

Bridgend Local Development Plan

2006-2021

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



Deposit LDP
Self Assessment of Soundness
Revised May 2012



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The LDP process needs to satisfy the tests of soundness identified in *Local Development Plans Wales*. (Welsh Assembly Government, December 2005). LDP Wales states that “the presumption will be that the LDP is sound unless it is shown to be otherwise as a result of evidence considered throughout the examination.
- 1.2 This report sets out the ten tests of soundness and the Council's assessment of its progress to date in meeting them. The Planning Inspectorate Wales’ “*Guide to the Examination of Local Development Plans*” has been used to assist in this process.

2. Procedural Tests

P1: It has been prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement including the Community Involvement Scheme

- 2.1 The Bridgend LDP Delivery Agreement was published in December 2006 and revised in October 2008 and November 2010.
- 2.2 A record of the key stages passed and consultation on the LDP is included in the Consultation Report which accompanies this document. These, together with the consultation on the Deposit LDP and ‘Alternative Sites’ have been conducted in accord with the published Revised Delivery Agreement.

P2: The Plan and its policies have been subject to sustainability appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 2.3 A draft SA/SEA Scoping Report was published in August 2006 and was consulted upon with the public and, specifically, the environmental consultation bodies. This set out the sustainability objectives which have been used in the assessment of the LDP throughout its preparation.
- 2.4 An Initial Sustainability Appraisal Strategic Growth Options Briefing Paper was prepared as part of a targeted stakeholder consultation on the draft strategic growth options and was used to inform further revisions of the documentation.
- 2.5 A Sustainability Appraisal Report which also met the requirements for SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report was produced to assess the affects of the Pre-Deposit Proposals; this was consulted upon simultaneously with the Pre-Deposit Proposals.
- 2.6 The deposit LDP has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment. Early versions of the LDP were subjected to these processes to ensure that changes could be made to the document before it was published. The Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment have been consulted on simultaneously with the deposit LDP.

- 2.7 As a result of this consultation, the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment reports have been amended. Revised documents have been published alongside this report which includes appendices outlining the representations received and an appropriate response. Details of the changes which have been undertaken throughout this process can be found in the SA / SEA / HRA Change Log report.

3. Consistency Tests

C1: It is a land use plan that has regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area or to adjoining areas

- 3.1 Background Paper 1: Policy Context and Issues and section 1.5 of the LDP examine the national, regional and local policy context (including those of adjoining areas) within which the deposit LDP has been prepared, and which has informed the choice of the LDP Strategy.
- 3.2 Previously, the LDP Delivery Agreement, LDP Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and the Pre Deposit Proposals documents identified the relevant national, regional and local plans and strategies which could have a potential impact on the LDP.

C2: It has regard to national policy

- 3.3 Background Paper 1: Policy Context and Issues and section 1.5 of the LDP examine the national, regional and local policy context (including those of adjoining areas) within which the deposit LDP has been prepared, and which has informed the choice of the LDP Strategy. The LDP Vision, Objectives, Strategy and Policies have all been prepared with regard to National Policy. These are referenced where appropriate in the LDP.

C3: It has regard to the Wales Spatial Plan

- 3.4 Background Paper 1: Policy Context and Issues examines the implications of the Wales Spatial Plan for Bridgend County Borough. The strategic spatial elements of the LDP Vision, Objectives, Strategy and Policies seek to implement the provisions of the Wales Spatial Plan.

C4: It has regard to the relevant community strategy/ies

- 3.5 Background Paper 1: Policy Context and Issues examines the implications of the Bridgend Community Strategy on the Bridgend LDP.
- 3.6 The aims of the Bridgend Community Strategy have duly informed the draft LDP Vision and objectives of the LDP (see Section 2 of the Plan). The Bridgend LDP seeks to give spatial expression of the land-use implications of the Bridgend Community Strategy.

4. Coherence and Effectiveness Tests

CE1: The Plan sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow and where cross boundary issues are relevant, it is compatible with the development plans prepared by neighbouring authorities

- 4.1 The Council considers the LDP to be coherent and to flow from the identified national, regional and local policy framework including the Wales Spatial Plan and the Bridgend Community Strategy. The four high level objectives of the Plan clarify this intent.
- 4.2 The Plan also takes into account work undertaken at the regional level, with neighbouring local authorities, through collaborative working throughout South East and South West Wales as appropriate, the recommendations of the Regional Waste Plan, Regional Transport Plan and other regional working groups. Neighbouring authorities are also members of the LDP Stakeholder Forum and liaison meetings between officers of the council and their colleagues in the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council have been held.

CE2: The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are founded on a robust evidence base

- 4.3 The LDP Strategy has been selected from realistic and appropriate options and seeks to implement the vision and objectives. Initial options were developed from the evidence base and in consultation with LDP Stakeholders.
- 4.4 The comments from the consultation on the Pre-Deposit Proposals were also used to confirm the Strategy for inclusion within the deposit LDP. A robust evidence base has continued to be maintained (which is published in full alongside the LDP) as appropriate.
- 4.5 Delivery mechanisms for the site allocations contained in the LDP are outlined in Section 9 of the Plan which is now supplemented by information contained in the Site Implementation and Delivery Background Paper.

CE3: There are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring

- 4.6 The Council is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) of the final LDP to review its progress and assess the extent to which the policies are being achieved.
- 4.7 Section 7 of the LDP contains the monitoring framework for the Plan. This includes appropriate monitoring indicators and triggers for a potential policy or plan review.

- 4.8 Implementation of the site allocations contained in the LDP are outlined in Section 9 of the Plan which is now supplemented by information contained in the Site Implementation and Delivery Background Paper.

CE4: It is reasonably flexible to deal with changing circumstances.

- 4.9 The LDP is considered to be sufficiently flexible to deal with changing circumstances in that it presents a range of key sites, many of which are for mixed-use development, which could come forward to meet strategic needs. Flexibility allowances have been included in both the housing and employment land supply figures. The Council's implementation of its out-of-centre bulky comparison goods retail policy will also be sufficiently flexible to deal with changes in circumstances.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Council considers the LDP to be a sound document and it is upon this opinion that it is now submitting the Plan for examination, in order that it may be tested. The Council reserves the right to issue further explanation or evidence of soundness during the examination process in order to address any issues raised during that stage.