

**WELSH GOVERNMENT**

**Examination Hearing Statement**

**NEWPORT  
Local Development Plan Examination**

**Hearing Session 1:**

**Development Strategy**

**Tuesday 01<sup>st</sup> April 2014**

## **(Session 1): Development Strategy**

### **1. Plan preparation process and consultation**

**Has the Plan preparation process met the requirements of the Delivery Agreement (DA) and associated Community Involvement Scheme (CIS)? What adjustments (if any) to the DA have been necessary along the way? Where there have been departures from the DA and CIS, what steps have been taken to ensure that the required level of community engagement has nonetheless taken place?**

The original Delivery Agreement (DA) produced by Newport City Council was agreed by Welsh Government in May 2008 with an indicative adoption date of August 2012. Newport City Council submitted a formal request to extend the timetable by 14 months. The Welsh Government agreed the revised DA in April 2011, which deferred the indicative adoption date to October 2013.

Newport consulted on their Deposit Plan in May 2012. Representations highlighted significant concerns, most notably relating to the relationship and deliverability of housing and employment provision. Subsequently, the Council commissioned consultants to undertake work that explained this relationship. The Welsh Government agreed the added clarity provided by the additional work would strengthen the evidence base supporting the LDP and subsequently approved Newport's request to amend their DA to an indicative adoption date of December 2014.

**Was the decision to produce a revised deposit plan rather than focussed changes to the first deposit plan based on appropriate authoritative advice?**

On the basis of the number of submitted representations to the Deposit Plan in May 2012, Newport City Council acknowledged it was likely that a significant number of Focussed Changes would be required to progress the LDP to examination. The scale of these changes would potentially be more expansive than envisaged through the Focussed Changes stage. In light of such substantive changes, the Welsh Government advised the Council that pursuing the Plan to examination would be a high risk strategy and considered that re-depositing the Plan would result in a more robust submission informed by relevant evidence.

**Was the subsequent revised deposit and revised alternative sites consultation process made sufficiently clear to all relevant parties?**

No comment

**Has the Plan and its policies as now submitted for examination been subjected to sustainability appraisal (SA) including Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)? Are the results of the SA/SEA process properly reflected in the completed SA/SEA of the Plan? Have**

**the recommendations of the SA/SEA regarding allocations and proposals on sites within or partly within SSSIs and/or flooding constraints been carried forward into the Plan? If not, which allocations/proposals remain contentious in this respect, and on what basis are these allocations/proposals maintained?**

The principles of sustainable development are embedded within Planning Policy Wales (PPW). All aspects of sustainable development should be taken into account when determining the scale and location of development i.e. economic and social factors as well as environmental issues. The strategy should represent the outcome of such deliberations, supported by a SA/SEA, based on robust evidence.

**Has a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the Plan has been undertaken in accordance with the Habitats Directive, including consideration of any requirement for Appropriate Assessment in relation to any relevant sites?**

No comment

## **2. Development of Plan Strategy**

**Do the Plan Vision and Objectives articulate a clear, distinctive and coherent direction for the Plan? Does the Plan strategy align clearly with the key objectives of the Plan?**

The Vision of the Plan is considered to provide a clear direction of travel for Newport addressing the 'key issues' identified by the Local Authority.

The Welsh Government supports the Authority's strategy to co-locate jobs and housing on brownfield sites within the urban core. The Welsh Government is supportive of the Council's strategy to increase the labour force through job opportunities and new homes in order to deliver the growth strategy and 'key objectives' of the Plan.

The strategy clearly accords with the Plan's objectives, most notably points 1-4.

### The Relationship between Housing and Employment Allocations

	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Employment</b>
<b>West</b>	16%	15%
<b>Central</b>	27%	17%
<b>East</b>	57%	68%

*\*Amended as per Focussed Changes*

## **Settlement Boundaries**

Whilst the Welsh Government acknowledge the requirement for settlement boundaries in the larger villages, the Authority should clarify their use in the smaller villages; most notably Lower Machen, Peterstone, Nash and Penhow, as by definition the Council has identified sustainable settlements that are suitable for infill plots. Paragraph 2.2.4 of Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6 states that in such settlements, planning authorities should consider including a criteria based policy against which planning applications can be assessed, rather than identifying settlement boundaries.

The Authority should also clarify how development boundaries follow defined features when gardens have been divided by an arbitrary line. An example is the village of Peterstone. It would also be beneficial if the Authority can explain the land uses excluded from the settlement boundary to the North West of St Brides Village.

### **What evidence demonstrates that the Plan strategy is based upon a comprehensive and robust consideration of an available range of meaningful options?**

No comment

### **Do the Plan Vision, Objectives and broad strategy align with (a) national planning policy guidance, including the Wales Spatial Plan?**

The Vision, Objectives and broad strategy of the Plan are considered to conform to national planning policy. In planning for sustainable development, the majority of the principles outlined in Chapter 4 of Planning Policy Wales (Edition 6) clearly underpin Newport's Plan. Unlike many development plans, Newport does not have a settlement hierarchy. Given the compact urban nature of the Authority area and its transport links into the urban core, the Welsh Government supports the approach adopted by the Council.

In the Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) the City of Newport is located within the City Coastal Zone. The vision, objectives and strategy of the LDP align with the WSP to strengthen the strategic role of Newport as the economic gateway to Wales through regeneration and employment growth.

### **(b) the corporate objectives and plans of the local authority, including the Single Integrated Plan?**

No comment

### **Does the Plan strategy fit with Newport's sub-regional and regional context, including the strategies of neighbouring local planning authorities?**

The Welsh Government considers Newport's Strategy is appropriate within the regional context. As one of two cities within SE Wales, Newport has a key

role to play at disseminating prosperity; by promoting regeneration opportunities and employment growth from its major centre to Valley's across the region. The Authority's aspiration of marrying population growth with an increase in housing numbers and jobs is a key priority of the Welsh Government to boost the Welsh economy. The aspiration of the Authority to maximise economic opportunities and prospects for the local community is supported.

**Has there been meaningful dialogue with these neighbours concerning possible need for cooperation or a collaborative approach in relation to significant issues or policy areas covered by the Plan?**

No comment

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