

River Usk Strategy

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Introduction

- 1.1 The River Usk is a dominant landscape feature within the County Borough of Newport and has played an integral part in the development of the city. The transportation of coal and iron and other dock related industries placed the Usk at the centre of Newport's growth and the focus of activity for Newport's population. With the decline of such industries also came the decline in the visual appearance of the land along the River and its function in Newport's environment. The Council is keen, however, to regain the River's prominence and sense of place in Newport's environment, and has placed the Usk at the heart of large scale regeneration proposals for Newport.
- Scope of Strategy**
- 1.2 This document attempts to highlight the current situation with the River, taking into account historical information and studies, and identify key recommendations for the many issues influencing the River's future. These cover a mixture of management issues as well as land use planning issues. Many of the key recommendations require further work to be carried out by other statutory organisations and as such this Strategy represents a starting point in co-ordinating the different functions of the River.
- 1.3 More specifically, the issues that have formed the basis of this strategy are:
- The River Context
 - River Usk – Historical Context
 - Development context and future opportunities.
 - Management of the River Usk.
 - Ecological Opportunities and Interests
 - Landscape
 - Cleaning Programme for the River Usk
 - Archaeology
 - Navigation and mooring opportunities.
 - Flood Risk
 - Riverside footpath and cyclepath
 - Tourism Opportunities.
- 1.4 For each of the issues listed above, a set of recommendations has been outlined as a basis for future work or discussion.



1.5 The Strategy has been through a consultation exercise, the results of which have been subject to the Council's formal report procedures and incorporated into the document where relevant. The Strategy has now been formally adopted by the Council and as such will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will form a coordinating document for the establishment of a management board for users of the river and adjoining land uses.

Policy Context

1.6 A summary of the policy and legislative framework associated with the many issues relating to the River Usk can be found at Appendix 1.

1.7 The advice presented in the Strategy and associated Habitats Regulations Assessment is based on current knowledge and policy framework, and may be updated to reflect significant changes.



The River - Context

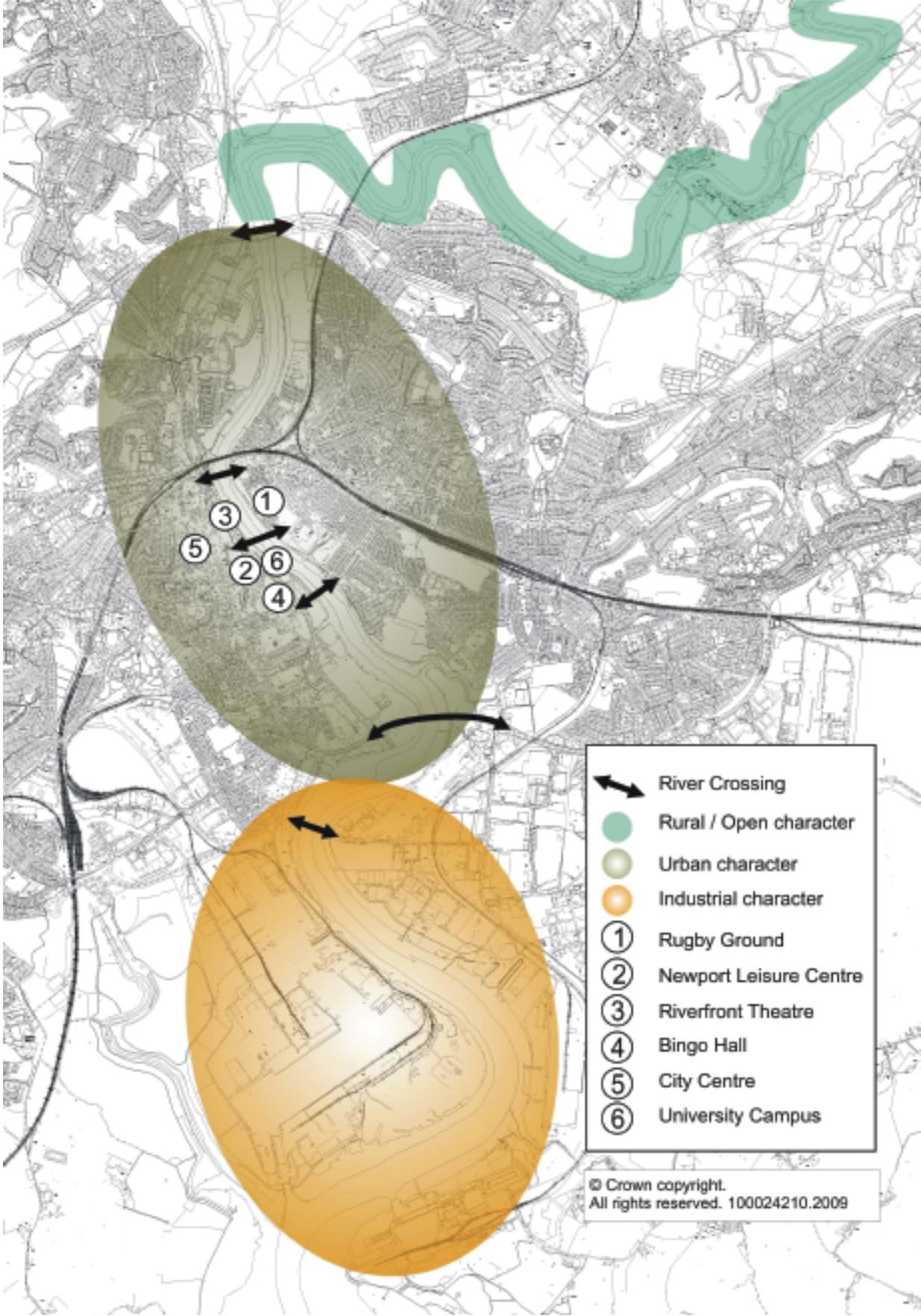
- 2.1 The River Usk is one of the largest rivers in Wales being over 120km long from its source to mouth. It rises in the mountains of mid-Wales then flows south-east through Abergavenny and Usk to the village of Caerleon, down through the centre of Newport to the strong tidal waters of the Severn estuary. It has the highest tidal range of any city centre in the world. The tidal reach of the River extends upstream as far as Newbridge-on-Usk.
- 2.2 Its whole length contains a wealth of plants and animals, some of which are very rare, both in Britain and Europe. Therefore the River Usk is designated both as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Contributing to the River's importance is the presence of the otter and several fish species including Atlantic salmon, bullhead, sea lamprey, brook lamprey, river lamprey, twaite shad and allis shad. As well as important species, the River Usk hosts habitats that contribute to the special wildlife interests. These include woodland, grassland, swamp and marginal vegetation, bracken, mudflats and saltmarsh. This diversity of habitats supports the wide range of species present and is therefore a key part of the special interest of the site.
- 2.3 The appearance of the River changes through Newport with the tidal conditions, with low tides exposing the River's mudflats. It is these conditions, however, that enable specific plants and wildlife to grow and breed and create the unique flora and fauna associated with the Usk. The character of the River also varies considerably, with industrial uses dominating the southern limits, residential and commercial uses concentrated in the central section and a more rural landscape at its northern limits.
- 2.4 The main vehicular crossing point over the Usk in Newport is the M4 Bridge. More centrally, the main crossing points can be found at Clarence Place (also known as Town Bridge), George Street Bridge and the Southern Distributor Road. Although closed at present to traffic, Newport Transporter Bridge also provides a major crossing point. Pedestrian access can also be gained across these bridges, with an additional dedicated pedestrian/cycle bridge, City Bridge, situated between Town Bridge and George St Bridge. The railway bridge also crosses the River Usk and for many visitors provides the first view and impression of the River and the City.

2.5 The Riverfront Theatre is one of the most significant activity generators along the riverside. Since opening, the theatre has provided a focus to activity, drawing people from the city centre to the river and along the riverfront walkway. Other facilities attracting people to the western bank are Castle Bingo and Newport Leisure Centre. Sainsburys is also a major activity generator along the west

bank of the river front. The main activity generator along the east bank is the Rugby Ground at Rodney Parade. There are also strong desire lines between the residential areas on the east side of the river and the city centre on the west. Newport Transporter Bridge provides a long standing visitor attraction spanning both banks of the river.



River Usk Context Plan



River Usk - Historical Context

3.1 The River Usk has historically been used as a major shipping route, principally because of its wide and deep mouth and good access from the Bristol Channel, and has played an important role in Newport's evolution from a modestly sized hamlet to a well populated city. Legacies from the River's past functions and roles are evident along the length of the Usk's banks. The northern section of the river is home to the village of Caerleon where a fortress was built to control South Wales. Moving south, Newport Castle stands on the west banks of the Usk, where it was built in the early 15th Century to guard the settlement and control the river crossing. Further evidence of the Usk's longstanding use as a main shipping route was discovered in July 2002, when the remains of the Newport Ship were unearthed. The ship dated around 1469 and was most likely a merchant ship.

3.2 During the late 1700s the construction of the Monmouthshire Canal allowed for the a large proportion of iron and coal produced at the Heads of the Valleys to be transported down to Newport and the River Usk and out into the Bristol Channel. The steady growth of Newport at the time can largely be attributed to the Monmouthshire Canal and its ability to link Newport to the source of iron and coal. Wharves and warehouses were built around the canal basin and Pillgwenlly Pill to handle the increase in trade, but many ships were unable to load and unload cargos due to the lack of suitable facilities along the River Usk, which eventually led to the development of additional dock facilities.

3.3 The River's main impact on the city's growth occurred, however, during the

early 1800s with the formation of the Newport Dock Company and the construction of the Town Dock. Work began in 1836 on the 10.5 hectares of land set aside for the development and the dock was completed in 1842.



1831



1854

- 3.4 With the increase in demand for South Wales coal from all over the world, the Town Dock could no longer cope and an extension was opened in 1858. However, the Town Dock began to become less important with the opening of the downstream Alexandra North Dock in 1875 and the South Dock in 1893, and eventually in 1931 it closed and was filled in.
- 3.5 The closure of the Town Dock was to be the start of a period of decline in the environment and vitality of the land bordering the central banks of the Usk. For several decades following the closure of the Town Dock and associated businesses, the riverfront area and waterfront sites became under-utilised and presented a poor visual image of Newport, consisting primarily of low quality industrial buildings.
- 3.6 More recently, however, Newport is entering an era of change, with the River Usk and its banks forming an integral part of regenerating the City's environment. This change is being facilitated by the City Council and Newport Unlimited, the Urban Regeneration Company set up by the Council, the Welsh Development Agency and the Welsh Assembly Government to bring about the physical and economic regeneration of Newport. In February 2004 the Central Area Masterplan, commissioned by Newport Unlimited and the City Council was completed. This set out a bold vision for Newport to be delivered over the next 15 – 20 years and

established an overall development framework for the central area. Key projects within this document were then identified and included within the Draft Newport City Centre Masterplan – SPG July 2004. A series of key projects proposed in the City Centre Masterplan are situated along the banks of the River Usk.



- 3.7 This Strategy aims to build on the Draft Central Area Masterplan and other development briefs for the riverfront sites, and provide a coordinated strategy to address the issues and challenges associated with the Usk.

Development - Context

- 4.1 The Council has had aspirations of re-orientating the city back onto the riverfront for many years. Various development plans and strategies of the last two decades have put the River Usk at the centre of Newport's regeneration proposals. Increases in land values during the early 2000s and the establishment of Newport Unlimited Urban Regeneration Company, together provided the stimulus for significant levels of development along the riverfront. Continuing the regeneration of the riverfront and surrounding land remains a priority of the Council.
- 4.2 Development has been focused in the central section of the river, at the heart of the city. The Plan overleaf illustrates the scale of development that has taken place, is under construction or has a valid planning permission or development plan allocation. The Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage SPG www.newport.gov.uk/planningpolicy sets out the Council's strategy for alleviating flood risk and has been instrumental in facilitating development along the banks of the River.
- 4.3 Development on the East Bank is predominantly residential, with approximately 1500 units with planning permission and a further 50 units allocated in the Adopted Newport UDP.
- 4.4 Proposals agreed or proposed on the West bank are more varied, reflecting its proximity to the city centre and the more commercial enterprises such locations tend to generate. Residential schemes are still a dominate feature in the

proposals, but other developments include:

- A riverside park at Old Town Dock
- Pleasure and Boat landing facilities at Penmaen Wharf
- Offices and Magistrates Court
- University Campus and student accommodation.
- Proposed marina and canal basin at Crindau creating a link to both the River Usk and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal at Barrack Hill. This forms part of a long term vision to connect the river to the canal.
- Mixed use development at Crindau including major residential scheme, commercial and leisure uses.

Future Developments

- 4.5 The UDP and its accompanying development briefs, masterplans and supplementary planning guidance identify the majority of present development opportunities available along the banks of the Usk. There may be other 'windfall' sites that become available as circumstances and the market change however, and these will be assessed against the policies in place at that time.
- 4.6 Policy CE14 - Coastal Zone, sets out the criteria for assessing where new development could be appropriate within coastal areas and the River Usk. The basis of the policy is that the undeveloped areas of the coast and tidal rivers of the County Borough will rarely be appropriate for major development. Previously developed areas around the River Usk do, however, provide

- opportunities for redevelopment and regeneration. This essentially focuses river edge development opportunities as being from the M4 southwards towards the mouth of the River.
- 4.7 As can be seen from the Riverfront Development / Proposals Plan, development opportunities between the M4 and the Transporter Bridge have largely been identified or developed. Within the context of Policy CE14 of focusing new development on previously developed land in coastal areas and River Usk, the already developed land to the south of the Transporter Bridge would appear to offer the most potential for new development opportunities.
- 4.8 Along the west bank, the retention and development of Newport Docks and port related industries is supported and considered to provide the focus for future development in this area.
- 4.9 The currently developed industrial area on the east bank is therefore considered to provide the greatest potential for major regeneration, especially when considered alongside proposals for the New M4 (proposed M4 relief road). The New M4 is a major piece of infrastructure, which if implemented, provides the greatest opportunities for development, on the eastern side of the lower limits of the River Usk, especially if a junction is situated in South East Newport. The area currently accommodates industrial uses, but if improved access is achieved through the New M4, land uses could possibly be broadened to include residential, commercial and leisure. Potential exists, however, to redevelop existing industrial areas in isolation of the proposed M4 project as part of the City's Eastern Expansion Area and Southern Distributor Road eastern extension.
- 4.10 A preferred line for an M4 Relief Road has been selected by the Welsh Assembly Government, which will be protected from development by Newport City Council until such time that the National Assembly for Wales make a final decision on the road's future. Redevelopment opportunities and associated infrastructure improvements and upgrades on existing industrial sites could also provide an opportunity to improve accessibility to land to the east of the Usk. However, development opportunities must ensure they do not prejudice the implementation of the New M4 and potential junction at a later date.
- 4.11 Given the River Usk's ecological designations as a SSSI and SAC, there are environmental constraints to developments which need to be addressed and satisfied by the statutory consultees and local authority. Similarly, there may be contamination issues that could require remediation works in advance of development or flooding concerns that require a Flood Consequence Assessment to be undertaken and mitigation works implemented. The development constraints and potential enhancements and improvements associated with a site will differ from site to site and therefore the appropriate conditions and mitigation measures will need to be considered on a case by case basis. While such constraints do not usually prevent development, it is important that such issues are considered early on in the development process.

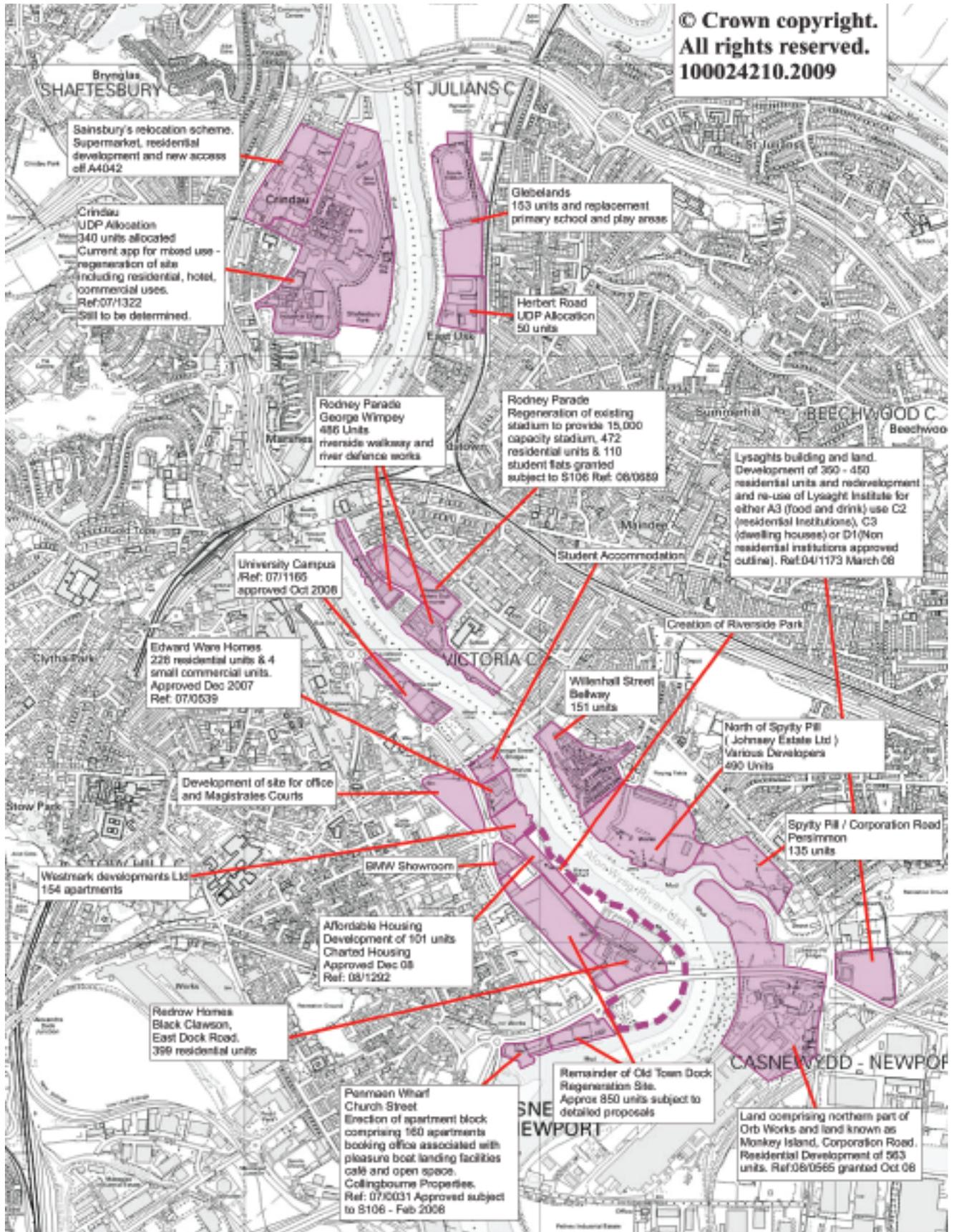
Design Considerations

- 4.12 It is important that a high standard of design quality is achieved with development along the riverfront. Key design principles that the City Council will apply in determining planning applications for development along stretches of the central section of the river is contained in Newport Public Realm Strategy. Architects, designers and planners are encouraged to refer to the document when considering riverfront developments.
- 4.13 The Public Realm Strategy builds upon the aspirations of the Central Master Plan, which includes design guidance for development areas within the city centre, including key riverfront sites. The design guidance given reflects the setting, context and development proposal for the site in question. In general terms, developers should be mindful of the following design principles when considering development sites along the banks of the River Usk:
- Building Height – the number of storeys will be dependant upon the surrounding landuses, however, development should provide a strong elevation to the river.
 - Context & Setting – developers should consider the way in which a new development will work with the site and the surrounding land. Key features and qualities to consider should include street pattern, form, grain, appearance and colours.
 - Building Mass & Density – how the proposed density and mix contribute to the existing character of the area and reflect the riverfront location.
 - Maximise development along the river frontage – development should face the river to create an attractive and active frontage, drawing people to the river’s banks.
 - Landscape context – the way in which development works within its landscape setting.
 - Riverfront walkway - maximise pedestrian connection through development to the riverfront.

Key Recommendations

- **Limited development opportunities to the north of the M4 Motorway.**
- **Retention and development of Newport Docks and port related industries to provide the focus for future development in the lower section of the river.**
- **Explore the potential for major regeneration opportunities in the Local Development Plan process along the east bank of the River Usk, within the vicinity of the proposed New M4 junction.**
- **In accordance with Adopted UDP Policy CE14 – Coastal Zone, new development should be focused on previously developed land in coastal areas and the river Usk.**

Riverfront Development/Proposals - April 2009



Managing the River Usk

Introduction

- 5.1 Works on the River Usk and its banks are covered by a number of Statutory Agencies. The types of works proposed will determine which Agencies are of relevance, and in many cases several agencies may be involved. This section aims to outline the main organisations responsible for managing the different issues associated with the River Usk.

Local Planning Authority

- 5.2 Technical Advice Note 4 – Coastal Planning, notes that planning controls extend as far as low water mark. It is likely, therefore, that any works in the River Usk or on its banks will require planning permission. More specifically, with regards to making a decision as to whether a material change of use has occurred by the mooring of boats, the important issue appears to be the permanency of the use. For example, the use of the side of a navigable waterway for the mooring of craft in the course of navigation is not likely to constitute a material change of use of a waterway for the purpose of navigation. However, in the case of a marina where boats are kept on a semi permanent basis, a material change of use of that land would be considered to have taken place.
- 5.3 In the case of operational development, the physical attributes of boat moorings such as permanent riverside mooring blocks, jetties, pontoons etc are operational development requiring planning permission.

Environment Agency Wales

- 5.4 The Environment Agency Wales www.environment-agency.gov.uk covers a number of responsibilities in relation to the management of the River Usk. These include:
- 5.5 Flood Defence Powers and Duties – The Environment Agency is required to exercise a general supervision over flood defence matters and has statutory powers to control the erection of structures in, over or under or within 7 metres of the top of the bank main rivers.
- 5.6 Waste Regulations – Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations (2007) – An Environmental Permit is required if you operate installations that carry out schedule 1 activities; for example, burning of fuel with a rated thermal input of 50 or more megawatts, a waste operation; or a mobile plant (carrying out either one of the Schedule 1 activities or a waste operation). If works involve the importation and disposal of waste, the operations will fall within the provisions of the Permitting regulations. If any waste is to be used on site then the applicant will be required to obtain an appropriate exemption of authorisation from the Environment Agency. The Environment Agency will then consider whether the material to be used is suitable for the purpose and, once satisfied, determine whether a Permit will be required or monitored to ensure that the conditions of the permit are complied with.

- 5.7 Water Quality/Pollution Prevention Measures – By issuing and reviewing consents, the Environment Agency can regulate the quality of the discharges in Wales to help protect water quality, the environment and human health. Depending on the environmental risk associated with the discharge we may monitor the discharge and/or the receiving water. Water quality is a key factor in maintaining healthy fish stocks, enriched habitats and a healthy environment. The Environment Agency also provides advice to industry and the public on your legal responsibilities and good environmental practice. A series of Pollution Prevention Guidance Notes provides practical guidance on avoiding pollution.
- 5.8 Nature Conservation – The Environment Act 1995 places both general and specific duties on the Environment Agency with regard to conservation. The principal aim of the Environment Agency in discharging its functions is to protect or enhance the environment to support the achievement of sustainable development.
- 5.9 Water Abstractions – The EA monitor water abstraction and discharge, to ensure water abstracted does not reduce flows and affect the quantity and quality of habitats.
- 5.10 Fishery Management – Fish stocks are monitored to maintain them a naturally sustainable level.
- Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)**
- 5.11 The River Usk is a designated SSSI and SAC and the views of CCW must therefore be sought prior to any works. They will require sufficient information to be able to advise the local planning authority, Environment Agency and any other competent authority on the effects of any proposals on the interest features of the sites. CCW also has a significant role in advising on European Protected Species issues. A full copy of the Conservation Objectives for the River Usk SAC can be found on CCW's website - **www.ccw.gov.uk**
- Newport Harbour Commissioners**
- 5.12 The Newport Harbour Commissioners is a body created by statute and covered by the Newport (South Wales) Harbour Acts and Orders 1836 to 2003. The limits of jurisdiction of the Commissioners are defined by the Harbour Revision Order 2003. Its outer limits are defined by a line drawn from Goldcliff Point in the east to Peterstone Gout to the west and upriver to the tidal limit of Newbridge-on-Usk.
- 5.13 Associated British Ports Limited (ABP) carries out the functions of the Harbour Master on behalf of Newport Harbour Commissioners.
- 5.14 Traffic within the Newport Harbour includes vessels arriving and departing from the enclosed dock as well as the river berths. The harbour currently handles between 1,200 and 1,350 ships per year involving the import and export of steel, agri bulks, solid fuels, timber and plywood, glass, scrap, sand and specialised project cargoes. The remainder of the traffic comprises leisure craft.
- 5.15 The Harbour Commissioners website **www.newportharbourcommissioners.org.uk** lists its main duties and responsibilities as including the following:

Safety and Navigation

- Regulation of navigation within statutory harbour limits.
- Provision of a pilotage service
- Local lighthouse authority establishing and maintaining lights and marks.
- Removal of wrecks
- Hydrographic surveying of harbour area

Enforcement

- To make and enforce byelaws relating to the conduct of vessels and issue local notice to mariners as required to ensure all harbour users are aware of the requirement for safe navigation in the harbour area.
- To undertake regular patrols throughout the harbour area to ensure compliance with byelaws.
- Policing of stakeholders' port waste reception facilities.

Pollution

- Development of harbour oil spill contingency plans as required by the Merchant Shipping (Oil Pollution Preparedness response and Co-operation Convention) Regulations 1998.
- Provision of Port Waste Management Plan as required by the Merchant Shipping (Port Waste Reception Facilities) Regulations 1997.

Environmental Management

- Duties under Habitats Directive to review consents.
- Prepare Ports Contingency Plans

- Comply with Guide for Good Governance for Trust Ports.

5.16 Advisory Body – The Newport (South Wales) Harbour Revision (Constitution) Order 2003 provides for the formulation of an Advisory Body. The Advisory Body is made up of representatives from the various bodies and organisations using, operating within, or having an interest in Newport Harbour.

Land Owners

5.17 The riparian owners are responsible for the riverbed and banks up to Mean High Water Mark (MHWM). Some parts may also be owned by the Crown Estates. In these instances, in addition to contacting the relevant organisation, it will be necessary to obtain permission from the Crown Estates Commissioners or their agents for any works.

Coordinated Approach to River Management

5.18 Many of the problems and issues related to the River Usk require a coordinated and cooperative approach between the main organisations involved in its management. A prime example of this is the dumping of waste in the River. It is not entirely clear who is responsible for clearing up such waste and consequently it has become a problem with the general environment of the river. Consideration needs to be given to the options and mechanisms required to clean up the river and improve its visual appearance. This is discussed in more detail in Section 9.

519 A partnership approach is therefore essential to the successful management of the River Usk and ensuring problems such as the waste are efficiently dealt with. The establishment of a River Usk management board/group with members representing a wide range of user interests; to co-ordinate the different functions of the river could provide the forum to address issues that require a coordinated approach.

520 A similar group exists for the River Wye which was formed with the passing of the Wye Navigation Order during 2002. Responsibility for navigation lies with the Environment Agency, who is assisted in the development of recreation and navigation on the Wye by the Wye Navigation Advisory Committee.

Key Recommendations

- **Establishment of a River Usk management board/group with members representing a wide range of user interests, to co-ordinate the different functions of the river.**



Ecological Interests & Opportunities

Introduction

- 6.1 The River Usk and associated landscape make an important contribution to biodiversity and wildlife. In the interest of nature conservation and the attractiveness of its setting, it is important that this contribution is protected and, where practicable, enhanced. The River Usk and its high ecological value contribute positively to the quality of life of local residents and visitors. This can be in many different ways, from mental health benefits, fitness and exercise levels, to contributing to a sense of community. Consideration, incorporation and enhancement of biodiversity all contribute to nature conservation and providing an attractive environment, and are therefore an important contributor to facilitating sustainable development.
- 6.2 Development can offer opportunities for enhancing biodiversity that may not otherwise be possible. In such a strategic location as the Usk, development can be used as a vehicle to contribute to national biodiversity objectives, as well as local conservation objectives and priorities. It can also add value to new development. It is important therefore to maximise enhancement and sustainable development opportunities when they arise.

Ecological Designations

- 6.3 The River Usk is a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). SACs are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). SSSIs are a national designation and protect the best examples of the UK's national heritage of wildlife habitats, geological features and landforms. The River Usk subsequently discharges into the Severn Estuary, a Special Protection Area (SPA), Site of Community Importance (SCI), Ramsar site and SSSI. Given the European designations associated with the site Newport City Council must comply with the provisions of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994.
- 6.4 The Usk is considered one of the best examples of a near natural river system in England and Wales. The range of plants and animals reflects a transition from nutrient poor to naturally rich. It was notified to protect a wide range of habitats and features. It also acts as an important wildlife corridor, an essential migration route and a key breeding area for nationally and internationally important species, including otter.



Qualifying Features

- 6.5 The River Usk, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has been designated because of a number of fish species and the presence of the European otter. The qualifying features present in the Newport section of the Lower Usk include:
- Allis Shad
 - Twaite shad
 - River Lamprey
 - Sea Lamprey
 - Atlantic Salmon
 - Otter
- 6.6 The conservation objectives of the SAC are outlined in full on the Countryside Council for Wales' website www.ccw.gov.uk however they can be summarised as follows:
- To maintain the availability of current spawning sites and lamprey nurseries;
 - To maintain suitable flows, water quality and sediment loads to sustain the population of shad, lamprey and nurseries;
 - To maintain riparian habitats to ensure optimum conditions for shad lamprey and bullhead;
 - To identify all linking factors on the population of shad, lamprey and bullhead and to seek to remove or minimise their effects;
 - Protection of otter breeding sites and resting places.
- 6.7 The key environmental qualities required to support all the qualifying features include;
- Water quality
 - Water flow
 - Disturbance
 - Access
 - And in the particular case of the otter the availability of resting sites.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 6.8 Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, development must ensure that it does not have a detrimental impact upon the SAC or the special features for which it was designated and must comply with the provisions of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Regs 1994. Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, but likely to have a significant effect, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects should be subject to an appropriate assessment of its implications for the site. Such developments or plans should only be agreed once it has been established that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.
- 6.9 Developers will be required to provide sufficient baseline information to allow Newport City Council to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment where it is considered that a development is likely to have a significant adverse impact, alone or in combination, on the River Usk. The HRA should determine the impact on the conservation site and identify avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures to ensure the integrity of the site is maintained. Any impacts will need to consider the conservation objectives for the River Usk in determining the issues to be addressed by the HRA.
- 6.10 A Habitats Regulations Assessment of this strategy is being carried out by the Council. It will assess whether any likely significant effects on the River Usk SAC and its qualifying features can be avoided through implementing appropriate conditions and legal obligations on individual planning

applications in respect of working practices, timescales, and watching briefs. The advice presented in the Strategy and HRA is based on current knowledge and may be updated to reflect significant changes in policy or legislation. A copy of the Habitats Regulations Assessment of this strategy is available separately and can be forwarded on request.

European Protected Species

- 6.11 Certain species receive protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 1994. This makes it illegal to:
- Intentionally kill, injure, or capture the species or their young
 - Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to areas used by the species for shelter or protection
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb the species while they are occupying a structure or place which is used for that purpose
- 6.12 Developments affecting any European species need a license from the Welsh Assembly Government before work is carried out. If planning permission is given for proposals that do not satisfy the licensing requirements, the license application may be turned down and the development cannot then go ahead. This makes it essential that the need for a licence is considered during the planning process - by both the applicant and the local planning authority.
- 6.13 The developer applies for a licence only after planning permission has been granted and a license will then be granted only if:

- There is no satisfactory alternative
- The population of the species will be maintained at favourable conservation status in its natural range

Newport Urban Otter Habitat Survey – Phase 2

- 6.14 As noted above, one of the qualifying features of the River Usk's SAC designation is the otter, which is also a European Protected Species in its own right. In order to have a clearer understanding of which sections of the River and its tributaries are of particular importance to the otter, a couple of surveys were commissioned by Newport City Council to identify and map any habitats which otters might exploit for resting purposes. During 2006 an appraisal was undertaken of suitable habitat for otters along the main stem of the River Usk in the City of Newport. In 2007 this appraisal was extended along the Bettws Brook/Crindau Pill/Malpas Brook, Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, Liswerry Pill and Spytty Pill, important tributary waterways along the Usk within the City.
- 6.15 The findings of the surveys classify areas of the River Usk and its tributaries as having either poor, low, moderate or high habitat value. The classifications are supplemented by a series of recommendations relevant to a particular survey section or of a more general nature. Consideration should be given to the report's findings and recommendations when considering development proposals that might impact

upon otters and their habitats. However, a key consideration must be the protection of existing riparian vegetation cover and awareness of opportunities to enhance the river corridor by new planting of appropriate nature species where cover is sparse. Up-to-date otter records from the South & East Wales Biological Records Centre (SEWBReC) should also be considered when considering development proposals that might impact upon otters and their habitats.



Development

6.16 During the last 5 years, the banks of the central section of the River Usk have been the subject of a number of major planning applications. As a result, the Local Planning Authority and Biodiversity Officer have established a close working relationship with the Countryside Council for Wales and the Environment Agency, to ensure that the potential impacts of

development on the River Usk are fully explored and addressed. Consultation with the relevant bodies on planning applications highlights concerns that need to be assessed through a Habitats Regulations Assessment and possibly mitigated against through the use of conditions. Typical concerns include the following:

- How surface water will be disposed of during construction and operation.
- How potential contamination of controlled waters, such as surface waters, ground water and ponds on the site will be addressed and what measures will be in place to prevent potentially contaminated run-off entering the River Usk during both construction and operation phases of the development.
- Need for measures to ensure no significant increase in disturbance to otters during construction and post-construction.
- Need to minimise disturbance to migrating fish species, particularly shad which are sensitive to any vibration in the channel or on the riverbank during construction activities, such as piling activities.

6.17 Through discussions with the relevant statutory authorities, the Local Planning Authority and applicant, a satisfactory conclusion has been achieved in relation to the recent river front applications. The large-scale development taking place along the river demonstrates that with the inclusion of appropriate conditions, potential adverse effects associated with development can be satisfactorily avoided.

6.18 Development proposals linked to the River Usk or adjoining land will be assessed against UDP Policy SP7 – Conservation of the Natural Environment. Only proposals that conserve and, where appropriate, enhances the nature conservations interests will be granted permission. Avoidance measures are usually implemented through planning conditions, management agreements and other statutory measures.

6.19 The table below sets out the main ecological features associated with the River Usk (international, national and

local) and some potential impacts of development or increased use of the river, as well as possible measures to avoid impact or enhance biodiversity. Avoidance measures are usually implemented through planning conditions or other statutory controls. The table is consistent with the Habitats Regulations Assessment carried out in conjunction with The Strategy. The information is offered as guidance on general considerations, and specific advice should be sought from the relevant organisations for individual development proposals.

Receptor	Examples of potential impacts	Possible measures to avoid impact and/or enhance biodiversity
<p>Shad and Lamprey</p> <p>Salmon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disturbance of sediments. ● Release of and or disturbance to contaminants/pollutants. ● Vibration, piling ● Possible release from boats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid any construction works that result in vibration e.g. boring, piling at sensitive times of the year i.e. migration and spawning period from March – June. ● Avoid works within the river such as construction of coffer dams or other works that could affect river flows at sensitive times of year. ● Where construction works with adverse impacts (such as piling or other activities with acoustic/pressure impacts) have to take place at sensitive times of year activities should be regulated to ensure that shad and lamprey migration can occur; ● Avoid discharges of polluted or turbid water; Prior to commencement of development, a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall be submitted and approved by the LPA. ● No infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground is permitted other than with consent of the LPA. ● No development shall commence until details of the foul and surface water drainage and storage system for the

Receptor	Examples of potential impacts	Possible measures to avoid impact and/or enhance biodiversity
		<p>site including means of discharge into the drainage network, have been agreed by the LPA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nothing other than uncontaminated excavated natural materials shall be tipped on the site. ● There shall be no discharge of foul or contaminated drainage from the site into either groundwater or any surface waters, whether direct or via soakaways during either construction or operation phases of development. ● Construction Environmental Management Plan to be submitted. ● Boat speed limits. ● Boat number restrictions. ● Good practice guidelines for boat cleaning, painting and bilge water management. ● Developer should seek advice from the Environment Agency on the above points and maintaining riparian habitats.
Otters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disturbance of sediments. ● Release of and or disturbance to contaminants / pollutants. ● Variation on normal level of water flow. ● Increased abstraction. ● Increased human disturbance, lighting. ● Availability or loss of habitats or resting sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid any construction works that result in vibration e.g. boring, piling at sensitive times of the year i.e. migration and spawning period from March – June. ● Avoid works within the river such as construction of coffer dams or other works that could affect river flows at sensitive times of year. ● Where construction works with adverse impacts (such as piling or other activities with acoustic/pressure impacts) have to take place at sensitive times of year activities should be regulated to ensure that shad and lamprey migration can occur; ● Avoid discharges of polluted or turbid water;

Receptor	Examples of potential impacts	Possible measures to avoid impact and/or enhance biodiversity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Noise and light pollution from boats ● Physical obstacles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prior to commencement of development, a scheme to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall be submitted and approved by the LPA. ● No infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground is permitted other than with consent of the LPA. ● No development shall commence until details of the foul and surface water drainage and storage system for the site including means of discharge into the drainage network, have been agreed by the LPA. ● Nothing other than uncontaminated excavated natural materials shall be tipped on the site. ● There shall be no discharge of foul or contaminated drainage from the site into either groundwater or any surface waters, whether direct or via soakaways during either construction or operation phases of development. ● Construction Environmental Management Plan to be submitted. ● Avoid operations within and immediately adjacent to the river at sensitive periods of the day, for example the hours around dawn and dusk. ● Provide a buffer area of at least 7 metres between the development and the river during both construction and operation phases. ● Identify and maintain an appropriate working corridor that does not impact on the buffer area. ● Restrict any construction lighting to working areas. ● The developer should seek advice from the Environment Agency on maintaining riparian habitats for otters within development sites.

Receptor	Examples of potential impacts	Possible measures to avoid impact and/or enhance biodiversity
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No trenches to be left open overnight, (or an escape route to be provided e.g. plank of wood). ● All construction debris should be removed from the river and its banks, and the areas disturbed by the construction (including the river bed and riverbank) should be restored to as natural a condition as possible. ● Replanting of suitable shrubs for shelter, in particular around bridge and tunnel entrances. ● Provide chamber holts at appropriate locations along soft edge boundaries. ● Riverside walkway to be set back from edge. ● Provide resting sites. ● Maintain and enhance habitat along soft edge boundaries. ● Good practice guidelines for boat cleaning, painting and bilge water management. ● Boat speed limits.
Bats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loss of suitable roosting / foraging sites. ● Reduced habitat connectivity impacting on bat commuting routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ecological connectivity to be accounted for through development design. ● Particular consideration should be given to potential impact of any development on the Usk Bat SAC and Wye and Forest of Dean Bat SAC, specifically in relation to migrating bats and summer bat roosts.

Receptor	Examples of potential impacts	Possible measures to avoid impact and/or enhance biodiversity
Invertebrates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loss of degradation of habitat. ● Fragment of habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developers survey sites for invertebrates, and identify valuable features on site for retention. ● Ecological connectivity to be accounted for through development design.
Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loss of rare plants or degradation of habitat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developers carry out botanical survey of development site (and adjacent habitats where necessary), and identify valuable features on site for retention.
Birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disturbance to nesting birds ● Loss of habitats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No vegetation clearance during bird breeding season (March – August). ● Habitat requirements can be addressed through the implementation of landscaping and biodiversity enhancement features.

Ecological Opportunities

6.20 Development can provide the opportunity to maintain and enhance ecological features, through retention and creation of valuable habitats, the provision of ecological corridors between valuable habitats, and continued management to maintain habitats. Ecological assessments carried out during the pre-application stage will help to inform this process. Examples of possible biodiversity enhancement may include: green roofing; native tree and scrub/hedge planting; provision of nest boxes and bird feeders; creation of a pond and/or wetland area; creation of wildflower meadow.

6.21 Section 7 – Landscape, gives detail on the landscape character of the River Usk and its habitats. This will inform the landscaping requirements of any development which might directly impact on the river and its riverine habitats. Other nearby habitats which may not be directly related to the river, may also be affected by development. For example, brownfield sites can be extremely valuable wildlife havens, supporting rare species such as Shrill Carder Bee (*Bombus sylvarum*), Wormwood Moonshiner beetle (*Amara fusca*) and Deptford Pink (*Dianthus armeria*).

- 6.22 Appropriate landscaping through development will:
- Help to maintain and enhance the natural features of the river;
 - Benefit biodiversity, and provide a vital ecological connectivity route through Newport;
 - Soften the aesthetics of the urban environs;
 - Benefit the people of Newport through the provision of natural green-space, which will benefit the physical and mental health of the community;
 - Contribute to the Sustainable Development of Newport;

- Contribute greatly to the attractiveness of the City, and promote it as a place to live and work.

Consultation with Relevant Organisations

- 6.23 Developers are advised to discuss any proposals that could have an impact on the River Usk with the relevant organisations such as the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales and Newport City Council's Biodiversity Officer. This should be carried out early on in the plan/application making process.

Key Recommendations

- **To continue to work closely with the Environment Agency and Countryside Council for Wales to ensure that future proposals or plans do not adversely affect the nature conservation features of the River Usk.**
- **To comply with the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 and carry out Habitats Regulations Assessments to ensure that development does not have a detrimental impact upon the Special Area of Conservation or the special features for which it was designated.**



Landscape

Introduction

- 7.1 The River Usk is one of the most important landscape features of the city of Newport. The river corridor has a landscape character wrought by a combination of river flow and tidal inundation. This has led to the formation of distinct bands of riparian (river edge) habitat that support a rich diversity of plant and animal life. The course and channel of the Usk is largely unaltered, probably since the post glacial Bronze Age, this despite ever increasing habitation and industrial importance, particularly over more recent centuries. The layers of human influence on this very natural landscape include the operational and mothballed jetties, landing stages, walkways and other maritime structures associated with a history of shipping and industry. On a larger scale is the number and variety of bridges that span the Usk; seven on the two mile city centre stretch. The cultural definition of the Usk as a working river, has helped to protect and in some areas enhance the ecology of the River. In combination these elements have provided the distinct landscape character that exists today.

Policy Context

- 7.2 Landscapes Working for Newport is the approved landscape assessment of Newport using the LANDMAP methodology in place at that time. Published in 1999, it did recognise the River Usk as an important element within the Newport landscape and prepared a detailed area strategy advocating its

protection and enhancement. At Deposit Unitary Development Plan stage the Assessment was not considered sufficiently robust to promote a specific special landscape designation for the River Usk. The Newport UDP 1996 – 2011 (adopted May 2006) does not contain formal landscape policy designations attached to the River Usk.

- 7.3 This situation is currently under review and a report proposing candidate Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) within Newport has been completed. This report includes The River Usk Corridor as one of the Special Landscape Areas of Newport. All of the proposed SLA's have been generated using a methodology of landscape assessment developed from the LANDMAP Information System (see Planning Policy Wales (2002 – Section 5.3.13). It is a methodology developed and approved by a working group of Welsh Authorities and is now being used by these authorities to identify and support their proposed SLAs. Following consultation the Special Landscape Areas could be incorporated into the emerging Local Development Plan.

River Usk Landscape Features – Natural Form and Character

- 7.4 The linear form of the River Usk provides perhaps the most readily identifiable, natural landscape feature meandering through the heart of the city. All land routes must cross it and all have views of it. The character of the river is heavily influenced by the tidal range, which is the highest of any city in the world.

In terms of visual quality the image that is perhaps the most memorable is that of the Usk at low tide when the extensive, river mudflats are clearly visible. Although not to everyone's aesthetic, the mud flats are home to numerous invertebrates and consequently the feeding ground for a remarkable number of bird species. Ecologically it is this tidal range in combination with fresh and salt water that provides the unique environment for the variety of plants and species associated with the Usk, with its protective ecological designations. On closer scrutiny the corridor of the Usk has a series of distinct habitat bands, following the corridor contours, the extent of each determined by the frequency of the tidal inundation and river erosion. In ascending order these habitats are:

- Mudflats and inlets: only accessible at low tides.
- Lower bank Saltmarsh: Plants in the saltmarshes are adapted to cope with the increase in salinity brought about by the mixing of waters with the Severn Estuary. Sea Aster, Salt-Marsh Grass have thick, fleshy leaves for storing water and a hard shiny or soft

waxy coating to retain moisture within the plant and to exclude salt.

- Mid bank : grass banks or Reedbeds composed almost entirely of Reed Canary Grass or Common Reed are an attractive feature fringing the river banks. They provide privacy for otters and breeding areas for reed warblers.
- Upper bank: The upper banks have many nature shrubs of importance for wildlife. Key species for the river animals are Bramble, Hazel, Hawthorn, Elder & Holly. These are significant for the food they provide and the opportunities for resting and safe havens. Other important species are the purple flowering butterfly bush, the bright red stemming Dogwood and the Guelder Rose.
- Upper Bank: the climatic climax vegetation of tree species help to define the character of the river bank and shelter the wildlife include: Alder with its long yellow catkins in spring; Downy Birch one of our native birches. Many forms of willow are common on the banks including white willow, crack willow, to the smaller great willow or goat willow, common willow and common osier.



**Requirements of Development
Proposals alongside the River Usk**

- 7.5 The River Usk as it winds through Newport has a visual identity and quality that distinguishes it not only from the city around it, but also from the upper reaches of The Usk as it moves into open countryside. For this reason The Usk corridor in Newport must be considered, managed and protected as a single entity and not segmented by landscape treatment that relates only to land ownership or development aspirations. In order to protect and enhance the unique character of this corridor, the Authority will always take a holistic view when considering development that abuts or encroaches on the Corridor. We will be particularly looking for development to make a contribution to respect and enhance the unique landscape character of The Usk corridor, rather than accepting development that could radically alter or compromise it.
- 7.6 Developers must demonstrate to the Authority that this requirement has been appreciated. To enable the Authority to carry out a thorough assessment of development proposals, developers, as part of the application process, should provide sufficient detail on landscape matters. This should include visual and landscape assessment work, a full set of drawings, a detailed masterplan, plant lists, etc. the exact nature of the requirement should be agreed with the Landscape Officer at pre application stage.
- 7.7 Developers will be requested to respect a buffer from the boundary of the SSSI and SAC boundaries, of at least 10-15m. Planting within this should strictly follow a palette that will:
- Help to protect the key riparian habitats of the corridor by using appropriate native species;
- Help to protect the key riparian habitats of the corridor by using appropriate native species;
 - Form part of the habitat necessary for sustaining many river species;
 - Assist in the formation of a distinct, identifiable River Usk Character area for the length of the river within the city limits.
 - A leaflet 'The River Usk: Newport' is available from the Countryside Service and provides information on species.
- 7.8 This buffer can overlap or include the Environment Agency's requirement for a 7m buffer and could also include development as long as this is compatible with the aims of conservation i.e. the Riverside walkway can be contained within this area.
- 7.9 Developers should explain and illustrate how any landscape proposals will be affected by the high and low tidal range associated with the River Usk. Illustrations with constant water levels are misleading and do not give an accurate impression. Illustrative material should always show a tidal range.
- 7.10 Retention of the maritime structures (e.g. wharfs/jetties) in the bank side, where not affecting the health and safety of the public or shipping, will be welcomed. In addition to avoiding unnecessary disturbance of the banks, these structures are used by otters and birds to feed and rest. The structures are also historic markers that give reference to the maritime tradition of the river and are considered to give greater value in celebrating its character than the introduction of contrived 'maritime' features.

7.11 Mitigation proposals should look to enhance bank side vegetation with the introduction of suitable species. The management of the area including the potential adoption by the local authority of the river edge should also be given serious consideration. Advice on appropriate plant species for mitigation and management should be sought from the Council's Countryside Section as early on in the development process as possible. A full list of plant species can be provided on request.

developers must provide a robust justification for a proposal that will irreversibly alter the character of the river bank. Such a proposal will require extensive consultation with all key environmental authorities, in the case of landscape this will be Newport City Council and Countryside Council for Wales. The main concern will be accumulative effect of over engineered (hard) river edge and the reduction of soft edge consistent with the Usk's character.

7.12 Where schemes replace the natural edge of the river with a hard edge build out,

Key Recommendations

- **To protect and enhance the visual identity and landscape continuity of the River Corridor. New developments should be examined in a holistic manner in terms of its associated landscape treatment and assist in the formation of a distinct and identifiable River Usk Character Area.**
- **Encourage proposals that celebrate the uniqueness of the river edge by making a contribution to the existing character. Ensure that local variations in scale, form, material type and species choice on the corridor are minimised.**
- **Monitor the LANDMAP Assessment and if appropriate make necessary Special Landscape Designations in the emerging LDP.**



Cleaning Programme for the River Usk

- 8.1 The River Usk is a major asset to the city and it is important that its environment is protected and enhanced for both ecological and aesthetic reasons.
- 8.2 The River Usk experiences an extremely high tidal range, which at low tide leaves the mudflats exposed and dumped waste clearly visible. Given the visual prominence of the River Usk and its ecological value a regular cleaning programme is considered to be a priority of the Council.
- 8.3 Given the number of organisations involved in the management of the River Usk, it is not clear who is responsible for cleaning dumped waste from the its banks. Consideration therefore needs to be given to the options and mechanisms required to clean up the river and improve its visual appearance.
- Newport Unlimited - Initial Clean Up**
- 8.4 Newport Unlimited has identified the cleaning of the River as a priority, not only for aesthetic reasons but also because of the potential damage that may be being caused to the ecology of the River as a result of these foreign objects being present with the river banks/habitats. It is therefore looking to facilitate an initial clean of a section of
- 8.5 the Usk to identify the impact that this will have. Contact has been made with the Environment Agency, Countryside Council for Wales and Newport Harbour Commissioner to seek agreement for the cleaning exercise along Town Bridge to George Street Bridge. No objections have been raised subject to some minor issues being addressed.
- 8.6 Considerable progress has been made in respect of setting out the methodology of the cleaning process and getting the agreement of interested parties.
- Future Cleaning Programme**
- 8.7 It is important that the experience gained from Newport Unlimited's clean-up exercise is fed in to a more long-term, regular cleaning programme. Issues such as funding and management of a programme will need to be addressed, but this could hopefully be co-ordinated through the establishment of a River Usk Management Board.
- 8.8 Consideration should also be given to waste prevention. The initial clean-up carried out by Newport Unlimited could help identify the type of waste being deposited in the river and therefore the source of the waste.

Key Recommendations

- **Through the establishment of a River Usk Management Board/Group put in place a strategy for a regular cleaning programme for the river.**
- **Develop a programme of promotion and education on the rivers special features and ecology.**

Archaeology

Archaeology Sensitive Areas

- 9.1 The Adopted Unitary Development Plan designates four non-statutory Archaeological Sensitive Areas within Newport, two of which border the banks of the River Usk. The Levels designation starts at the mouth of the River Usk and extends northwards as far as Liswerry Pill. The more central designation is in the vicinity of the church of St Woolos, but extends eastwards to the Newport Castle and the Town Bridge.
- 9.2 While only sections of the River Usk banks are designated as Archaeologically Sensitive Areas, the lack of such a designation elsewhere on the River does not mean that important archaeological features may not be present. The discovery of the Medieval Ship highlights the needs for a precautionary approach along the River Usk. The Newport Medieval Ship was discovered in the banks of the River Usk in June 2002 during construction of the Riverfront Theatre. The timbers were excavated and are being recorded and conserved with a view to future display.

Archaeological Evaluation

- 9.3 Given the role the River Usk has played in Newport's history there is potential for

future development along the banks to unearth further historical remains. Where development is likely to affect a known or suspected site of archaeological significance, further information may be required to help establish any potential effects of development on the archaeological resource. Developers may therefore be required to arrange for an archaeological investigation of the site to be carried out.

Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust

- 9.4 Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust (GGAT) www.ggat.org.uk is the Council's professional archaeological advisers on development proposals and applications. They provide advice on development proposed in known or suspected areas of archaeological interest and set out the requirements of any necessary archaeological investigation.
- 9.5 Developers are advised to contact GGAT at an early stage in the development proposal to identify potential archaeological constraints associated with a site.

Key Recommendations

- **Adopt a precautionary approach to development along the banks of the River Usk and consult GGAT on all proposed development.**

Navigation & Mooring Opportunities

- 10.1 The Council is keen for the River Usk to be used as a recreation resource. Central to this vision is maximising the navigational and mooring opportunities available to boat users along the Usk.

Existing Moorings

- 10.2 Along the River Usk formal leisure mooring arrangements are provided by Uskmouth Sailing Club at its base on the eastern bank of the river, in the grounds of Uskmouth Power Station. Commercial wharfs can be found at the Orb works, Felnex/Eastern wharf, Alpha Steel and Penmaen Wharf. Elsewhere on the river, there are numerous 'ad hoc' moorings on either side of the river. Many of these are accessed from the shore via a self constructed walkway. These moorings are exposed to the tidal range, with vessels resting in the mud banks at low tide.



- 10.3 Further upstream, Isca Boat Club has a landing pontoon, shipway and small boatyard with capacity for 15 – 20 boats by way of swinging moorings.



Tidal Considerations

- 10.4 A significant consideration in how the River Usk is/could be used and navigated by leisure vessels is the tidal range. This will also determine the type of mooring structures suitable and the engineering solutions required.
- 10.5 Downstream of the Town Bridge, the river area is dominated by the tidal regime rather than fluvial. The tidal range of 10m in the city centre rising to over 13m at the docks is the highest tidal range in a city centre anywhere in the world.

This means that significant mooring structures would be required to provide access to the tidal zone. The presence of large commercial vessels that use both banks of the Usk is also an important factor affecting the navigation opportunities of leisure vessels.

- 10.6 The nearer to Town Bridge you approach, the less depth of water exists at low water and this reduces the opportunity for access to mid to high water levels, even for leisure craft.
- 10.7 Upstream at the Town Bridge, the area is dominated by fluvial river regime. The flow in the river and relatively narrow channels and shallow waters at low tide and river flows means that access is limited to windows at the top half of the tide. On spring tides water depths in excess of 2m can be present for 3 hours either side of high tide.

Potential Mooring Destinations

- 10.8 The Council would like to see a greater provision of formal moorings situated along the Usk. Suitable locations for mooring facilities should be linked to places which are close to sources of activity, where users can gain easy access to facilities, and are linked to wider regeneration proposals, strategies and events. Further work is required to determine the most suitable locations for mooring facilities; however, provision at various points along the length of the River would be desirable. While the exact location of potential moorings is yet to be determined, possible broad locations could include: the southern stretch of the River in the vicinity of the Riverside Park; city centre; and further north towards St Julians pub and Caerleon. Proposals set out for the

Crindau Regeneration area also include mooring facilities in the form of a marina and smaller basin area providing a link from the River Usk to the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal.

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service

- 10.9 At present incidents on or near the River Usk in Newport requiring the use of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service (SWFRS) rescue boat rely on the use of Uskmouth Sailing Club slipway.
- 10.10 The current arrangement could be improved by the introduction of a slipway nearer to the town centre. Access to the Uskmouth Sailing Club requires a journey from Maindee Fire Station to Uskmouth Power Station in through the main gates and down to the Sailing Club. This journey although approximately 4 miles, requires negotiating of narrow lanes with a four by four vehicle towing a 7 metre boat and trailer.
- 10.11 The majority of SWFRS calls that require the use of a boat are in the stretch of river between 'the wave' and the transporter bridge. A slipway anywhere in this area of the river would significantly reduce turnout and response times. The location indicated by the crew at Maindee Fire Station as being the preferred site would be at Coverack Road on the down stream side of George Street Bridge. However, a slipway anywhere between the Transporter Bridge and Town Bridge would be acceptable.
- 10.12 In deciding on mooring destinations the requirements of the Fire Service should be considered, and opportunities for their requirements to be accommodated within proposed moorings explored.

Navigation & Safety

1013 Responsibility for safety of navigation, pilotage and fixed and floating aids to navigation lies with the Newport Harbour Commissioners, whose upstream limit is Newbridge-on-Usk. The Harbour Commissioners, in partnership with Associated British Ports carry out regular safety inspections including of lights and aids to navigation

1014 As part of the safety procedures, the NHC have powers to undertake maintenance dredging of the main navigation channel within the Newport Harbour to acceptable and publicised depths. The bed levels are kept under review to avoid causing problems to navigation and dredging is carried out when necessary, subject to the approval of all relevant parties.

1015 The NHC in agreement with Associated British Ports (Newport), have arranged for traffic management, communication and monitoring of all vessel movements to be under the day-to-day administration of the vessel Traffic Information Service (Severn VTS). NHC, in deciding the level of safety management necessary for the port take into consideration the following:

- Traffic density
- Traffic patterns and intersections
- Port and river regimes, depths of water, sand and mud banks, bars, shoaling patterns, meteorological conditions, tides and currents.
- Hazardous and pollutant cargo trades
- Recreational craft

Bylaws

1016 Current practices and procedures largely relate to the successful management of Newport Harbour and the movement of commercial vessels. The Council, however, would also like the River Usk to

become a popular route with leisure crafts. To achieve this, it will be necessary to ensure both commercial and leisure vessels can safely navigate the river together and appropriate management procedures are set up.

1017 Increased use of the River for recreational use could therefore necessitate the introduction of new bylaws. This is an issue currently under consideration by NHC, which has set up a sub-committee to research and drive forward the production of new bylaws, to assist the control and regulation of the River.

1018 Navigation controls are beyond the scope of this Strategy; however, as part of the review of bylaws and control of the river, it is recommended that a navigation strategy is also prepared. Such a document could set out a code of conduct to regulate the way people navigate on the River Usk, to minimise conflict between users and set out appropriate speed limits.

Newport Harbour Commissioners

1019 Given Newport Harbour Commissioners www.newportharbourcommissioners.org.uk experience and expertise in managing river and port related matters, they are considered to be the most appropriate body to facilitate the development and management of increased recreational use of the River Usk. A key consideration in increased responsibility would be any increased costs incurred. Presently income for the Commission is all obtained from commercial vessels. Consideration would therefore need to be given to charges for the services currently provided to leisure crafts and other potential funding sources for the preparation and implementation of new bylaws and associated strategies.

Key Recommendations

- **Support the review and production of new bylaws for the River Usk to facilitate the increased use of the river for recreational use.**
- **A Navigation Strategy be prepared to provide a robust framework for the future management of navigation of both commercial and leisure vessels using the river. Such a document could set out a code of conduct to regulate the way people navigate on the River Usk, to minimise conflict between users and set out appropriate speed limits.**
- **Investigate further the feasibility and locations for developing mooring facilities and improve existing infrastructure to encourage wider use of the river.**
- **Accommodate a Fire Service slip way within the central section of the River Usk.**



Flood Risk

General Considerations

11.1 The whole length of the River Usk within Newport's administrative boundary is designated as being at flood risk, and is designated as a C1 Zone under Technical Advice Note (15) up to the M4 and C2 from this point to the borough's northern limits. TAN 15 advises that highly vulnerable development and Emergency Services in Zone C2 should not be permitted. Where development has to be considered in areas of high risk (that is, Zone C, which is contained in the Technical Advice Note 15 - Development Advice Map) only development which is determined to be 'justified' by the Local Planning Authority are to be permitted in such locations. The LPA will need to be satisfied that a proposal is justified and that the consequences of flooding are acceptable. In order to meet the requirements of the justification test, any planning application for development must be accompanied by a Flood Consequence Assessment, which conforms to the requirements of TAN 15 and the Council's Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Supplementary Planning Guidance

www.newport.gov.uk/planningpolicy

11.2 In recent years a number of studies have been carried out to assess the degree of flood protection in place. These have been supplemented by a number of Flood Consequence Assessments submitted as part of planning applications for development along the River Usk. A review of this information has helped provide a picture of what flood defence measures have been agreed or

implemented, and where gaps exist. The attached plan attempts to visually present this information. This is provided on an information basis only, and advice should always be sought from the Environment Agency on flooding matters.

North of M4

11.3 North of the M4 the surrounding land on both sides of the river is classified as C2 in TAN 15 and is generally designated as Countryside in the Newport Unitary Development Plan. Development opportunities in this location are therefore limited and the implementation of flood defences is not a priority. Development proposals will be considered on their merits and against the relevant UDP policies and flood guidance in place at the time.

M4 to Town Bridge

11.4 Flood mitigation measures are being considered as part of the Crindau regeneration proposals. Supplementary Planning Guidance prepared for the area notes that in seeking to protect new development in this area, developers may wish to consider undertaking general land raising and grading of their sites through importing clean inert material. These measures would offer a level of protection to land situated to the east of Crindau Pill, however, land to the south, in the Pugsley Street vicinity would remain unprotected.

11.5 Along the east bank of this section of this river, land is to be raised to the required level as part of the Glebelands residential and school planning approval.

Town Bridge to Transporter Bridge - East Bank

- 11.6 The Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage SPG sets out the Council's strategy to alleviate flood risk along the eastern bank of the River Usk. The strategy is based upon the whole scale raising of the sites along the East Bank through the importation of clean inert fill material. Formal flood defence walls, or a raised walkway, will be constructed, where land behind existing development is too narrow to allow levels to be effectively raised.
- 11.7 The strategy is, in the main, being implemented by the private sector as part of major redevelopment works. The manner in which flood mitigation is provided, and the timescale of work is being monitored and enforced through the negotiation, approval and implementation of a number of residential planning applications along the east bank of the River. The Plan overleaf illustrates where flood mitigation works have been agreed as part of a planning approval. In accordance with the Council's strategy, the required thresholds have predominantly been achieved through the raising of the land. This approach had overcome a significant constraint associated with development sites along the East bank and consequently assisted major regeneration along the River Usk.

Town Bridge to Transporter Bridge - West Bank

- 11.8 Ground levels along the west bank are

- 11.9 generally higher than those on the east. Like the east bank, the central section of the West bank is also experiencing major redevelopment at present. More specifically, the Pill/Old Town Dock area of the west bank forms one of the Council's major regeneration areas and is the subject of a number of recent planning applications / permissions for mixed use development, but predominantly residential. Flood defences along this stretch of the river are being achieved through land raising and ensuring floor levels are above a specified level.
- 11.10 The stretch of River situated between George Street Bridge and City Bridge forms one of the highest levels on the West bank, with the riverside wall effectively forming a barrier to flooding in this location.

South of the Transporter Bridge

- 11.11 South of the Transporter Bridge, both banks of the Usk accommodate predominantly industrial uses. Along the eastern bank, from Stephenson Street down to Uskmouth Power Station, ground levels form a natural degree of flood protection, with the railway embankment running down to Uskmouth restricting the course of flood waters in an easterly direction. Land levels and therefore the standard of protection do, however, vary along this stretch of the River Usk. An obvious gap in flood defences is situated at Julian's Pill, which forms the lowest point along this stretch of the river.

11.12 A review of the sea defences on the Caldicot and Wentlooge levels has been completed; however, implementation of proposed recommendations of this review has been put on hold pending the outcomes of other strategies, for example, the Severn Tidal Strategy. Within the vicinity of Uskmouth Power Station the information available suggests that existing land levels provide sufficient protection. However, given the strategic importance of the power supply provided by the power station, the Environment Agency is currently reviewing the level of protection. The outcome of this assessment is considered to be of significant importance to Newport's flood defence protection.

11.13 On the western bank, previous studies of the Newport Dock's area indicate that ground levels in the docks and alongside the Usk are generally above 9m AOD. The lowest levels of the dock area are 8.8m AOD at the lock gates. The study goes on to note that in the event of a flood event occurring, ground levels at the northern end of the dock complex appear high enough to preclude flooding inland towards the Pillgwenlly area. (EAW, Newport Tidal Flood Defence Strategy – Feasibility Report – Draft – Feb 2004).

Identified Flood Priorities

11.14 The above information and associated plan help identify gaps or weak points in the flood defences along the River Usk. The following sections of the river have been identified as needing further investigation or flood defence works undertaken:

- Crindau Pill – flood prevention measures will need to be introduced as part of regeneration plans for the wider Crindau area. It is anticipated

this will be achieved through land raising.

- Bond Street to Collier Street
- Old Town Dock to Gwennyly Pill
- Transporter Bridge to Julian's Pill
- Pill to Usk Mouth Power Station

The Severn Estuary Shoreline Management Plan – December 2000

11.15 The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP1) www.severnestuary.net/secg/index.html has been set up by the Severn Estuary Coastal Group to provide the basis for sustainable coastal defence policies within the Severn Estuary and to set objectives for the future management of the shoreline. It provides a framework for shoreline management options for coastal defence.

11.16 As the length of the River Usk situated within Newport City Council's limits in tidal, it is covered by the SMP. The preferred coastal defence policy for the Usk, with the exception of one stretch of the River near Caerleon, is to maintain the defence line in its current position, in both the short term and long term. For the purposes of the SMP, shorter term has been defined as typically up to 30 years time and longer term as up to 100 years time. This policy was arrived at with the surrounding land uses such as the port, urban, industry and residential development in mind. Moving the coastal defences inland is not considered a viable option due to the presence of substantial port-related development, infrastructure and urban development close to the existing line of defence. Advancing the defence line towards the water has also been discounted as it is not considered an appropriate strategy with regard to estuary processes and the natural environment nor is it considered beneficial for coastal defence purposes.

- 11.17 Between the M4 Bridge to Caerleon Bridge, the coastal defence policy for the short term is to maintain the defence line in its current position. However, in the longer term the plan outlines an alternative strategy of retreating the line of defence, which by intervention, moves the defence line landwards.
- 11.18 The flood defences agreed or put in place since the Shoreline Management Plan was agreed have been consistent with the strategy as set out.
- 11.19 The Severn Estuary Coastal Group recently started work on the Shoreline Management Plan 2, which will update the existing management plan. Work on the document is at an early stage in the preparation process.

Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP)

- 11.20 The Environment Agency, Welsh Assembly Government and Defra are promoting Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMP) (<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/64223.aspx>) across England & Wales, one of which covers the River Wye and River

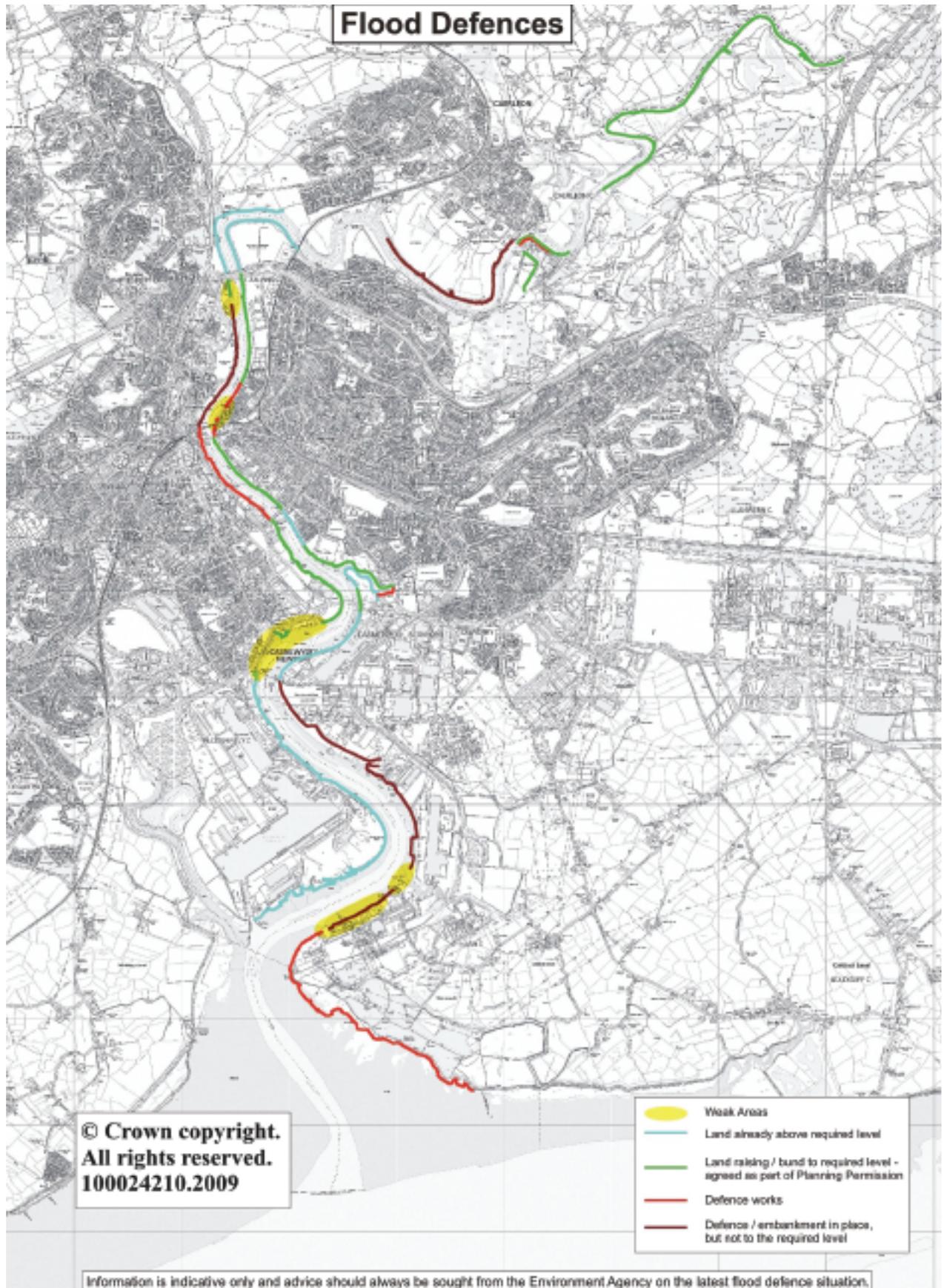
Usk. CFMPs aim to take a comprehensive and long-term look at flood risk in a particular group of river catchments. Each plan will assess the flood risks and examine the main physical processes and factors that contribute to that risk. They will also consider how the flood risks are likely to change over the next 50-100 years, due to climate change impacts and changes in how land is used and managed. Based on the information gathered, the Plans will set policies for managing flood risk at the catchment scale and include action plans to achieve these policies.

- 11.21 The draft Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan went out to consultation during summer 2008. The Draft CFMP area is divided into sub-catchments, termed policy units and for each unit the draft document presents preferred policies and actions that could be taken to achieve these policies. There are three policy units that affect the Newport area. Relevant policy and actions for each of the three units are contained in the Management Plan and can be viewed in Appendix 2.

Key Recommendations

- **Seek to introduce adequate flood defence measures in known weak areas, notably:**
 - Crindau Pill**
 - Bond Street to Collier Street**
 - Old Town Dock to Gwenlly Pill**
 - Transporter Bridge to Julian's Pill**
 - Julian's Pill to Usk Mouth Power Station**
- **Continue liaison with the Environment Agency for advice on the risks, consequences of flooding and mitigation proposals.**
- **Seek to incorporate and coordinate the coastal and flood defence policies contained in the Shoreline Management Plan, Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan and other strategic flood management plans with new flood defence strategies and infrastructure, which will seek to address known weak spots in flood defences.**
- **Monitor the progress of the Environment Agency's review of flood defences in place along Uskmouth.**

Flood Risk



Riverside Footpath/Cyclepath

12.1 A key aspiration of the Council is to establish public access to the River throughout Newport's administrative boundary. The Council wishes to establish public access to both banks of the Usk in the form of either paved promenades or less formal footpaths which can provide pleasant, attractive and interesting walkways and cycleways. This section of the document aims to set out the policy context behind this, note progress made to date and identify gaps in provision.

Policy Background

12.2 There are many policy documents of relevance to the Council's aim for a continuous walkway/cycleway along the riverfront. However, of particular note are the following:

Wales Spatial Plan

12.3 Newport's aspirations for access to the riverfront through the provision of a network of cycle and footpaths could contribute to the Wales Spatial Plan's objectives for a 'networked environmental region'. One of the main elements of the concept is to address river habitats which are important for wildlife and biodiversity, while protecting against flooding and offering opportunities for leisure and tourism.

Newport UDP

12.4 Policy T14 Walking and Cycling – this policy seeks to develop a network of safe walking and cycling routes, which will be segregated from traffic where possible.

12.5 CF6 – Riverfront Access – this policy

seeks to encourage public access of pedestrians and cyclists along the riverfront on both banks.

SEWTA – a Walking and Cycling Strategy for South Wales

12.6 In July 2006, SEWTA published a Walking and Cycling strategy for South East Wales. The overall vision of the document is “to maximise the levels of walking and cycling, including their contribution to prosperity, accessibility and well being of the people in south east Wales, and the protection of the environment”. One of the aims noted to help achieve this aim is “to maximise the number of journeys made by walking and cycling as alternatives to travel by car in south-east Wales”.

Sustrans

12.7 Sustrans (www.sustrans.org.uk) is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, leading the way in promoting cycling and walking as healthy forms of transport. The charity is responsible for developing the safe Routes to Schools project and the National Cycle Network.

Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan

12.8 Newport City Council has produced a draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) (www.newport.gov.uk). This is intended to form the foundation for any future improvement work to the public rights of way network and will form the structure for planning policy decisions, annual work programmes and grant aid applications for improving access to the countryside for the next 10 years.

- 12.9 The ROWIP identifies a number of key aims, together with actions that will enable Newport City Council to achieve these aims.

Newport Central Area Master Plan: 2020 Unlimited Vision

- 12.10 Newport Unlimited www.newportunlimited.co.uk unveiled its Central Area Masterplan: 2020 Unlimited Vision in April 2004. It sets out a vision for the future of central Newport for the next 20 years identifying priority areas for early action and design guidance to promote high quality development and public realm improvements in the city. A key aim of the strategy is to reconnect the City with the River Usk. More specifically, Chapter 4 discusses public space and the River setting out how to promote pedestrian and cycle movement in Newport and increase usage of the Riverfront. To help achieve a continuous pedestrian and cycle access along the riverfront the following aims are noted:
- Extend the existing riverfront walk to the north and south.
 - Create new public walks along the eastern edge of the river.
 - Provide connection to UWCN's Caerleon campus to the north.

River Usk Central Section

- 12.11 Newport's Riverside walkway within the central section of the River Usk extends along the west bank of the Usk from Newport Bridge to George Street Bridge.



It primarily has an urban, hard edge character and is retained by a 6m high wall. A short section of the walkway is carried across a 6m wide bridge structure. The east bank has a soft mud edge.

Planning Applications

- 12.12 Significant progress has been made towards implementing the proposals for a continuous walk/cycleway along the River edge. The Riverfront has experienced significant regeneration over the last few years, with a number of large-scale planning applications being agreed for residential development. The Council has successfully negotiated the incorporation of a riverside walkway as part of these applications. The central section of the east bank now has planning permission for a riverfront walkway / cycleway from Newport Bridge extending down to the SDR. Likewise, the west bank has been the subject of a number of planning applications where the walkway has been incorporated. Most notably, is the Riverside Park and development of Old Town Dock as a residential area. The promotion of sensitive design to avoid any significant impacts upon the SAC and European Protected Species, such as otters has been central to these planning permissions.

- 12.13 The plan overleaf illustrates existing and approved sections of the walkway.



Newport City Footbridge

- 12.14 Newport's new footbridge and cycle bridge was lifted into position on May 2006. The footbridge spans the River Usk and forms a key part of the regeneration plans by allowing quick and easy access for pedestrians travelling from the east into the city centre.



Cycle Routes

- 12.15 The National Cycle Network (NCN) in Newport provides opportunities for recreational use for cyclists and pedestrians. The NCN in Newport totals around 52kms and runs through both urban and rural areas, with many sections being off road. There are three separate NCN routes in Newport, two of which form part of the Celtic Trail, which is a fully waymarked 220 mile journey across south and west Wales. There are also a number of local cycle routes across Newport totalling around 21kms which provide links to the NCN and provide easier access to the countryside.
- 12.16 The Council is working in partnership with Sustrans, and the Celtic Manor resort, to create a route between Newport city centre and the countryside around Caerleon. The proposed route forms part of the Sustrans Connect 2 project which was successful in receiving a multi-million pound grant from the Big Lottery Fund's Living Landmarks' initiative.

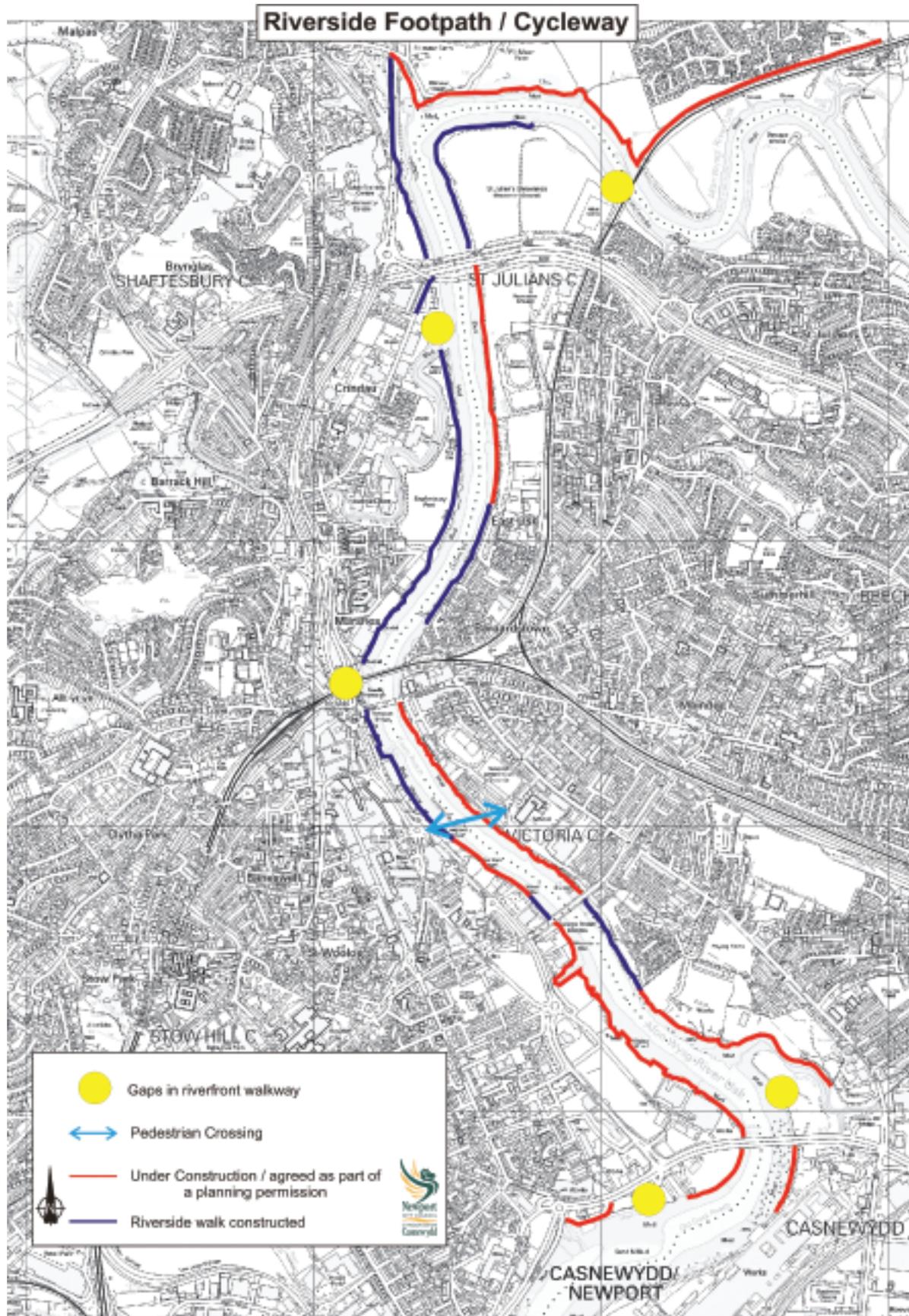
- 12.17 The proposal creates a level riverside route giving direct access from Malpas and central Newport to the University campus at Caerleon, St Cadoc's Hospital site, the Celtic Manor Resort and Wentwood Forest and beyond. Planning permission has now been granted for the stretch of walkway running between Pillmawr Road and Lodge Road, Caerleon.

- 12.18 The cycle route connecting Malpas and Caerleon is proposed to be constructed in 3 phases. Phase 1 has recently been constructed and extends from Crindau to Malpas (just east of the bridge over the A4042). This phase was located generally on land which was in Newport CC ownership and within the existing highway boundary. Phase 2 extends from Malpas (at a point just east of the bridge over the A4042) to the western point of the proposals of Phase 3. It is mainly located on Public Highway, except for a stretch which is privately owned and for which some accommodation works details and land agreements have yet to be agreed. Planning approval is currently awaited for accommodation works associated with a replacement barn. Phase 3, is the final phase of a scheme which will provide a cycleway/footway from Malpas to Lodge Road, Caerleon.

Rights of Way Network

- 12.19 There are approximately 300km of Public Rights of Way within the local authority area. In the main, the PROW network runs through the more rural parts of Newport, however, there are a number of public footpaths that run along the banks of the Usk. It is important that new development incorporates existing PROW routes and / or provides additional pedestrian routes to link in to and expand the network.

Riverside Footpath/Cyclepath



Coastal Access Path

- 1220 The Welsh Assembly Government is promoting an initiative to develop a new coastal access improvement programme. The programme aims to improve access to the coast both for local communities and for visitors to Wales through local path improvements, and aims to provide a good quality all Wales coastal path linking up existing trails. To implement the project on behalf of Monmouthshire County Council and Newport City Council a Coastal Access Improvement Officer post has been created.
- 1221 In Newport, the initiative includes linking the coastal path network up with the existing public rights of ways running along the banks of the River Usk. A recently completed phase of the programme involved the public right of way which runs southwards along the east bank of the River Usk from the Transporter Bridge, which used to be overgrown and inaccessible. With Coastal Access Improvement funding this whole stretch has been opened up and a full mobility gate positioned at the end of Stephenson Street allowing easy access for all and a new surface to facilitate easy walking. Where the route enters the industrial estate at the bottom of Corporation Road the firms Cemex and Marshalls have worked in partnership with the Council and Access Officer to create a smart and safely defined route. The long term programme will eventually provide a continuous link from the coastal path along the Wetlands Nature Reserve up to the Rive Usk riverside walkway.

Continuation of Provision

- 1222 Where gaps exist in the walkway/cycleway it is important that future development briefs and/or applications identify and secure the construction of a continuation in the route. At present a notable gaps are apparent at the following locations:
- Crindau – Supplementary Planning Guidance prepared for the regeneration site highlights the gap in provision and seeks the incorporation of a footpath/cycle path that runs through the site connecting up with the National Cycle Network to the north and south of the site. Proposals in the SPG include a pedestrian bridge across Crindau Pill, providing a more direct route from the city centre to Caerleon.
 - St Julian's to Caerleon – provision of a bridge is required to provide access across the River Usk north of St Julian's to provide access to Caerleon from the eastern side of the city.
 - Newport Castle – pedestrian access alongside Newport Castle has been closed off due to anti-social behaviour. This forms a crucial gap in the provision of a continuous riverfront walkway. A possible solution could be to work with CADW to open up the walkway on a controlled or restricted basis, forming part of an interpretation strategy/facility.
 - Between the SDR Bridge and Liswerry pill – a gap currently exists between the residential developments running down to Liswerry Pill and the recently approved residential proposal on the old Orb works.

The land running alongside the gap has been safeguarded as an ecological area.

- Between the Riverside Park and Penmaen Wharf.

Newport Riverside Edge - Guide for Developers

- 1223 To help achieve a consistent approach to the provision of the riverside walkway Austin-Smith: Lord was commissioned by the Council to provide a guide on the Council's aspirations and requirements for the development of a walkway. The report sets out proposals to encourage activity along the Riverfront in the short, medium and long term and forms an appendix to the Rodney Parade Development Brief
www.newport.gov.uk/planningpolicy

Short Term

- 1224 In the short-term, before the east and west banks are developed, resources should be focused on developing the potential of the existing structure of Newport, encouraging movement from the:
- City centre to the river
 - Riverside car park to the walkway
 - Existing activity generators e.g Riverfront Arts Centre
 - Between the east and west banks on the new pedestrian and cycle bridge.



Medium Term Proposals

- 1225 In the medium term, resources should be focused on:
- Development of the west bank walkway between George Street Bridge and the new pedestrian/cycle bridge.
 - Development of the east bank walkway particularly between Newport Bridge and new pedestrian / Cycle Bridge.
 - Improving links with rejuvenated public squares of Market Gateway, Kingsway Square.
 - Providing a meeting place for rugby fans at East Bank landing.
 - Improving the start of the walkway at George Street Bridge.
 - Improving the view from the west bank.

Long Term Proposals

- 1226 In the long term, the east and west banks and Old Town Dock should be fully developed. Resources should be focused on:
- Encouraging movement along the entire length of Riverside Walkway on the east and west banks.
 - Encouraging movement between the city centre and Old Town Dock.
 - Maintenance of walkway.



Form & Design

- 12.27 The riverfront walkway passes through a number of existing and proposed public squares and development areas, which are being developed with different characters, uses, paving, street furniture and lighting. In order to unify these areas and provide legibility to the city, it is essential that any route between these areas fit into the street hierarchy strategy for Newport as a whole and is a single character throughout its length.
- 12.28 The identity and character of the Riverside walkway should:
- Be simple and clean but providing a background and structure for events and development to take place along its length.
 - The character of the walkway to a greater extent will be defined by the linear character of the river and proposed development along its bank. The linear character of the walkway itself should be under emphasised through a considered approach to building form, location and design, boundary treatments, introduction of viewpoints and activity nodes and the detailing of any linear features and location of street furniture on the walkway itself.
 - The walkway should be focused on the river towards the water, bridges and the opposite bank. Visual access and permeability should therefore be maintained throughout its length.
 - The night time character of the walkway should be well lit defined routes between the city centre, activity generators and residential areas. The lighting design should, however, be sympathetic to the natural habitats present, for example, low impact and directional lighting to avoid adverse impacts on otters and bats.
 - It is important to retain the character of the River Usk and therefore the retention and enhancement of existing habitats wherever possible, in particular bankside habitats of importance for otters and bats.
 - Long stretches of the riverfront walkway may have the dual function of providing a footpath and a wildlife route. Proposed improvements or new sections should be designed so that they can be utilised by both people and wildlife. Section 7 – Landscape, offers more detailed advice on this matter.

Key Recommendations

- **Where opportunities arise, seek to secure the construction of a continuation in the relevant cycle/walkway route, with particular reference to the following gaps:**
 - Crindau**
 - St Julian's to Caerleon**
 - Between SDR Bridge and Liswerry Pill**
 - Between the Riverside Park and Penmaen Wharf**
 - Newport Castle in consultation with CADW**
- **Co-ordinate new stretches of the cycle/footpath network with activity generators, to encourage movement towards the Riverfront.**
- **Continue to work in partnership with Sustrans to create/improve links to the national cycle network.**
- **Seek to achieve and incorporate the aims of the Council's Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan and Coastal Access Path.**

Tourism Opportunities

Introduction

13.1 Tourism is now worth £165m annually to the economy of Newport and is becoming an increasingly important sector in the future of Newport's economy. The River Usk and the mixture of uses along its banks should therefore be utilised to their full potential to encourage and facilitate tourism in Newport.

River Usk Tourist Attractions

13.2 Newport's Tourism Strategy sets out the Council's aims and objectives for developing tourism in Newport. Many of the projects and key action points set out in the strategy are central to the River's environment and how it is used. Of particular relevance to the River Usk are the following tourist attractions:

13.3 **Caerleon:** The Roman remains of Caerleon formed one of only three permanent bases of the Roman Legions in Britain, and are a significant generator

of tourism activity in the area. There are also a number of pubs/restaurants in Caerleon, some of which sit on the banks of River and therefore draw people to the river's edge. Interest in the area is likely to receive a further boost due to the close proximity of the presence of the Celtic manor Resort and the 2010 Ryder Cup.

13.4 **Transporter Bridge:** A grade I listed building. There are only two working in Britain, and a total of seven in the world. The Bridge is a unique and iconic element of the industrial heritage of Wales and is of international interest and importance. Opened in 1906, this aerial ferry transports people and vehicles between the east and west banks of the River Usk. However, the opening of the SDR has meant that when functioning fewer people are using the bridge to cross the river and its primary role has shifted to one of a tourist attraction.



135 **Riverfront Theatre:** The Riverfront arts centre offers a range of live entertainment, workshops and free exhibitions. The venue includes a theatre, studio, dance and recording studios, art gallery as well as a bar and café.

136 **The Newport Castle:** The building is in the custodianship of Cadw, and can be potentially improved to give a better visitor experience. A key focus for the future of the castle is to work closely with Cadw and Newport Unlimited to explore ways to improve the access and tourism use of the Newport Castle.



137 **Walks and Cycleways:** These are key to the wider tourism strategies for developing trails with interpretation and artworks, but also to link with such products such as pubs/accommodation, shops, etc. The current Connect 2 cycle scheme is focussed along the River Usk, bringing the river back to the visitor/resident and is key to the University links between the new city centre campus and Caerleon. To make full use of these routes the Council should continue to work with Sustrans to develop the trails for the economic benefits of tourism.

Tourism Opportunities

138 **Medieval Ship**
Once reconstructed the ship could prove to be a popular tourist attraction, drawing in large numbers of tourist. It is

yet to be decided where the ship will be displayed, however, a riverfront location would be preferable given the ships connection to the River Usk and Newport's history. Once in place the full tourism potential of the medieval ship should be fully explored. There may also be potential to moor other historic boats along the River Usk providing tourist



attractions linked to the importance of the Usk has had in the Newport's history.

Restaurant Boat

139 The River Usk provides for tourist opportunities that make use of the River itself, such as a floating Restaurant Boat. There are no firm proposals in place at present, but it is envisaged such a facility would be best situated within the central section of the Usk, i.e. between Town Bridge and George Street Bridge.

Tidal Range

1310 Newport has the highest tidal range of any city centre in the world. The rise and fall of the river should be promoted as a unique attraction.

River Wharves

1311 There are numerous disused wharves situated along the banks of the River Usk, i.e. Blaenavon Wharf, Ebbw Vale Wharf, Liverpool Wharf. They are named after local coal and iron companies which developed during the industrial revolution in the Valleys and provided an export outlet for raw materials and finished goods. The wharves provide an important historical connection to the role the River Usk had in Newport's development and could provide a focus for future tourist attractions and walks.

13.12 Wharves such as the Blaenavon Wharf also provide historical background to the wider role the local canal network and River Usk had in the South Wales industrial revolution in providing a connected transportation network. In November 2000, the town of Blaenavon was designated as a World Heritage Site for providing one of the best examples in the world of a landscape created by coal mining and iron making in the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century. Goods would be transported from the Blaenavon ironworks to Blaenavon Wharf via the Monmouthshire Canal ready to be exported.

Venue Spaces

13.13 Potential exists to develop venue spaces along the riverfront capable of hosting a variety of events, such as local festivals, exhibitions and presentations. There is currently a shortage of such spaces in Newport and consideration should be given to where and how the riverfront walkway could accommodate flexible public spaces.

The Transporter Bridge/Maltings and Old Dock – ‘Visitor Arc’

13.14 The tourism strategy notes that this area of the River Usk has good tourism potential. More specifically, the regeneration of the bank of the Usk between the SDR Bridge and the Transporter Bridge offers an opportunity to create a series of visitor attractions that will feed off one another. The area which forms an arc includes some 800m of Riverbank. The arc extends from the

transporter bridge in the south to the SDR in the north, encompassing the proposed Riverside Park.

13.15 The main idea behind the visitor arc concept is that linkage with other attractions will help promote and encourage tourism and visitor numbers in the area. Attractions central to the Visitor Arc include:

13.16 **Transporter Bridge** – as noted above this is a structure of international importance, but probably cannot, on its own, generate enough revenue to cover its costs. In March 2006, The Newport Transporter Bridge Feasibility Study and Business Plan explored options for future roles of the bridge as an entity and as part of a potentially wider visitor based programme. The report explores the key options around the development of the Bridge as a heritage asset – the main issues of risk, viability and sustainability and the differing structures and requirements for the separate but related stages of regeneration and after use. The report concludes that the bridge has an important role to play in Newport’s tourist economy and sets out recommendations to help maximise its potential.

13.17 **The Maltings** – site is about 7 acres in extent and about half will be available for built development. The restoration of the existing Maltings building provides an opportunity to reuse it for potential uses such as office accommodation.

- 1318 **Old Town Lock** – Immediately to the west of the Maltings site is the lock of the Town Dock. This listed structure is filled with silt, but is believed to have the capability in the future, of restoration as a water filled basin. There is also the potential to locate visitor moorings in this location. Such facilities may provide an opportunity for other visitor attractions such as a replica of the medieval ship found in the River Usk.



- 1319 **Penmaen Wharf** – Proposals at Penmaen Wharf offer huge tourism potential for both the Usk itself and attractions nearby. Planning permission for a mixed use scheme at Penmaen Wharf was granted during February 2008 subject to the signing of a S106 agreement. The proposed scheme includes 160 apartments, riverside footway, car parking, booking office, and waiting area to serve the pleasure boat use of the Wharf together with a cafeteria and public realm area.

- 1320 There is a wharf at the southern end of the site which has been recently upgraded to allow the reintroduction of moorings for the pleasure steamers Waverley and Balmoral. Additional work may also be required to enable ships to use the wharf over a much wider range of tide. Once complete the Penmaen

Wharf project will provide a much welcomed tourist facility.

- 1321 **Riverside Park** – A key component of the proposed Visitor Arc and regeneration of the riverfront more generally is the creation of a Riverside Park. The proposed Riverside Park stretches along the west bank of the River Usk from George Street Bridge down to Old Lock just west of the Maltings south of the SDR Bridge and covering an area of approximately 20 hectares. It is envisaged that the park would take a more urban form in the north and central areas with a wider and more open character nearer to the SDR Bridge.



Crindau Marina and Connection to Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal

1322 Supplementary Planning Guidance has been prepared to facilitate major regeneration proposals for the Crindau area. An important element of the regeneration proposals for Crindau is the creation of a marina and canal basin with links to both the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal and River Usk. The development of a marina at Crindau offers a opportunity to connect canal, river and coast. The proposals would create a southern terminus and visitor destination for the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal, whilst also providing boat access to the River Usk, and in addition, marina facilities for coastal boats in the Bristol channel. The proposals form part of a wider regeneration scheme, including residential, commercial and hotel.

1323 Given Crindau's central position within Newport, the marina proposals have huge tourism potential to create a visitor destination, offering a wide range of visitor facilities, attractions and services.



Interpretation Strategy

1324 Interpretation boards situated at strategic points along the river's edge could provide valuable information on the river itself and interesting facts relating to the tourist attraction in question. Potentially these could be designed as part of a riverfront tourist route, encouraging tourists and local residents to visit another attraction along the river. Key information to be displayed could emphasise the:

- historical role of the river
- ecological value
- tidal range of the river, emphasising that the River Usk has the highest tidal range in a city centre.
- Information relating to any nearby attractions.

Key Recommendations

- **Seek to implement the aims and objectives of the Council's Tourism Strategy that promote and are influenced by the River Usk.**
- **To work in partnership with the relevant organisations to ensure that new facilities and services are situated to facilitate and encourage visitors to the Riverfront. For example, a coordinated approach to the provision of footpaths/cycleways, toilets, cafes, restaurants and mooring points.**
- **Develop a tourism strategy specific to the River Usk.**
- **Encourage and facilitate tourism opportunities along the River Usk with specific reference to:**
 - a location for the medieval ship**
 - a location for a restaurant boat**
 - the river's tidal range**
 - historic river wharves**
 - the provision of venue spaces**
 - 'Visitor Arc' concept**
 - Crindau marina and canal**
 - Interpretation strategy**

Summary of Recommendations

Development Context

- Limited development opportunities to the north of the M4 Motorway.
- Retention and development of Newport Docks and port related industries to provide the focus for future development in this section of the river.
- Explore the potential for major regeneration opportunities in the Local Development Plan process along the east bank of the River Usk, within the vicinity of the proposed the New M4 junction.
- In accordance with Adopted UDP Policy CE14 – Coastal Zone, new development should be focused on previously developed land in coastal areas and the river Usk.

Managing the River Usk

- Establishment of a River Usk management board/group with members representing a wide range of user interests, to co-ordinate the different functions of the river.

Ecological Interests & Opportunities

- To continue to work closely with the Environment Agency and Countryside Council for Wales to ensure that future proposals or plans do not adversely affect the nature conservation features of the River Usk.
- To comply with the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 and carry out a Habitats Regulations Assessment to ensure that development does not have a detrimental impact upon the Special Area of Conservation or the special features for which it was designated.

Landscape

- To protect and enhance the visual identity and landscape continuity of the River Corridor. New developments should be examined in a holistic manner in terms of its associated landscape treatment and assist in the formation of a distinct and identifiable River Usk Character Area.
- Encourage proposals that celebrate the uniqueness of the river edge by making a contribution to the existing character. Ensure that local variations in scale, form, material type and species choice on the corridor are minimised.
- Monitor the LANDMAP Assessment and if appropriate make necessary Special Landscape Designations in the emerging LDP.

Cleaning Programme for the River Usk

- Through the establishment of a River Usk Management Board/Group put in place a strategy for a regular cleaning programme for the river.
- Develop a programme of promotion and education on the rivers special features and ecology.

Archaeology

- Adopt a precautionary approach to development along the banks of the River Usk and consult GGAT on all proposed development.

Navigation and Mooring Opportunities

- Support the review and production of new bylaws for the River Usk to facilitate the increased use of the river for recreational use.
- A Navigation Strategy be prepared to provide a robust framework for the

future management of navigation of both commercial and leisure vessels using the river. Such a document could set out a code of conduct to regulate the way people navigate on the River Usk, to minimise conflict between users and set out appropriate speed limits.

- Investigate further the feasibility and locations for developing mooring facilities and improve existing infrastructure to encourage wider use of the river.
- Accommodate a Fire Service slip way within the central section of the River Usk.

Flood Risk

- Seek to introduce adequate flood defence measures in known weak areas, notably:
Crindau Pill
Bond Street to Collier Street
Old Town Dock to Gwenlly Pill
Transporter Bridge to Julian's Pill
Julian's Pill to Usk Mouth Power Station
- Continue liaison with the Environment Agency for advice on the risks, consequences of flooding and mitigation proposals.
- Seek to incorporate and coordinate the coastal and flood defence policies contained in the Shoreline Management Plan, Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan and other strategic flood management plans with new flood defence strategies and infrastructure, which will seek to address known weak spots in flood defences.
- Monitor the progress of the Environment Agency's review of flood defences in place along Uskmouth.

Riverside Footpath/Cyclepath

- Where opportunities arise, seek to secure the construction of a continuation in the relevant

cycle/walkway route, with particular reference to the following gaps:

Crindau

St Julian's to Caerleon

Between SDR Bridge and Liswerry Pill

Between the Riverside Park and Penmaen Wharf

Newport Castle in consultation with CADW

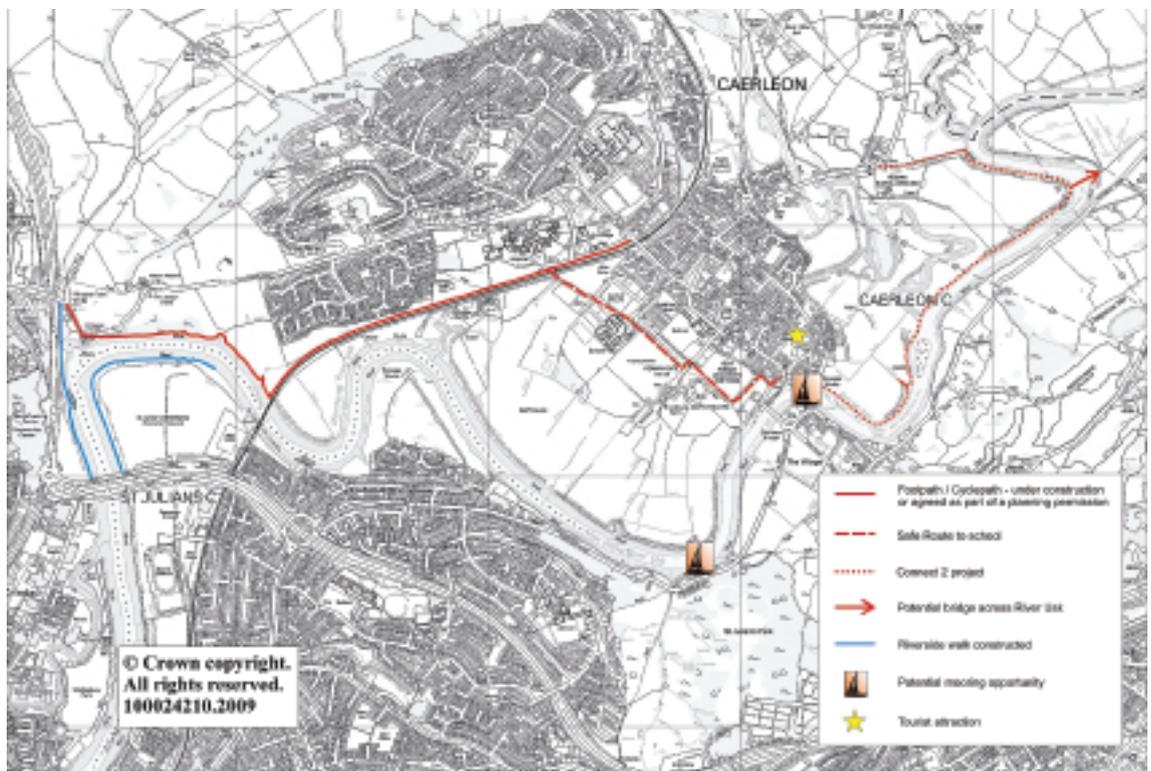
- Co-ordinate new stretches of the cycle/footpath network with activity generators, to encourage movement towards the Riverfront.
- Continue to work in partnership with Sustrans to create/improve links to the national cycle network.
- Seek to achieve and incorporate the aims of the Council's Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Tourism Opportunities

- Seek to implement the aims and objectives of the Council's Tourism Strategy that promote and are influenced by the River Usk.
- To work in partnership with the relevant organisations to ensure that new facilities and services are situated to facilitate and encourage visitors to the Riverfront. For example, a coordinated approach to the provision of footpaths/cycleways, toilets, cafes, restaurants and mooring points.
- Develop a tourism strategy specific to the River Usk.
- Encourage and facilitate tourism opportunities along the River Usk with specific reference to:
a location for the medieval ship
a location for a restaurant boat
the river's tidal range
historic river wharves
the provision of venue spaces
'Visitor Arc' concept
Crindau marina and canal
Interpretation strategy

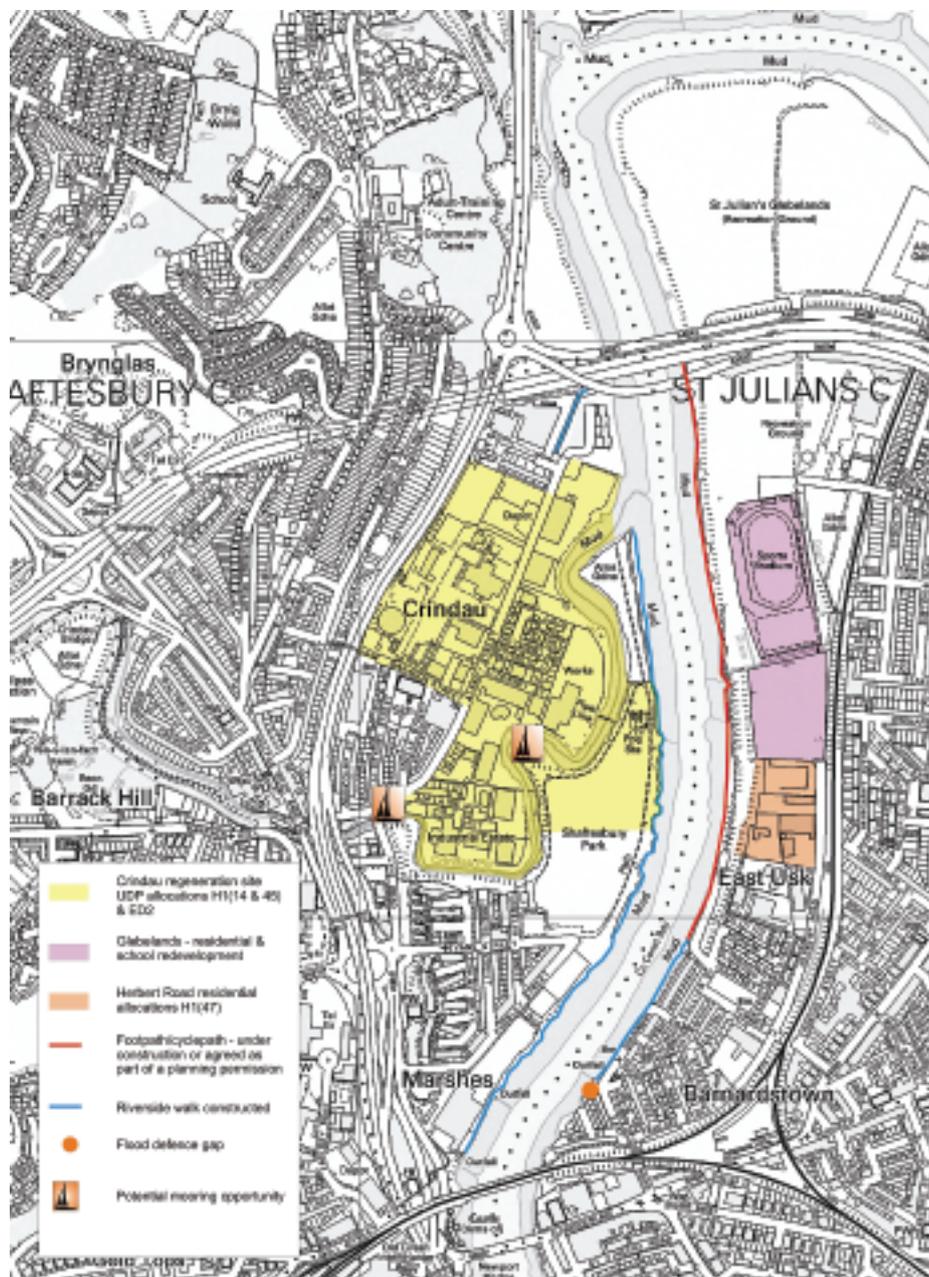
M4 to Authority Boundary

- Softer landscape.
- Development opportunities restricted to those suitable to the countryside designation.
- Predominantly C2 Flood Zone in TAN 15.
- Potential mooring opportunities in the vicinity of St Julian's House Pub and Handbury Arms Public House, Caerleon.
- Cycleway/footpath agreed as part of Sustrans Connect 2 project.
- Tourism attractions drawing people to the area.



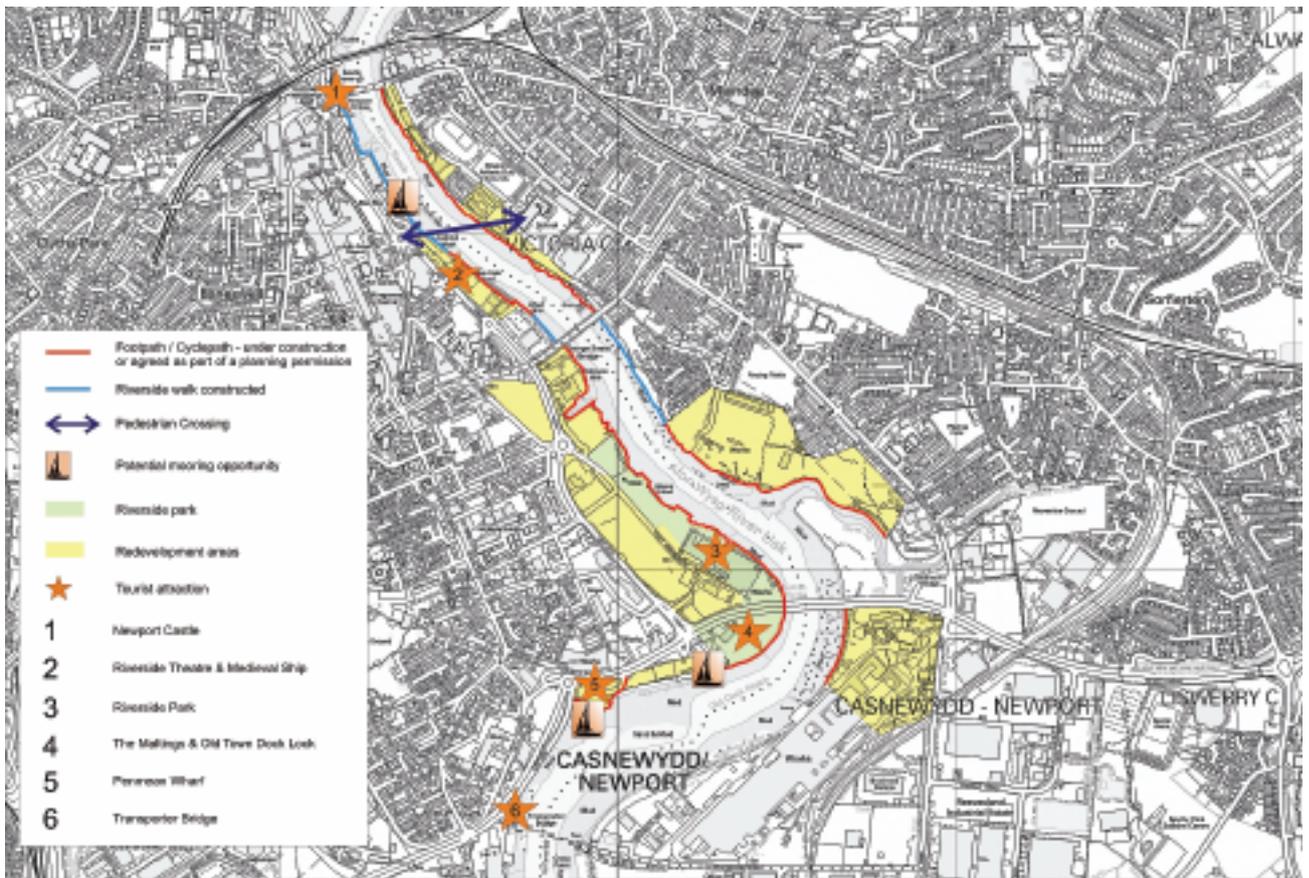
M4 to Town Bridge

- Major redevelopment proposal at Crindau including large scale residential, marina and canal basin.
- Redevelopment proposals at Glebelands including replacement school and residential.
- Flood mitigation improvements proposed as part of the Glebelands and Crindau proposals.
- Cycle/footpath route to be continued through the Crindau and Glebelands developments and integrated with the wider Sustrans network.
- Flood defence gaps present at the end of Frank Street



Town Bridge to Transporter Bridge

- Urban/developed character.
- Flood mitigation measures being agreed and/or implemented through large scale redevelopment on both banks of the river.
- Cycle/footpath in place or agreed as part planning permissions.
- Potential mooring points to be explored in the vicinity of Old Town Dock/Riverside Park and the City Centre.
- Pleasure boat moorings approved at Penmaen Wharf for the Waverley and Balmoral.
- Tourism destinations located at:
 - Transporter Bridge
 - Newport Castle
 - Riverfront Theatre
 - Medieval Ship
 - The Maltings
 - Old Town Dock Lock
 - Penmaen Wharf
 - Riverside Park



Transporter Bridge to Mouth of River

- Industrial character
 - Flooding weak spots along the east bank, but land levels do offer a degree of alleviation
 - Environment Agency carrying out a review of flood defences along the banks of St Julian's Pill and Uskmouth
 - Potential development opportunities along the east bank stretch of the
- proposed possible junction off the New M4 route to be explored through the Local Development Plan process.
- Cycle/footpath routes do not run along this stretch of the river due to its industrial nature.
 - Retention and development of Newport Docks for port related industry.



Appendix 1 - Policy Context

Policy level	Details
European Legislation	
<p>The Conservation (Natural Habitats,&c.) Regulations 1994</p>	<p>The EC Habitats Directive provides a high level of robust protection for habitats and species considered to be of European importance, and is transposed into UK law by means of the Habitats Regulations (1994).</p> <p>Under the Habitats Directive the River Usk is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and the Severn Estuary is designated as a candidate SAC. The Severn Estuary is also designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Birds Directive. The EC Habitats Directive and the EC Birds Directive are therefore particularly relevant to Newport, and are a key consideration for many planning decisions.</p> <p>In addition to the protection which given to designated sites, the EC Habitats Directive provides robust protection to a number of species listed in Annex II of the Directive, known as 'European Protected Species'. This is relevant to Newport as otters, bats (all species), dormice and great crested newts all occur within Newport and are all listed as European Protected Species.</p> <p>Under the provisions of the regulations, before permitting any plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on the site and is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, the competent authority must carry out an 'appropriate assessment' of the implications for the site. Plans or projects which will have an adverse effect on the conservation objectives may only be allowed where there is no alternative and there are 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest'.</p>

Policy level	Details
Water Framework Directive	In October 2000 the 'Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy (EU Water Framework) was adopted. The purpose of the Directive is to establish a framework for the protection of inland surface waters (rivers and lakes), transitional waters (estuaries), coastal waters and groundwater. It will ensure all aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands meet 'good status' by status by 2015. The Directive requires Member States to establish river basin districts and for each of these a river basin management plan.
EU Flood Directive	The aim of the directive is to reduce and manage the risks that flood pose to human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. The Directive applies to inland waters as well as all coastal waters across the whole territory of the European Union. The directive requires flood risk management to be negotiated across national borders. Member states are now obliged to identify river basins and associated coastal areas at risk of flooding and draw up flood risk maps and management plans for these areas.

UK Legislation/Policy

Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000	The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, places a duty on the Council to take reasonable steps, to further the conservation and enhancement of the features by reason of which a SSSI is of special interest.
Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006	Part 2 of the Act concerns nature conservation in the UK. It introduces a duty on every public authority to exercise its functions with due regard to conservation of biodiversity, prohibits possession of banned pesticides, regulates sales of invasive non-nature species and modifies the offences in connection with SSSIs.

Policy level	Details
<p>Waterways for Tomorrow – DETR (June 2000)</p>	<p>The Council’s aims and objectives for the River Usk are consistent with government policy on the future of inland waterways as set out in the DETR document, Waterways For Tomorrow (June 2000). This sees inland waterways as an important asset which should be maintained and developed in a sustainable way so that they fulfil their social, economic and environmental potential. It notes the valuable contribution that the improvement and restoration of the inland waterways and the development of adjoining land makes to regeneration, by creating pleasant places in which to live, work and play; and attracting private sector investment. The Government wishes to increase such benefits by promoting the waterways as a catalyst for urban and rural regeneration.</p>
<p>Planning a Future for the Inland Waterways (DEFRA, IWAAC and DTLR, 2000)</p>	<p>Restoration and regeneration proposals relating to inland waterways should have regard to Planning a Future for the Inland Waterways – A Good Practice Guide (June 2000). This document recognises the valuable role that water based regeneration proposals can have on a community and sets out practical terms and good practice advice of how best to achieve beneficial outcomes with such projects. It sets out a number of key recurring themes and features of a successful project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The waterways itself. ● The vision for the waterway corridors should promote their accessibility and integrate land areas as part of a co-ordinated approach to regeneration. ● Improvements to the waterway and its environs will generate people based activity, enhance development value and so act as a catalyst for regeneration. ● Principles of quality design should be applied to waterside locations. The amenity value of the waterways creates the opportunity for high quality development, incorporating open space, recreation uses and public realm areas as part of the overall mix. ● Visionary and innovative projects are important in engaging project partners and creating the flagship catalysts for investment from both public and private partners.

Policy level	Details
<p>Waterways for Wales – The Way Forward, British Waterways (June 2003)</p>	<p>In June 2003, British Waterways consulted on Waterways for Wales – the Way Forward. This was the start of a process aimed at bringing interested parties together to develop a ‘made in Wales’ plan for Waterways. The document sets out a strategic approach to the revitalisation of the waterways of Wales. It identifies five key themes where water can make a significant contribution, with specific relevance to Wales.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Economic Regeneration – the power of waterways to act as a catalyst and focus for regeneration and creation of jobs. ● Rural recovery – the waterway is part of a rural community’s past having served industry and agriculture. It now offers a modern role as a focus for leisure and tourism. ● Sustainable Living – waterways are biodiversity and history corridors, which help to create a more attractive environment. ● Cultural Heritage Vitality – waterways are an intrinsic part of Wales’ past and future success. ● Wales in the wider world – Wales’ waterway have the potential to represent the best of Wales’ green and cultural tourism assets and could generate year-round income.

Wales Strategic Policy

<p>Planning Policy Wales (March 2002) – WAG</p>	<p>Planning Policy Wales (March 2002) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Assembly Government together with their commitment to sustainable development. The Assembly has a duty under Section 121 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 to promote sustainable development in the exercise of its function. There are four broad sustainability objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone; ● Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment; ● The prudent use of natural resources; and ● Effective protection of the environment.
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Policy level	Details
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Planning Policy
Wales – Protected
Species

Planning Guidance Planning Policy (Wales) (March 2002) [section 5.5.11] states that “the presence of a species protected under European or UK legislation is a material consideration when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out would be likely to result in disturbance or harm to the species or its habitat”.

In addition the planning guidance states that [section 5.5.12]”To avoid developments with planning permission subsequently not being granted a derogation in relation to European protected species, planning authorities should take the three requirements for a derogation into account when considering development proposals where a European protected species is present”.

Statutory Instrument 2716: The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Regulations 1994 states that where a European protected species, such as bats and otters, are present, a development may proceed, under a licence issued by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) who are the appropriate authority responsible for issuing licences under Section 44 (1) (e) of the above Regulations. This licence can only be issued for the purposes of:

(i) ‘preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature, and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.’

The licence can only be issued by WAG on condition that there is:

(ii) ‘no satisfactory alternative’, and that

(iii) ‘the development will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range’.

Policy level	Details
<p>Planning Policy Wales – Designated Sites</p>	<p>Statutory Nature Conservation Designated sites, such as SSSIs, Ramsar sites, SPAs and SACs, Planning Policy Wales states: “The Assembly will ensure that international responsibilities and obligations for conservation are fully met, and that, consistent with the objectives of the designation, statutorily designated sites are protected from damage and deterioration, with their important features conserved by appropriate management.”</p>
<p>Planning Policy Wales – Tourism and Regeneration</p>	<p>PPW recognises that tourism is a major element in the Welsh economy and can act as a catalyst for environmental protection, regeneration and improvement in both rural and urban areas.</p>
<p>Technical Advice Notes - WAG</p>	<p>Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), which offer detailed guidance on specific topics. Of particular relevance to the issues associated with the River Usk are the following TANs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TAN 5: Nature Conservation and Planning -1996 ● TAN 12: Design – 2002 ● TAN 13: Tourism – 1997 ● TAN 14: Coastal Planning 1998 ● TAN 15: Development & Flood Risk - 2004
<p>TEAM Wales – Catching the Wave</p>	<p>In August 2004, TEAM Wales published ‘Catching the Wave’. The document recognises that the coastline of Wales, along with inland lakes, rivers, and canals, currently do not play their full part in providing recreational and commercial opportunities for the nation. The vision the strategy sets out is “to embark on an environmentally sustainable long term strategic initiative to maximise the contribution of the Welsh Coastline, rivers, lakes and canals, to deliver economic and community regeneration”.</p> <p>A key objective within ‘Catching the Wave’ is to increase the supply of long stay and visitor berths and moorings, to ideally provide a necklace of safe havens at every 10 – 20 miles along the coast of Wales.</p>

Policy level	Details
<p>The Severn Estuary Shoreline Management Plan</p>	<p>The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) provides a framework for shoreline management decisions. Its aim is to provide the basis for sustainable coastal defence policies within the Severn Estuary and to develop objectives for the future management of the shoreline. The preparation of the SMP has involved the collection and analysis of information on coastal processes and also on the developed and natural environment in so far as they may interact with coastal defence strategies.</p> <p>The Plan provides a means to inform the statutory planning process and related coastal zone planning about how sea-level rise and other natural and human induces factors may affect the coastline and about priorities of the coastal defence authorities. The SMP should be considered within the wider planning process around the estuary and be taken into account when preparing statutory local plans.</p>
<p>Severn Estuary Flood Risk Management Strategy</p>	<p>The Environment Agency's long-term strategy for flood management. The Strategy has 3 main objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To define a 100 year plan of investment for flood defences by the Environment Agency and local authorities; ● To prioritise other flood risk management measures such as providing advice to utility companies to protect critical infrastructure, development control advice and flood warning investment; ● To decide where to create new inter-tidal wildlife habitats to compensate for losses of habitat caused by rising sea levels. <p>It covers the coast from Gloucester to Lavenercock Point near Cardiff and from Gloucester to Hinkley Point in Somerset.</p>

Policy level	Details
<p>Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP)</p>	<p>The Environment Agency, Welsh Assembly Government and Defra are promoting Catchment Flood Management Plans (CFMP) across England and Wales, one of which covers the River Wye and River Usk. CFMPs aim to take a comprehensive and long-term look at flood risk in a particular group of river catchments. Each plan will assess the flood risks and examine the main physical processes and factors that contribute to that risk. They will also consider how the flood risks are likely to change over the next 50-100 years, due to climate change impacts and changes in how land is used and managed. Based on the information gathered, the Plans will set policies for managing flood risk at the catchment scale and include plans to achieve these policies.</p>

Local Policy

<p>Newport Unitary Development Plan</p>	<p>The Newport UDP was formally adopted in May 2006. The UDP therefore forms the development plan, and its policies are material considerations when determining planning applications. Given the length of the river and the range of issues relevant to it and its surroundings, a number of UDP policies are of note. These include:</p> <p>UDP Part 1 Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SP1 – Sustainability SP2 – Quality of Design SP6 – The Countryside SP7 – Conservation of the Natural Environment SP9 – Conservation of the Built Environment SP11 – Planning Obligations SP13 – Integrated Transport SP17 – Urban Regeneration SP19 – Recreation, Leisure and Tourism SP27 – Flood Consequences Assessment <p>UDP Part 2 Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CE5 – International Sites CE6 – National Sites CE9 – Species Protected by European Legislation CE14 – Coastal Zone
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Policy level	Details
	<p>CE20 – 24 Conservation Areas CE26 – Archaeological Sensitive Area CE33 – Environmental Spaces CE38 – Quality of Design CE39 – Residential Design and Layout H1 – Housing Allocations T14 – Walking and Cycling T15 & 16 – Public Rights of Way ED1 – Employment Land Allocations ED2 – Urban Regeneration Sites CF6 – Riverfront Access</p>
<p>Supplementary Planning Guidance</p>	<p>Other Supplementary Planning Guidance has been taken into consideration when reviewing issues relevant to the River Usk. A comprehensive list of all Supplementary Planning Guidance can be found on the Council's website at www.newport.gov.uk/planningpolicy, however of particular relevance are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Systems (Dec 2005) ● Newport City Centre Masterplan (Draft July 2004) ● Newport Public Realm Strategy (Nov 2005) ● Old Town Dock Development Brief (Jan 2005) ● Rodney Parade Development Brief (July 2006) ● Crindau Development Brief (September 2008)
<p>Local Biodiversity Action Plan – NCC</p>	<p>The LBAP is a document which is produced and endorsed by a local authority, in conjunction with local volunteers, conservation groups and organisations, known as the Biodiversity Partnership. The LBAP helps to coordinate and promote awareness raising and education of the importance of wildlife and nature amongst local people. At present the LBAP for Newport is in the process of being reviewed this process will be completed in 2009.</p>

Policy level	Details
<p>Nature Conservation Strategy - NCC</p>	<p>This Nature Conservation Strategy (NCS) sets out a detailed framework addressing nature conservation issues in the city of Newport. Nature conservation issues are a significant material planning consideration, and a strategy is therefore required which sets out a logical framework for the evaluation of development proposals, and for the assessment and determination of planning applications, where these might have a significant impact on nature conservation interests. The Newport City Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) specifically notes that there is a requirement and need for detailed Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on nature conservation issues. It is therefore proposed that this strategy will act as the required SPG, to build upon and help achieve the broad intentions of the UDP, which include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the protection of sites and features of nature conservation and earth science value, and ● the maintenance of biodiversity. <p>This Nature Conservation Strategy will therefore play an important part in the City Council's overall strategic approach to Local Agenda 21, in conjunction with the development of its Local Biodiversity Action Plan, and will help to raise awareness of the environment and the issue of sustainable development.</p>

Appendix 2 - Policy Context

Wye and Usk Catchment Flood Management Plan

Wye and Usk CFMP - policies and actions relating to newport - Summer 2008

Policy unit	Policy selected	Actions
Policy Unit 1 – Cwmbran & M4 Corridor	Policy 4 – Take further action to sustain current scale of flood risk into the future (responding to the potential increases in flood risk from urban development, land use change, and climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide development control advice; - Develop an Integrated Urban Drainage Plan for Cwmbran; - Seek opportunities to take action with others to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits. <p>Water Management Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asset System Improvement and Replacement Project. <p>Increased conveyance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain existing level of flood defence and drainage network maintenance; - Continue with existing level of maintenance of watercourses. <p>Influencing and Informing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a Flood Awareness Plan; - Implementation of a Flood Forecasting Study for the River Lwyd Catchment; - Produce a local community flood plan for Cwmbran and Ponthir. <p>Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a Flood Risk Mapping Study along the River Lwyd; - Undertake an appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic modelling study; - Conduct a study to determine the most appropriate way of keeping flood risk the same as now into the future.

Policy unit	Policy selected	Actions
<p>Policy Unit 2 – Caldicot Levels</p>	<p>Take further action to sustain current scale of flood risk into the future (responding to the potential increases in flood risk from urban development, land use change, and climate change.</p>	<p>Attenuation / Retention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide development control advice; - Develop an Integrated Urban Drainage Plan for Cwmbran; - Seek opportunities to take action with others to store water or manage run-off in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits. <p>Water Management Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asset System Improvement and Replacement Project. <p>Increased conveyance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain existing level of drainage network maintenance within the Gwent and Caldicot Levels. <p>Monitoring / Advise / Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue maintenance of the Gwent Levels SSSI. <p>Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a Flood Risk Mapping Study within the Gwent and Caldicot Levels; - Conduct a study to determine the most appropriate way of keeping flood risk the same as now into the future; - Review findings of Severn Estuary Strategy regarding future flood risk in the catchment, and implement actions as appropriate; - CFMP/ SMP Compliance Project.

Policy unit	Policy selected	Actions
Policy Unit 7 – Newport	Take further action to reduce flood risk (now and /or in the future).	<p>Attenuation / Retention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide development control advice; - Promotion and support towards the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new developments; - Develop an Integrated Urban Drainage Plan. <p>Water Management Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a System Asset Management Plan (SAMP). <p>Increased conveyance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve existing level of flood defence and watercourse maintenance. <p>Influencing and Informing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put in place policies within the Local Development Plan ensure the layout of commercial buildings are made more resilient; - Develop a Flood Awareness Plan; - Produce a local community flood plan. <p>Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asset System Improvement and Replacement Project; - Produce a Multi-Agency Response Plan; - Undertake a Flood Risk Mapping Study; - Review findings of Severn Estuary Strategy regarding future flood risk in the catchment, and implement actions as appropriate; - Conduct a study to determine the most appropriate way of keeping flood risk the same as now into the future; - Undertake an appropriate hydrologic and hydraulic modelling study; - CFMP/SMP Compliance Project.