

Bridgend Local Development Plan 2006 – 2021

Guidance on the Sustainability Appraisal of Alternative Sites

June 2010

**Development Planning
Regeneration and Development
Communities Directorate
Bridgend County Borough Council
Angel Street, Bridgend
CF31 4WB**

1. Guidance on the Sustainability Appraisal of Alternative Sites

- 1.1 The Deposit LDP sets out a development strategy and policies to guide the development and use of land in Bridgend County Borough to 2021.
- 1.2 The statutory consultation on the Deposit Plan includes the opportunity to suggest different sites or changes to boundaries to those included in the Deposit Plan. These 'alternative sites' will be subject to a separate consultation and an independent Planning Inspector will decide whether they are included in the finalised plan.
- 1.3 To enable the appointed Inspector to consider your alternative site(s) you must provide a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment with your alternative site(s).
- 1.4 An alternative site can be any piece of land which has not been included within the Deposit Plan either as an allocation or within a settlement boundary which you wish to see considered as an alternative to sites allocated in the Plan. This can include land previously assessed by the Council as a Candidate Site or suggesting a different use for a site that has been allocated in the Deposit Plan, or sites which you propose should be deleted.
- 1.5 The Council will publicise site allocation representations and all accompanying information (including the SA incorporating SEA) to provide an opportunity for public comment on the site(s).

Sustainability Appraisals

- 1.6 Sustainability Appraisal is a process that considers the likely social, economic and environmental impacts of a proposal, including alternative development sites, against local sustainability objectives. The Council's Sustainability Appraisal incorporates the regulatory requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Sustainability Appraisal should include evidence regarding:
 - The site's compatibility with the Plan's strategy;
 - Any substantial physical, ecological, environmental and geological constraints to development of the site and the potential for mitigation measures to overcome or reduce these;
 - The sustainability of the site in relation to availability and accessibility of infrastructure, community facilities and services, public transport and the use of brownfield land.
 - You must attach a plan of the site you wish to be considered. This must be an Ordnance Survey type map, of minimum scale 1:2500, outlining the land for consideration in RED with points of access clearly marked.
 - If the site is significant in size or within 2km of a Special Area of Conservation (see Appendix 2) you will need to consider the impact of development in terms of the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

1.7 The alternative site may have already been assessed as part of the Council's Candidate Site Assessment Procedure. You may object to the outcome of the Council's assessment and seek to have that site included. If you are proposing a site extension or boundary change then you will need to make sure that SA is carried out to account for these changes.

1.8 Alternative site representations will be dealt with at the Examination as a representation on the soundness of the Plan. It is essential for you to demonstrate why you do not consider the Council's assessment to be sound (based on good evidence).

2. How to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal

2.1 It is important that your assessment of the site is consistent with the Council's methodology. This is set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Report of the Plan as well as the separate Site Allocation Sustainability Appraisal. Both of these are available on the LDP website at: www.bridgend.gov.uk/ldp

2.2 The Sustainability Appraisal Report details the sustainability baseline, issues and objectives which you may find useful in undertaking your assessment.

2.3 You should explain in detail how you consider that your site contributes towards the Plan's overall sustainability, particularly in relation to the Strategy and the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives. This can be done using the "Sustainability Appraisal Matrix" included at Appendix 1.

2.4 You can use this matrix to assess your proposed site(s). You should assess the contribution that the site makes to meeting the individual SA Objectives. You also need to look at the cumulative effects of the sites, this can be detailed in the summary of your assessment. To assess the cumulative effects of the site you will need to look at the potential effects of the site in relation to other sites.

2.5 If a new or alternative site has not been subject to Sustainability Appraisal it is unlikely that the Inspector will be able to recommend its inclusion in the Plan. In the absence of SA to support an alternative site, the Inspector is unlikely to be able to conclude that the Plan will be sound if the suggested change is made.

3. Information needed for the Habitats Regulations Assessment

3.1 If your development proposal for the new or alternative site is within 2km of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (See Appendix 2) or likely to cause the Plan to change significantly and may have a likely significant effect on any European site of nature conservation importance you will need to have regard to the Habitats Regulations Assessment and the impact which the inclusion of your site would have on its conclusions.

3.2 Your assessment would need to include detailed information on the site's physical, environmental and geological condition and the proposed use of the site. Much of this information would be included in the environmental information provided with your Sustainability Appraisal of your site. The Countryside Council for Wales can provide more information on specific European sites of nature conservation importance (see web link below).

4. More information on how to prepare the necessary appraisals

For more information on undertaking your appraisal the following websites may be of assistance:

CCW Guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):

<http://www.ccw.gov.uk/landscape--wildlife/managing-land-and-sea/environmental-assessment/sea.aspx>

CCW information on European sites:

<http://www.ccw.gov.uk/landscape--wildlife/protecting-our-landscape/special-sites-project.aspx>

DCLG Guidance on SEA:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/practicalguidesea>

WAG Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (see Annex 6 – Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans, page 75):

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/policy/tans/tan5/?lang=en>

Further information on the LDP and this process is available on the Council website: www.bridgend.gov.uk/ldp

or from:

Development Planning, Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices,
Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB

Email: ldp@bridgend.gov.uk

Telephone: 01656 643165

Appendix 1

Sustainability Appraisal Objectives, Matrix and Assessment Process

Sustainability Objectives

Concern	Objective	Supporting objectives / questions / issues to consider
Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone		
Accessibility	To ensure an increase in accessibility to opportunities, transport and to all services and information in the County Borough.	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote sustainable transport infrastructure, and integrated transport approaches? • implement an access hierarchy, putting pedestrians at the top and car users at the bottom? • promote alternative modes of transport where feasible? • ensure all have access to essential facilities and services, by a variety of modes of transport? • reduce reliance on the car for transport? • reduce existing disparities to access to services, decent homes and jobs?
Housing	To provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing needs	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help meet the housing requirements of the area in ways which help build sustainable communities? • provide affordable housing to meet identified needs? • help provide good quality housing throughout the County Borough?
Health, safety and security	To improve overall levels of health and safety, including the sense of security, for all in the County Borough	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve access for all to good quality health services for planned and emergency healthcare, leisure and social facilities? • enhance opportunities for healthy living and empower people to take responsibility for their own health – including improving access to open space? • encourage people to reduce car use, and travel by walking and cycling? • encourage new development to be designed for security and safety principles?
Community	To maintain, promote and where suitable enhance, the distinctive character of the communities of Bridgend	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help strengthen community spirit and wellbeing? • challenge anti-social behaviour by creating an environment where it is difficult for such behaviour to flourish? • help to ensure new development and regeneration provides for the communities which it will serve, taking into account considerations such as appropriate design layout and sense of place?
Effective protection of the environment		
Biodiversity	To maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard areas of significant nature conservation value	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help to conserve the local biodiversity as a result of land management and flood management? • help to conserve areas designated for national and international biodiversity significance? • protect and enhance habitats wherever possible, and help contribute towards biodiversity? • help to ensure new development avoids the further fragmentation of habitats, and the destruction of movement routes for flora and fauna? • help implement the Local Biodiversity Action Plan actions and/or targets?

Sustainability Objectives

Concern	Objective	Supporting objectives / questions / issues to consider
Landscape	To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape, including its contribution to the setting and character of settlements	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect and enhance the County Borough's urban, rural and coastal landscapes and to maintain and increase access to open space? • help instil in local communities, a pride in their surroundings? • help to protect areas identified for their historic landscape importance? • bring the natural environment under positive management, including natural habitats, the historic built and natural environment and land environment meeting national quality standards?
Built Environment	To maintain and enhance the quality of the built environment, including the cultural/historic heritage	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect and enhance sites, features and areas of historical, archaeological, architectural and cultural value and their setting, including features of local cultural significance? • encourage and support specific improvement projects? • maintain and enhance the built quality of settlements? • ensure that the County Borough remains a region of diverse and distinctive heritage and landscape? • ensure the most appropriate design advice and guidance is made available in connection with proposals for development to enhance built environment quality?
Prudent use of natural resources		
Air	To reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce the need for dependence on the private car through influencing people's travel choices, including making alternative, more sustainable modes of transport like walking and cycling, much easier, more attractive and a viable alternative? • ensure all new development takes into account the need to maintain and improve residential amenity?
Climate change	To ensure that new development takes into account the effects of climate change	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • avoid development from being located in areas at substantive risk from fluvial flooding, including incorporating sustainable drainage systems in new development where appropriate? • take into consideration the risks of storm surges and sea defences being overtopped when planning new development in areas of risk from tidal flooding • Ensure development it constructed with high energy efficiency standards to reduce energy consumption? • ensure development is constructed to be able to adapt to the potential change in weather patterns as a result of climate change, in particular hotter summers?
Water	To maintain and improve the quality and quantity of ground waters, river waters and coastal and bathing waters	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help ensure new development is constructed so as to ensure that water is used efficiently? • help to improve and maintain coastal bathing waters at Rest Bay and Porthcawl, and transitional waters at Ogmores-by-Sea • protect water bodies from pollution, for example by ensuring there is sufficient suitable waste water treatment infrastructure?
Land / Soil	To use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing damaged land back into	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote the conservation and efficient use of land, including building at higher densities and reusing previously developed and derelict land in preference to

Sustainability Objectives

Concern	Objective	Supporting objectives / questions / issues to consider
	use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greenfield sites? protect soil of higher agricultural grades from development? ensure that appropriate remediation of contaminated sites is undertaken prior to development?
Minerals and waste	To maintain the stock of minerals and non renewable primary resources	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure mineral resources are used efficiently and with the least environmental damage? ensure the recycling and reuse of building materials wherever possible, such as for aggregate, in preference to primary mineral resources? reduce use of primary resources through providing appropriate sites for sustainable waste management, including re-processing, recycling and sorting?
Renewable energy	To increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote the generation of energy from renewable sources? ensure that, where appropriate, new developments generate a proportion of their energy from renewable sources on site?
Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment		
Employment	To ensure that there is a vibrant local economy which is at the forefront of a wider regional economy and provide diversity of employment within the County Borough and support a culture of entrepreneurship	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> help maintain a motivated, highly skilled and well educated workforce? improve access to employment for all residents of County Borough, and help reduce disparities? provide an infrastructure of transport, communications and land development, which attracts and retains local businesses? ensure Bridgend continues to be a 'working district', providing diverse job opportunities for local people?
Wealth creation	To achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity	Does the strategy, policy or proposal... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> achieve economic benefits resulting from tourism? ensure necessary infrastructure to support a sustainable economy? maintain a coherent and successful range of business support that is widely available and assists the competitiveness of local companies and local supply chains?

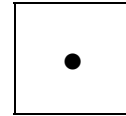
Sustainability Appraisal Assessment Process

The matrix included below shows an appraisal of a proposed site against the full set of sustainability objectives developed for the SA process, as shown above. The assessment for each SA objective is undertaken by the appraisers view on how the site contributes to the supporting objectives / questions.

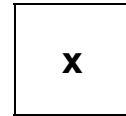
The appraisal of the site should be completed according to a simple symbol summary of the site's performance against the sustainability objectives (see over). A further commentary is provided in the matrix with an overall conclusion.

Key to assessment symbols

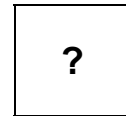
Likely to contribute to the achievement of greater sustainability according to the identified objective



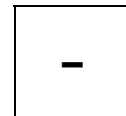
Likely to detract from the achievement of greater sustainability according to the identified objective



Likely effect but too unpredictable to specify, or multiple impacts potentially both positive and negative



No identifiable relationship between the topic covered in the policy and the sustainability concern



Sustainability Appraisal Matrix

Site Name			
Site Area (Ha)		Proposed Use	
Objective	Assessment • / x / ? / -	Commentary	
To ensure an increase in accessibility to opportunities, transport and to all services and information in the County Borough.			
To provide the opportunity for people to meet their housing needs			
To improve overall levels of health and safety, including the sense of security, for all in the County Borough			
To maintain, promote and where suitable enhance, the distinctive character of the communities of Bridgend			
To maintain and enhance the diversity and abundance of species, and safeguard areas of significant nature conservation value			
To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape, including its contribution to the setting and character of settlements			
To maintain and enhance the quality of the built environment, including the cultural/historic heritage			
To reduce all forms of air pollution in the interests of local air quality and the integrity of the atmosphere			
To ensure that new development takes into account the effects of climate change			
To maintain and improve the quality and quantity of ground waters, river waters and coastal and bathing waters			
To use land efficiently, retaining undeveloped land and bringing damaged land back into use			
To maintain the stock of minerals and non renewable primary resources			
To increase the opportunities for energy generation from renewable energy sources			
To ensure that there is a vibrant local economy which is at the forefront of a wider regional economy and provide diversity of employment within the County Borough and support a culture of entrepreneurship			
To achieve a clear connection between effort and benefit, by making the most of local strengths, seeking community regeneration, and fostering economic activity			
Conclusions			

As well as the matrix, a statement should be included as to how the proposed site contributes to the sustainability of the LDP as a whole including how the site will interact with others in the Plan to achieve the sustainability objectives.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

In addition, if the site lies within 2km of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (see Appendix 2) or likely to cause the Plan to change significantly and may have a likely significant effect on any European site of nature conservation importance you will need to have regard to the Habitats Regulations Assessment and the impact which the inclusion of your site would have on its conclusions.

In particular the following vulnerabilities of each SAC should be addressed:

Blackmill Woodlands SAC:	Air Quality Disturbance
Kenfig SAC: (including Kenfig Burrows)	Erosion Falling Water Tables Grazing / scrub Recreation and Access Air Quality Non Native Species Petalwort and fen orchid
Cefn Cribwr SAC:	Grazing levels Maintenance of Shelter Belt Hydrology Off-site pollution Agricultural improvements Weather Parasites

This list is by no means exhaustive. It should also be noted that in terms of significant proposed development sites, SACs other than those listed above outside of the County Borough may be affected. These should be screened accordingly and the impacts assessed if it is deemed there is potential for impact.

Appendix 2

2 and 5km zones around SAC sites