

10 March 2010

Dear Councillor,

Re: Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP)

You are invited to attend a meeting of the LDP Advisory Panel on the 30th March 2010 at 2pm in the Video Conferencing Room, County Hall, Carmarthen. An agenda and all relevant papers will be forwarded to you in advance of the meeting.

The Local Development Plan represents one of the four strategies required to be prepared by the Welsh Assembly Government and will set out the Authority's proposals and policies for future development and use of land within its administrative area.

The Advisory Panel is central to the effective preparation and delivery of the LDP as it will take political ownership of the process and the emerging Plan. The Panel will assist in ensuring adherence to the agreed Timetable and Community Involvement Scheme as set out in the Delivery Agreement and will play an important role in determining policy direction and resolving issues that emerge from meetings of the Key stakeholder Forum.

I would be grateful if you could confirm your attendance and I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Yours faithfully

Jon Timothy
Forward Planning Manager

18 March 2010

Dear Councillor,

Re: Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP)

Please find enclosed the relevant papers in respect of the meeting of the Local Development Plan Advisory Panel on Tuesday 30th March in the Video Conferencing Room, County Hall, Carmarthen.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Yours faithfully

Jon Timothy
Forward Planning Manager

**LDP Advisory Panel ,
30/3/2010, 2.00pm, Video Conference Room County hall**

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Confirmation of Minutes – 30th April 2009
4. Receive update on LDP progress and amendments to the Delivery Agreement Timetable
5. Receive update/report on consultation responses to Preferred Strategy
6. Receive update/report on consultation responses to the Habitat Regulations Screening Report
7. Receive update/report on consultation responses to the SA/SEA Initial Report
8. Report the consultation feedback received to the May Topic Papers and ratify publication of revised versions of these papers
9. Receive and approve further Pre Deposit Topic Papers including:
 - (a) Transportation
 - (b) Sustainable Development and Climate Change
 - (c) Minerals
 - (d) Waste
 - (e) Unitary Development Plan Strategic review
10. Technical Officers Group – Confirmation of its composition and terms of reference.
11. Town and Community Council Involvement
12. Receive update on next steps in LDP plan making process
13. AOB

Agenda item 4

**LDP PROGRESS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE DELIVERY AGREEMENT
TIMETABLE**

It was reported to Council at its meeting on 8th July, 2009 that slippage had been incurred in the timetable for production of the LDP and that it was necessary to revise the Delivery Agreement accordingly. Council resolved that officers be authorised to agree amendments to the Delivery Agreement with WAG.

The matter has been discussed with WAG and a revised timetable as attached has been tentatively agreed. Prior to seeking formal approval for the changes it is necessary that a Council resolution approving the revisions be obtained.

The accompanying chart shows the remaining key stages in the preparation of the LDP. The Plan is currently at Key Stage 3 as shown and slippage of approximately 12 months has been incurred. As a consequence under the revised programme the Deposit Plan will be completed by the end of April 2011 and will be taken to inquiry (Examination in Public) in August 2012.

In addition to WAG, the Planning Inspectorate has been consulted on the revised timetable and has no objections to the changed schedule for the Examination.

Agenda item 5
Consultation responses received to the Local Development Plan (LDP)
Preferred Strategy

Introduction

The publication of the Preferred Strategy represented an important formal stage in the production of the LDP. The Strategy includes sections on the key plan issues, vision and objectives, strategic options, key policies and the suggested overall level of growth and key areas of change and protection for the County. It also identifies strategic sites which contribute to the delivery of the strategy. It is a strategic document and does not therefore include detailed policies or non strategic site specific proposals. The Strategy was made available for public consultation as part of the wider consultation on the Authority's pre deposit proposals documents from the 4 November 2009 to the 4 January 2010. All Authority Members will have received a copy of the Preferred Strategy, together with copies of the Initial Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Report and the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Preliminary Screening Report.

Overview of the consultation responses received

415 representations were received in response to the Strategy. The responses were wide ranging in nature, with the majority being supportive of the strategic direction of travel being proposed. Following the collation of the responses received, officers proceeded to consider the need to amend aspects of the Strategy. Whilst agreeing that some changes are required to the Strategy, the large majority of issues raised from the consultation can be addressed as the plan making process proceeds.

Reporting and Member involvement

All of the consultation responses received, together with the officer responses/recommendations in relation thereto (including any proposed amendments or changes to the strategy) will be reported to full Council on the 22/4/2010. This is in full accordance with the Council protocol for Reporting.

Next Steps

The Plan making process will now proceed towards the production of the Deposit LDP. Stakeholders will continue to be involved and the SA/SEA and HRA will continue to be key underpinning documents to the LDP. The evidence base of the Plan is also being developed and this includes developing knowledge on key issues such as population and household projections, as well as constraints to development such as flood risk.

Recommendations

That this report be noted and that Panel Members be kept updated on the progress of the LDP as the Plan making process continues.

Representations Submitted on the Soundness of the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy

Report to Advisory Panel 30th March 2010

The Preferred Strategy sets out the key elements of the LDP and presents a strategic perspective to which the full Deposit Plan will conform. The Strategy will underpin the policies and allocations to be identified in the full Deposit Plan and provides a basis for meeting the economic, social and environmental needs of the County by identifying broad locations for the delivery of housing and other strategic requirements. (With the exception of the identified strategic sites, specific allocations are not dealt with in this strategic document but will be an issue for the Deposit Plan.) A key element of the new plan making system governing the preparation of the LDP relates to the need for the Plan to be sound, and as such 10 tests of soundness (see table below) are set out against which the Plan will be assessed at examination.

The formal consultation of the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy, as outlined within the previous report, invited respondents as part of any representation to also comment on the ‘soundness’ or otherwise of the document. In this regard, the following report details the responses received and the officer recommendation/response. The consultation in respect of the Preferred Strategy generated some 415 representations of which 151 registered an objection to the soundness of the Strategy. These objections often included identifying more than one test of soundness. The following table details the number of times the pre-deposit preferred strategy was deemed to not have meet a test of soundness;

Test of Soundness		No. of Reprs
P1	It has been prepared in accordance with the Delivery Agreement including the Community Involvement Scheme.	14
P2	The plan and its policies have been subjected to sustainability appraisal including strategic environmental assessment.	16
C1	It is a land use plan which has regard to other relevant plans, policies and strategies relating to the area to adjoining areas.	18
C2	It has regard for national policy.	42
C3	It has regard to the Wales Spatial Plan.	16
C4	It has regard to the relevant community strategy/ies.	14
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.	40
CE2	The strategy, policies and allocations are realistic and appropriate having considered the relevant alternatives and are found on a robust evidence base.	113
CE3	There are clear mechanisms for implementation and monitoring.	42
CE4	It is reasonably flexible to enable it to deal with changing circumstances.	52

It should be noted that a number of the responses in relation to soundness are directly

related to the original objection to the content of the Preferred Strategy and as such will have been considered as part of the report proceeding to full council on the 22nd April 2010. These representations will (where applicable) be formally addressed through that reporting process. In such instances the changes proposed or the future work identified etc are sufficient to address the issues of soundness raised. However, such matters should be subject to future monitoring to ensure that issues of soundness are satisfied and (where appropriate) incorporated into the plan and the plan making process. This report details such representations and seeks to address those which require individual consideration.

Recommendations

1. That the officer's response/ recommendations in respect of the following be accepted.
2. That matters of Soundness continue to be monitored.

The following representations relate to questions of soundness which are considered through the recommendations/ responses to the preferred strategy (report to Council). Consequently it is recommended that they be **noted and that the matters they raise in respect of the Plan's soundness are addressed through the response and recommendations to their accompanying representations to the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy.**

Ref No	Test of Soundness	Ref No	Test of Soundness	Ref No	Test of Soundness
PS0001	CE2	PS0192	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0303	CE1, CE2
PS0002	P1, C4	PS0193	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0304	CE1, CE2
PS0005	C2	PS0194	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0305	C1, CE1, CE2
PS0013	CE2	PS0195	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0306	CE2, CE4
PS0015	CE2	PS0196	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0309	CE2, CE4
PS0016	CE2	PS0197	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0310	CE2, CE4
PS0017	CE2	PS0198	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0311	CE2, CE4
PS0018	CE2	PS0199	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0312	C1, CE1, CE2
PS0019	CE2	PS0200	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0313	CE1, CE2
PS0020	CE2	PS0201	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0314	CE1, CE2
PS0021	CE2	PS0202	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0315	C1, CE1, CE2
PS0023	CE2	PS0203	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0317	CE2
PS0024	CE2	PS0204	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0318	CE2, CE4
PS0047	None Id	PS0205	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0342	CE2, CE4
PS0048	None Id	PS0206	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0343	CE2, CE4

			CE4		
PS0050	CE2	PS0207	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0344	CE2, CE4
PS0051	CE2	PS0208	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0345	CE2, CE4
PS0052	CE2	PS0210	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0359	CE1, CE2
PS0053	CE2	PS0211	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0360	P2
PS0054	CE2	PS0212	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0362	C2
PS0055	CE2	PS0213	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0364	C2, C3
PS0056	CE2	PS0214	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0365	C2, C3
PS0057	CE2	PS0215	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0367	C2
PS0058	CE2	PS0216	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0368	C2
PS0059	CE2	PS0217	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0370	C2
PS0060	CE2	PS0237	C4, CE2, CE3	PS0372	C2
PS0061	CE2	PS0244	All	PS0379	C2
PS0064	C2	PS0245	All	PS0380	P2
PS0075	C2	PS0246	All	PS0381	P2
PS0087	CE1	PS0247	All	PS0384	C2
PS0088	CE1	PS0248	All	PS0385	C2
PS0089	CE1	PS0249	All	PS0386	CE2, CE3
PS0090	CE1	PS0250	All	PS0389	C2
PS0096	C2, CE2, CE4	PS0251	All	PS0390	CE2
PS0100	C2, CE2, CE4	PS0252	All	PS0398	C2
PS0101	C2, CE2, CE4	PS0253	All	PS0401	P2
PS0105	C2, CE2, CE4	PS0254	All	PS0402	CE2
PS0106	C2, CE2, CE4	PS0255	All	PS0404	C2
PS0107	CE2	PS0257	C2, CE2	PS0405	C2
PS0109	CE2	PS0260	C2, C3, CE2	PS0407	C2
PS0110	CE2	PS0261	CE2	PS0410	C2
PS0112	CE2	PS0276	CE2	PS0414	CE3
PS0132	C2, CE2, CE4	PS0277	CE2		
PS0133	C3, CE1	PS0278	CE1, CE2		
PS0136	CE2	PS0279	CE1, CE2		
PS0139	CE2	PS0280	CE1, CE2		
PS0140	C1, CE1, CE2	PS0283	CE1, CE2		
PS0141	C1, CE1, CE2	PS0284	CE1, CE2		
PS0191	CE2, CE3, CE4	PS0302	CE1, CE2		

The following representations, where they relate to matters of soundness, raise issues which are not the subject to consideration as part of the report to Council on the Preferred Strategy. The response/recommendation are set out below.

Ref: PS0065

Respondent: Mr J D Evans
J Evans Planning Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

The distribution of the Strategic Sites is not in accordance with the Preferred Strategy (ie Sustainable Distribution) and does not support or reflect the role played by the Cross Hands and Ammanford Growth Area. Additional or replacement Strategic Sites should be allocated in the Ammanford area (such as that off Blaenau Road, Llandybie) to redress this imbalance (see attached sheet)

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. The selection of sites accords with the site assessment methodology. The non identification as a strategic site does not preclude their consideration and subsequent contribution as a potential non-strategic site.

Ref: PS0108

Respondent: Mr Mark Tebboth
Energy Saving Trust

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

Failed to take into account the MIPPS and TAN22 (draft) on Sustainable buildings.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Amendments to the strategy as proposed in the report on responses to the Preferred Strategy will incorporate elements that demonstrate that regard has been had to their content. These are also matters which will be further developed as part of the preparation of the Deposit LDP

Ref: PS0219

Respondent: D T JONES

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2

CE3 CE4

Summary:

I am not aware of any community news or input into the preparation of this strategy. Public participation is important.

Further, no copy of the document was deposited in Cross Hands library the display of which would have stimulated the interest of local residents if seen.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. The LDP has been fully prepared in accordance with the provisions set out within the Delivery Agreement and includes the publication of articles etc. These will be detailed within the REG15 statement.

Ref: PS0240

Respondent: Christine Davies

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

Believes the document to be mainly sound, I think there should be some clear reference to policies relating to agriculture in Carmarthenshire and the impact that residential development may have on the agricultural viability of the county. This has a bearing on the environment, but also is of key concern for the long-term sustainability of food production both on a county and national level. This should also be borne in mind re. site assessment (e.g. section D2.2.11)

Further comment that where possible, development should therefore be on 'brown-field' sites rather than 'green-field' sites, which has the additional benefit of aiding regeneration (sections 6.6.8; 7.9.3).I would suggest that this should be incorporated within the criteria for site assessment.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Matters in relation to agriculture will be developed as part of the Deposit LDP. Agricultural land quality forms part of the assessment of sites. In this regard brownfield and Greenfield will also be utilised as part of the site selection process as a reflection of WAG guidance.

Ref: PS0329

Respondent: Mr Ben Lewis
GVA Grimley Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2

CE3 CE4

Summary:

9.1 Whilst we are able to offer general support for the PDPS, there are a number of areas (as identified above) where further clarification or minor revision is suggested. The principal area of concern relates to the population projections used as the basis of the strategy and proposed levels and distribution of growth. In light of this, it is considered that the PDPS (as currently drafted) fails Test of Soundness CE2.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Detail in respect of population and housing is set out within the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy and the Population and Housing Topic Paper. This paper and its contents will be reviewed in light of the commitment made within the Preferred Strategy, the consideration of the responses as contained within this report and evidence gathered as part of the preparation of the Deposit Draft LDP.

The apportionment of units is indicative and allows the flexibility of development throughout settlements and this will be further explored through more detailed analysis.

Ref: PS0330

Respondent: Mr Ben Lewis
GVA Grimley Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

9.1 Whilst we are able to offer general support for the PDPS, there are a number of areas (as identified above) where further clarification or minor revision is suggested. The principal area of concern relates to the population projections used as the basis of the strategy and proposed levels and distribution of growth. In light of this, it is considered that the PDPS (as currently drafted) fails Test of Soundness CE2.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Detail in respect of population and housing is set out within the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy and the Population and Housing Topic Paper. This paper and its contents will be reviewed in light of the commitment made within the Preferred Strategy, the consideration of the responses as contained within this report and evidence gathered as part of the preparation of the Deposit Draft LDP.

The apportionment of units is indicative and allows the flexibility of development throughout settlements and this will be further explored through more detailed analysis.

Ref: PS0331

Respondent: Mr Ben Lewis

GVA Grimley Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

9.1 Whilst we are able to offer general support for the PDPS, there are a number of areas (as identified above) where further clarification or minor revision is suggested. The principal area of concern relates to the population projections used as the basis of the strategy and proposed levels and distribution of growth. In light of this, it is considered that the PDPS (as currently drafted) fails Test of Soundness CE2.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Detail in respect of population and housing is set out within the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy and the Population and Housing Topic Paper. This paper and its contents will be reviewed in light of the commitment made within the Preferred Strategy, the consideration of the responses as contained within this report and evidence gathered as part of the preparation of the Deposit Draft LDP.

The apportionment of units is indicative and allows the flexibility of development throughout settlements and this will be further explored through more detailed analysis.

Ref: PS0334

Respondent: Mr Ben Lewis
GVA Grimley Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

9.1 Whilst we are able to offer general support for the PDPS, there are a number of areas (as identified above) where further clarification or minor revision is suggested. The principal area of concern relates to the population projections used as the basis of the strategy and proposed levels and distribution of growth. In light of this, it is considered that the PDPS (as currently drafted) fails Test of Soundness CE2.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Detail in respect of population and housing is set out within the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy and the Population and Housing Topic Paper. This paper and its contents will be reviewed in light of the commitment made within the Preferred Strategy, the consideration of the responses as contained within this report and evidence gathered as part of the preparation of the Deposit Draft LDP.

The apportionment of units is indicative and allows the flexibility of development throughout settlements and this will be further explored through more detailed analysis.

Ref: PS0335

Respondent: Mr Ben Lewis
GVA Grimley Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

9.1 Whilst we are able to offer general support for the PDPS, there are a number of areas (as identified above) where

further clarification or minor revision is suggested. The principal area of concern relates to the population projections

used as the basis of the strategy and proposed levels and distribution of growth. In light of this, it is considered that the

PDPS (as currently drafted) fails Test of Soundness CE2.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Detail in respect of population and housing is set out within the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy and the Population and Housing Topic Paper. This paper and its contents will be reviewed in light of the commitment made within the Preferred Strategy, the consideration of the responses as contained within this report and evidence gathered as part of the preparation of the Deposit Draft LDP.

The apportionment of units is indicative and allows the flexibility of development throughout settlements and this will be further explored through more detailed analysis.

Ref: PS0336

Respondent: Mr Ben Lewis
GVA Grimley Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

9.1 Whilst we are able to offer general support for the PDPS, there are a number of areas (as identified above) where

further clarification or minor revision is suggested. The principal area of concern relates to the population projections

used as the basis of the strategy and proposed levels and distribution of growth. In light of this, it is considered that the

PDPS (as currently drafted) fails Test of Soundness CE2.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Detail in respect of population and housing is set out within the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy and the Population and Housing Topic Paper. This paper and its contents will be reviewed in light of the commitment made within the

Preferred Strategy, the consideration of the responses as contained within this report and evidence gathered as part of the preparation of the Deposit Draft LDP.

The apportionment of units is indicative and allows the flexibility of development throughout settlements and this will be further explored through more detailed analysis.

Ref: PS0338

Respondent: Mr Ben Lewis
GVA Grimley Limited

Tests of soundness:

P1 P2 C1 C2 C3 C4 CE1 CE2
CE3 CE4

Summary:

9.1 Whilst we are able to offer general support for the PDPS, there are a number of areas (as identified above) where further clarification or minor revision is suggested. The principal area of concern relates to the population projections used as the basis of the strategy and proposed levels and distribution of growth. In light of this, it is considered that the PDPS (as currently drafted) fails Test of Soundness CE2.

Response/Recommendation:

Noted. Detail in respect of population and housing is set out within the Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy and the Population and Housing Topic Paper. This paper and its contents will be reviewed in light of the commitment made within the Preferred Strategy, the consideration of the responses as contained within this report and evidence gathered as part of the preparation of the Deposit Draft LDP.

The apportionment of units is indicative and allows the flexibility of development throughout settlements and this will be further explored through more detailed analysis.

Habitats Regulations Assessment Preliminary Screening Report

Introduction

A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Local Development Plan (LDP) is required by Sections 85A-E of the Conservation (Natural Habitats and c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended 2007) to ensure that key international nature conservation sites are safeguarded and that the Plan will not cause significant negative effects on them. If it is determined that the LDP is likely to have significant negative effects on these 'European sites', a more detailed HRA will be required. JACOBS were appointed by the Authority to undertake the HRA via the consultant gateway framework agreement.

Overview of the Preliminary Screening Report Contents

The Report completes the first part of the HRA process by providing a constraints plan to inform and support the LDP Preferred Strategy. 25 European sites are highlighted as being potentially affected by the Carmarthenshire LDP and thus the report recommends a precautionary approach in further developing the Plan. It suggests that the following potential issues will need to be considered as part of an iterative approach to plan making; *air pollution, water treatment infrastructure provision, sustainable construction modes, water resources and quality, species and habitat disturbance and mitigation measures*. The Report was made available for public consultation as part of the wider consultation on the Authority's pre deposit proposals documents from the 4 November 2009 to the 4 January 2010.

Summary of main issues to arise from consultation responses received

46 representations were received in relation to the Report, with a large majority of them supporting the precautionary approach proposed. 12 of these responses were in relation to specific candidate sites which should not be considered as part of the HRA Preliminary Screening Report. The Countryside Council for Wales were largely supportive of the Report, as were the Environment Agency. The majority of the comments received were helpful in terms of raising points that can be addressed as the plan making process progresses. Support was received from the City and County of Swansea in recognition of discussions that have already taken place regarding cross border issues in relation to the Burry Inlet and Carmarthen Bay. Ceredigion County Council stated that they are also keen to work in a collaborative manner to reduce adverse impacts on European Sites such as the River Teifi.

Next Steps

JACOBS' recommendations in respect the 46 representations will be reported to full Council as part of the wider reporting of the Preferred Strategy on the 22/4/10. The Forward Planning Section and JACOBS are already working with key agencies such as the Environment Agency and the Countryside Council for Wales in order to address some of the issues raised (eg air quality). These discussions include giving due consideration to potential mitigation measures that can be built into the emerging LDP policy framework. Where it is deemed appropriate, more detailed assessments of potential impacts on international

nature conservation sites will be undertaken as the plan making process proceeds.

Recommendation

That this report be noted and that Panel Members be kept updated on the progress of the HRA work as part of the wider reporting of LDP.

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Initial Report

Introduction

To assess the overall sustainability of the LDP, a combined SA/SEA is being undertaken alongside the development of the Plan itself. The aim of the process is to provide a high level of protection for the environment and to integrate environmental, social and economic considerations into the Plan. JACOBS have been appointed to undertake the SA/SEA and Panel Members will have already considered the SA/SEA Scoping Report that established the evidence baseline and sustainability framework.

Overview of the SA-SEA Initial Report Contents

The Report undertakes to assess and inform the plan making process by reviewing the objectives, spatial options and the strategic policies contained within the LDP Preferred Strategy. As part of an iterative approach to plan making, the Initial SA/SEA Report assists the Authority by highlighting any potential incompatibilities that may exist between the Preferred Strategy's objectives, options and policies when measured against the sustainability objectives and framework. The Report also contains recommendations on some mitigation measures that can be built into the emerging LDP policy framework as a means to offset these potential incompatibilities. The Report was made available for public consultation as part of the wider consultation on the Authority's pre deposit proposals documents from the 4 November 2009 to the 4 January 2010.

Summary of main issues to arise from consultation responses received

41 representations were received in relation to the Report. 12 of these responses were in relation to specific candidate sites which should not be considered as part of the SA/SEA initial report. Following a meeting held on the 4 March 2010 between the Authority, the Countryside Council for Wales and JACOBS, consensus was reached with regards the ongoing and more detailed assessment work required in terms of growth alternatives and options generation. Responses received also highlighted the importance of cross border collaboration and the significant role that the SA/SEA process will have in underpinning the Plan.

Next Steps

JACOBS' recommendations in respect the 41 representations will be reported to full Council as part of the wider reporting of the Preferred Strategy on the 22/4/10. The Forward Planning Section and JACOBS are already working with key agencies such as the Environment Agency and the Countryside Council for Wales in order to address some of the issues raised. The SA/SEA process will now proceed in tandem with the Plan making process and a Draft Environmental Report (essentially the full SA/SEA Report) will be published accordingly. In order to view how the SA/SEA Initial Report is being used iteratively to inform the LDP, Members should refer to the reporting of the Preferred Strategy on the 22/4/10. This report demonstrates how suggested

improvements to the strategic policies contained within the SA/SEA Initial Report are being iteratively built into the LDP policy framework.

Recommendation

That this report be noted and that Panel Members be kept updated on the progress of the SA/SEA as part of the wider reporting of LDP.

Agenda item 8

Report on Consultation Feedback – Topic Papers (May 2009)

Members will recall that at the meeting of the Advisory panel on the 30th April 2009 four pre-deposit topic papers were presented for approval for informal public consultation (4 weeks). These Papers represented an important step in the development of the LDP Pre-Deposit Preferred Strategy, and performed an important role in informing the plan making process. Whilst they were not exhaustive in content, the Papers were designed to provide details on key topic areas of the LDP whilst also facilitating informal discussion and stakeholder input. The Papers will continue to change and evolve in accordance with the developing evidence base and the ongoing stakeholder consultation being undertaken in accordance with the Community Involvement Scheme. These papers were as follows:

- Issues, vision and strategic objectives
- Population and Housing
- Site Assessment Methodology
- Strategic Spatial Options and Settlement Hierarchy

The informal consultation period in respect of these papers commenced in May 2009 with the final date for receipt of comments was the 15 June 2009. Some 53 submissions were returned from a range of groups and individuals across all four papers details of which are can be seen in the attached report. **–(for online see Topic Papers pages of LDP website)**

The submissions received have been utilised to inform the preparation of the preferred strategy and it is consequently proposed to utilise the consultation responses received to the Preferred Strategy and those to the topic papers to further inform their development. In this regard and in accordance with the iterative nature of the plan making process, revised Topic Papers will be prepared.

It should be noted that this future work will be informed by the Initial SA/SEA report and will evaluate how the emerging LDP policy framework can assist in mitigating and offsetting any incompatibilities highlighted between the LDP Strategic Objectives and the SA/SEA Sustainability Objectives.

Recommendations

1. The responses received as set out within the attached report of consultation be noted and that they be utilised where appropriate to inform revisions to the Topic Papers.
2. That the Topic Papers be amended where necessary and appropriate to reflect the Preferred Strategy and any prospective changes to its content.
3. That the amended Topic Papers be published as part of the LDP evidence base as and when appropriate.

Report on the Topic/Background Papers

Background

Members will recall that at the last meeting of the Advisory Panel on the 30th April 2009, four papers were presented for consideration. A further five topic/background papers have now been developed as a means to set the context for the formulation of the LDP. The preparation of background and Topic Papers represents an important part of the LDP's evidence base and sets the context for future work. Whilst they are not exhaustive in content, the Papers are designed to provide details on key topic areas of the LDP whilst also facilitating informal discussion and stakeholder input. The Papers will continue to change and evolve, and will inform and reflect the developing evidence base and ongoing stakeholder consultation being undertaken.

The 5 new papers are entitled:

- Transportation
- Sustainable Development and Climate Change
- Minerals
- Waste
- Unitary Development Plan Strategic Review

Executive Summaries of the above are duly attached for Members consideration. Officers will undertake to provide a brief verbal report thereon at the Panel Meeting.

Copies of the full Papers are available for inspection upon request.

The nature of the plan making process requires the ongoing development of evidence and information to support of the LDP. In this regard (and further to the above papers) additional background and topic based documents will be written as and when required. In view of the ongoing requirement to produce such documents on a periodic basis, dispensation is sought for officers to produce (and consult upon) these papers (and other pieces of evidence) as and when appropriate.

Recommendations

- (1) That the Executive Summaries be received and accepted
- (2) That the Topic/Background Papers (in full format) be made available as part of the Council's evidence base.
- (3) That officers be given dispensation to prepare and publish future evidence, background documents and topic papers in relation to the LDP.

Executive Summary - Transport Topic Paper

Introduction

In setting the context for, and providing background to inform, the role of transportation in the LDP this paper provides details of the national, regional and local overview together with those schemes or projects which are proposed within the area. It also seeks to contextualise the role of the land use planning as part of an integrated sustainable transport strategy with linkages to other plans and strategies including the Regional Transport Plan and the Wales Spatial Plan.

Local Transport Network

The principal highway network within the plan area includes the A48 trunk road leading to the M4 motorway (and its connections through south east Wales and beyond) together with a network of trunk and county roads. The road network consists of the following:

Carmarthenshire Road Length (Km)	
M4	5
Class A (Trunk)	147
Class A (County)	247
Class B and C	1,579
Minor Surfaced	1,496
Total	3,474

Source: Regional Transport Plan

In relation to passenger rail services the County is served by the West Wales and Heart of Wales lines. The West Wales line has branches from Pembrokeshire which converge at Whitland and extend via Carmarthen and Llanelli to Swansea where they connect to the wider rail network. The Heart of Wales line extends from Swansea to Shrewsbury and includes stops at Llanelli, Ammanford, Llandeilo, and Llandovery. This line, in addition to catering for local transport needs, provides a regional link from the North of England and the Midlands to South West Wales.

The area is generally well served by public transport though the bus network albeit with the level and frequency of service subject to variation dependent upon location and destination.

In building upon the established network of facilities and services the paper identifies those transport projects for Carmarthenshire as derived from:

- Regional Transport Plan - South West Wales Integrated Transport Consortium (SWWITCH)
- Carmarthenshire Priorities for Transport 2009 – 2014
- Trunk Road Forward Programme 2002 (update 2004)

Issues

The LDP affords an opportunity to ensure that the relationship between land use planning and transportation is further strengthened and to reflect the respective challenges raised by issues such as climate change.

National policies and targets in terms of reducing greenhouse gases are influential in seeking reductions in fossil fuel use and emphasises the need to develop upon the sustainability objectives. These and the need to promote and take account of alternative and more sustainable modes of transport will be central components in the formulation of transportation policies within the LDP. Their importance is recognised in the preferred strategy through from the Issues and Drivers to the strategic policies with the selection of a Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy a reflection of the continued importance attached to them.

Given the rural character of large parts of the County there is a recognition that the motor car will continue to play an important role. However the LDP as a key contributor to an integrated sustainable transport strategy can contribute to making progress towards reconciling the conflict between reducing the need to travel and the dangers of exclusion and isolation within rural areas.

Next Steps - Taking Forward Transport and the LDP

The contribution of transport may be viewed at all levels across the plan from its role in delivering the strategic objectives and policies through to the selection of an individual sites or influencing the level of development a given area can accommodate.

Whilst, as stated, the LDP occupies an important role as a component of integrated transport strategy, it is not in itself the sole solution to key issues such as reducing emissions; rather it can contribute through its policies and proposals towards such a reduction.

The relationship between land use and transport is longstanding one with the allocation of land and areas of protection having to be considered carefully if they are to contribute towards transport objectives including reducing pollution and emissions. In this regard accessibility represents an important consideration in the implementation of the LDP preferred strategy and in the identification of those areas suitable for growth be they in broad settlement terms or in the selection of individual sites. The selection of accessible areas for development including considering the availability of alternative modes of transport, represents a central consideration in their acceptability or otherwise.

Executive Summary – Sustainable Development and Climate Change Topic Paper

The prevalence of Sustainable Development (SD) as a central organising principle means that it is a key underpinning principle of the LDP. The LDP will make a contribution towards addressing socio-economic issues such as obesity, energy/food security and access to housing, and will also assist in ensuring that communities are resilient and adaptable to the causes and effects of climate change.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) clarifies the tools available within the planning system to progress SD. The Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) offers a SD framework which is underpinned by 5 themes. Specific guidance also offers advice on sustainable building standards, reducing carbon emissions, the energy hierarchy, planning conditions and obligations and setting higher local requirements for sustainability on certain sites.

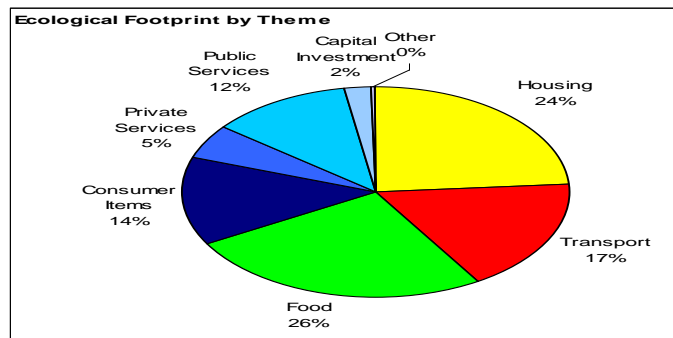
The UDP is the current land use plan for the County and is based on a sustainable spatial strategy that promotes SD and seeks to tackle climate change issues. A total departure from the UDP Spatial Strategy is unjustified in the preparation of the LDP because the UDP provides an important evidence baseline for the consideration of how SD and climate change can be addressed within the LDP.

According to the UKCP09 scientific reports, warming of the global climate system is unequivocal, with global average temperatures having risen by nearly 0.8 °C since the late 19th century, and rising at about 0.2 °C/decade over the past 25 years. The UKCP09 scientific reports also state that it is very likely* that man-made greenhouse gas emissions caused most of the observed temperature rise since the mid 20th century (*very likely = >90% probability, likely = >66% probability).

An ecological footprint can be defined as a measurement of sustainability. The ecological footprint is essentially an accounting system that recognises the impact of every good and service purchased by taking into account all of the energy and resources used to make the product. The added value of measurement is the emphasis placed on exploring where reductions can be made through policies which influence consumption patterns and behaviour.

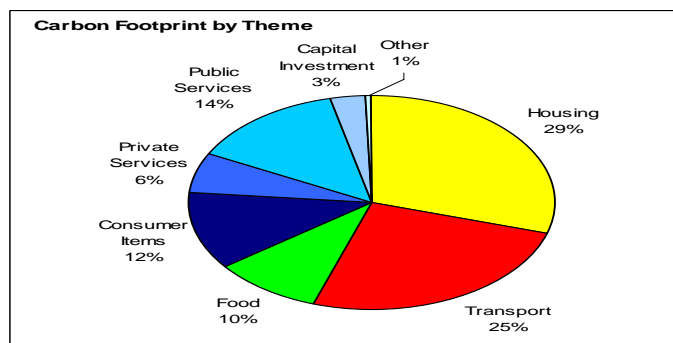
The chart overleaf depicts the ecological footprint of Carmarthenshire by theme. It can be clearly noted that Housing (24%), Food (26%) and Transport 17% take up a sizable proportion of the overall figure. These are all issues that a land use plan can make a contribution towards addressing. The LDP Preferred Strategy sets the context for making a contribution towards reducing the ecological footprint of the County. The Strategy seeks to reduce the need to travel and is underpinned by a settlement framework that reflects the County's rural and urban characteristics, needs and issues.

Ecological footprint in global hectares per capita by theme for Carmarthenshire (2004):



The below chart depicts the carbon footprint of Carmarthenshire by theme. It can be clearly noted that Housing (29%) and Transport (25%) take up a sizable proportion of the overall figure. These are issues that a land use plan can make a contribution towards addressing. The LDP Preferred Strategy does stress the importance of sustainable energy use and high building standards (including the promotion of BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes).

Carbon footprint in tonnes of CO₂ per capita by theme for Carmarthenshire (2004):



The full Topic Paper captures some headline 2040 climate change effects/future issues for Wales. It reviews issues such as increasing temperatures, health issues, fuel poverty and water supply.

Planning for Water Management will include interpreting flooding data and the Strategic Flood Consequence Assessment currently being commissioned. The LDP will need to appraise water supply and quality, promote sustainable urban drainage systems and allocate land in areas that are resilient to flooding & coastal erosion. The importance of this topic to SD and climate change is clear; particularly with regards to reducing the future vulnerability of communities. It is also key to ensuring a sustainable supply of quality water into the future.

Planning for Food Security and encouraging local production includes appraising allotment demand and supply issues and also protecting land of high agricultural value. The importance of this topic to SD and climate change is clear; particularly with regards to irrigation issues, globalisation, resource use, migration, conflict and health. The LDP will need to provide a policy framework that encourages and supports local production and consumption.

Planning for Energy Security, reducing Waste and increasing GVA will include interpreting the evidence gathered within the Energy, Utilities and Infrastructure research and the Waste Topic Paper. The importance of this topic to SD and climate change is clear, particularly with regards to Energy Security issues (including increasing & volatile prices and globalisation), IT, and potential Tourism growth. The LDP will need to provide a policy framework that provides favourable conditions for green innovation and sustainable resource use/production whilst reducing waste.

Planning for Sustainable Buildings will include promoting the use of BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes. The LDP will need to provide a policy framework that provides favourable conditions for the delivery of sustainable buildings, however there will need to consider and test the deliverability of these objectives within market conditions (particularly with regards to the viability of affordable housing).

Planning for Transport will include contributing towards reducing the km driven by private motor car and promoting sustainable & accessible transport modes. The LDP Preferred Strategy provides a framework for nurturing good relationships between public transport, places of work, homes and leisure destinations. This Topic is of particular importance to the LDP because Carmarthenshire is the 4th highest County in Wales in terms of km driven by private motor car. The County is characterised by large rural areas with the majority of services, homes and employment situated in the South East. As well as reducing emissions and promoting good air quality, the LDP will seek to ensure equality of access for all given the envisaged increase in fuel costs. The LDP will also promote walking, cycling etc. The Transportation Topic Paper will inform and support the deposit LDP.

Planning for the Natural Environment will include protecting and enhancing habitats and species as well as the landscape. The LDP will need to provide a policy framework that provides favourable conditions for habitats and species and as such the Habitats Regulations Assessment will provide a useful input into these aims.

Planning for Wellbeing will include acknowledging the issues that will emerge from increasingly complex and diverse trends and demographics; including population, poverty levels (including access to transport, fuel, services and affordable homes) and health. The LDP will also need to acknowledge the diversity that exists within the County in terms of culture, heritage and recreation and will need to provide a policy framework that provides favourable conditions for promoting equality within the built and natural environment.

Executive Summary – Minerals Topic Paper

Land use planning policy guidance for mineral extraction and related development in Wales is set out in Minerals Planning Policy Wales (MPPW, 2000) and supplemented by Minerals Technical Advice Notes (MTANs). There are currently two Technical Advice Notes in respect of minerals - MTAN 1: Aggregates (2004) and MTAN 2: Coal (2009).

In most cases, mineral planning is an appropriate subject for collaboration between local authorities. In terms of aggregates, the regional consideration of demand and supply of aggregates is carried out by the two Regional Aggregates Working Parties (RAWPs) for North and South Wales. The role of the RAWPs is to examine issues of aggregates provision and to draw up a Regional Technical Statement (RTS) setting out the strategy for the provision of the aggregates in the South Wales region for the period until 2021. Where it is considered necessary the Minerals Planning Authorities (MPAs) in South Wales will then be expected to include allocations for future aggregates provision in their area (landbanks), as part of the LDP process. Evidence will therefore need to be presented at the Deposit Plan Stage as to how the South Wales RTS has informed the LDP.

The planning policies in respect of mineral extraction in Carmarthenshire are set out in the Carmarthenshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The UDP was adopted in 2006, and the policies and proposals contained within this recent Plan will contribute towards providing a useful base from which to develop the issues, policies and proposals as part of the preparatory work for the Deposit LDP.

MPPW sets out 5 key principles that authorities should adhere to when formulating development plan policies. The key principles are to:

- **provide mineral resources to meet society's needs and to safeguard resources from sterilisation;**
- **protect areas of importance to natural or built heritage;**
- **limit the environmental impact of mineral extraction;**
- **achieve high standard restoration and beneficial after-use;**
- **encourage efficient and appropriate use of minerals and the re-use and recycling of suitable materials.**

MPAs should ensure that appropriate contributions are made in LDPs to meet local, regional and national needs for minerals. For aggregates,

the RTS determines the contribution each authority should make towards meeting regional needs. In addition, it is important that access to mineral deposits that might be needed in the future is safeguarded. National planning guidance requires that areas to be safeguarded should be identified on LDP proposals maps, and policies should protect potential mineral resources from other types of permanent development which would either sterilise them or hinder extraction. The importance of safeguarding aggregate mineral resources is reinforced within the RTS for South Wales and recommendations are made to individual authorities in this respect. Coal is also an important mineral resource that will require safeguarding in the LDP.

The Welsh Assembly Government has commissioned the British Geological Survey to undertake a study into minerals safeguarding. The finalised project is due to be published in June 2010, after which local authorities will have to utilise the data as part of preparatory work for their LDPs. A draft version of the data in respect of Carmarthenshire has already been obtained from the BGS and has been incorporated in Appendix 1 of the Minerals Topic Paper.

LDPs must show evidence that they have been informed by an assessment of the County's landbank of aggregates (the sum of all permitted mineral reserves) and should ensure that an adequate landbank is maintained throughout the Plan period. Appendix 2 of the Topic Paper provides evidence that Carmarthenshire has an adequate landbank for the required period. This means that no new mineral allocations will need to be made in the LDP. However, all existing mineral allocations for working (both hard rock and sand & gravel) will need to be shown on the LDP proposals map.

Issues to be addressed during preparation of the Deposit LDP

In addition to safeguarding mineral resources and showing evidence of an adequate landbank of reserves, the Deposit LDP will need to provide evidence in support of the following:

- ***A consideration of dormant/inactive sites and the likelihood of these sites becoming active and operational again:*** Deleting reserves from these sites would have a knock-on effect on the County's landbank of reserves. MPAs are asked to pursue serving Prohibition Orders on those sites where working is unlikely to be resumed. If the remaining landbank of reserves falls below the threshold set out in MTAN 2, then 'replacement' permissions in more suitable locations would need to be found.
- ***Safeguarding wharves:*** The RTS recommends that existing and potential wharves should be identified for protection in the LDP to safeguard marine sand and gravel supply route into the area.

- ***Measures are in place that ensure the environmental impact of mineral extraction is minimised:*** LDPs should set out clearly the criteria that will be applied to minerals proposals to ensure that they do not have an unacceptably adverse impact on the environment and the amenity of nearby residents. Buffer zones, in particular, are important features that provide areas of protection around permitted and proposed mineral workings. An assessment of buffer zones will be undertaken as part of the preparatory work for the Deposit Plan, as will areas around settlements where coal extraction would not be acceptable.
- ***Mineral resources potential for secondary or recycled aggregates:*** The LDP will need to show evidence that it has been sufficiently supportive of the use of recycled and secondary aggregates.
- ***Proposals for restoration:*** **The LDP should provide guidance on preferred after-uses and reclamation standards and should also provide guidance on the after-uses that are likely to be acceptable for existing sites that may be reclaimed during the Plan period.**
- ***Coal Mining Legacy:*** The LDP will have to ensure that adequate consideration has been made to land instability and subsidence arising from past coal related activity.
- ***Review of UDP policies and formulation of LDP policies:*** The LDP will need to contain policies that will reinforce the Plan's role in providing a framework within which sound and consistent decisions on mineral development proposals can be taken. A review of existing UDP policies will be undertaken as part of the preparatory process of formulating new policies for the Deposit LDP.

Executive Summary – Waste Topic Paper

This Topic Paper sets out current legislation/guidance (European, national, & regional) in respect of the management of wastes and explores how this influences Carmarthenshire at the local level in respect of preparation the emerging Local Development Plan (LDP).

As a Member of the European Union (EU), the UK has an obligation to implement the provisions of European Directives within its own legislative framework. There are a number of directives relevant to waste planning, the most important of these being the *Waste Framework Directive*, which places a requirement on member states to establish an adequate network of waste facilities, and the *Landfill Directive* which has banned certain types of waste from being landfilled.

At the national level, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) consulted on a new draft Wales Waste Strategy in 2009. Due to be published later in 2010, the Strategy reinforces the WAG's commitment to meeting the targets set out in the EU Directives. National Planning Guidance in respect of Waste is set out in 'Planning Policy Wales' (March 2002) and supplemented by 'Technical Advice Note (TAN) 21: Waste' (November 2001).

TAN 21 sets out the requirement for a regional waste planning process to assist local authorities in Wales to plan for future waste management facilities and to assist in preparing development plans. Regional Waste Plans (RWPs) have subsequently been produced which apportion the required capacity for each waste management/resource facility type to each local authority area with the purpose that provision is made for meeting those capacity requirements in Development Plans. The RWP also provided a guide to the locational requirements of each facility type to assist LPA's with site selection.

At the local level, the planning policies in respect of waste management in Carmarthenshire are set out in the Carmarthenshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The UDP was adopted in 2006, and the policies and proposals contained within this recent Plan will contribute towards providing a useful base from which to develop the issues, policies and proposals as part of the preparatory work for the Deposit LDP.

In its capacity as municipal waste authority, Carmarthenshire County Council has responsibility for managing waste from householders and businesses within the County, and in meeting its obligations to achieve statutory targets. In 2008/09, Carmarthenshire made the highest amount of improvement in its recycling tonnages compared to the previous year of all Welsh authorities. In addition, in terms of diverting biodegradable municipal waste (BMW) away from landfill, Carmarthenshire is already achieving targets well below the

maximum permitted quota set out in the Landfill Allowance Scheme for Carmarthenshire.

However, whilst the Authority is making progress in meeting recycling targets – in 2008/09 33.86% of its municipal solid waste (MSW) was re-used or recycled – more will have to be achieved in the future to accord with revised targets set out in the new draft Waste Strategy for Wales – minimum level of 70% of MSW to be re-used or recycled by 2025.

In its role as waste planning authority, the County Council is required to provide a planning framework which enables adequate and sufficient land provision to be made to facilitate the establishment of the required network of waste facilities. The RWP for South West Wales estimates that the total land area required for new waste facilities in Carmarthenshire by 2013 is 13.2 hectares. Land suitable for accommodating this new capacity will have to be identified within the LDP.

Issues to be addressed during preparation of the Deposit LDP

Identification of Sites

Whilst the Authority currently has an adequate supply of employment land – of the type that could accommodate many types of new waste facilities – the suitability of this land will need to be assessed before it can be identified within the LDP as appropriate for a waste use. In addition, the Authority will also have to identify locations that would be suitable for waste operations that could not be accommodated on employment land – notably, landfill sites and open-air composting facilities. In terms of landfill sites, it is hoped that Nantycaws will be sufficient to accept the required quantities of waste over the Plan period (up to 2021), including the possibility of serving the role of a regional facility, and therefore negating the need to identify other locations within the County. However, it is likely that evidence will need to be provided at the Deposit LDP stage to show that Nantycaws can feasibly provide the required capacity.

Formulation of LDP Policies

Through its role in providing land for waste management facilities, the LDP will contain policies that will both protect land currently used for waste management purposes and provide new opportunities through the identification of land in appropriate locations.

The existing Carmarthenshire UDP Waste Policies will be reviewed as part of the preparatory work for the Deposit LDP. Progress on the development of LDP policies will form either an addendum to this Paper or will be produced as part of a supplementary paper, along with the assessment of appropriate sites for new waste management facilities highlighted above.

Inter-Authority Working

Due to the importance of waste management as a regional issue, it is necessary for the LDP to account for this fact. An essential component of this

process is the need to provide evidence of joint-working with neighbouring local planning authorities (and municipal waste authorities).

Anaerobic Digestion (AD) is now firmly favoured by the WAG as a method of treatment for food waste. Funding is available for a potential of five AD Plants in Wales, through WAG's Food Waste Treatment Programme. Carmarthenshire has been part of a procurement hub comprising several local authorities looking into AD, and Nantycaws has been suggested as a potential location for such a facility.

Whilst Carmarthenshire has made considerable progress in terms of increasing its re-use and recycling rates in respect of MSW, solutions will still need to be found for *residual waste* (i.e. waste remaining after reuse and recycling) as the targets for 2012/13 set out in the Waste Strategy for Wales are fast approaching. Options include inter-authority working, and discussions are currently underway to find a regional solution for the management of residual waste.

Executive Summary – UDP Strategic Review Topic Paper

Adopted in July 2006, the Carmarthenshire Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the current land use plan for the County and will remain the statutory development plan until superseded by the LDP.

The UDP was founded on the principles of sustainability and sought to reduce dependence on the motor car, reflect the area's diversity and promote sustainable socially inclusive communities. In seeking to underpin these key sustainability drivers, the UDP set out a hierarchical settlement strategy within its Sustainable Strategic Settlement Framework (SSSF) for the Plan area. This approach centres on a sustainable model wherein settlements are categorised by virtue of their respective level of provision in terms of the services and facilities accessible to their own residents and surrounding communities.

The objective of this paper is to undertake a strategic assessment of the UDP. It is not designed to concentrate on the finer details of UDP policies and proposals, but is intended to function as a high level critique of the UDP's strategic relevance within a Spatial Planning context.

The Paper concludes that the UDP successfully provides a strategic context for the future growth and development of the plan area by seeking to manage development in a sustainable manner.

The below points clarify how the UDP continues to successfully address the key sustainability issues facing the County:

- **Reducing the need to travel** – The SSSF focuses upon reducing the need to travel by motor car and as such it remains a valid and consistent sustainable spatial strategy, particularly given the fact that the County is the fourth highest in Wales in terms of Km driven by private motor car.
- **Sustainable communities and self sufficient economies** – The SSSF acknowledges the fact that Carmarthenshire is a County of contrasts which is characterised by a mix of rural and urban settlements. The UDP distributes development in a manner which is consistent with the spatial hierarchy by seeking to ensure the viability of rural areas along with the regional competitiveness of urban areas.
- **Climate change and Flood risk** – The SSSF seeks to tackle the issue of climate change by directing development to deliverable and sustainable locations that are accessible via a range of transport modes, including public transport, walking and cycling. Given the size of the County in terms of land mass and the spread of population and distribution of facilities, the SSSF continues to represent a relevant and deliverable framework for the distribution of development throughout the County.

In terms of the spatial distribution of development since 2006, the UDP has been successful in directing development in accordance with its Settlement Framework. The Urban Growth Areas of Llanelli, Carmarthen and Ammanford/Cross Hands have accommodated 62.75% of housing development, whilst the lower tiers have achieved 37.25%. This means that the UDP is reflecting the developmental needs of both rural and urban areas of the County in accordance with the spatial distribution of services, population and transport links.

The residential allocations (Policy H1) are proving to be robust and deliverable. This is demonstrated by the fact that 3079 units were completed to 1/4/08 (34% of the updated H1 allocations). It should also be noted that the above completion figures only refer to allocated H1 sites, they do not relate to Planning Development Brief sites, nor any windfall sites. The SSSF is therefore securing sustainability benefits by supporting rural and urban communities and is also proving to be market aware, realistic and deliverable. These factors are critical to the implementation of a deliverable and achievable spatial strategy.

The UDP continues to be largely up to date in terms of its regard to national policies and guidance. This includes Planning Policy Wales and Minerals Planning Policy Wales.

The UDP also remains highly relevant within the context of the Wales Spatial Plan (WSP). This can be demonstrated by the fact that the UDP Growth Areas of Llanelli, Ammanford-Cross Hands and Carmarthen are all identified as key settlements/strategic hubs of a regional importance within the WSP.

The UDP SSSF continues to make a significant contribution towards addressing the 5 strategic themes/priorities that run through the 2008 WSP; thus:

(1) Building sustainable communities within the region requires the tackling of deprivation and poverty. The UDP continues to contribute in terms of co-ordinating regeneration initiatives; delivering a suitable range and mix of housing and promoting access to sound health services.

(2) The spatial dimension of the economy: Promoting a sustainable economy within the region and addressing economic inactivity are key objectives of the WSP. The UDP continues to contribute by releasing a suitable supply of employment land at the correct locations. This allows for the promotion of access to skills development and infrastructure provision (including ICT).

(3) Valuing the region's environment: The UDP continues to contribute via the protection, regeneration and enhancement of the County's landscape, biodiversity, marine and historic environment.

(4) Achieving sustainable accessibility: The UDP continues to contribute by improving access to employment, leisure and public services. The UDP plays a part in allowing the County's rural & urban businesses to be competitive on a local, regional and national basis.

(5) Respecting distinctiveness within the region and engendering a sense of place. The UDP continues to contribute by developing and enhancing distinctive communities via its emphasis on good design and protecting the social fabric of communities.

In spite of its strengths and contemporary relevance, the UDP does face challenges in terms of managing and addressing the issue of development density. This has been perpetuated by fluctuating market conditions and the considerable diversity that exists within the County's settlements. The UDP also lacks a phasing policy which could mitigate adverse impacts in infrastructural and social terms.

Various national planning policy directives have emerged since the adoption of the UDP. These include guidance on how land use plans should deliver low carbon development via the promotion of BREEAM standards for non residential development and the Code for Sustainable Homes. The UDP will therefore need updating to reflect these emerging directives.

The publication of new guidance on affordable housing (in terms of thresholds and viability) mean that the UDP will need reviewing. The UDP was not subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulations Assessment and there is also a need to update the evidence base (particularly with regards to revised population and household projections for the County).

By way of conclusion, the Paper notes that the strategic direction of travel set out within the UDP remains largely relevant, robust and sound. The UDP provides the means to shape development and mediate conflicting demands in a manner which attains sustainability benefits by promoting self sufficient communities and reducing the need to travel. The UDP is continuing to manage the developmental wants and needs of the County against a backdrop of increasingly volatile market conditions. It also continues to offer a degree of certainty within a County of socio-economic & geographical contrast so that the distinctive needs of the rural and urban areas of the County are accommodated.

In spite of the fact that the UDP is a relevant and up to date land use plan, there are a series of challenges that will need to be addressed particularly if elements are to form part of the preparation and formulation of the LDP. These are discussed within the full Topic Paper and include a review of the various national planning policy directives that have emerged since the adoption of the UDP in 2006.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – TECHNICAL OFFICER GROUP

Introduction

The establishment of a Technical Officer Group (TOG) provides an opportunity for the Authority to institute a means of overseeing and informing the development of the LDP and its Sustainability Appraisal /Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The establishment of such a group (particularly from a HRA and SA/SEA) is actively encouraged within the LDP Manual. The TOG will provide expert advice and information in order to support the continued formulation of a deliverable and sustainable land use plan for the County. The TOG will not compromise the key strategic role of the Key Stakeholder Forum and is not a decision making body within the plan making process. An indicative TOG membership list, consisting of Local Authority officers along with representatives from external agencies, is provided within the Terms of Reference. It should be noted that this membership list is not exhaustive and there is potential for contributions from other persons/agencies where their specialist input would be beneficial to the TOG.

Recommendation

That the establishment of the Technical Officer Group, along with the terms of reference (as outlined below) be approved.

Terms of Reference

Primary Purpose

The LDP manual states that formulating a Technical Officer Group (TOG) can provide the LPA with a means of overseeing and informing the development of the SA /SEA and the LDP. The TOG will provide advice and information in order to inform the development of a deliverable and sustainable land use plan for the County.

Objectives

The TOG will:-

- Provide feedback on emerging/key policy (eg climate change) and investment programmes (eg AMP)
- Refine and confirm LDP issues by evolving strategic themes and enhancing their local distinctiveness.
- Refine and confirm SA Objectives and evidence baseline
- Refine and confirm LDP objectives, strategy and policies
- Contribute to the ongoing gathering of evidence and where necessary to the preparation of background papers.
- Review and confirm site assessment methodology (SAM)

- Assess candidate sites in accordance with the SAM for potential consideration in terms of the LDP

An agenda will be circulated prior to the meeting being convened.

Mandate

The role of the TOG will be advisory in nature without decision making powers and as such it will only operate successfully if the aim of producing a coherent and balanced Plan is maintained, and compromise and consensus building are achieved. Therefore representatives will need to:

- Be able and willing to contribute to discussions and make recommendations on behalf of their department/organisation at the meetings
- Be committed to working, assisting and informing the plan making process.
- Accommodate differing views, seeking consensus and accepting compromise to reach agreement on the matters placed before them
- Be open minded and consider the whole picture, not seeking to promote sectional interests.
- Support and encourage the implementation of the Plan.

Membership

The following have been identified as prospective members of the group representing a range of interests from both internal departments and external partners. It should be noted that not all group members will be required to attend all meetings if the matters being discussed are not pertinent to their interests.

- Landscape/ Ecology – (CARMS CC)
- Sustainability/Energy – (CARMS CC)
- Leisure Services – (CARMS CC)
- Highways – (CARMS CC)
- Community Planning – (CARMS CC)
- Development Control – (CARMS CC)
- Economic Development/Tourism (CARMS CC)
- Countryside Council for Wales
- Environment Agency
- Dwr Cymru
- WAG – DE&T
- JACOBS – SA/HRA consultants
- Trunk Roads Agency
- Dyfed Archaeological Trust

Substitutes

It is accepted that some Officers may not be able to make every meeting. A representative may be sent in place of the nominated member subject to the following:

- The substitute is fully aware of the outcomes of previous meetings and is in a position to actively participate.
- The substitute complies with the requirements of the Membership mandate.

Where no suitable substitute is possible, any input the member wishes to make on the information before the TOG should be submitted no later than 3 days before the date of any meeting, in order for the information to be reviewed and presented to the TOG as appropriate.

Endorsement

The establishment of the Group and its terms of reference will be formally endorsed by the LDP Advisory Panel. The Group will not compromise the key strategic role of the Key Stakeholder Forum.

Quorum

Due to the fact that the Group is not a formal decision making body, it is not necessary to have a quorum limit.

Frequency

The Group will meet as and when required. This may result in periods where meetings are not necessary, and periods where a number of meetings are required. In order for members to have the necessary time to include meetings into their schedules, dates will be set well in advance of each meeting where possible. It may be necessary, due to unforeseen circumstances, to call a meeting at relatively short notice. Special Meetings will only be called where the need for the meeting is urgent and where the outcomes from the meeting are required to ensure compliance with LDP Delivery Agreement. Where a special meeting is called, members will be afforded the maximum amount of notice that is possible within the timeframe allowed. Ongoing liaison will take place between meetings via e mail and telephone calls and planners will meet with individual officers/agencies away from the TOG at their discretion.

Information

Information for each meeting will be sent in advance of the date of the meeting. In order to ensure that the meetings are focussed, and to achieve the outcomes necessary and within the timescale laid out by the Delivery Agreement, a schedule of outcomes for each meeting will be included in the meeting documentation.

Reporting Mechanism

Any recommendations for consultation/changes to the LDP document, or for consultations/changes on the SA/SEA or HRA, will be reported to the Advisory Panel for decision-making.