

# Sustainability Appraisal Report Powys Local Development Plan, April 2015

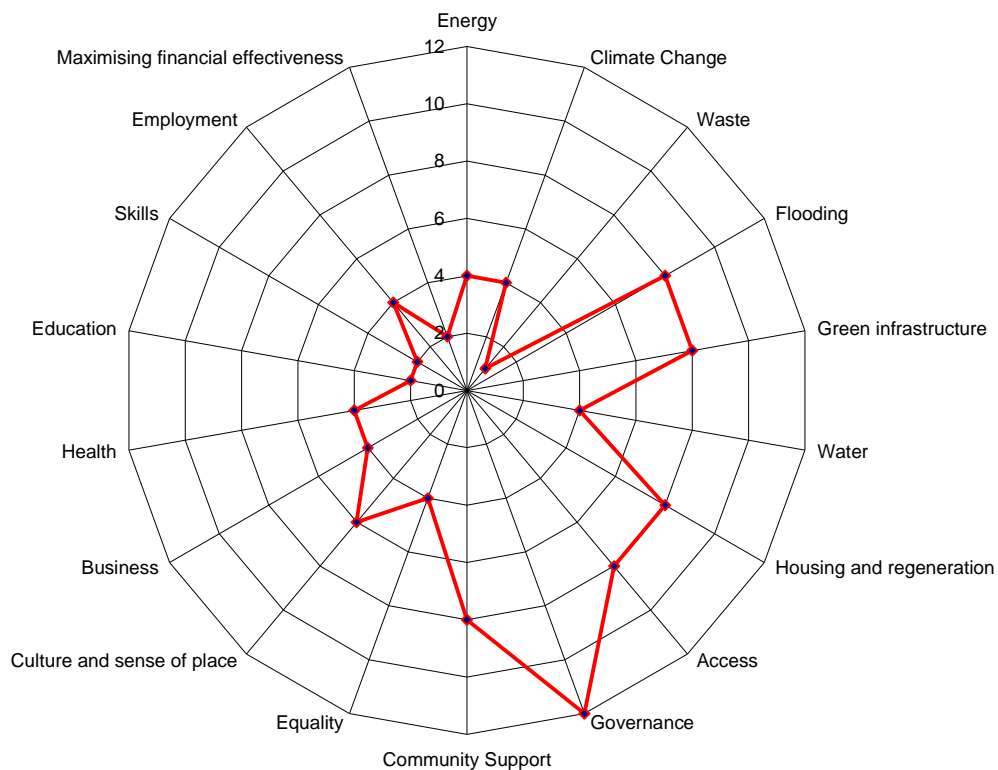
## Appendix 2 - Consideration of Growth Options and Alternatives at Preferred Strategy

## **Introduction**

The sustainability integration tool was used to appraise the draft vision, objectives, housing growth options, spatial options and strategic policies to inform the emerging Preferred Strategy in 2012. This assessment was then considered by the LDP Working Group on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012.

The assessment recommendations on housing growth options and spatial options taken to the Local Development Plan working group at the preferred strategy stage on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012 and included in the Pre-deposit Proposals Sustainability Appraisal Report (March 2012) are repeated below. Overall, it was considered that the chosen Preferred Strategy would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

## Appraisal 1 - Vision



The spider diagram showed that the vision scored low on waste, education, skills and maximising financial effectiveness. This reflected the plan's limited ability to affect those factors. It scored high on governance which reflected the Council's statutory duty to prepare the LDP in accordance with the LDP regulations.

The vision performed well against the criteria which focused on community support, access, housing & regeneration, green infrastructure and flooding.

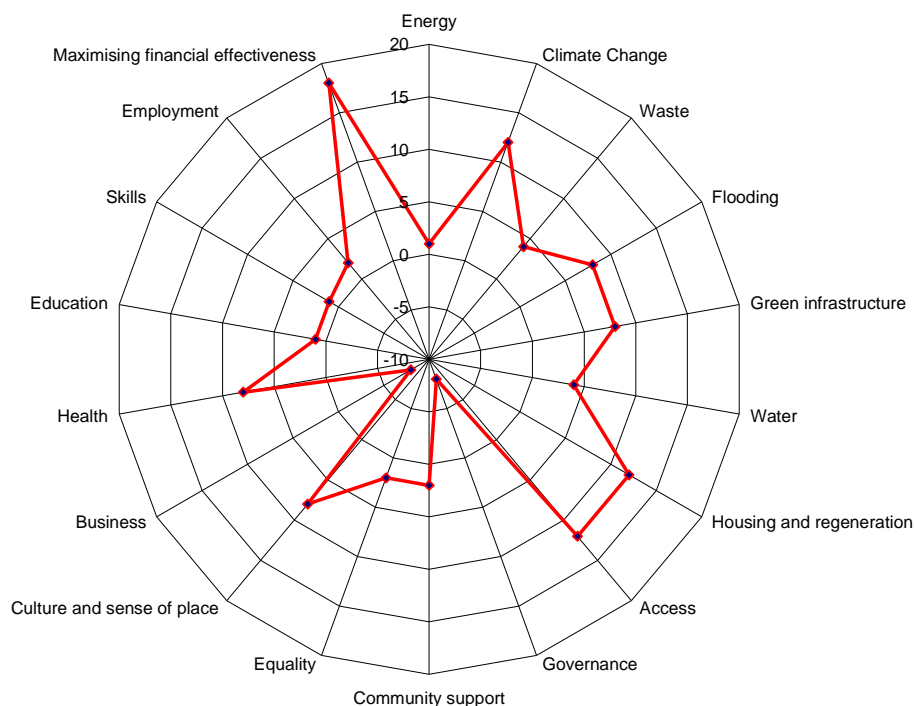
### Vision Assessment Recommendations

Recommendation	Accepted by working group
The recommended amendments to the vision seek to improve the performance of the vision in terms of Energy, Climate Change and Green Infrastructure.	Yes. Accepted.
The spider chart considers the vision does not perform well in seeking to maximise the effectiveness of services. This reflects the fact that the vision omits a strong spatial element. The word communities could be changed to 'Towns and Villages supporting' adding 'by' after the word communities.	

<p>If this is not intended, and the plan is intended to spread development, the word communities could be placed in context by adding the word 'rural' before it.</p>	
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<p>“As the green heart of Wales, Powys will be a place of vibrant <b>and resilient</b> communities providing sustainable development and economic opportunities set in a healthy, safe environment, <b>whilst</b> celebrating, <b>protecting, enhancing</b> and making the most of its natural <b>resources</b> and cultural heritage.”</p>	
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## Appraisal 2: Objectives



The plan objectives were considered as a suite. Objectives considered in isolation of each other would focus on their area particular interest without addressing other issues.

The spider diagram showed that the objectives performed poorly against the sustainability criteria related to business & governance. Low governance scoring is due to the fact that the objectives themselves do not mention community participation, however, this has addressed in the LDP Delivery Agreement.

The objectives performed neutrally against the sustainability criteria related to skills, education and energy. The objectives performed positively against all other the sustainability criteria.

### Objectives Assessment Recommendations

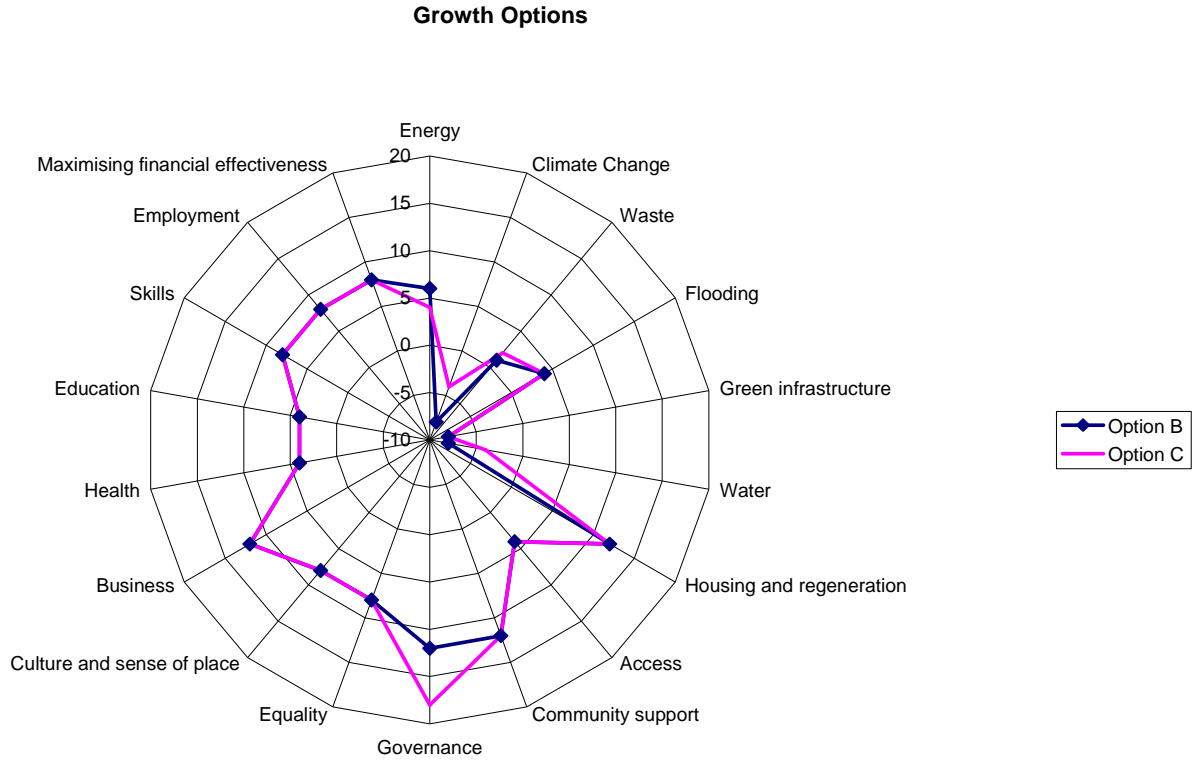
<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Accepted by working group</b>
The recommended amendments to the objectives seek to improve the performance of the vision in terms of Energy, Climate Change, Flooding, Green Infrastructure, Water, Housing & Regeneration, Community Support, Governance, Equality, Business, Health, Education, Skills and Employment. Improving the objectives as recommended would have no further knock on sustainability implications.	



<p>9. To maintain and strengthen established key economic sectors within Powys including the major manufacturing areas of the Severn Valley and Ystradgynlais, the provision of a more sustainable year-round tourism industry, <b>agriculture</b> and Powys' distinct green technology credentials.</p> <p>10. To support <b>the regeneration and renewal of Powys built environment and to support community regeneration</b> activities.</p> <p>11. To ensure that new development is serviced by <del>adequate</del> <b>adequate infrastructure and physical services that are designed to withstand the impacts of predicted climate changes</b>.</p> <p>12. To <b>support the provision and retention of community services and facilities and to facilitate</b> changing models of service provision.</p> <p>13. To conserve, protect and where possible enhance the <del>natural and built heritage, environmental</del> <b>landscape character</b> and cultural assets of Powys.</p> <p>14. To encourage active, healthy lifestyles by enabling access to open spaces, areas for recreation and amenity including allotments and ensuring developments provide opportunities for walking and cycling and play provision if required.</p> <p>15. To support the use of the Welsh language and promote inclusive <del>bilingual</del> communities within Powys.</p> <p><b>16. To conserve and protect land important for environmental quality and biodiversity interests and where possible to promote development that enhances them.</b></p> <p><b>17. To promote development which supports community wellbeing and cohesion, especially in those areas facing multiple deprivations.</b></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
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### Appraisal 3: Housing Growth Options



The spider diagram above showed both housing growth options scored similar levels of impact for each of the effects. Housing growth option C (7,700 homes) scored slightly better than option b (9,100 homes) for climate change, water, waste and governance effects. This is probably due to the simple fact that fewer homes will have less of an adverse impact so long as meeting needs are facilitated.

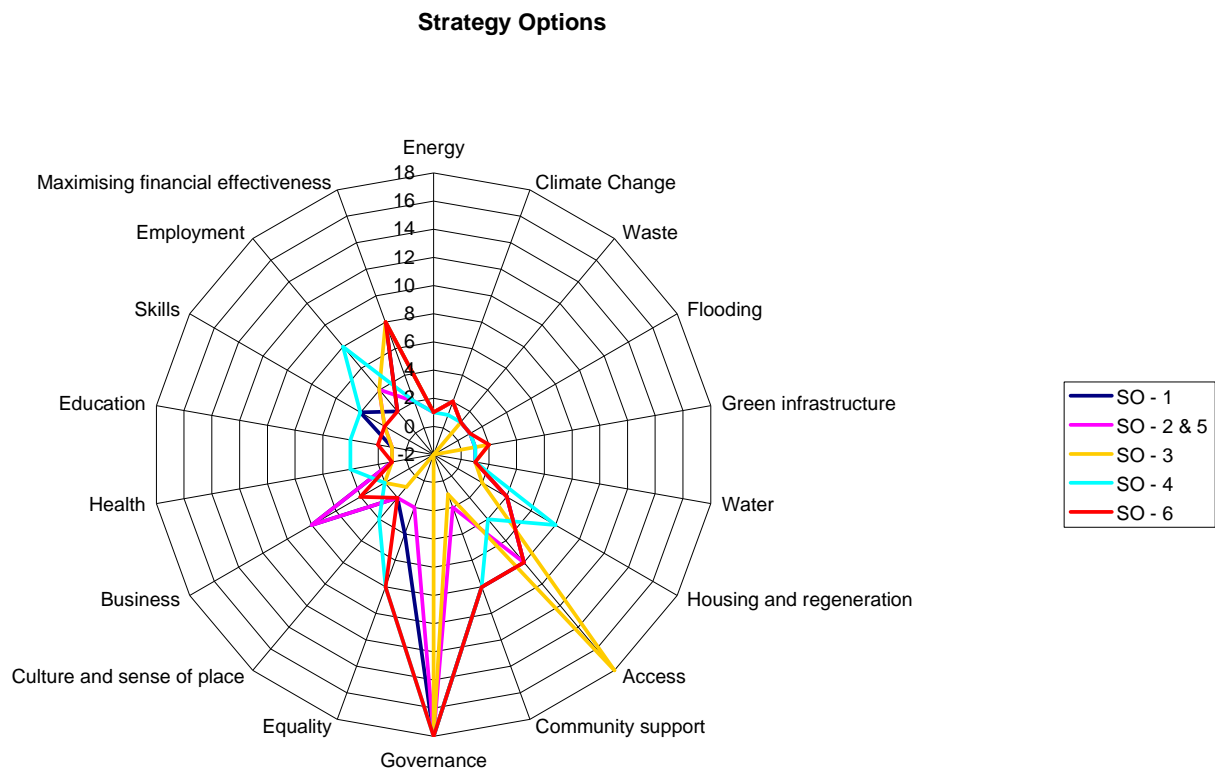
### Housing Growth Options Assessment Recommendations

Recommendation	Accepted by working group
<p>The main growth that the Local Development Plan must cater for is Housing. Housing projections are a careful balancing act.</p> <p>It is important to ensure sufficient provision of land to meet housing needs. This is important in creating sustainable communities. Since these are not defined at a strategic level it is important not to under provide. It is also important not to</p>	<p><b>Accepted by working group</b></p>



<p>significantly over provide, to do so leads to less certainty for communities and could lead to overdevelopment in a sensitive area.</p> <p>However development increases pressure on environmental resources and it is inevitable that some greenfield land will be released to allow for both housing provision to be met and in some instances for existing stock to be renewed.</p> <p>All things equal, less development has less environmental impact. It is considered that the growth option selected (c) 7,700 homes over the plan period is an appropriate balance. It is less than the principal projection of 9,100 homes, although for the reasons provided it is considered sufficient to meet housing needs.</p> <p>The impact of this level of growth very much depends on the spatial strategy selected and on further detailed constraints information. Furthermore 'knitting' together of the delivery of public services will depend on those services planning future provision in accordance with the levels of housing growth provided for in the development plan.</p> <p>Detailed policies are also important, for instance on ensuring that the best use of brownfield land is made and that development should not go ahead at 'any cost' to the environment or community.</p>	
<p><b>Overall recommendation</b></p> <p>That growth option (c) 7,700 homes is selected.</p> <p>It is considered that this growth option (approx allocation of 308 Hectares of land) would provide enough scope to provide a range of housing types, sizes &amp; tenures which reflect housing needs until 2026.</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>

## 4.7 Appraisal 4: Spatial Options



The spider diagram above showed the appraisal of the spatial options. Spatial options 2 & 5 were considered to be very similar and were therefore assessed together. It is clear from the diagram that spatial option 6 (the preferred spatial option) provided the best overall performance.

### Spatial Options Assessment Recommendations

Recommendation	Accepted by working group
<p>The spatial options were assessed assuming a growth option of 7,700 dwellings and the allocation of 42 Hectares of employment land and that this is the most sustainable level of growth. It is also accepted that the role of the Local Development Plan was to promote development which generally had a negative environmental impact, nevertheless the spatial strategy chosen and the strategic policies have the opportunity to mitigate any adverse impacts.</p> <p>Implementation of the Spatial Option is reliant on strategic and detailed development policies. It will be of most importance in</p>	

directing land allocations for housing and employment development to appropriate locations.

Assessment of the spatial options was difficult because of the limited detail of each option considered.

**Option 1 - Settlement Hierarchy**

The option did not explain the settlement hierarchy. Dispersing growth ensures that community needs are generally met.

**Option 2 - Character Areas and Travel to Work Areas & Option 5 - Functional / Character Areas**

This option provided an opportunity to reduce travel emissions and to develop distinct approaches based on the needs and challenges of each area.

This approach had the potential to miss the connectivity that has grown within Powys since becoming a Unitary Authority.

**Option 3 - Central Transport Corridor**

This recognised that Powys's main internal communication route is its road network, in particular its central transport corridor and that this should therefore be the central organising principle of the plan.

This had benefits for climate change, opportunity to reduce transport emissions, and would utilise existing infrastructure building on existing service centres in the corridor. This would generally preserve landscape character outside the central transport corridor.

However, the central transport corridor follows the valleys which are at greatest risk from flooding and a focussed approach to development was considered to have a detrimental impact on meeting the needs of areas outside the central corridor.

**Option 4 - High School Catchments / Planning Areas (Current UDP approach)**

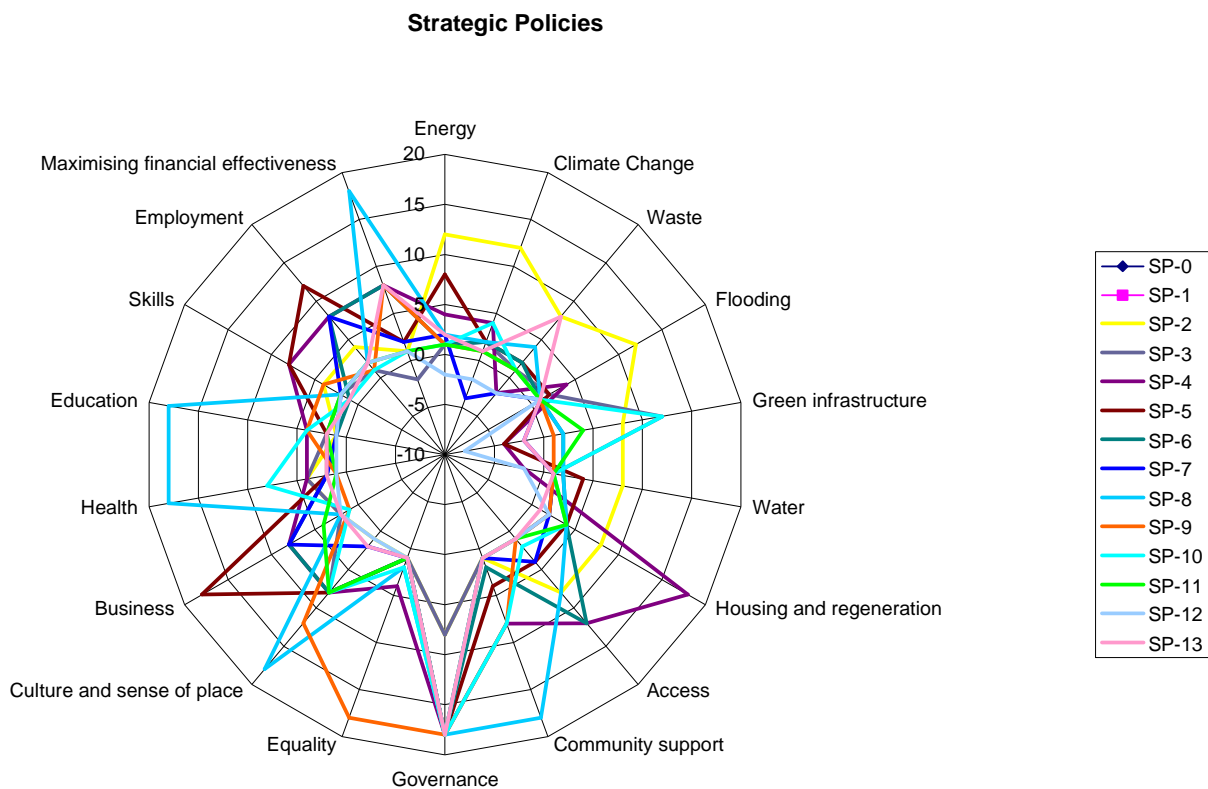
This option provided an opportunity to reduce travel emissions and to develop distinct approaches based on the needs and challenges of each area and is based around individual service centres.

This approach dispersed development across the county although does little make the functional connections that exist between areas.

**Option 6 - Settlement Hierarchy with Central Growth Corridor.**

<p>This is a balance of options 1 and 3 above. In general it focused development in the central transport corridor without neglecting those areas outside it.</p> <p>This strategy does focus development in towns at risk from flooding, although development can also be considered to bring opportunities to those areas which experience highest multiple deprivations.</p>	
<p><b>Overall recommendation</b></p> <p><b>Option 6 - Settlement Hierarchy with Central Growth Corridor.</b></p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>

### Appraisal 5: Strategic policies



The spider diagram above showed the appraisal outcomes of 13 strategic policies. It is clear from the diagram that different policies perform well in particular effects. For example, policy SP4: Housing Growth & Needs scores well in terms of its impact on housing & regeneration.

## Strategic Policies Assessment Recommendations

Recommendation	Accepted by working group
<p>Policy SP2 considers energy efficiency; however it does not promote renewable energy production. There is potential to incorporate a strategic policy on energy generation.</p> <p>There is no policy which seeks the provision of learning opportunities (education and skills) alongside large development proposals. There is potential to add this to Policy SP5 on Economic and Employment Developments.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>Overall recommendation</b></p> <p>Having considered all of the draft Policies against each other it is apparent that there is the potential for some to conflict with each other. In these instances there is the possibility to prioritise the policies for certainty.</p> <p>Furthermore some Policies consider similar topics and there is an opportunity to combine them e.g. Community facilities and recreation.</p> <p>It should be noted that Minerals (Policy SP12) are specific to their location so cannot reflect the strategy.</p> <p>Policies SP2 &amp; SP3 are very similar design based amenity protection Policies. There is potential for them to be combined. Policies SP2 &amp; SP3 are critical to the successful implementation of SP4, SP5, SP6, SP7, SP11, SP12 &amp; SP13.</p> <p>The preferred strategy should prioritise Policies SP1, SP2 &amp; SP3 and explain the approach which ensure that development must take place within the environmental capital available. For example, where there is sufficient water supply to support both biodiversity interests and the needs arising from the new development.</p> <p>Policy SP5 potentially undermines Policy SP6. There is potential for them to be combined or for the requirement that Economic and Employment Developments to be in accordance with the settlement hierarchy to be expanded through detailed policy for clarity.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p> <p><b>No</b></p> <p><b>No</b></p> <p><b>No</b></p>

<p>Policy SP6 may be undermined by SP11 although these are existing attractions and so the interaction between the facilities and attractions and Town Centres are not new.</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p>There is potential for SP8 &amp; SP10 to be combined as they essentially relate to community facilities.</p>	