

Newport LDP Mr Dafydd Williams (3029)

Hearing Session 10: Comments on Council Response to Matters Arising

The Council states in 1.3 Local designations that there are 5 development allocations that have the potential to affect a Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC).

At Hearing Session 10 the council admitted that not all the environmental areas identified in the LDP had been assessed for eligibility for SINC site designation as was the case with the environmental sites in Ringland that were discussed. As this assessment of all the environmental areas has not taken place then the council cannot be certain that any development allocations in the LDP do not have the the potential to affect a SINC site.

The Vale of Glamorgan Council and Caerphilly County Borough commissioned Soltys Brewster Ecology with a dedicated field survey team of experienced botanical surveyors with extensive experience of site assessment to identify SINC sites as part of their LDP process.

The LDP does not clearly identify SINC sites. I have looked at the proposals map and the SINC sites are not identified. A blanket identification of “environmental area” is used.

Other authorities such as Rhondda Cynon Taf have identified SINC sites on their LDP Proposals map as this deficiency was highlighted when their LDP was inspected.

The Welsh Assembly Government has published a list of habitats and species of principal importance in Wales, as required under Section 42 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The presence of these habitats and species is a material consideration and has informed the SINC criteria. The Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) lists the habitats and species of particular importance in Newport and these have informed the SINC criteria.

Para 2.24 of LDP Wales states that proposals maps should show designated areas such as SSSIs and Conservation Areas.

By not identifying the SINC sites and not including them in the LDP proposals map the LDP is deficient and fails the test of soundness as it does not take into account national policy.

Remedial Action

Assessments for SINC site status of all the environmental areas identified in the LDP should be undertaken and any meeting that criteria should be clearly identified in the proposals map.