



Gwasanaeth
Democrataidd
Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on **20 November 2015**
Council Chamber, Llangefni

Present:

Gwynedd

Coun. Dafydd Meurig
Coun. John Wyn Williams
Coun. Owain Williams
Coun. Gwen Griffith
Coun. Dyfrig Jones
Coun. John Pughe Roberts

Isle of Anglesey

Coun. Richard Dew
Coun. Victor Hughes
Coun. Ann Griffith
Coun. John Griffith
Coun. John Arwel Roberts

Officers:

Nia Davies	Manager - JPPU
Gareth Jones	Senior Planning Manager, Environmental and Public Protection (temporary) (GC)
Mike Evans	Senior Planning Officer – JPPU
Bob Thomas	Team Leader (Housing and Communities) - JPPU
Jim Woodcock	Head of Planning and Public Protection

Apologies:

Coun. Lewis Davies, Coun. John Brynmor Hughes

1) APOLOGIES

As above.

2) DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None

3) MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4) MINUTES

It was confirmed that the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 21 October 2015 were correct.

5) REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING POLICIES RELATED TO RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGY IN THE DEPOSIT PLAN

The Panel was reminded of the range of studies which were carried out prior to the development of policies relating to renewable energy technology, i.e. Renewable Energy Capacity Assessments for the two counties (October 2012 & January 2013); Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (March 2014); and an assessment to see whether it was possible to identify separation distances between houses and wind turbines or pylons. It was confirmed that comments have been received regarding aspects of Policy PS7 (Renewable Technology), Policy ADN1 (onshore wind energy) and ADN2 (Other Renewable Technology). The Panel was briefed on the main issues raised by the objectors. It was suggested that there was a basis to make some focussed changes or minor changes to the policies and the explanations for them.

Reference was also made to the publication of the revised national toolkit on assessing the capacity of areas to address the technical requirements of renewable energy infrastructure. Specific reference was made to the part of the guidance that provides a tool to check whether an area is likely to have the necessary characteristics to locate solar PV energy infrastructure in the fields. Support was requested to undertake an assessment to ensure that the evidence base is up to date, and to revise the Councils' explanation of Policy ADN2 to refer to the study. Reference was also made to the Government's expectations that constraints maps in local development plans show the conclusions of assessment work on the capacity of areas to cope with the development of renewable energy.

Points raised:

1. It was asked whether there was information available on the coverage (ha) of solar farms that have been granted permission and the amount of local employment opportunities created. It was also asked if good quality agricultural land was used.
2. It was noted that the objector refers to the installation of underground cables. It was suggested that there is a need to be aware of the possibility that the cost of

underground cables means development would not be viable in the case of proposals for individual turbines on farms.

3. It was noted that there was a suggestion to refer to 'tourist facility' – wonder whether the amenity value of housing used by visitors should be considered rather than tourist attractions, in order to avoid misunderstandings.
4. It was noted that there were references to 'significant' and 'cumulative' effects, and a definition of 'significant' and 'cumulative' was requested.
5. There was a request for a copy of the table that describes the different types of turbines.
6. There was discussion on the suitability or otherwise of promoting wind turbines in the AONB, and the possibility of identifying 'buffers' for these areas. Reference was made to the possibility that a site in the AONB could be hidden while a site outside the AONB could be prominent in the landscape. It was noted that the character of the AONB in Anglesey is different to the AONB in Gwynedd because it is a coastal AONB and the Island in general is much flatter than the AONB in Gwynedd. A large number of visitors go to Anglesey because of its magnificent coastline.
7. Reference was made to figure 5.1 in the study regarding distances from houses, in that the distance referred to in it for turbines between 100.1 and 150m differs from the distance included in the table that accompanies the policy.
8. It was noted that there was no reference to hydro projects in the officers' report.
9. It was asked whether it was possible to negotiate community benefits a result of developments.

Responses:

1. It was agreed to look for the information and send whatever is available to the Member.
2. The comment was noted.
3. It was agreed that it is important to ensure that the wording of policies is clear, and it was agreed to look at the wording to ensure clarity and internal consistency of the plan.
4. It was noted that there is no 'black or white' answer, and that it is going to depend on the circumstances which apply on a case by case basis. Regarding the impact of wind turbines, reference was made to the work done to look into the possibility of identifying specific distances between houses and wind turbines and pylons. As part of the work, several appeal decisions were examined and various descriptions were seen of what inspectors look for in order to assist them in reaching a conclusion. It was agreed to look into the possibility of including a focussed change to the glossary of the Deposit Plan.
5. It was agreed to send a copy of the relevant table to the Member.
6. The discussion regarding the characteristics of both AONBs was noted. Reference was made to Natural Resources Wales' view at the time of preparing supplementary planning guidance, i.e. that it was not appropriate to identify a standard buffer area around the AONB because consideration must be given to issues on a case by case basis. Reference was made to the study that looked at the characteristics of the different landscape character areas to identify those that, at a strategic level, are likely to be less sensitive to wind turbines of various sizes. It was agreed to look at this work to see if we could identify areas outside the AONB which may be more sensitive to wind turbines on a category by category basis.
7. It was agreed that officers would look into the discrepancy.
8. There was no reference to hydro projects because no objection was received that refers to this type of development.

9. It was noted that if a community benefit is not part of a planning obligation then it is beyond the scope of the planning system. It is a matter for discussion between prospective developers and communities.

Recommendation:

Subject to the above points, that the Panel supports the direction set out in the report in response to comments received.

6) COMMENTS REGARDING ADDRESSING THE DEMAND FOR ACCOMMODATION FOR GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS IN THE PLAN

A briefing report was given to the Panel on the current needs assessment for accommodation to meet the demand of Gypsies and Travellers in the Plan area. An explanation was given of the different types of accommodation: residential pitches, permanent touring pitches and temporary stopping pitches. The kind of provision that is available at the moment was noted. The Panel was reminded of the duties of local planning authorities to safeguard and allocate sites in local development plans. It was noted that there are currently new studies to measure the need for accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and that we have to consider the results before the completion of the Joint LDP. The requirement to identify sites in a plan if the evidence shows demand for pitches was emphasized. There are recent examples of authorities who have failed to safeguard and allocate sites where the evidence indicated otherwise, and the inspector has noted that the plans were not sound. It is not possible to adopt a plan if it is not sound.

The Joint Planning Policy Unit has been working with Housing Services to apply a comprehensive methodology to identify sites to address the demand. The methodology was demonstrated with examples of how it is used. The potential sites are also being assessed against a sustainability framework.

An overview was given of the main issues raised in the comments received during the public consultation period. It was suggested that minor changes and focussed changes to the wording of policies and explanations will ensure that the Plan is consistent with national planning policy and guidance.

Points raised:

1. It was noted that the existence of different families will have to be considered.
2. It was asked what the definitions of 'Gypsy' and 'Traveller' were.
3. It was asked what the needs of other areas were, and whether the existence of residential sites means that there will be increased demand.
4. It was asked whether members of the Gypsy and Traveller households have had an opportunity to express their opinions.
5. It was suggested that using Council owned sites is more practical and more likely to be achieved within the timeframe in mind.

Responses:

1. The comment was noted.
2. It was noted that the glossary at the end of the Plan gives a description that is consistent with the legislation.

3. It was agreed to include a matrix in the Topic Paper to show the conclusions of the surveys of accommodation need in the North Wales planning authorities' areas. It was noted that it was likely that the existence of permanent pitches is likely to lead to a demand for more pitches in the future.
4. It was noted that questionnaires have been sent to households living on permanent pitches and households living in houses. Information was received from the Education Services. It is difficult to be certain if every household is known because not everyone is willing to declare that they are a Gypsy or Traveller. The Focus Group includes representatives of the community who live in Llandygai, Bangor
5. The comment was noted.

Recommendation:

That the Panel supports the direction set out in the report in response to comments received and the method of identifying sites.

7) DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to be held at 10am on 17 December in Glyder Fawr, Caernarfon.