

WELSH GOVERNMENT

Examination Hearing Statement

**Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local
Development Plan**

**Hearing Session 3: Housing – Spatial
Distribution**

8th September 2016

(Session 3): Questions

Note: This statement should be read in conjunction with Welsh Government statement to Hearing Session 1.

1. Is the strategy for the spatial distribution of new housing consistent with the principles of sustainable development?

a. Will the spatial distribution of housing growth minimise any increase in car journeys.

The only area requiring further clarification resides around the identification of clusters. With 112 clusters identified in the plan it is questioned as to how development, specifically affordable housing (as defined in TAN2) would minimise car journeys based on their dispersed nature. Clarity on access to public transport, the relationship to higher order settlements services and facilities would demonstrate if all 112 clusters would indeed minimise car usage. It may be that some of the smaller and remote clusters do not warrant being identified, removing the ability to provide a notional 2 affordable units and be treated as countryside?

b. Will the strategy sustain rural communities, and safeguard local facilities and services

This is for the Local Authority to answer based on the detailed settlement analysis undertaken when preparing the plan.

Welsh Government statement Hearing Session 1, question 8 makes further reference to issues regarding rural areas and sustain rural communities.

2. Is the spatial distribution of new housing opportunities sustainable and coherent?

a. Have settlement boundaries been drawn consistently and coherently?

Settlement boundaries need to reflect the development capacities of places contained within the plan. They should follow clear, defined and logical, physical boundaries, easily identifiable on the ground. They should also

minimise the inclusion of 'white land' where there is a potential risk of inadvertently enabling growth at levels higher than anticipated,

b. Is the approach to identifying rural clusters consistent and coherent?

There does appear to be some discrepancies between the identification of clusters. Some clusters contain 10 dwellings whereas some are significantly larger, questioning whether they merit a settlement boundary in their own right? Some also seem to perpetuate the development of ribbon development, a pattern of development the plan itself is seeking to avoid. Our statement for session 1, Q1A makes this point, reinforced by examples of various clusters cited at the end of the statement. It may be that some of the smaller clusters could be better categorised as countryside, as the introduction of 2 affordable units on an existing 10 could appear onerous. Further consideration to clusters at the lower end of the scale may prove advantageous to determine if they need to be identified at all.

Welsh Government statement Hearing Session 1, question 8c makes further reference to issues regarding clusters.

c. Are the spatial distribution of housing allocations and windfall opportunities consistent with the identified settlement hierarchy?

See Welsh Government Hearing Session 2 statement – This requires further explanation by the Local Authority.

d. Does the distribution of housing adequately relate to existing and proposed transport infrastructure?

This is for the Local Authority to answer.

e. Does the distribution of housing adequately relate to where people are likely to work, shop and participate in leisure?

This is for the Local Authority to answer.

f. In the absence of defined development boundaries in the cluster settlements can the level of growth be effectively controlled?

It is worth noting that recent delivery of housing at some clusters would appear to be for market housing rather than affordable housing; this requires

further explanation with regard to the current policy approach (TAI9) and inhibiting any further granting of market housing.

The Welsh Government would welcome further explanation regarding criteria 2 and 3. For example, what is directly adjacent to a coloured building? Is this physically attached to the building, adjacent to the curtilage? What is intrusive development into the countryside? What is a fragmented pattern of development? The creation of ribbon development would appear to be a logical conclusion in some clusters. The reasoned justification would benefit from further explanation to define more precisely such circumstances, thereby ensuring the policy goal is achieved.

g. How do the existing housing completions / sites under construction, which count towards the overall housing target, fit into the proposed strategy for the distribution of housing?

See Welsh Government Hearing Session 2 statement – This requires further explanation by the Local Authority.

3. Does the Plan incorporate robust monitoring and review mechanisms that will enable the spatial distribution of new housing to be implemented and monitored?

The Welsh Government considers that from previous LDP examinations the Monitoring Chapter will require further consideration, particularly based on Action Points arising from the hearing sessions. The Welsh Government is prepared to work with the Local Authority to give further consideration in this area.