was previously identified has been developed to provide a new supermarket. Development activity is high compared with much of the remaining Forest of Dean District (FoDD) and is in part due to the perceived accessibility of the town from the south west.



Map 2: Adopted Planning and Environment Policies (source: Forest of Dean District Council)

Forest of Dean District Local Plan

On the 6th July 2026, the Forest of Dean Council gave notice of the commencement of a new Local Plan. The Local Plan will form part of the Development Plan for the District alongside made Neighbourhood Plans. Adoption of the new Local Plan is timetabled for 2029.

The new Local Plan will continue to be the vehicle for the Local Planning Authority to deliver overall growth and sustainable development, for the whole of the Forest of Dean district. It will address each of the topic areas which are covered in this Neighbourhood Plan in detail for the area of Lydney.

As set out in section 5 of this Plan, once a new Local Plan is in place, the Lydney Neighbourhood Plan may be reviewed to ensure policies to remain an effective part of the updated development plan.

1.3 How Lydney Neighbourhood Plan 2 has been produced

Town Council and Local Steering Group

A steering group of local community, business representatives and Lydney Town Councillors have worked together to prepare this updated Plan, operating under the auspices of Lydney Town Council and chaired by Anne Harley, former Councillor and Mayor.

Consultation and Feedback

Each stage of the updated Lydney Neighbourhood Plan process to date has aimed to build a clear understanding of local community views together with locally produced evidence all set within the context of national and Forest of Dean Council planning policy.

In addition to meeting the legal formal consultation requirements, the Steering Group has undertaken several informal stages of engagement including stakeholder workshops and community drop in sessions and online engagement that has gathered local opinions, needs and topic evidence to inform the update of the plan.

Further details of the consultation have been recorded in the Consultation Statement which can be found on the website www.lydneyndp2.com and demonstrates that the engagement processes followed, fully comply with the Regulations of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012[5].

The Plan will be amended, where appropriate, in response to both public and statutory consultation comments received.

Evidence Base

To meet legal requirements, all policies must be justified with sufficient and robust evidence.

Evidence combines;

- National and strategic policy
- National, county and district guidance
- Views and information provided by the community and stakeholders
- Survey work undertaken by the Steering Group members or through direct engagement with the community e.g. to identify locally valued heritage assets.
- Technical work undertaken by expert consultants in relation to housing needs, character and design and a master plan for the town centre.

The “Evidence Base” documents are summarised in background text supporting each policy and are available via the NDP Website (www.lydneyndp2.com).

The key evidence base reports include: the Launch Report, Masterplan, Housing Needs Assessment and Design Guide.

1.4 Introduction to Lydney

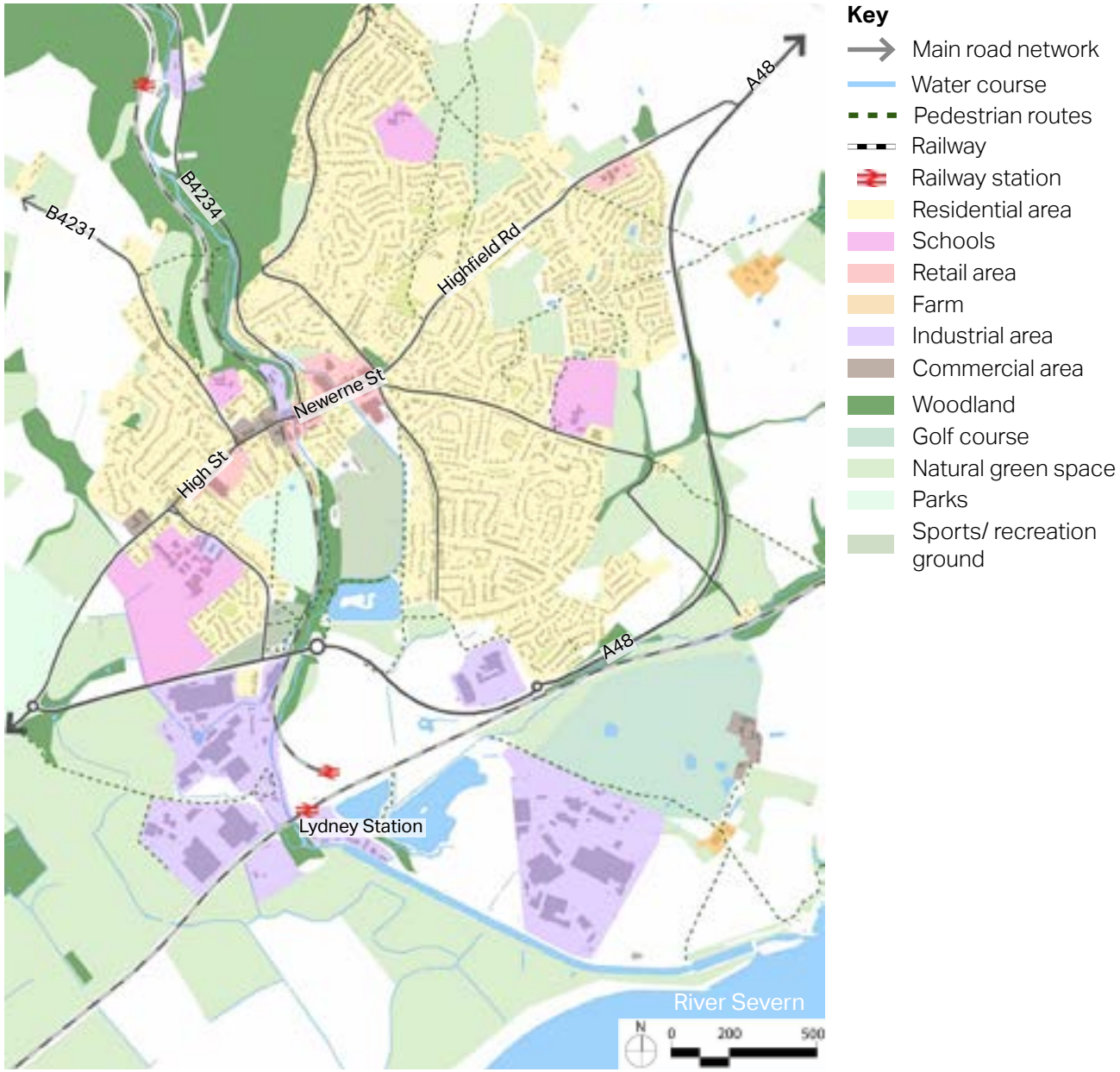
Lydney Today

Lydney is an historic market town frequently referred to as the 'Gateway to the Forest', being bordered to the west by the Forest of Dean, and to the east by the River Severn. It is a fairly compact town with the main concentrations of housing being somewhat elevated from the centre, not all parts are well connected to the centre. Lydney acts as an important economic and transport hub for the surrounding villages and wider community.

Environment

The River Lyd flows through the town joining the Severn at the Harbour. Lydney receives tidal flows from the Severn and is situated on a flood plain. Flooding is an issue for Lydney both from the River Lyd and the tides from the Severn; parts of Lydney have been defined as a Flood Zone 3 by the Environment Agency.

Lydney has two main recreation areas: Bathurst Park and the Recreation Trust Grounds. A third area much used and valued by the residents is the Harbour, which whilst accommodating the Yacht Club also provides public access for walking, dog walking etc. Lydney's open space provision is recognised as the best in the area. A smaller, but equally valuable recreation space is the park and recreation



Map 3: Key Features of Lydney (source: Lydney Masterplan 2024)

area on Primrose Hill Mesne, maintained by the Town Council and supported by the Friends of the Mesne. The Town Council also maintains a number of small recreation spaces in residential areas within the town.

The Lydney community values its environmentally rich and diverse location, the “special places” that exist within the area, which add to its natural feel. ‘Lydney Town Marsh and Sidings’ is a Key Wildlife Site designated by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. The Severn Estuary European Marine Site is designated a Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA).

To the south-east of Lydney town down to the edge of the Severn Estuary is the ‘Lydney Cliff’ Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Regional Important Geological Site (RIGS). The area to the south and west of the Harbour and Harbour Road is a Strategic Nature Area (SNA) called ‘Aylburton’. This SNA is also a priority area for biodiversity enhancement particularly for coastal habitats, wet meadows and grazing marsh.

Areas of saltmarsh are dwindling in the UK as a whole, therefore the Severn Estuary saltmarsh (over 1100 hectares in total) is increasing in value as a wildlife habitat. It is an important component of the Severn Estuary SSSI, SPA and SAC. Saltmarsh vegetation holds sediment from the Estuary, in some cases maintaining a natural intertidal “buffer” for flooding and high waves. The management of the saltmarsh, including the intensity of grazing, affects not only the wildlife value of this habitat, but also maintenance of the net area of saltmarsh on the Severn Estuary. Larger areas of saltmarsh and mudflat are found around New Grounds (at Slimbridge – Headquarters for the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust), Lydney, Beachley and Sedbury. These habitats provide important feeding grounds for wading birds, migratory wildfowl and fish (at some or all stages of their life cycles).

This Plan also intersects the Wye Valley Forest of Dean Bat Sites Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is a 142.70ha area made up of several sites used by lesser and greater horseshoe bats for breeding and hibernating. Other bat species found in these

sites include brown long-eared and Natterer's bats. Outside the designation of Lydney's NDP area is another SSSI on the edge of Bream called 'Devil's Chapel Scowles'.

Heritage

Lydney's history and its heritage underpins Lydney itself; its Roman remains, echoes of its legendary ship building and industrial era, are still present today.

There are four Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Lydney; the Harbour, the Town Cross, Little Camp Hill and Lydney Park Camp and Roman remains. There are nearly 70 listed structures and over 500 entries on the County Historic Environment Record in the Lydney NDP area. Since 2005 Lydney has embraced two distinctive Conservation Areas (see map 7) centred on the Town Centre and Bathurst Park, and St Mary's Church and its precincts.

Community

The Lydney NDP designated area has a population of 10,043.[6] Within Lydney there are areas of deprivation. The dimensions of deprivation are indicators based on the four selected household characteristics – employment, education, health and disability, and housing.

Economy

Employment opportunities in Lydney mainly exist in the retail sector, education, care services and manufacturing. There are a range of industrial units spread over several sites within Lydney: the Harbour Industrial Estate, Hurst Farm, Church Road and Mead Lane. New developments include a proposed eel farm, fish smokery and visitor centre on the site of the former Pine End works adjacent to the Harbour.

Lydney Town Centre

Lydney has a strong independent retail offering. Much of Lydney's current office accommodation is based in converted buildings in the Town Centre.

There is a high level of commuting out from Lydney, with people working in areas such as Gloucester, Chepstow and Bristol. At the time of the 2001 Census and the 'Out Commuting from the Forest of Dean' study, 1,282 of 4,260 economically active residents commuted out of the area to work. Provision of additional well paid employment within the Lydney area would make a significant contribution to reducing traffic congestion at either end of the A48 at Over roundabout and Chepstow.

Lydney's heritage as a market town is important and improvements to the Town Centre are seen as vital if Lydney is to continue to be a sustainable and vibrant market town. Lydney's historic environment

plays an important role in achieving a successful and vibrant Town Centre. Improvements to the Town Centre (as defined on map 4) should reflect Lydney's heritage with the installation of any modern infrastructure being as unobtrusive as possible.

Leisure & Tourism

Providing sustainable recreational activities and other facilities benefits local residents and will attract visitors to our town. The Town Council can play a part in developing improved amenities and the long-term protection of open spaces for sport, recreation and environmental sustainability. It recognises the need for flexibility to match changing lifestyles and community needs.

Tourism plays an important role in supporting the local economy and The Plan recognises the need to provide a clean environment, a warm welcome for visitors, and a clear description of what the town has to offer and information on how to find it. Over time, the Town Centre has to respond to a balanced mix of retail and other activities and to "sell" the whole town experience which is essential for the future. This includes promoting the cultural, heritage and leisure opportunities to attract visitors, as well as locals, and to make it a pleasant and memorable experience. It is important to reverse the perception that "towns close at 5.30pm" and to provide assurance that it is actually safe to visit for an evening out.

Lydney already promotes and embraces its many facets. To the south of the town are the tidal waters of the Severn, once a busy conduit for travel and trade shipped out from Lydney Harbour. The town itself is now a busy shopping and commercial centre with a diverse range of leisure facilities and tourist attractions; Dean Forest Railway operates regular steam trains and has recently extended services to Parkend. Just outside the town lies Lydney Park Estate with its spectacular spring gardens, and Taurus Crafts, one of the premier visitor attractions in the area featuring an art gallery, craft workshops, garden centre, organic shop and

restaurant. However, in order for the tourist industry to thrive it is important that these enterprises are further supported by residents and visitors alike.

This Plan supports Dean Forest Railway, Taurus Crafts, Lydney Park Estate and other businesses which encourage visitors, promote tourism, signposting the town as the 'Gateway to the Forest'. This Plan supports Dean Forest Railway in extending their rail connection to Cinderford.

Traffic and Transport

The poor road system within the town and its inability to support the growing number of vehicular movements to and from the settlements especially north of Lydney is of great concern. There is a need to drastically improve the road network to ensure free access through the town from settlements surrounding Lydney without causing congestion and air pollution.

Public Rights of Way are a valuable recreational resource which must be protected for future generations. There are guidelines in place to ensure that developers and the District Council provide for these paths when seeking to modify paths under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990[7]. Particular attention needs to be paid to DEFRA Rights of Way Circular 1/09. In particular Section 7 'Planning Permission and Public Rights of Way'[8] which states:

Lydney public transport system needs to be integrated in order to be accessible to the entire community. Public transport needs to link residential settlements, employment sites, leisure areas and commercial sites to the villages and towns in the Forest to ensure easy access for employment, retail and leisure purposes. The ongoing improvements to pedestrian and cycling connections between the town centre, bus and railway station and harbour are a significant priority.

1.5 Pre-application Community Engagement Protocol

The importance and benefit of early community engagement in planning applications is acknowledged as key to shaping good places to live. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out "Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community" (NPPF paragraph 40).

Discussions between applicants and the local community, as well as with the Local Planning Authority, from the earliest stages enables a more collaborative approach to the process of preparing a development proposal that will need to balance many factors as the design evolves "Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and responsive engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot." (NPPF paragraph 137).

The National Design Guide[9] also highlights the role and importance of community engagement in shaping the use and development of land.

Whilst it is acknowledged that in the early stages of considering a development proposal, applicants may wish for any discussions with Lydney Town Council to be confidential, involvement of the local community should happen at the earliest possible stage. The Lydney Town Council Planning Pre-application Protocol (available on the Town Council website) is intended to facilitate a structured approach to enable effective, positive and early involvement of the local community in outline and full planning applications addressing all aspects of a proposal.

In order to ensure a positive and structured engagement with the local community potential applicants bringing forward a significant development proposal that are for:

- 10 or more new homes
- A commercial development of more than 1000m^2 floorspace or a site likely to have five or more employees

are encouraged to proactively undertake proportionate and effective pre-application engagement, particularly with regard to design issues, with Lydney Town Council and the affected communities *in accordance with the Lydney Community Pre-Application Engagement Protocol.*

The Planning Pre-application Protocol can be found here: Lydney Town Council Policies & Procedures

2. Vision and Objectives

2. Vision and Objectives

2.1 An Updated Vision for Lydney

The Plan provides a sustainable environmental, economic and social vision for the future of the town and sets objectives and associated delivery planning policies and community projects.

Vision

Lydney will continue to build its position as an important, attractive, growing and thriving coastal harbour market town at the gateway to the Forest of Dean.

All developments will enhance the health and well-being of residents whilst protecting and enhancing local wildlife and nature, building resilience against the effects of climate change and rising sea levels that may threaten the security of the town.

Our Neighbourhood Plan will balance meeting the needs of its population with promoting the town's attractiveness to new employers, visitors and residents whilst taking local action addressing the huge challenges of a more uncertain and warming world.

Lydney will provide local people with opportunities to have rewarding jobs, homes that meet changing needs, a thriving town centre and accessible health, education and community facilities for all. Travelling out will be a choice rather than a necessity.

As its growth continues, the town will conserve its heritage and retain its distinct character, it will strengthen its sense of being "one" integrated, diverse, safe and sustainable community. To help deliver its aims and bolster its role within the forest, Lydney will develop strong partnerships with other town and parish councils, District and County councils and other statutory and voluntary organisations.

2.2 Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

Topic Area	Objective
1. Development	Promote Lydney's role as the 'gateway to the forest', enable mixed use development to meet local needs including housing, employment, shopping, and community facilities; including health and educational provision.
2. Natural and Built Environment	Protect, conserve and enhance our locally valued natural and built environments, Lydney's built and cultural heritage and character by promoting locally distinctive, high quality and sustainable design and placemaking.
3. Climate Change and Renewable Energy	Reduce the climate impact of the town and promote the well-being of both humans and nature.
4. Housing and Community Infrastructure	Ensure housing development meets the evidenced need of our local community; providing sustainable, high quality and accessible housing for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds and is delivered in the right places. Ensure the necessary community facilities, education, training and employment opportunities are delivered alongside development to increase community well-being and remove health and social inequalities.
5. Economy and Tourism	Protect and support the vitality of Lydney's existing employment spaces. Support the expansion of Lydney's economy and local employment opportunities. Support the development of Lydney Harbour as a key driver of the tourist and visitor economy.
6. Town centre	Support and encourage a distinctly local shopping offer that can enhance the identity of the town. Encourage town centre development to meet the needs of a rapidly expanding town. Identify and support a Town Centre/focal point (or town square) for Lydney. Support the regeneration of the former Co-op site.
7. Accessibility and Transport	Support improvements to the transport network to enable all members of the local community to access and engage with the amenities and facilities of Lydney using healthy and sustainable transport. Enhance Lydney's connections to the forest. Contribute to addressing safety, pollution, and congestion issues in the centre of Lydney.

3. Development Policies

3. Development Policies

Government guidance sets out that a policy in a Neighbourhood Plan should be: “clear and unambiguous… It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared”

The planning policies on the following pages will be used to help determine planning applications within the Lydney Neighbourhood Area. Each policy relates back to at least one objective, which in turn links to the overall vision. They focus on specific planning matters that are of the greatest interest to the local community.

There are many other policy matters that have been left to the Forest of Dean Local Plan to cover. This avoids unnecessary repetition of policies between the two plans, which work together and must be complimentary.

Planning policies are shown within a box and in bold text, to clearly distinguish them. Before each policy is some supporting text that explains the purpose of the policy, how it will be applied and, where helpful / relevant, what evidence it draws upon and how the policy relates to other development plan policies.

We have colour coded each section with the aim of making it easier to follow

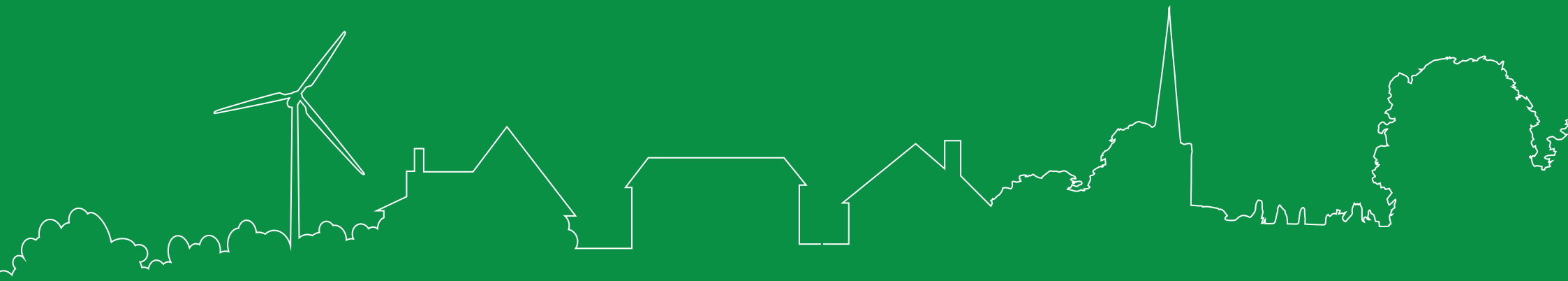
3.1 Built and Natural Environment

3.2 Housing and Community Infrastructure

3.3 Economy and Tourism

3.4 Accessibility and Transport

3.1 Built and Natural Environment



3.1 Built and Natural Environment

Introduction

"Lydney's Park and green spaces are a huge asset to the town."

(Lydney Forward community engagement 2020/21)

Consultation with the community and local business identified the need for increased employment opportunities as the population grows, with particular emphasis on provision for the younger generation. A balance between the valuable natural assets within the town and the needs of the community for additional housing and employment developments is one of the main challenges of this plan. The policies aim to ensure that any developments meet the needs of the community as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment and fit in with existing developments as described in the Design Codes and guidance. Proposals that include affordable housing, provisions for elderly and disabled residents as well as for growing families, will be supported by this plan.

The Policies aim to ensure that new developments respect the setting and aesthetics of the many heritage assets in the town. The plan also aims to support development that enhances walkways and footpaths, and wildlife corridors to support improvements in biodiversity and to provide easy access to the revitalising benefits of being close to nature.

LYD ENV1: LOCATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

What does this policy mean for the community?

This updated policy aims to support sustainable development within the defined settlement boundary of Lydney and to set criteria for proposals to protect our valued rural setting and local identity.

It is an overarching policy that supports delivery of all Neighbourhood Plan Objectives through development.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development within settlement boundaries

is considered the most sustainable, especially where this re-uses previously developed and under-used land. Local authorities are required to identify land to meet housing and other land use requirements. Local Plans or sites allocation plans may allocate the most sustainably located greenfield land outside of settlement boundaries, minimising impacts and maximising the efficient use of the land.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.4 – Development at Settlements

This policy seeks to ensure all development contributes to the overall aims of the core strategy, and that development should be concentrated at settlements and be of a scale and nature which is compatible with their size and role. The policy draws attention to the south and the three towns, including Lydney, likely to experience most change.

The adopted Core Strategy allocated land for about 1,900 new dwellings at Lydney, the largest amount in the Forest area. It also identified about 30 hectares of employment land and additional retail floor space for the town centre. Much of the housing land is in the process of being developed and some of the employment land has been taken up.

Draft Local Plan

The Forest of Dean District Draft Local Plan 2021-2043 emerging preferred strategy for Lydney was being prepared as the Neighbourhood Plan was being reviewed and submitted. In July 2026 FoDDC decided to withdraw the emerging Local Plan and to produce an up-to-date local plan through the gateway process. On this basis Section 5 of this Plan comments about the way in which it will address the future adoption of an updated Local Plan in due course.

Policy LP.1 Sustainable Development

Protection of Lydney's open spaces and natural environment are one of the top priorities for the community. (Lydney Forward report, NDP review launch report). As set out in more detail in the next section, the biodiversity of the area is diverse and a number of areas are designated for nature conservation value from the internationally important Severn Estuary, to locally important Town Marsh and Sidings. Lydney Cliff is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Regional Important Geological Site (RIGS). Development must protect these features.

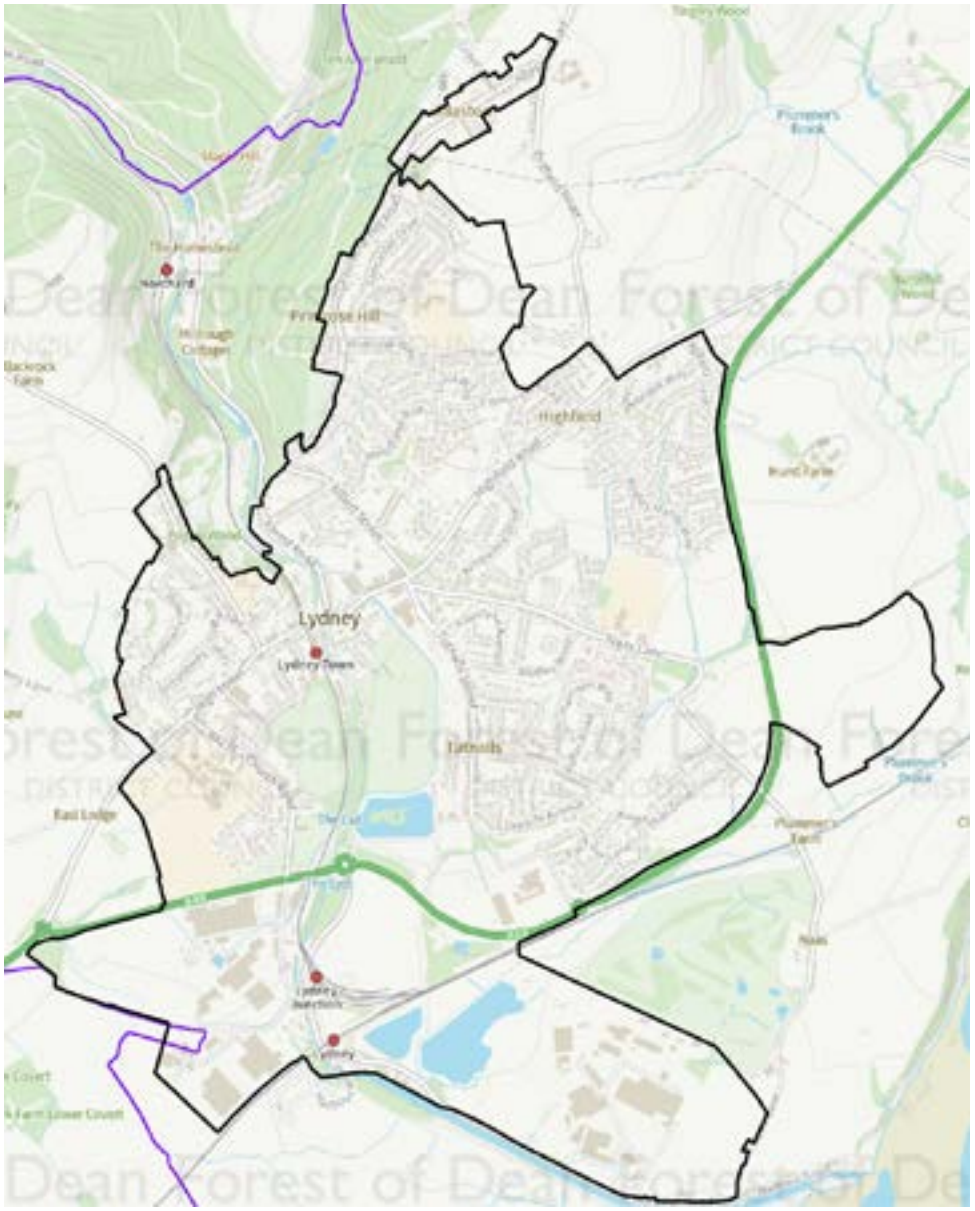
While in principle, Lydney residents recognise the benefits that growth can bring and support housing, employment and infrastructure development through allocation of sites in the adopted Forest of Dean Local Plan, the enhancement of the natural environment and access to it should not be compromised by unsuitable projects.

In order that Lydney's valued rural setting, its distinct built character and its natural environments are conserved, the Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure Lydney remains contained within a defined area and does not merge with neighbouring settlements of Yorkley to the north, Blakeney to the north-east, Bream to the north-west and Aylburton to the south-west. (see map 4).

Development will be supported where it makes a positive contribution to meeting the needs of our local community by addressing the objectives and wider policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

LYD ENV1: Location of new development (alternative)

1. Development within the Lydney settlement boundary, as identified on map 4 will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it is in accordance with other relevant development plan policies.



Map 4: Lydney Settlement Boundary (source: Forest of Dean District Council)

LYD ENV2: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING LYDNEY'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Green Infrastructure Network and Nature Recovery

What does this policy mean for the community?

This strengthened policy seeks to provide protection to Lydney's locally valued natural environment and biodiversity and to support proposals that enhance it to the benefit of local people and wildlife.

The policy supports delivery of Neighbourhood Plan Objectives, by protecting the natural environment and by reducing the impacts of climate change.

Background

Lydney community values its environmentally rich and diverse location, the "special places" that exist within the area, which add to its natural feel.

Biodiversity is at the very heart of sustainable development and can contribute positively to social cohesion, community well-being and quality of life. The Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan (The Plan) seeks to ensure that protecting, and wherever possible enhancing, Lydney's biodiversity is given the highest priority when considering planning matters.

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The NPPF requires strategic plans made by local authorities to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment including designated or protected landscapes and views, habitats and biodiversity and geology.

Natural England have published a National Green Infrastructure Framework which contains 16 principles and Green Infrastructure standards that are intended to guide local authorities and communities in assessment and delivery of infrastructure that achieves appropriate levels of quality.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.1, Design and environmental protection.

The policy acts as an umbrella strategic policy for much of Lydney NDP Built and Natural Environment chapter.

The policy intended to promote local distinctiveness as well as good design and conservation by protection of designated and locally valued non-designated historic and natural features and by ensuring that development takes account of the maintenance or enhancement of the quality of the landscape and design quality. It seeks to ensure that new development makes a positive contribution and this may

include environmental improvements. It also sets out some basic considerations against which development proposals will be assessed.

Core Policy CSP.2; Climate Change Adaptation identifies primary development issues and measures that need to be addressed to adapt to climate change including landscape and biodiversity benefits, planting and wider green infrastructure corridors that link to existing habitat features and networks.

Landscape Designations

Lydney is located within the context of natural environments of European, and national significance (See maps 2 and 5).

- The Severn Estuary European Marine Site is designated a Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA). The Severn Estuary saltmarsh (over 1100 hectares in total) is increasing in value as a wildlife habitat. It is an important component of the Severn Estuary SSSI, SPA and SAC. Saltmarsh vegetation holds sediment from the Estuary, in some cases maintaining a natural intertidal "buffer" for flooding and high waves.
- 'Lydney Town Marsh and Sidings' is a Key Wildlife Site designated by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (see map 2).
- To the south-east of Lydney town down to the edge of the Severn Estuary is the 'Lydney Cliff' Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Regional Important Geological Site (RIGS).
- The area to the south and west of the Harbour and Harbour Road is a Strategic Nature Area (SNA) called 'Aylburton'. This SNA is also a priority area for biodiversity enhancement particularly for coastal habitats, wet meadows and grazing marsh.
- This Plan also intersects the Wye Valley Forest of Dean Bat Sites Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is a 142.70ha area made up of several sites used by lesser and greater horseshoe bats for breeding and hibernating. Other bat species found in these sites include brown long-eared and Natterer's bats. Outside the designation of Lydney's NDP area is another SSSI on the edge of Bream called 'Devil's Chapel Scowles'.

Adhering to National and European policies, Lydney's protected species are identified in the Natural England Protected Species List and European Protected Species List. Protected habitats and Conservation Areas are afforded protection under existing National and European policies which this Plan endorses.

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) and Biodiversity studies should be completed as appropriate. Furthermore, due regard and thought for Lydney's sustainability and biodiversity should be included in every planning application.

Local Background

Landscape Character Context

The landscape of Lydney Neighbourhood Area varies with four distinct landscape character areas across the area. To the north west this area is part of the Wooded Scarp and Lower Scarp slopes and has steep, exposed and elevated topography with extensive coniferous trees forming woodland backdrop to the lower slopes. A significant feature of this landscape is the historic parkland at Lydney Park. To the

south the landscape falls within the Drained Riverine Farmland and Grazed Salt Marsh which consists of areas of pasture of arable fields with extensive views towards the Forest of Dean occasionally interrupted by tall hedges and hedgerow oaks.

Locally Green Infrastructure; Green spaces and wildlife corridors.

Lydney's open space provision is recognised as one of the best in the area. providing a wide range of recreational and sporting opportunities.

Lydney contains a network of footpaths and rights of way that support wildlife corridors connecting its green spaces and water. (see map 6). This plan supports proposals for development and projects that will increase connections to the network and protect and enhance its biodiversity.

Trees and Woodland

The Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan endorses the cataloguing and publication of existing Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and the necessity to continually monitor and add to this schedule as appropriate. It is recognised that there may be a necessity to sympathetically pollard/address remedial tree works in order to ensure species remain healthy. The Plan advocates the replanting of some species where there has been a necessity to remove a tree bearing a TPO.

Developments which preserve and enhance natural views and which provide countryside and community woodland utilising natural landscape features such as water courses, trees and hedgerows and connect these spaces with others in the town will be encouraged.

Planting programmes for new developments will incorporate local arboreal species, such as Alder, Ash, Beech, Birch, Blackthorn, Dogwood, Hawthorn, Hazel, Holly, Hornbeam, Lime, Oak, Wild Cherry and Willow.

The Plan endorses the importance of countryside in Lydney and the need to enhance it and protect it for future generations.

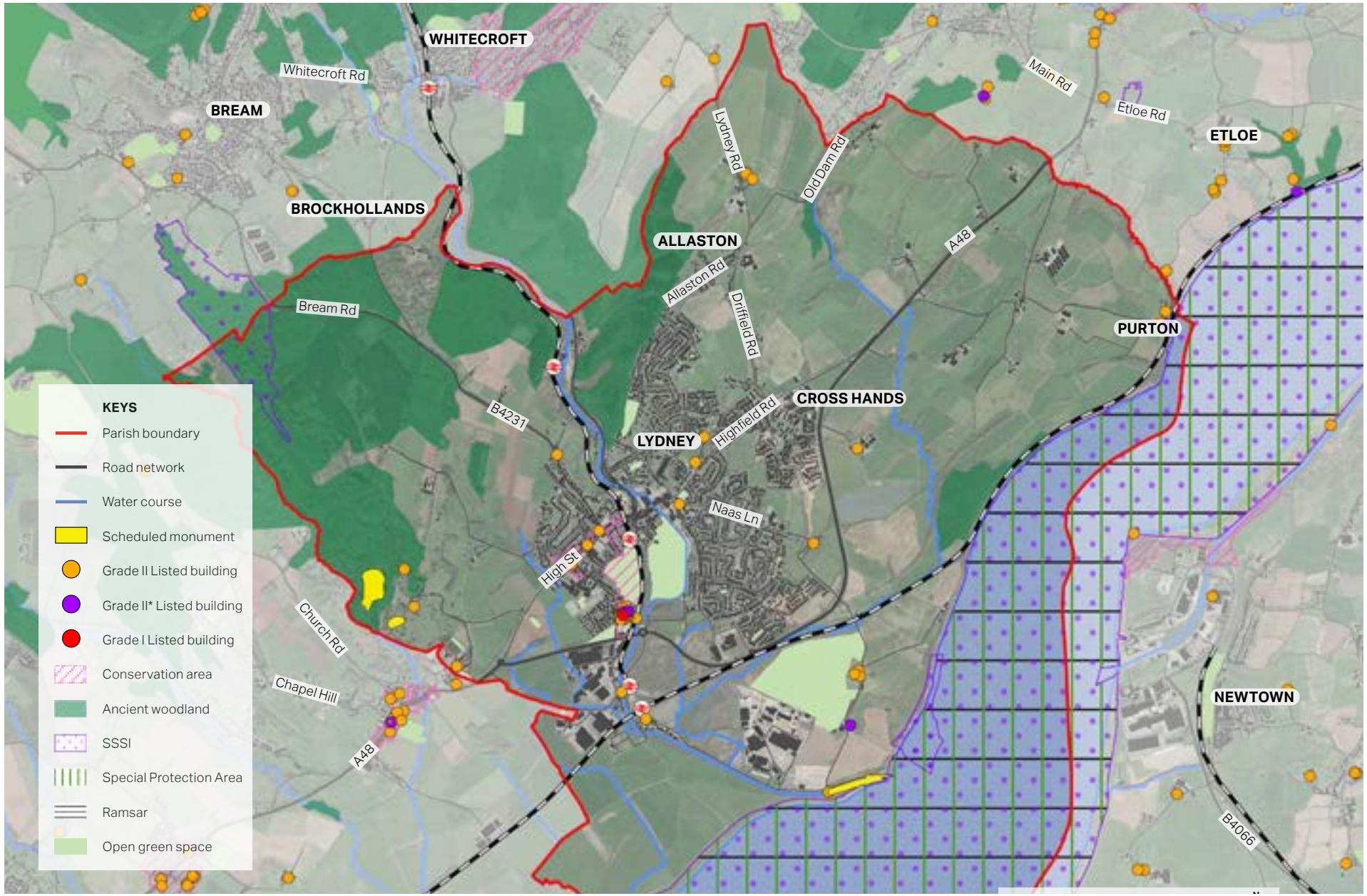
Lydney's Blue Infrastructure – The River Severn, Lyd, canal and ponds

The River Lyd and tributaries, the Cut, the canal, flows through the town joining the Severn at the Harbour. Lydney receives tidal flows from the Severn and is situated on a flood plain. Flooding is an issue for Lydney both from the River Lyd and the tides from the Severn; parts of Lydney have been defined as a Flood Zone 3 by the Environment Agency.

The river, ponds and the estuary are features which offer opportunities for enhancement with respect to informal recreation and wildlife. In addition to their cultural and landscape value they offer a significant biodiversity resource. This is typified by, but not limited to their fish populations. These features are particularly important to the local community and their enhancement is encouraged and supported.

Any proposals that protect and improve habitat for both fish and mammals and improve the connectivity of the River Lyd and the Severn Estuary for migratory fish species, including European eel, should be encouraged and supported.

Through enhancement and extension of Lydney's network of public footpaths, cycle routes and wildlife corridors (see map 6) appropriate proposals that enhance connections to and access along the River Lyd for community leisure and visitors should be supported where they are compatible with protection of the river's biodiversity.



Map 5: Landscape Designations (source: Lydney Design Code 2024)

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Both national policy and the Environment Act say we need to:

- **Map important natural areas:** This includes special wildlife sites and the routes that connect them (like corridors and stepping stones).
- **Prepare Local Nature Recovery Strategies across England:** These plans will also map important nature areas and highlight places where we can make nature better.

Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) has been named by the government as the responsible body for producing a new and first Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for the county. The consultation draft of the LNRS[10] was published in September 2025.

What is Green and Blue Infrastructure?

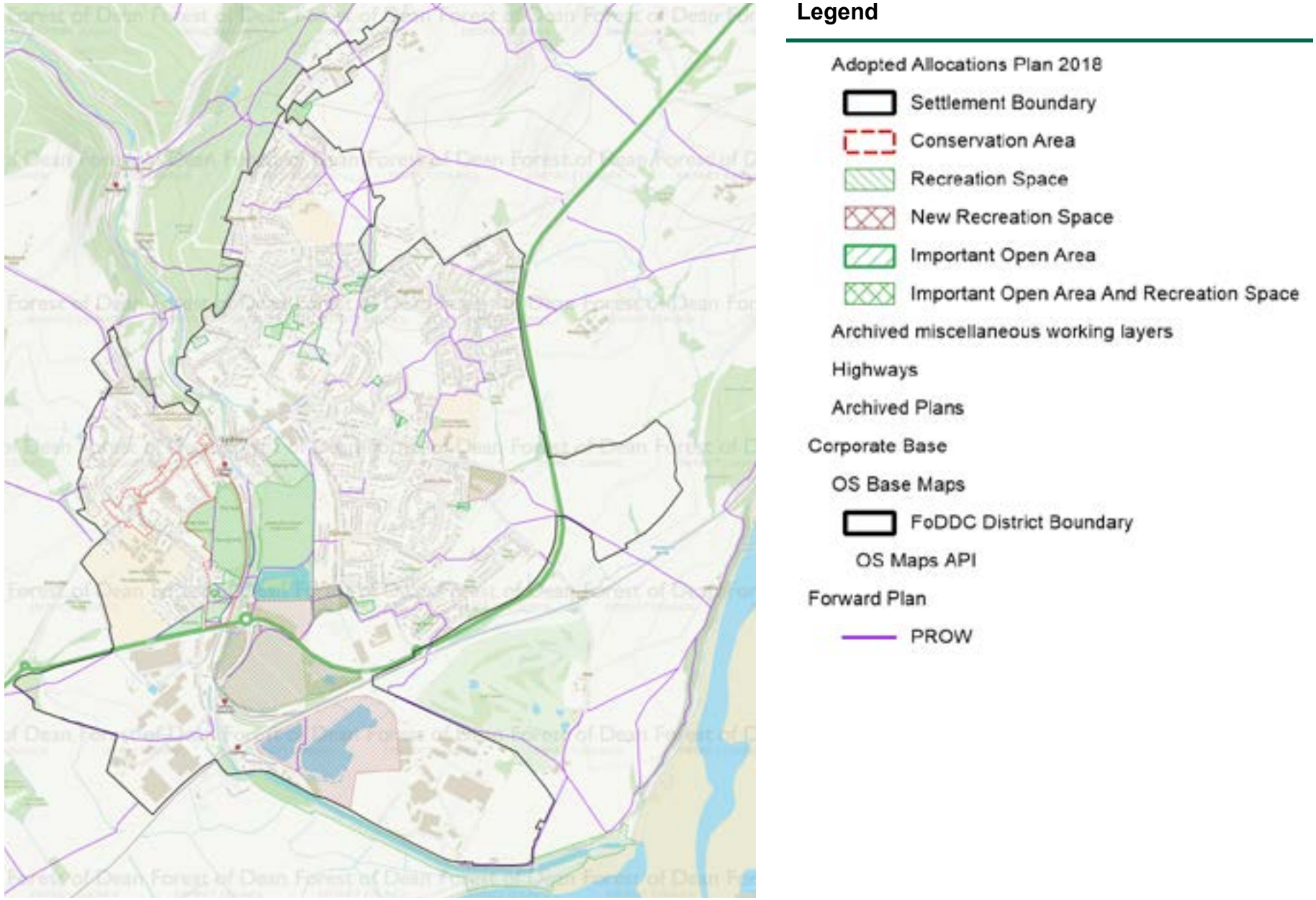
Well designed and managed Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) generates multiple benefits for people and nature and creates greener, healthier places to live that supports a more productive economy.

A Green and Blue Infrastructure network can include street trees, green roofs/ walls, parks, private gardens, allotments, sustainable drainage systems, through to wildlife areas, woodlands, wetlands and natural flood management functioning at local and landscape scale. Linear GBI includes roadside verges, green bridges, field margins, rights of way, access routes, and canals and rivers.

(Natural England: National Green Infrastructure Framework)

LYD ENV2: Protecting and enhancing Lydney's Natural Environment

1. Development proposals should respond positively to the green and blue infrastructure network of Lydney parish as shown on Map 6.
2. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should demonstrate how they:
   a. Protect and where appropriate and necessary enhance green infrastructure assets, including providing high quality links between existing assets;
   b. Fully integrate high quality, green infrastructure into development proposals, including with sustainable drainage and the management of flood risk;
   c. Secure improved access to green infrastructure where this would not have an unjustified adverse effect on biodiversity; and
   d. Secure net-gains for biodiversity in accordance with national policy



Map 6: Green and Blue Infrastructure (source: Forest of Dean District Council)

Map 7: Conservation Area indicated by the dotted red line and Listed Buildings highlighted in orange (source: Forest of Dean District Council)

LYD ENV3: PROTECTING LYDNEY'S HERITAGE

What does this policy mean for the community?

This new policy aims to increase the protection and support the enhancement of Lydney's designated and locally valued non-designated heritage assets.

It supports delivery of Neighbourhood Plan Objectives 2 and 3 in particular by protecting the heritage of Lydney and enhancing its attractiveness to visitors and shoppers.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The NPPF places significant levels of importance on the protection and conservation of the historic environment at the local as well as the national level. Paragraph 202 states: "These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generation…" and urges plans to set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.1, Design and environmental protection

Promotes local distinctiveness, good design and conservation by protection of designated and locally valued non-designated historic and natural features

Local Background

The need to conserve areas of Lydney arose out of local concern about safeguarding locally important buildings against fairly radical changes to the character of the town.

Lydney's history and its heritage underpins Lydney itself; its Roman remains, echoes of its legendary ship building and industrial era are still present today.

There are four Scheduled Ancient Monuments in Lydney; the Harbour, the Village Cross, Little Camp Hill and Lydney Park Camp and Roman remains.

There are nearly 70 nationally significant listed structures and over 500 entries on the County Historic Environment Record in the Lydney NDP area. Lydney Harbour is a designated Ancient Monument. Lydney has two distinctive Conservation Areas (see map 7 page 35) centred on the Town Centre and Bathurst Park, and St Mary's Church, which is Lydney's only surviving

mediaeval building, and its precincts, which is a particularly significant heritage asset being special not only as an historic building but also as an important landmark within Lydney.

Lydney's heritage as a market town is important and improvements to the Town Centre are seen as vital if Lydney is to continue to be a sustainable and vibrant market town. Lydney's historic environment plays an important role in achieving a successful and vibrant Town Centre.

Improvements to the Town Centre (as defined in map 12) should reflect Lydney's heritage with the installation of any modern infrastructure being as unobtrusive as possible.

Lydney Local Non-designated Heritage List

While the National Heritage List for England designates listed buildings and sites of clearly national significance, locally significant heritage assets that are important to the community contribute significantly to the distinct character and history of Lydney. Whilst not of national significance and listed, the NPPF supports their conservation through being identified within a list of non-designated locally important heritage assets.

Identification of these buildings and structures will give the community of Lydney the opportunity to give these assets consideration within the planning process.

Forest of Dean District Council undertook an appraisal of the built heritage of Lydney in 2005, when it designated its conservation areas, it also identifies a number of specific

buildings as being of note; these form the basis of our non-designated assets list.

Further engagement with the local community as part of the evidence gathering for the Neighbourhood Plan review enabled local people to identify additional local buildings.

Lydney Non-Designated (or locally valued) Heritage Asset List

Assets already recognised by Forest of Dean District Council:

- The Almshouses, Church Road
- Bathurst Estate Cottages, Church Road
- Cross Keys Inn, Church Road
- Lydney Town Hall
- Cross Bank House, High Street
- Westfield House (opposite the Town Hall)
- Old Bank House (Nos 19 & 21), High Street
- Raglan House, High Street
- 3-5 Hill Street (former British Legion Building)
- 4-6 Hill Street
- Lydney Methodist Church.

Assets recognised by Lydney Town Council as part of the preparation of this Plan:

- The former Police station and magistrates court
- Former Lloyds bank building, The Cross
- The original hospital buildings, Grove Road
- Larger Edwardian houses in Grove Road
- Nos 2, 4 and 6 Forest Road
- Former Midland bank building, Newerne Street
- Raymond's stores, Newerne Street
- The Swan Hotel, Newerne Street
- Age concern building, corner of Forest Road
- Victoria Centre, Victoria Street
- Former Bridge Inn, Newerne Street
- Former Fleece Inn, Newerne Street
- Oakfield, Hill Street (Thrings Solicitors)
- The community centre, Naas Lane
- Christian Fellowship Church in Swan Road
- United Reform Church, Tutnalls St.

LYD ENV3: Protecting Lydney's Heritage

Listed Buildings

Development proposals should sustain the significance of listed buildings including any contribution made by their setting. Decisions should be informed by a sound understanding of the significance of the building concerned and the impact of the proposal on that significance.

Lydney Conservation Area

Proposals for development within, or which may affect the setting of the Lydney Conservation area, should be accompanied with proportionate evidence to demonstrate that they have been informed by an understanding of the significance, character, appearance and setting of the area.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals affecting public and private open spaces within the Lydney Conservation Area or which form part of its setting, should demonstrate how they would:

a. contribute to the area's special historic interest;

b. respect its spatial and visual importance to the landscape or townscape qualities of the conservation area; and

c. where practicable, provide views or vistas into, out of or within the conservation area.

Non-designated heritage assets

The Plan identifies a package of non-designated heritage assets as listed in the supporting text. When considering development proposals that affect the significance and setting of a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement should be applied. This should take into account the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

LYD ENV4: HIGH QUALITY DESIGN AND LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

What does this policy mean for the community?

Lydney is experiencing significant development. This new policy seeks to conserve and enhance the distinctive character and quality of Lydney's built environment. It should be read in conjunction with the new Lydney Design Code and Guidance (2024) which supports this policy.

High quality design contributes to the delivery of environmental and community objectives and helps stimulate investment through promotion of Lydney's attractiveness.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The NPPF also underscores the importance of high quality design:

NPPF Chapter 12: "Achieving well-designed places" stresses the creation of high-quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

The NPPF sets out that "Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development" (NPPF paragraph 132).

In 2019 and 2020 the Government published a National Design Guide[11] and the National Model Design Code[12]. These highlight the importance of understanding and responding to local character and provide guidance on delivering 10 key characteristics of good design.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.1 Design and environmental protection

Promotes local distinctiveness and good design. To support its delivery across the Forest area, FODC has also produced:

FoDC Supplementary Planning Documents:

Forest of Dean Residential Design Guide 2019[13] and Residential Design Guide, Alterations and Extensions, a guide for householders (2020)[14].

These guide the design of development to reflect local characteristics of the area and address environmental and sustainability issues. They have been incorporated into the design in both major applications (10 or more houses, or over 0.1 hectares) and householder development proposals.

Local Background

Where a design and access statement is required, it should incorporate a clear and proportionate demonstration of:

a. How relevant design policies and the Lydney Design Code and Guidance, and other relevant design guidance have been integral to the design development process;

b. A robust analysis of the context and character of the site and the local area, in addition to the functional requirements of the intended use;

c. The design concept and the evolution of the design development through drawings or models, including explanatory text as appropriate; and

d. Where relevant, how consultation with communities and other relevant stakeholders, including Lydney Town Council has informed the design.

LYD ENV4: High quality design and local distinctiveness

1. Development proposals should contribute positively to the local character and distinctiveness of Lydney, as described within the Lydney Design Code and Guidance (2024) and should be informed by the design guidance and codes defined within section 4 of the document.

   The relevant development areas in Lydney are as follows:

   • The Victorian residential development areas;

   • 20th century residential development areas;

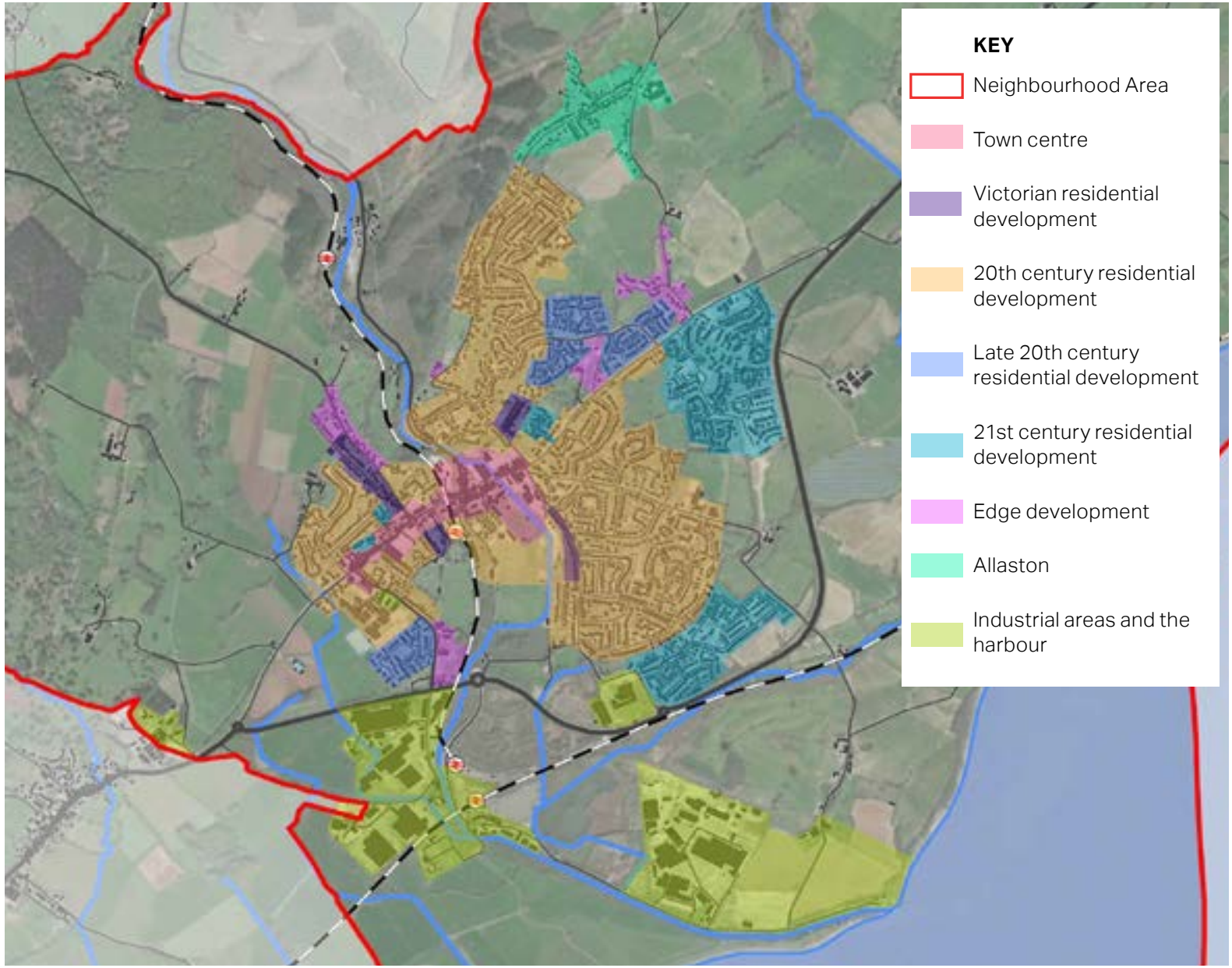
   • Late 20th century residential development areas;

   • 21st century residential development areas;

   • Edge residential development areas; and

   • Allaston area

   All major development schemes with a residential component should perform positively against ‘Building for a Healthy Life 12’ or its successor. A ‘Building for a Healthy Life’ Assessment should be included within the Design and Access Statement. (As a guide, development should seek to achieve a score of no ‘reds’, design out all ‘ambers’ and achieve a majority of ‘greens’)



Map 8: Lydney's Character Areas (source: Lydney Design Code 2024)

LYD ENV5 Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Generation NEW

What does this policy mean for the community?

This new policy responds to the increased importance of achieving zero carbon energy. It aims to promote and support a positive local response to climate change through low carbon and sustainable small scale renewable energy installations.

This policy helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan climate change Objective 3.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

Renewables, such as wind and solar power, are important ways to achieve the UK legal commitments to slow down climate change by cutting greenhouse gases and meet increased energy demand from renewable sources. They will also help make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses.

Large scale renewable energy strategy and schemes are addressed by the Government. But the National Planning Policy Framework explains all communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy. Local or Neighbourhood Plans should consider and maximise the potential for renewable and low carbon energy generation to ensure communities and the environment benefit from smaller scale and domestic renewable energy infrastructure including roof mounted solar panels and ground and air source heat pumps.

Community initiatives play an increasingly important role and are encouraged as a way of providing positive local benefit from renewable energy development. Local policies can give positive weight to renewable and low carbon energy initiatives which have clear evidence of local community involvement and leadership. Neighbourhood plans are recognised as an opportunity for communities to plan for community led renewable energy developments. As part of a neighbourhood plan, communities can also look at developing a community energy plan to underpin the neighbourhood plan.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.3; Sustainable Energy within Development Proposals is intended to reduce the carbon emissions from new development by ensuring that a proportion of its energy requirements are provided by on site renewable means.

The District Council are working with partners and local residents to establish the Forest Community Energy, a community forum and group set-up to help Forest residents, reduce energy bills for businesses, and to establish a community solar scheme through a community energy share offer.

Local Background

The predictions of increased rainfall together with rising sea levels makes Lydney particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. These changes have seen a marked increase in awareness of the need to find alternative energy solutions by local communities.

The development of a community owned wind turbine at Alvington demonstrates the particular potential of the Severn Estuary environment for wind energy production and the community benefits it can deliver (See case study on page 45).

As part of moving towards the net zero target in a changing climate, this Neighbourhood Plan supports generation of zero or low carbon energy, particularly where it enables communities to take a more active role in, and get direct benefit from, the production of renewable and low carbon local energy. However, as with other types of development, it is important that our community, quality of life, landscape, biodiversity and heritage are protected in

any proposals for renewable, or low carbon energy generation and associated infrastructure.

What is Renewable and Low Carbon Energy?

Renewable energy is energy that is collected from renewable resources, which are naturally replenished on a human timescale, such as sunlight and wind as well as plant and animal matter. Another example, heat pumps which draw heat from the ground, air or river and use an electric pump to raise the temperature for use in heating.

Case Study

Resilient Energy Forest of Dean Renewables (REFD) is a Community Benefit Society (CBS) that owns and operates two 500kW wind turbines, one near Alvington, generating clean, green electricity. A share of operational turnover and any surpluses are allocated to local community resilience initiatives, including fuel poverty.

It is well placed to deliver against the society's social aims over the turbine's operational lifetime. These include establishing the Alvington Turbine Community Resilience Fund to help address the current needs and future challenges in the host community of Alvington, Aylburton and their environs.

As well as providing clean electricity to the grid, funding from revenues generated will continue to support local community projects in the Forest of Dean. So far, a wide range of local community buildings and schools have benefitted as a result. https://www.thriverenewables.co.uk/projects/forest-of-dean-wind-farm

LYD ENV5: Low-carbon and renewable energy generation

1. Domestic and decentralised renewable and low carbon energy schemes will be supported where their proposed locations are appropriate, and where their impact is acceptable, or can be made acceptable through mitigation.
2. Particular support will be given to local renewable and low carbon energy generation developments that:
   a. are led by local renewable energy groups, and/or meet the needs of the local community;
   b. provide energy storage opportunities;
   c. provide solar canopies over surface car parks; or
   d. harness the tidal energy stemming from the tidal range of the River Severn.
3. In particular, applications for development should be supported by evidence to inform an appropriate assessment pursuant to the Habitats Regulations in order to establish that development will have no adverse impact on the Severn Estuary European Marine Site as a Ramsar site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA), and the Wye Valley Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC.

   As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should respond positively to the following matters:

   a. landscape character and sensitivity;
   b. local character and distinctiveness (as identified in the Lydney Design Code);
   c. air, ground and water quality;
   d. hydrology, water supply and any associated flood risk;
   e. the significance of heritage assets and their settings;
   f. recreation;
   g. amenity due to noise, odour, dust, vibration of visual impact;
   h. highways and traffic flow, including public rights of way;
   i. the safety of aviation operations and navigational systems;
   j. agricultural land use; and
   k. telecommunications.

LYD ENV6: Flooding and Water Management

What does this policy mean for the community?

Flood risk is a key issue for Lydney. This policy reinforces national and Forest of Dean policies to continue to seek to minimise the impacts of flooding through supporting locally sustainable approaches to water management within development schemes.

This policy supports delivery of Neighbourhood Plan Objectives 1, 2 and 3 in particular by steering sustainable development away from flood risk areas and reducing environmental impacts.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

One of the major impacts of a changing climate is an increased risk of flooding. This is a significant issue for Lydney, given its relationship with the River Severn and River Lyd.

The UK Met Office predicts that Britain could experience a decrease in summer rainfall by up to 47%, and up to 35% more rain in winter by 2070[15].

Any development has the potential to worsen surface water flooding. The NPPF sets out that residential development should be located away from zones of higher flood risk and make use of opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding, and use natural flood management techniques

The National Design Guide and National Model Design Code include guidance on integrated water management and drainage and expectation that schemes should integrate sustainable drainage systems into to reduce flood risk and improve water quality, biodiversity and amenity.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.2 Climate Change Adaptation

It addresses key development issues and requirements that need to be addressed in order to reduce the impacts of climate change within a development and the wider environment including flood risk, water management , efficiency, safeguarding of supply and SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage)

Local Background

Recent episodes of flooding in the town centre and recreation ground areas emphasise the vulnerability of Lydney to the effects of climate change and associated sea level rises.

Flooding remains an issue for Lydney given its proximity to the River Lyd and that it was built on a flood plain. As previously noted Lydney has been defined as a Flood Zone 3 by the Environment Agency (see Flood Zone map on page 50).

Lydney is situated on the St. Maughans Formation which is classified as a Secondary A aquifer capable of supporting local water supplies and an important base flow to rivers. This groundwater resource is potentially vulnerable to pollution and as Lydney has an industrial history it is assumed that there are pockets of contaminated land around the area. The European Union's Water Framework Directive aims to prevent deterioration of aquatic ecosystems and River Basin Management Plans implemented by a range of organisations can help deliver the Water Framework Directive objectives.

As areas of vegetation are replaced by impermeable concrete and tarmacadam, they lose their ability to absorb rainwater. This rain is instead directed into surface water drainage systems, often overloading them and causing localised floods. New developments must not be allowed to exacerbate the current situation. Water must therefore be held on site for longer and not just passed downstream; Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be incorporated to minimise or eliminate water discharges from the site. If all future development sites incorporated SuDS, Lydney flood issues and town sewer

incapacity would be less problematic.

This Plan endorses SuDS management train concept. This involves the following hierarchical approach to the management of surface water:

1. Prevention – the use of good site design and site housekeeping measures to prevent run-off and pollution, and rainwater re-use harvesting.
2. Source Control – control of runoff at or near its source (e.g. soakaways, other infiltration measures, green roofs, permiable pavements).
3. Site Control – management of water in a local area or site (e.g. routing water from building roofs and car parks to large soakaway, infiltration or detention basin).
4. Regional Control–management of run-off from a site or several sites, typically in a balancing pond or wetland.

When considering proposals in locations at risk of flooding the Council will, where appropriate, seek to avoid flood risk in the first instance by requiring applicants to demonstrate that there are no suitable sites for the development in areas with a lower risk of flooding. Where this is shown not to be possible, proposals should be supported by an appropriate assessment of flood risk from all sources and should demonstrate that they will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. The predicted effects of climate change on peak river flows and rainfall intensity should form an integral part of the assessment.

In addition to the flood risk and sustainable drainage issues set out above, good water management should also be focused on water conservation. Water conservation measures in new developments will not only save homes and businesses money, but will also help to protect drinking water resources, reduce the need for expensive water supply and waste water treatment facilities, minimise water pollution and help to maintain the health of aquatic ecosystems.

This Plan supports developments that incorporate water conservation measures. The Water provisions within the Code for Sustainable Homes and the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) standards provide useful guidelines in this respect. Policy ENV6 addresses these matters. In order to safeguard the flooding profile and wider environment of the town, and where relevant, proposals should have regard to land contamination issues and the status of the receiving water body under the Water Framework Directive.

Policy LYD ENV6 sets out a policy basis for addressing water management in the Plan area. The appropriate SuDS method(s) will vary depending on the characteristics of the site and the proposed development but all proposals should follow SuDS management train hierarchy of prevention, source control, site control and regional control.

The individual strategies must be agreed with Severn Trent Water, the Environment Agency, and the Planning Authority and identify:

- the intentions of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) methods into the project
- any infrastructure improvements and how these will be delivered.

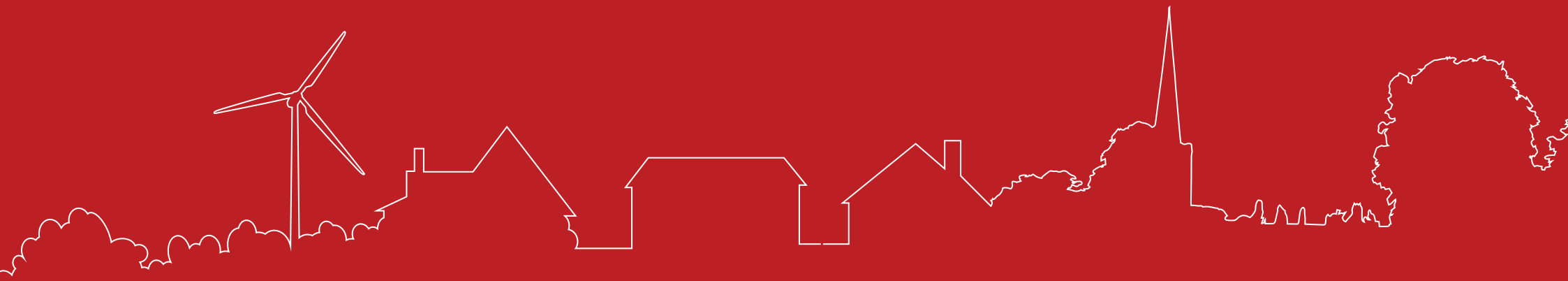
Developments that do not contain these specifications must clearly be shown why this would not be feasible and/or viable.

LYD ENV6: Flooding and water management

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should make adequate provision to manage surface water sustainably through the use of SuDS on site.

Map 9: Flood Zone Map (source: Lydney Design Code 2024)

3.2 Housing and Community Infrastructure



3.2 Housing and Community Infrastructure

Introduction

For Lydney to be a vibrant place to live and work, a broad range of people at different life stages need to be accommodated to create a balanced community. To enable this to happen, it is necessary for housing to reflect the occupants' needs.

The NDP public consultation has highlighted the necessity for additional tailored accommodation which meets the needs of older people. Older people down-sizing their property or with limited mobility prefer to have small properties within easy access to the Town Centre and its amenities, and accommodation that includes facilities which reflect their mobility/aging needs to ensure their continued independent living.

Map 10 identifies a suitable site for elderly accommodation. The site's location is such that appropriate safeguards will need to be included to protect future occupants of the buildings from possible flood risk. A criterion is included in policy LYD HOUS1 to this effect. Applications may need to be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment. This matter is important both in its own right and given that the site is identified for occupation by elderly persons.

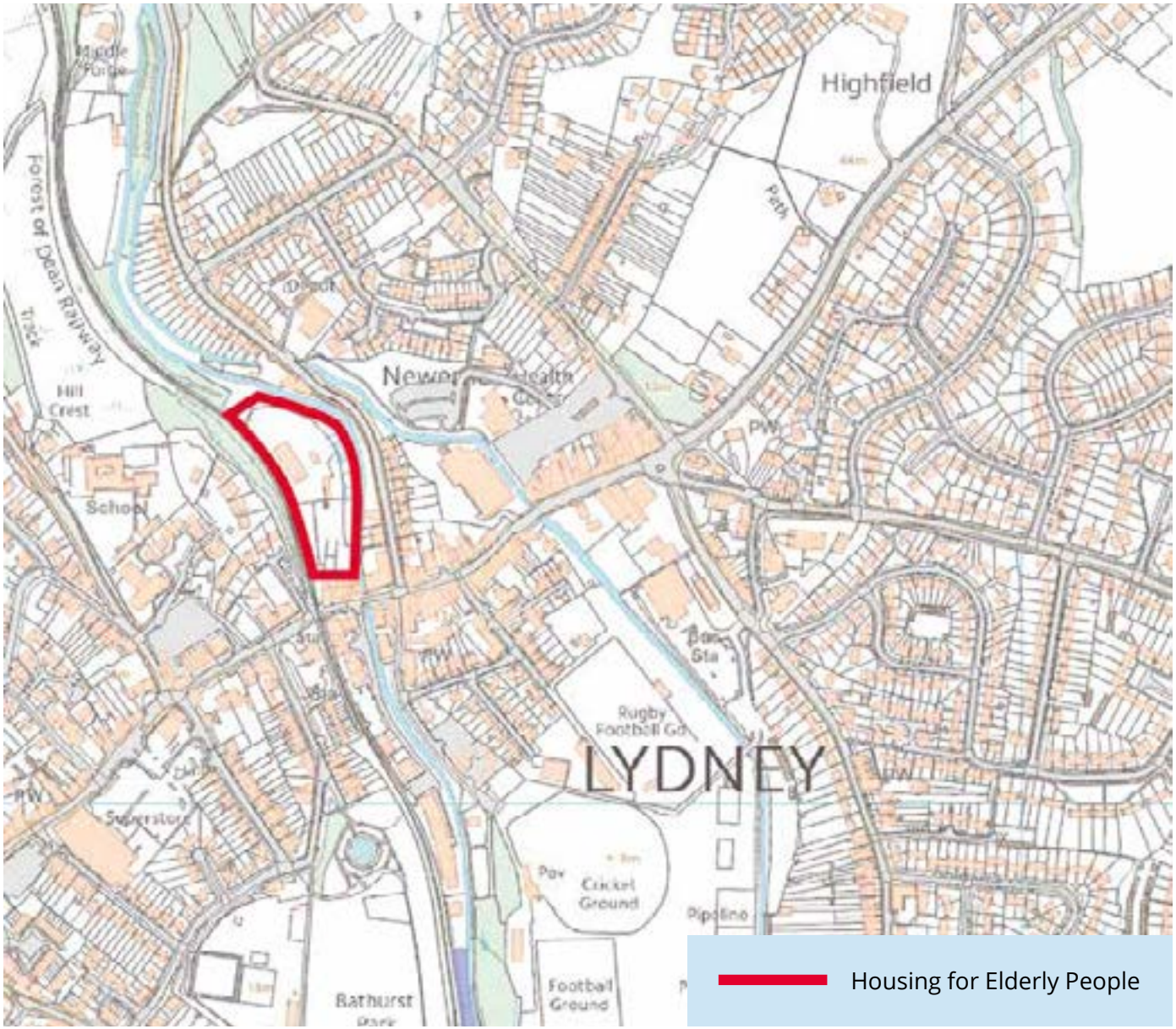
To retain Lydney's built heritage a Design Statement has been developed to guide developers and householders. It is important that new residential developments are in keeping with the surroundings and that the correct building materials are used during construction.

This Plan is pro-growth and understands the necessity of balancing and weighing the use of Greenfield and Brownfield land contained within the CS14.

Lydney's rural character should be retained and new housing should make a positive contribution to a low carbon economy. The community of Lydney believes it to be important to ensure that new developments achieve the highest standards of energy efficiency.

The proposed site is a brownfield site and next to the River Lyd. The site has potential habitats used by protected species including bats and is hydrologically connected to the Severn Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar. The River Lyd is an important green corridor and should be protected as a key element of any future proposal, possibly providing connectivity to the woodlands of the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC.

Habitats (including the builds) and species on and adjacent to the site, need to be fully taken into account at the earliest stage of project development, to ensure adverse impacts protected sites and species are integrated into any proposal.



Map 10: Opportunity in Lydney identified for Housing for Elderly People (source: Lydney Neighbourhood Plan)

LYD HC1: Housing Choice for Everyone

What does this policy mean for the community?

This updated policy widens the neighbourhood plan promotion of the right type of local housing growth. It guides residential developments that contribute positively to meeting the identified local needs for housing. It should be read in conjunction with the Lydney Housing Needs Assessment (2023).

It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Housing and Communities Objective 4.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The new Government has committed to delivery of 1.5m new homes within its first term. The 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places increased importance and mandatory requirements on local authorities to prepare local plans and allocate land to enable housing requirements to be met.

Core Strategy Policy CSP.5 identified1,900 homes to be allocated in Lydney. About 1000 of these have been built leaving 900 to be accommodated.

Accessible housing is essential in meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities and health challenges, but also the wider systems in society including adult social care and the NHS. Improving the quality, affordability, availability, and suitability of housing is one of the seven priorities in the Gloucestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

40% of all new dwellings are expected to be delivered as Affordable Housing on sites larger than 10 homes. The suggested tenure mix within Affordable Housing is 70% affordable rent to 30% affordable home ownership.

Neighbourhood plans may include policies that influence the scale of Affordable Housing and the mix of new housing development in areas with ageing populations to include policies relating to specialist housing for older persons.

Local background and Evidence

As the best connected forest town, Lydney attracts house buyers and renters from across the Forest of Dean, Cheltenham, Gloucester, the Cotswolds and even Bristol and Cardiff, which makes it more difficult to be precise about our local needs. However, the Lydney Housing Needs Assessment (2022) has identified key local characteristics which our plan tackles.

Local Background

Lydney has about 10,000 residents occupying about 4,700 dwellings. Since 2011 the population has grown around 14%. Lydney has an above average proportion of younger residents. The number of older people over the 75 are forecast to increase to more than 14% of the community by 2041.

Homeownership makes up 67% of all households, which is slightly less than the district average (73%). Of the remaining households, a majority live in socially rented accommodation (16%), which is slightly higher than the district average (14%). There is a higher proportion of the population in private rented accommodation than the district. There has been an over 50% increase in the proportion of private renters in Lydney over the last decade.

The current median house price in Lydney is £260,000, which is 83% higher than the

median price in 2013. Local households on average incomes of £38,000 would require an annual income of around 80% above this. Private renting presents a similar affordability challenge.

There is a relatively large group of households in Lydney who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership who may benefit from the range of Affordable home ownership products such as First Homes and shared ownership.

Affordable rented housing is generally affordable to households with two lower earners. Households made up of a single lower earner (c£14,000) would need to rely on social and affordable rented options.

In future years there will be a need for both social/affordable rental and affordable home ownership properties providing a higher proportion of socially/affordable rented homes (65%), whilst also maintaining a healthy supply of affordable ownership options (35%).

First Homes is a new Affordable discounted market housing product. Its discount can be set at 30%, 40% or 50% in Neighbourhood Plans. In Lydney, the HNA recommends a 40% discount would expand access to home ownership to average earning households.

About three quarters of the housing in Lydney are detached and semi-detached. Homes with more than 3 bedrooms make up 65% of the overall housing stock. The Lydney HNA suggests new housing should deliver a variety of house sizes including 2 , 3-bed and 4 bed homes.

Housing development should also address the increased needs of local older people including ongoing support for specialist housing and accessible housing to enable older and disabled local people to live decently.

LYD HC1: Housing Choice for Everyone

1. Development will be supported which ensures the delivery of a range of good quality, energy-efficient homes, including affordable homes. The mix of housing types and tenures should have regard to and be informed by evidence of housing needs, including that contained within the Lydney Housing Needs Assessment (2023) and any subsequent updates, or other evidence of local housing needs verified by the local planning authority.

LYD HC2: PROTECTING AND PROVIDING COMMUNITY FACILITIES

What does this policy mean for the community?

This updated policy continues to protect and seek to improve the range of accessible local facilities within Lydney to meet its needs.

It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Housing and Communities Objective 4.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The National Planning Policy Framework steers planning policies to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe neighbourhoods and places promoting opportunities for meetings between people and avoiding isolation. Policies should protect valued local accessible green infrastructure, social, recreational and cultural facilities and services, local shops and pubs the community needs, meeting halls and allotments all contribute to strong and inclusive communities. They must plan positively to enable the provision of new facilities and improvement of existing ones where they meet local needs.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.8 – Retention of community facilities is intended to maintain access to community facilities. But it does not protect individual facilities or enterprises, but protects communities from not being able to gain access to a range of facilities or services. At Lydney it aims to provide significantly improved community facilities, to serve both the local population and also a wider catchment area.

Local background

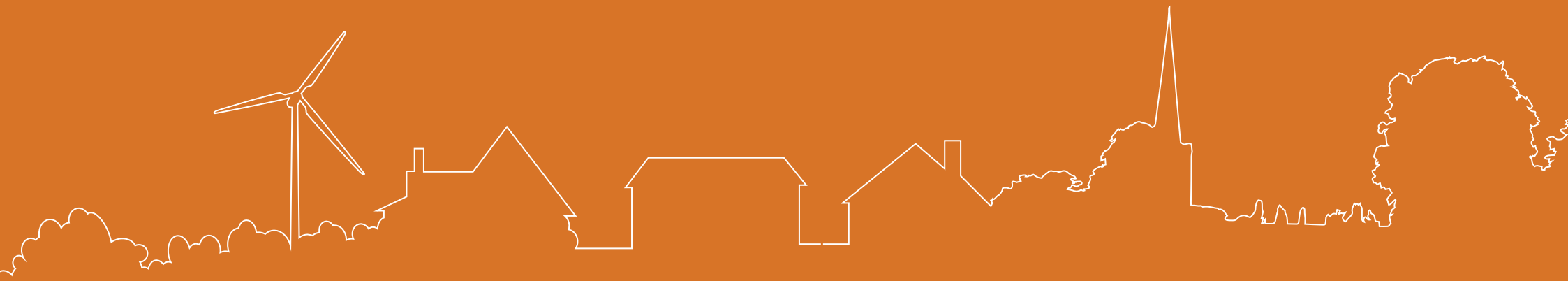
Lydney Neighbourhood Plan has recorded and mapped the individual community facilities that are located within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Lydney has a range of facilities serving the community as a whole, for example; a library managed by Gloucestershire County Council, a Town Hall and Community Centre run by local groups, and a sports centre managed by Forest Leisure. There are two doctors' surgeries in Lydney which are proposed to merge into a new facility 2025/6. Lydney is well served by three primary schools and the Dean Academy which provides education for children aged 12-16 year olds. Post 16 education is provided by Gloucester College in Cinderford.

LYD HC2: Protecting and providing community facilities

1. Development proposals within the settlement boundary that improve the quality and range of community infrastructure shall be supported where the development:
   a. meets an identified community need;
   b. will not harm the viability of existing community uses; and
   c. will not result in unacceptable traffic movements or impact on residential amenity.
2. Development which would lead to the improvement of the quality or additional provision of the following community infrastructures should be supported, provided it meets the requirements of other relevant development plan policies:
   a. Educational facilities to meet local needs;
   b. Places to meet and socialise;
   c. Facilities for young people, for example a wheels and skate park; and
   d. Additional health services and facilities.
3. Where planning permission is required, development proposals that involve the loss, in whole or part, of a community facility (as detailed in the Community Facilities Report) must demonstrate that:
   a. adequate alternative provision of at least equivalent community benefit exists or will be provided in an equally or more accessible location, including by walking and cycling, within the catchment area of the facility; or
   b. the site or building is genuinely redundant / surplus to requirements for community uses and does not comprise open space or undeveloped land with recreational or amenity value; or
   c. if relevant, the partial development of the site will secure the retention and improvement of the remainder of the site for community use; or
   d. it would not be possible (economically viable, feasible or practicable) to retain the building or site for use as a community facility.

3.3 Economy and Tourism



3.3 Economy and Tourism

Introduction

Tourism plays an important role in supporting the local economy, however tourism alone cannot provide the well paid job opportunities in significant numbers to support the growing population. If travelling to the surrounding cities of Gloucester, Cardiff and Bristol is to become a choice rather than a necessity, then it is important that employers are attracted to the available development land.

Providing employment in Lydney will give the town and surrounding areas many advantages.

- Reducing carbon emissions
- Reducing congestion at either end of the A 48
- Enabling people to afford to live and work in the town, benefitting local retailers
- Promoting the use of local leisure facilities and personal services such as hairdressers and beauty therapists.

The Plan recognises the need to provide a clean environment, a warm welcome for visitors and local people alike and a clear description of what the town has to offer. Over time, the Town Centre has to respond to a balanced mix of retail and other activities and to “sell” the whole town experience which is essential for the future. This includes promoting the cultural, heritage and leisure opportunities to attract visitors, as well as locals, and to make it a pleasant and memorable place to live and work.

LYD ET1: EMPLOYMENT

What does this policy mean for the community?

This policy continues to seek to protect existing places of work and support growth and inward investment to increase local opportunities for rewarding employment and reduce out commuting.

It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Economy and Tourism Objective 5.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

National Planning policy directs local and neighbourhood plans to help create the conditions for sustainable economic growth in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight is placed on the need to support economic growth and

productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

Gloucestershire Economic Strategy

The Gloucestershire Economic Strategy 2024–2035, its 2023 Evidence Base, and the Forest of Dean Sustainable Economic Strategy all stress the growing importance of green and digital skills. Recent business and investor consultations also highlight the need for strong growth conditions and a skilled local workforce.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.7

Economy provides for a more diverse economy and supports improved education and other facilities. At Lydney it aims to;

- Stimulate economic development providing higher skilled and higher paid employment.
- Provide a wider range of employment opportunities and to develop these at the same time as the major housing sites.

Alongside c1900 new homes including the new east of Lydney neighbourhood, the strategy allocates about 15ha at Hurst Farm and about a further 5ha as part of the east of Lydney neighbourhood, and about 7ha at Mead lane.

Local background

Consultation with the community and local business identified the need for increased employment opportunities as the population grows, with particular emphasis on provision for the younger generation.

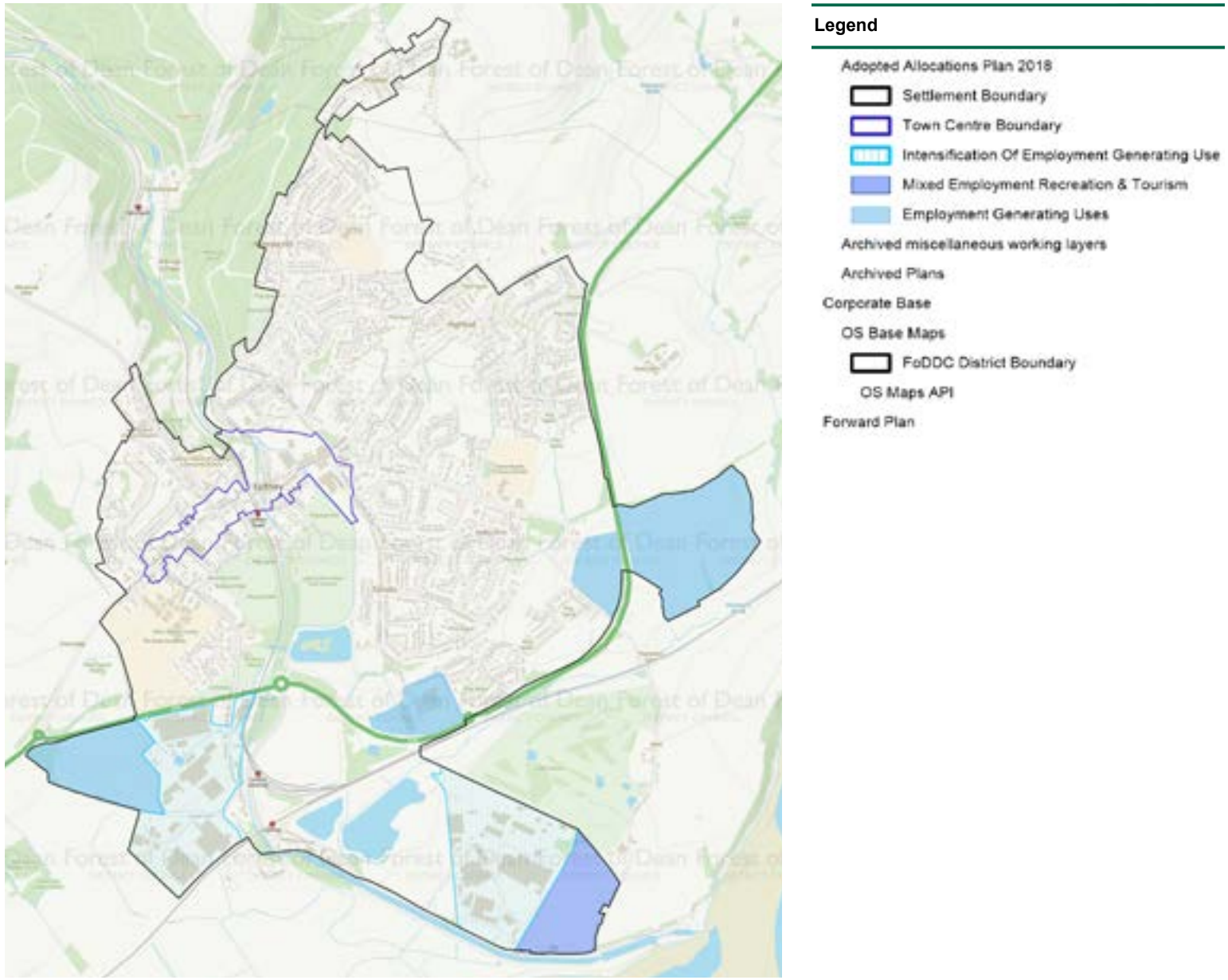
It is generally accepted that sufficient land has been allocated to industrial and commercial use – about 30ha of employment land.

This objective will be achieved by:

- working with commercial and retail businesses and developers to provide appropriate premises for growth, and new businesses to start up or relocate to Lydney
- ensuring the provision of high speed Broadband improving access to Harbour Industrial Estate marketing Lydney as a Business Centre

LYD ET1: Employment

1. Within the employment areas identified in map 11, main employment uses will be supported. Development of wider employment generating activity in these areas will be supported if the development meets one or more of the following:
   a. Directly supports and is ancillary to the primary function of the employment area as a location for main employment uses; and
   b. Will not have a detrimental impact on the existing or future main employment uses on the employment area; and
   c. Ensures that main employment uses remain the majority activity on the employment area
2. Development within the employment areas identified in map 11, where appropriate and relevant, should contribute positively to the local character and distinctiveness of Lydney, as described within the Lydney Design Code and Guidance (2024). In particular it should:
   a. Reflect the low density character of the employment area;
   b. Use materials which complement the existing palette, including brick walls and corrugated metal cladding/ weather boarding with gabled roofs;
   c. Consider opportunities to enhance pedestrian routes in the employment area
3. Proposals for employment uses outside the employment areas identified on Map 11, including within residential areas, will be supported, where they are appropriate on highways, access and amenity considerations and where they respond positively to the character of Lydney as described within the Design Code and Guidance (2024).



Map 11: Employment Areas

LYD ET2: SUPPORTING LYDNEY TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENTS

What does this policy mean for the community?

This policy continues and intensifies support of the vitality and improvement of Lydney Town Centre where it is consistent with criteria set within the newly drafted Lydney Town Centre Master Plan report that accompanies this policy.

It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Town Centre Objective 6.

National Policies and Local Plan Context

Many town centres are in decline, particularly post pandemic. The retail sector is suffering from rapid change. The proliferation of e-commerce, online retailing and the reduction in floorspace required, is now widely acknowledged. This trend is reflected in some aspects of Lydney town centre, but it remains a focus of local economic and social life and has successfully attracted new inward investment from Lidl.

The National Planning Policy Framework identifies that planning policy should promote the long-term vitality and viability of town centres – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters. It encourages allocation of a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least 10 years ahead.

The 2021 Build Back Better High Streets policy strategy document notes the importance of our high streets at the forefront of the UK's recovery post-COVID and focuses on five key priorities and the overarching ambition is for high streets to become "clean, green, mixed-use spaces in which people not only want to shop but also live, work, and relax."

Forest of Dean Core Strategy vision includes commitment to support town centre vitality by promoting their attractiveness, diverse offer, supporting town centre living and maintaining high levels of community safety. Policy CSP.4; Development at Settlements recognises the important role of Lydney town centre in supporting a vibrant sustainable self-contained town. Policy CSP.5; Housing and CSP.8; Community facilities recognise the town centre presents opportunities for higher density and smaller dwellings and is a highly connected and well-served location for the neighbourhood plan to continue to support development of specialist

housing for older and disabled people and community facilities.

Local background

The quality and offer of Lydney town centre remains a key priority for many local people. Since our first plan was Made, Lydney has successfully promoted the development of a new town centre supermarket and a regular market, but we have also seen the recent loss of the Co-op, which is now a major regeneration opportunity.

Consultation undertaken as part of the Town Council's 'Lydney Forward' initiative in 2021 has built a strong evidence base that identified the key town centre issues and characteristics that the community and stakeholders want to see addressed.

This policy and a new Town Centre Master Plan report (AECOM 2024) which supports the policy, promotes, supports and guides town centre improvements towards strengthening Lydney Town Centre as the sustainable economic, retail, facility and leisure heart of our town.

The Town Centre must become multifunctional social centres, not just competitors for stretched consumers. Retail is one element, but not the only element. The Town Centre now has to respond to a balanced mix of retail and other activities and to "sell" the whole town experience which is essential for the future. This includes promoting the cultural, heritage and leisure opportunities to attract visitors,

as well as locals, and to make it a pleasant and memorable experience. It is important to reverse the perception that "towns close at 5.30pm".

Lydney's conservation area and heritage assets (as defined in map 7) plays an important role in achieving an attractive and vibrant Town Centre.

Improvements to the Town Centre.

Lydney Town Council seeks to work with the Local Planning Authority to ensure that Lydney Town Centre remains viable and thrives whilst reflecting and enhancing its market town heritage.

LYD ET2: Supporting Lydney Town Centre

1. Development proposals within the town centre, as shown on map 12, will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they contribute positively to its economic sustainability, its vitality and its viability and where it supports the delivery of the vision, aims and objectives set out within the Lydney Town Centre Masterplan Framework (2024).
2. Development will be particularly supported where it would:
   a. Diversify the range of uses within the town centre, to fill gaps in local provision, including those with a focus on the cultural/ creative industries, entertainment and leisure, the provision of multi-functional uses such as performing arts, bike café, arts centre, temporary performance space, meeting spaces and small independent businesses and retailers;
   b. Enhance the key gateways into the town;
   c. Improve digital infrastructure, such as public Wi-Fi, smart benches, local business hubs and co-working facilities with desks and internet access;
   d. Develop the potential of the Dean Forest Railway in the town centre;
   e. Deliver sustainable transport schemes and facilitate active travel;
   f. Result in public realm improvements which enhance the heritage of the town centre, including introducing planting, trees and green spaces and other green linkages;
   g. Conserve and enhance the historic town centre buildings;
   h. Deliver high quality new sustainable buildings that reflect the distinct identity of the historic environment and enhances the natural environment, including by maximising biodiversity benefits.
   i. Deliver the comprehensive regeneration of the former Co-op site and its surrounding context, including providing a new town centre public space.
3. Proposals for new supermarkets or other large footprint developments will be supported where they demonstrate that they can be sensitively accommodated into the existing townscape. Where appropriate developer contributions will be sought from proposals within the town centre to assist in wider public realm proposals within this area.

Map 12: Town Centre Development Opportunities (source: Lydney Town Centre Master Plan Report 2024)

LYD ET3: LYDNEY HARBOUR REGENERATION

What does this policy mean for the community?

This policy continues support for the ongoing regeneration and revitalisation of Lydney Harbour.

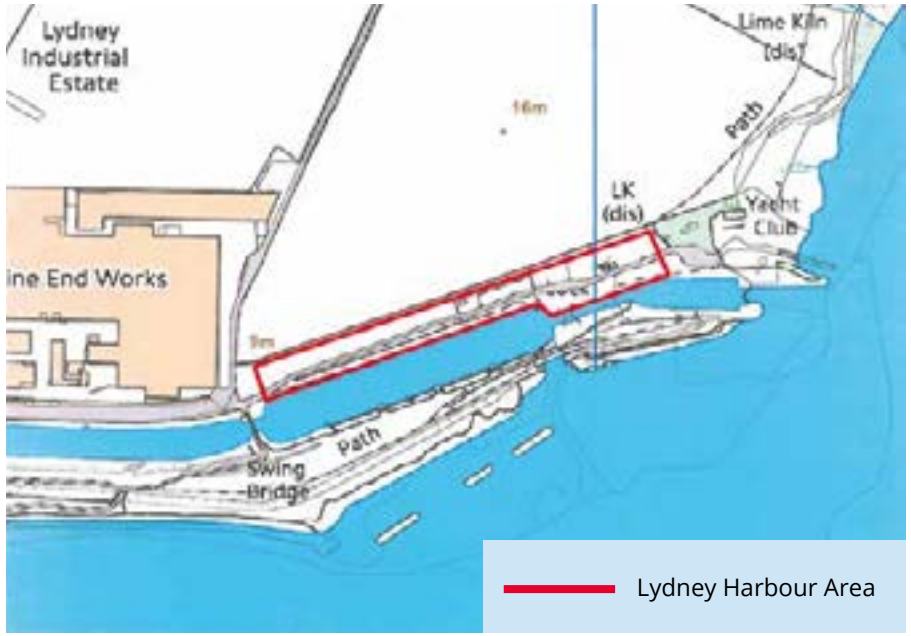
It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Economy and Tourism Objective 5.

Local background

Lydney harbour (as defined in map 13) borders the River Severn estuary, which is of European importance for its biodiversity (Severn Estuary SAC/SPA/ Ramsar). Increased visitors to heritage and nature conservation sites can have significant implications. Any proposals that may lead to likely significant effects will only be permitted where no adverse effect on the integrity of the site can be shown and proposals should identify the form and locations of all necessary measures required to ensure that no adverse effect on the integrity of a European site occurs as a result of that development.

The harbour is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade 2 Listed Building of national heritage significance. It's protection is managed by Historic England and the Forest of Dean Council.

Since the first Lydney Neighbourhood Plan was made, more than £2m of conservation and improvements to the harbour have been undertaken area seeking to increase the tourism and recreation potential of the harbour through conservation work, access and public art trail improvements from the railway station, opening a community café, toilets and specific features to support increased boat use. In addition to this, 150 trees were planted along the access corridor to improve biodiversity in the area, in keeping with the plan's commitment to the environment.



Map 13: Lydney Harbour

Lydney Harbour is a much cherished area used by Lydney residents and visitors alike. Policy LYD ET3 provides a supportive context for the development of recreational facilities at the Harbour area. It identifies the criteria against which planning applications will be assessed. The development of recreational facilities should help to ensure the long term preservation, restoration and interpretation of this important and iconic feature in the town both for the local community and for visitors. Clearly the dynamics of the wider restoration will change over time. Any proposals in the Harbour area as shown on map 13 for business uses of an appropriate nature and scale will be considered on their merits and against the policies in place at that time.

LYD ET3: Lydney Harbour Regeneration

Proposals for recreational development in the Lydney Harbour area as shown on map 13 will be supported where it would:

a. Be appropriate in scale and design, and would contribute positively to the setting, character and quality of the Harbour; and

b. Not result in substantial harm or loss of the significance of the scheduled monument; and

c. Minimise any impact on the ecological importance of the area, avoiding harm through location and/or design. Where harm cannot be avoided, applicants will be required to demonstrate that adverse impacts will be adequately mitigated, or as a last resort compensated for; and

d. Demonstrate that it would avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk from flooding and minimise flood risk to people, property and infrastructure.

LYD ET4: PROMOTING LOCAL TOURISM

What does this policy mean for the community?

This policy seeks to promote and support the sustainable and appropriate growth of Lydney's distinct visitor economy and its accommodation offer.

It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Economy and Tourism Objective 5.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The NPPF recognises tourism can be an important element of both vibrant town centres as well as being part of a sustainable and diverse rural economy. Tourism is a growth sector of increasing significance in the Forest economy that is supported by The Forest of Dean and Wye Valley Tourism partnership and the Core Strategy subject to it being compatible with environmental and heritage objectives.

At Lydney the Core Strategy promotes continued improvement of the town's role in providing opportunities for recreation and tourism development based on the historical and natural attributes of the harbour, dock and Dean Forest Railway and greater use of the town centre by visitors and sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

Local background

Tourism plays an important role in the local economy and The Plan recognises the need to provide a clean environment, a warm welcome for visitors, and a clear description of what the town has to offer and information on how to find it.

Lydney is at the gateway to the Forest of Dean, linked by the Dean Forest Railway and the proposed Dean Forest Greenway, which aims to create a multi-use track to link Parkend and Lydney along a safe off road route following the Dean Forest Railway line. Lydney Harbour is a well-established and growing visitor destination and the town also contains locally valued attractions.

The town itself is now a busy shopping and commercial centre with a diverse range of leisure facilities and attractions including Bathurst Park and the lido. Dean Forest Railway operates regular steam trains and has recently extended services to Parkend. Just outside the town lies Lydney Park Estate with its spectacular spring gardens, and Taurus Crafts, one of the premier visitor attractions in the area featuring an art gallery, craft workshops, garden centre, organic shop and restaurant.

Lydney currently has a small visitor accommodation offer, with two hotels and the Lydney Marina campsite. There is scope to increase this offer through diversifying the economy of the town centre.

Providing sustainable recreational activities and other facilities benefits local residents and will attract visitors to our town. This plan will support the development of a replacement Skate Park as part of the facilities offered on Lydney Recreation Ground. The Town Council can play a part in developing improved amenities and the long-term protection of open spaces

for sport, recreation and environmental sustainability. It recognises the need for flexibility to match changing lifestyles and community needs.

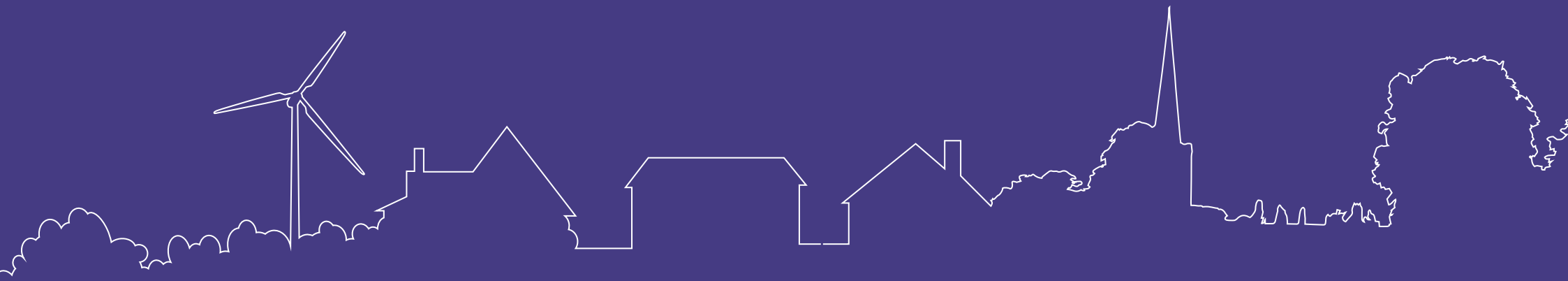
This Plan supports the further expansion of Dean Forest Railway, and connections to Taurus Crafts, Lydney Park Estate and other businesses which encourage visitors, promote tourism, signposting the town as the 'Gateway to the Forest'.

However, in order for the tourist industry to thrive it is important that these enterprises are further supported by residents and visitors alike. This Plan protects and supports Lydney's public spaces and community facilities, the regeneration of Lydney Harbour and the expansion of Lydney's visitor businesses.

LYD ET4: Promoting local tourism

1. Development proposals that maintain, enhance or expand the tourism and the visitor economy within Lydney will be supported where they sustain and conserve the character of the local environment and respond positively to the amenity of residents in the immediate location of the site.
2. Particular support will be given to proposals for the expansion of or alteration/expansion of:
   a. Existing hotel and bed and breakfast accommodation, including proposals for the development of new visitor accommodation within Lydney and at Lydney Harbour;
   b. Visitor attractions and facilities including Dean Forest Railway, Taurus Crafts, Bathurst Park and Lydney Lido that provide local employment opportunities and support vitality.
3. Within the open countryside, proposals to expand or develop visitor facilities and accommodation businesses will only be supported where they
   a. protect or enhance the character of the local environment;
   b. are well-connected to local services; and
   c. do not harm existing or neighbouring rural businesses or farming

3.4 Accessibility and Transport



3.4 Accessibility and Transport

LYD TRAN1: IMPROVEMENTS TO HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

What does this policy mean for the community?

This policy aims to guide and support safe improvements to Lydney's transport network through developer contributions and scheme design.

It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Environment and Transport Objectives 1 and 7.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

The NPPF directs significant development to be focused on locations which are already or can be made sustainable and well-connected, limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health.

Forest of Dean Core Strategy seeks to maximise the sustainability and self containment of Lydney, minimising the need to travel out of town for work, education, services, shopping or leisure. It seeks a better environment especially for the town centre including the bus station, and highway and environmental improvements are part of The Lydney Transport Strategy 2013 jointly prepared by Gloucestershire Highways and Forest of Dean District Council.

Optimum use should be made of the railway station which should offer improved facilities including parking, and connection with the Dean Forest Railway, in conformity with FoDDC Allocations Plan Policy AP51 (Railway Station Area). New development will be required to take advantage of the town's access to the rail network and to contribute to the overall highway strategy and other necessary improvements.

Local background

All means of transport within Lydney need to be integrated, free moving, safe and sustainable, throughout and within the area, as accessibility and ease of movement are essential to the economic and social life of the town. Lydney acts as an important transport hub for the surrounding villages and wider community.

With an increasing proportion of the population being elderly and/or disabled it is important that the streets of the town and public transport are accessible to all. In 2020, Accessibility Gloucestershire prepared an audit and found that many improvements could be made to make the main areas of the town centre more accessible to people who have restrictions to their mobility and to those who use mobility scooters or other mobility aids.

Lydney Town Council will work with all the key strategic partners to deliver and improve Lydney's transport infrastructure. This Plan supports several discrete parts working in harmony to make changes to Lydney's transport infrastructure and support the community.

Footways and Cycle Ways

Public Rights of Way are a valuable recreational resource which must be protected for future generations. There are guidelines in place to ensure that developers and the District Council provide for these paths when seeking to modify paths under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Particular attention needs to be paid to DEFRA Rights of Way Circular 1/09. In particular Section 7 'Planning Permission and Public Rights of Way' which states:

"In considering potential revisions to an existing right of way that are necessary to accommodate the planned development, but which are acceptable to the public, any alternative alignment should avoid the use of estate roads for the purpose wherever possible and preference should be given to the use of made up estate paths through landscaped or open space areas away from vehicular traffic."

A good network of signposted Public Rights of Way, including footpaths and cycle routes in Lydney will allow safe access to paths/ footways/cycle routes. This Plan embraces the key principles outlined in the Natural England Guidance on 'Local Transport Plans and the Natural Environment' and specifically wishes to reduce transport carbon emissions and promote accessibility for people to walk, cycle or take public transport.

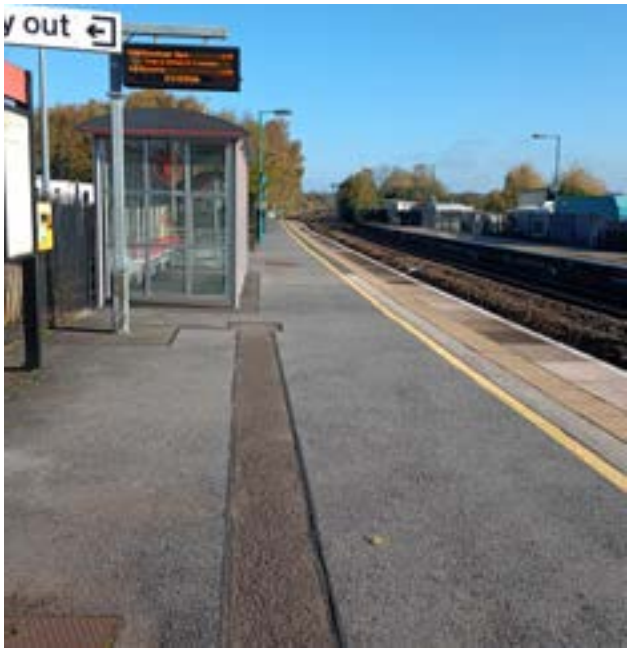
Policy LYD TRANS 2 sets out a supportive policy context against which any proposals that may need planning permission can be assessed. A mixture of developer contributions and project specific funding will be sought throughout the Plan period to bring schemes forward. In consultation with the relevant statutory bodies careful consideration will be given to the promotion of PRoWs around the estuary to avoid impacts on the nature conservation assets of the Severn Estuary, these may include interpretation and/or promoted alternative routes/permitted paths.

Public Transport

The Lydney public transport system needs to be integrated in order to be accessible to the entire community. Public transport needs to link residential settlements, employment sites, leisure areas and commercial sites to the villages and towns in the Forest to ensure easy access for employment, retail and leisure purposes.

The Plan encourages better planning of public transport to enhance sustainable solutions and better efficiency. This Plan supports the use of circular bus services linking all residential areas (including Primrose Hill, Centurion Road, Highfield Hill and Oakdale) with the Town Centre, bypass retail outlets, employment areas and the Railway Station. The bus services need to fit into the rail timetable.

The Plan encourages consideration of the benefits of re-routing the Coleford to Gloucester number 23 service to visit the Railway Station or alternatively introducing a new service from Chepstow/Sedbury to Gloucester via Lydney Railway Station and town.



The Lydney Neighbourhood Plan supports a major review and redesign of the suggested bus interchange.

The Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan supports the development of an integrated light transport bus service using the latest low emission technology.

Roads

The poor road system within the town and its inability to support the growing number of vehicular movements to and from the settlements especially north of Lydney is of great concern. There is a need to drastically improve the road network to ensure free access through the town from settlements

surrounding Lydney without causing congestion and air pollution. This Plan identifies the issues to be addressed, which in order of priority are:

1. Bream Road/Hill Street junction – this junction feeds the B4231 road from Bream, Coleford and beyond into the Town Centre. A relatively high proportion of the traffic is heavy goods traffic. This is also the main access to Lydney C. of E. Community Primary School. At peak times this junction becomes heavily congested. There is also on-going concern relating to air quality which is currently being monitored via Forest of Dean District Council's Air Quality Management Team.
2. Forest Road/Newerne Street junction – this junction feeds the B4234 road from Parkend, Lydbrook and beyond into the Town Centre. This also carries a relatively high proportion of goods traffic into the Town Centre. This area of the town is an extremely narrow shopping area with much pedestrian movement.
3. A green pedestrian and cycleway link connecting Swan road to the bypass and onward to the rail station and harbour (Swan Road Link).
4. In the Tutnalls/Harrison Way area there is a high volume of peak time traffic, which could be alleviated by providing a link via Naas Lane to the proposed Spine Road from Highfield Hill to the bypass.

The Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan supports work addressing the priority list above and will work with partners to deliver transport infrastructure which the local community considers is needed in the town/ parish area and which addresses the safety concerns and the needs associated with growth.

All developments likely to have a traffic impact on the network must complete a Transport Assessment / Statement and where necessary a Travel Plan. These documents will be assessed by the District Council and with the assistance of the relevant highways authority. The Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan also wishes to reflect its commitment to working with strategic partners to achieve the following:

- an appropriate investigation of the traffic generation aspects of proposed development on the roads in close proximity to the proposed development
- highway improvement, traffic management and public transport measures to be agreed and implemented, using Gloucestershire County Council Local Transport Plan funding and developer contributions.

Policy TRAN1 sets out the Plan's approach to these matters. The various criteria seek to ensure that new developments are properly integrated with, and accommodated within the local highways network. However, in accordance with national policy, development proposals will not necessarily be constrained where sustainable transport opportunities are limited due to site constraints, and the impacts on the highway network can be appropriately mitigated by the development proposal concerned.

LYD TRAN1: Sustainable and Active Travel and Improvements to transport infrastructure

Development proposals should respond positively to their impacts on the local transportation network. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should:

a. Contribute proportionately and positively towards the protection of, connection to and enhancement of Lydney's sustainable travel network defined on map 14, in accordance with the sustainable transport hierarchy.

b. Provide effective and safe access to egress to the existing highway network;

c. Include appropriate measures to avoid, mitigate and manage any significant impacts on highway capacity, congestion or on highway safety including any contribution to cumulative impacts;

d. Minimise conflict between different modes of transport;

e. Create accessible development which reduces the need to travel by car and maximises the use of sustainable modes of transport;

f. Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;

g. Ensure delivery of cycle parking and supporting infrastructure;

h. Protect, enhance and support public rights of way identified on map 6 and shown on map 14;

i. Be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra low emission vehicles in safe, accessible, convenient locations;

j. Be located within easy walking distance of public transport with good service frequency;

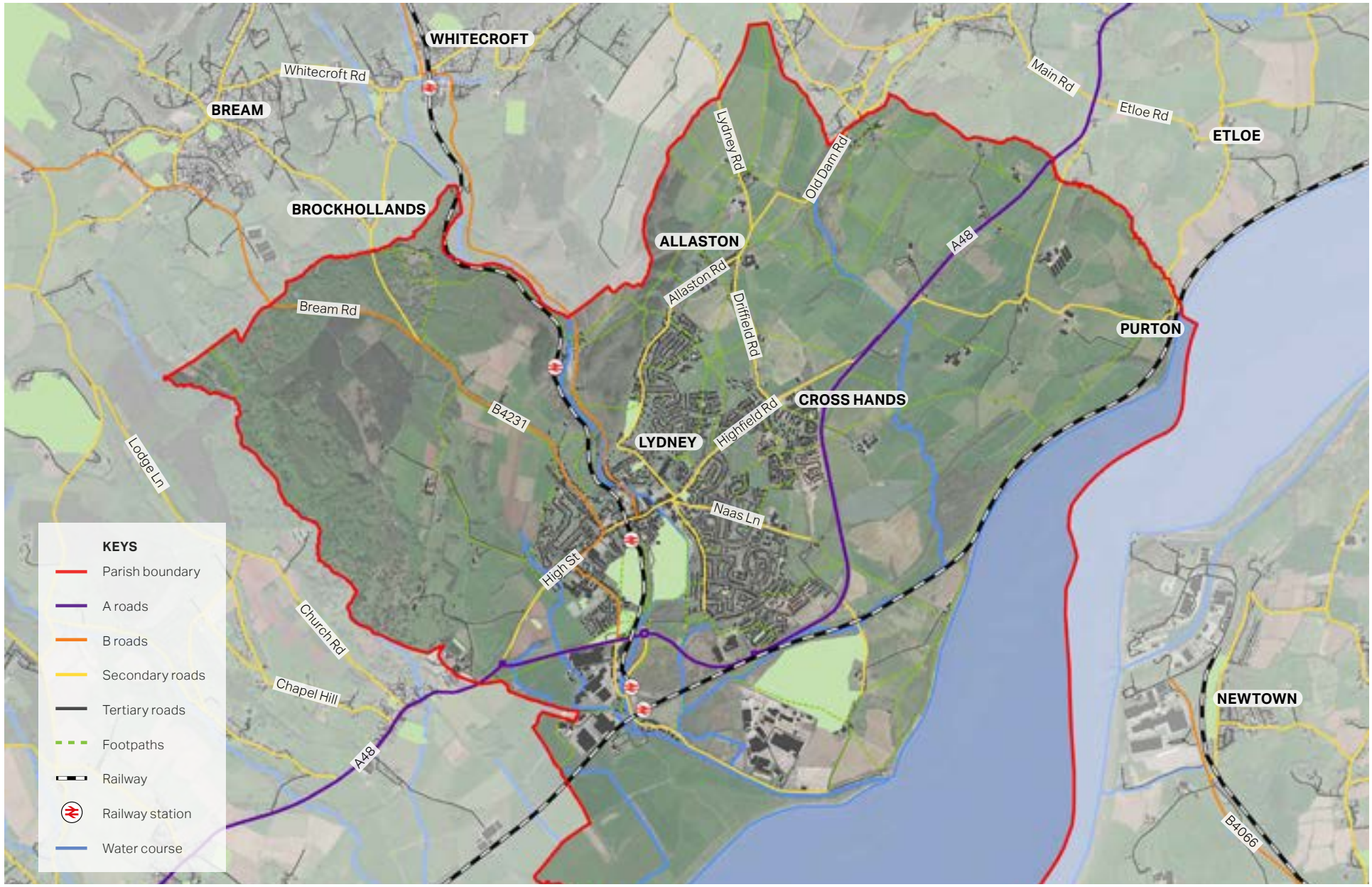
k. Minimise any adverse impact on communities and the environment, including noise and air quality.

Particular support will be given to proposals which:

l. Provide or contribute proportionately to direct and accessible pedestrian and cycle connections to local facilities, employment centres and Lydney town centre and Harbour;

m. Improve the public right of way and wildlife corridor network as shown on map 6; and/or

n. Assist with the development of a sign-posted network of public rights of way connecting the town centre, the railway station, the harbour and leisure areas.



Map 14: Lydney Movement Network (source: Lydney Design Code 2024)

LYD TRAN2: PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

What does this policy mean for the community?

This policy adopts the key principles outlined in the Government Guidance on Local Transport Plans and the Natural Environment (DEFRA Rights of Way Circular 1/09). In assessing proposals of this nature developers will also be expected to have regard to the potential impact of the construction of rights of way on protected sites and species. In doing so planning applications should demonstrate how they comply both with national planning policy and the policies in the Forest of Dean Core Strategy.

It helps deliver Neighbourhood Plan Environment and Transport Objectives 1 and 7.

Background

National Policies and Local Plan Context

Forest of Dean Core Strategy Policy CSP.1; Design and Environmental Protection and Policy CSP.4 – Development at Settlements, provide a strategic policy basis to underpin the aim to enhance, extend and improve Lydney's Wildlife corridors associated with public rights of way through developer provision and contributions.

Local background

Wildlife Corridors

This Plan supports proposals that enhance the local biodiversity by providing and enhancing wildlife corridors alongside Public Rights of Way (See the online Gloucestershire County Council map for the most up-to-date map: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/prow/rights-of-way-online-map/).

Many PRoWs will have existing ecological value and are already important wildlife corridors; these plans must respect the existing value of PRoW and consider potential impacts to the protected sites and species in the plan area.

The area close to the Severn Estuary to the south of Lydney and woodland areas to the north must be assessed with regards to any potential impacts to the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC and the Severn Estuary SAC/SPA/Ramsar.

LYD TRAN2: Public rights of way and wildlife corridors

Proposals to develop a network of wildlife corridors alongside public rights of way, as shown on map 6, will be supported. Where revisions to existing rights of way are necessary to accommodate planned development alternative alignments should avoid the use of estate roads for the purpose wherever possible. Proposals that include appropriately designed and surfaced footpaths through landscaped or open areas will be supported.

4. Community Projects

4. Community Projects

Lydney Town Council's strategic plan outlines the priorities for projects within the town. One of its primary objectives is to implement the town centre masterplan that has been created in parallel with the review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

In addition, the following projects are ongoing:

- Supporting sport and recreational facilities.
- Enhancing the natural environment.
- Supporting cultural events and activities that increase community cohesion and well-being.
- Support sustainable and suitable housing developments that meet the needs of local people.
- Working with partners to ensure sustainability in relation to climate change objectives.
- Working with partners to improve transport links and to reduce the impact of traffic on the town centre.
- Helping to develop a thriving and sustainable economy within the town.
- To work with partners to increase school capacity and post 16 education and skills training opportunities to high levels of attainment and employment opportunities and incomes within the community.

The Town Council will achieve these goals by working closely with the Forest of Dean District Council and Gloucestershire County Council, and other statutory and voluntary organisations.

Lydney Town Council will continue to update its strategic plan as projects progress.

5. Delivering the Plan

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Lydney's Neighbourhood Development Plan will be implemented by a number of bodies which will include Lydney Town Council, Forest of Dean District Council (the local planning authority) and by consultation with local Lydney community groups.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan will be used to form the basis of Lydney Town Council's response to submitted planning applications for development in the area. Responses will highlight any conflicts or any deficiencies that may arise from the proposed development. Likewise it will also highlight any perceived benefits from such development. Any appropriate mitigation measures would be secured by way of planning agreement or conditions.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development. Where applications for proposed development accord with the principles of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, relevant local plans and national policies, Forest of Dean District Council should work proactively with applicants to secure the most sustainable outcome.

The Lydney Neighbourhood Development Plan will be delivered through applicants and landowners bringing forward developmental proposals in a positive context provided by the policies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

As well as informing Lydney Town Council's response to planning applications the Town Council will also use the Neighbourhood Development Plan as the basis for strategy and approach to securing public and private investment in Lydney's infrastructure and benefits to the local community.

Following Lydney Forward Consultation Report three priority projects were identified:

- Town Centre Strategy/Master Plan
- Business Hub and Network Feasibility and Implementation
- Town Centre Quick Win and Project Selection, Design and Implementation

Lydney Neighbourhood Plan will continue to review and refresh its policies to remain an effective part of the development plan alongside the reviewed Forest of Dean Local Plan. A review creates an opportunity to refresh and bolster Lydney Town Centre Improvement Policy supported by steering groups involving local community groups and Town Council representatives working on specific projects and pursuing available external funding and grants to achieve these projects. In this context the Town Council will consider the need or otherwise for a further review of the Plan within six months of the adoption of the Forest of Dean Local Plan.

Endnotes

1 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents

2 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

3 Forest of Dean Core Strategy (2012-2026): https://www.fdean.gov.uk/media/szzpnzxj/core-strategy.pdf

4 Forest of Dean Allocations Plan(2006-26): https://www.fdean.gov.uk/media/ruscm3s1/allocations-plan.pdf

5 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012) Paragraph 14; Pre-sub-mission consultation and publicity: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/regulation/14

6 SOURCE: https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/mhuleeka/localinsight-lydney-cp-e04004313_gcp21-20230331115403240.pdf

7 Town and Country Planning Act (1990): https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents

8 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7971d9ed915d04220687b3/pb13553-rowcircular1-09-091103.pdf

9 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide

10 Gloucestershire Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy (September 2025 www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/ecology-and-landscape/gloucestershire-local-nature-recovery-strategy/

11 National Design Guide (2021): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/602cef1d8fa8f5038595091b/National_design_guide.pdf

12 National Model Design Code (2021): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/611152f98fa8f506ca458925/NMDC_Part_1_The_Coding_Process.pdf

13 Forest of Dean Residential Design Guide (2019): https://apps.fdean.gov.uk/_Assets/docs/Allocations%20examiner/other/RESIDENTIAL_DESIGN_GUIDE.pdf

14 Alterations and Extensions, a guide for householders (2020): https://www.fdean.gov.uk/media/vgzj10mr/residential-design-guide-for-alterations-and-extensions.pdf

15 UK Met Office Effects of Climate Change data: https://weather.metoffice.gov.uk/climate-change/effects-of-climate-change