



Ceredigion County Council Local Development Plan 2007-2022

Adoption Statement (including SA/SEA Statement) April 2013

**Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004,
The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations
2004 (Regulation 16),
The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations
2005 (Regulation 25)**

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Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of Regulations 25 (2) of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 and Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004, the Authority is required to prepare an Adoption Statement for the Ceredigion County Council Local Development Plan.

Part 1 of the statement addresses the requirements of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 and Part 2 accords with the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004.

Part 1: LDP Statement of Adoption

Ceredigion Local Development Plan 2007 – 2022

On the 25th April 2013 Ceredigion County Council adopted a Local Development Plan (LDP) for the County of Ceredigion. The adopted LDP will form the development plan for the County of Ceredigion and will be the basis for decisions on land use planning in this area.

The LDP has replaced the existing adopted Dyfed Structure Plan (1991) and the un-adopted Unitary Development Plan (2001-2016), as the policy context for assessing development proposals within Ceredigion up to 2022.

Copies of the adopted LDP, the recommendations of the person appointed to hold the independent examination, the sustainability appraisal report (incorporating the environmental report), and a statement indicating how the environmental report etc. has been taken into account, and Habitats Regulations Assessment are available for inspection free of charge at the Council Offices, Penmorfa, Aberaeron, Mon - Thurs, 9am - 4.30pm and Fri 9am - 4.00pm and at the County Libraries and Mobile Libraries, during the opening times specified at <http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=1310> (or contact 01545 572123 for opening times). They are also available on the Council's website at <http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/ldp>.

Copies of the LDP, including its proposals map, will be available for purchase from Neuadd Cyngor Ceredigion, Penmorfa, Aberaeron Ceredigion SA46 0PA, as soon as is practicable.

The Public Examination of the Ceredigion County Council LDP began on the 6th January 2012.

A public consultation was held at the recommendation of the Inspector on changes resulting from some of the Matters Arising during Hearing Sessions 1-3 of the Ceredigion Local Development Plan Examination. The consultation period ran from Thursday 5th July 2012 to Noon (12pm) Friday 3rd August 2012. All persons on the LDP database were notified via letter of this consultation and an advert was placed in the local press. All responses to this consultation were forwarded directly to the

appointed Inspector for consideration. Additionally any queries relating to proposed matters arising changes during the Examination were dealt with directly by the Inspector, not the Council.

Consultation prior to the Examination was the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority and the process applied and summary of those consultations are set out in the following documents which are available to view at the same locations as the LDP (see above):

- Initial Consultation Report (Ceredigion County Council, 2010),
- Consultation Report (Appendices)(Ceredigion County Council, 2010) and the
- Addendum to the Initial Consultation Report (Ceredigion County Council, 2011).
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The LDP became operative on its adoption (i.e. 25th April 2013).

A person aggrieved by the LDP who desires to question its validity on the ground that it is not within the powers conferred by Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 or that any requirement of that Act or any regulation made under it has not been complied with in relation to the adoption of the LDP, may, within six weeks from 2nd May 2013 make an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the 2004 Act.

Part 2: SA/SEA Statement

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations) (Regulation 16) sets out the scope for the Environmental Statement, specifically identifying 6 matters (required matters) that should be addressed, namely:

- a) How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
- b) How the environmental report has been taken into account;
- c) How comments under statutory consultations have been taken into account;
- d) How the results of any trans boundary consultations have been taken into account;
- e) The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives;
- f) The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

The remainder of this document addresses each of the required matters in turn. It should be noted however, that whilst this document will set out the position in respect of them, and provides new information where required, it is not intended for this document to repeat information that is already contained in the published LDP or Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) documentation. Such information will be identified in this document, with associated references to the information being included in the Statement. This position reflects the advice contained in Paragraph 8.5.2 of the LDP Manual June 2006.

Since the SEA of Ceredigion's LDP has been incorporated within the wider remit of the SA, the scope of this statement has been expanded beyond that of the SEA Regulations to include wider sustainability considerations, i.e. it covers environmental, social and economic matters.

In addressing the required matters, it will be necessary to also address the changing nature of the SA/SEA through the LDP process. SA/SEA is a vitally important element in the production of the LDP. The SA/SEA developed iteratively, and in parallel, with the emerging LDP. It has a continuous role of informing the decision making on the content of the LDP, as well as providing measures against which the sustainability of the emerging plan could be considered.

2.1 How Sustainability Considerations Have Been Integrated Into the Plan (Regulation 16 (4) (a))

2.1.1 The LDP has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in order to consider the potential impact of the Plan on the environment and to improve the Plan's environmental performance. The SEA and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) processes have been undertaken in parallel and integrated within the Sustainability Appraisal Report and other SA/SEA related documents. A Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment has also been undertaken, which concluded that the LDP will not have a significant effect on European sites, alone or in-combination with any other plans or projects.

2.1.2 In order to inform and advise in the production of the SA/SEA a Sustainability Working Group (SWG) was established.

2.1.3 The objectives of the Group were to:

- a) assist in the development of the methodology for the SA/SEA;
- b) assist in identifying suitable sustainable (environmental, economic, social, good governance and use of science responsibly) and environmental problems and opportunities;
- c) assist in the identification and quantification of sustainability objectives and monitoring indicators;
- d) provide guidance on the assessment of the emerging LDP in relation to the SA/SEA objectives and indicators; and
- e) contribute as appropriate to the Appropriate Assessment process.

2.1.4 Membership of the Group was organised to try and balance contributions that reflect three of the five UK shared principles of sustainable development, namely: "living within environmental limits," "ensuring a strong healthy and just society", and "achieving a sustainable economy". The SWG were consulted at various key points within the LDP preparation process, which included workshops and electronic communication. The organisations which make up the Group are listed in Appendix 10 of the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report (April 2013).

- 2.1.5 All the relevant sustainability and environmental information relating to the LDP is contained within the existing published SA/SEA and Habitats Regulations documents, which are listed below along with their examination document reference where applicable:

SA/SEA Scoping Process

- Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report (January 2008) (DC22.1)

Pre-deposit Consultation Stage

- Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report – Non Technical Summary (March 2009) (DC22.3)
- Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (March 2009) (DC22.4)
- Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendices (March 2009) (DC22.5)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (March 2009) (DC22.6)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report – Appendices (March 2009) (DC22.7)

Deposit Consultation Stage

- Sustainability Appraisal Report – Non Technical Report (December 2010) (DC2.1)
- Sustainability Appraisal Report (December 2010) (DC2.2)
- Sustainability Appraisal Report – Appendices (December 2010) (DC2.3)
- Habitats Assessment Screening Report: Deposit Version Summary (December 2010) (DC6.1)
- Habitats Assessment Screening Report: Deposit Version (December 2010) (DC6.2)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment: Technical Background Paper Deposit Version (December 2010) (DC6.3)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment: Appendices (December 2010) (DC6.4)

Submission, Examination and Adoption Stage

- Sustainability Appraisal Report (Focused Changes Addendum) (December 2011) (DC2.4)
- Sustainability Appraisal Report (Focused Changes Addendum) – Appendices (December 2011) (DC2.5)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment: (Focused Changes Addendum) (December 2011) (DC6.6)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment (Focused Changes Addendum) – Appendices (December 2011) (DC6.7)
- Sustainability Appraisal Report (Matters Arising Changes Addendum) (July 2012) (ED012f)
- Sustainability Appraisal Report (Matters Arising Changes Addendum) - Appendices (July 2012) (ED012g)

- Habitats Regulations Assessment: (Matters Arising Changes Addendum) (July 2012) (ED012h)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment (Matters Arising Changes Addendum) – Appendices (July 2012) (ED012i)
- Final Sustainability Appraisal Report – Non technical Summary (April 2013)
- Final Sustainability Appraisal Report (April 2013)
- Final Sustainability Report Appendices (April 2013)
- Final Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (April 2013)
- Final Habitats Regulations Assessment Report Appendices (April 2013)
- Final Habitats Regulations Assessment Report – Non technical Summary (April 2013)

2.2 How the SA Report Has Been Taken Into Account (Regulation 16 (4) (b))

2.2.1 In the context of this required matter, the term “Environmental Report” is being taken to mean the report of the detailed assessment of the LDP, as it is the assessment findings in that document that lead to changes in the content of the LDP. The SA/SEA process has been fully integrated into the plan making process and the LDP has been appraised against the devised sustainability appraisal framework at key stages of its preparation. The findings of these appraisals, which have been documented in the published Sustainability Appraisal Reports and their addendums (as listed under 2.1 above), have been used to inform and influence the final content of LDP.

2.2.2 The Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (ISAR) (2009) was undertaken by the Council, with the aid of the Centre for Sustainability (C4S) to help assess the preferred options, quality assure the process and provide advice at key stages of the appraisal. The ISAR was publically consulted on alongside the LDP Preferred Strategy. The ISAR included, amongst other things, a compatibility analysis of the spatial strategy options, the vision, the strategic objectives and the strategic policies using the devised sustainability appraisal framework. Where there were any potential adverse effects predicted for sustainability or opportunities identified to improve the sustainability of the Preferred Strategy recommendations were made. These recommendations, along with consultation responses, were considered further as part of the plan preparation process and appropriate revisions were incorporated into the Deposit LDP.

2.2.3 The Council also undertook the Sustainability Appraisal of the Deposit LDP, again with the aid of C4S. The Deposit Sustainability Appraisal Report (SAR) (2010) appraised the revised strategic objectives and plan policies against the SA framework. Furthermore, the SAR contained a detailed appraisal of plan’s Candidate Sites and proposed allocations, which formed a vital part of the Council’s Candidate Site Assessment Methodology. The SAR was subject to public consultation alongside the Deposit LDP. As a result of public consultation on the Deposit LDP, the Council considered it necessary

to propose a number of Focused Changes to the Plan. The changes were subject to SA/SEA screening, with appraisal being carried out where changes were considered to be significant. The findings of the SA/SEA appraisal were published in an addendum to the SAR in December 2011 and submitted to the Examination later that year.

- 2.2.4 Throughout the course of the LDP's Examination in Public (EiP) the Council considered it necessary in response to the concerns raised by the Inspector to propose further refinements to the LDP. In July 2012 the Council proposed a series of Matters Arising Changes relating to Section 6 of the Plan (and appendices combined in Volume 1). These changes were subject to SA/SEA screening, and all were considered significant enough to warrant re-assessment under the SA/SEA's framework. The findings of the SA/SEA appraisal were published in an addendum to the SAR alongside the proposed changes consultation (July 2012). Further Matters Arising Changes to Section 6 along with other parts of the plan were proposed to the Inspector at the end of the EiP. These proposals resulted from concerns/changes sought by the Inspector during the course of the Examination. These were also subject to SA/SEA screening, with appraisal being carried out where changes were considered to be significant. The proposed changes, where endorsed by the Inspector, along with binding recommendations made by the Inspector have therefore been subject to screening and assessment. The results of this screening assessment have been incorporated within the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report (April 2013).
- 2.3 How Opinions Expressed In Response To Statutory Public Consultations Have Been Taken Into Account (Regulation 16 (4) (c))
- 2.3.1 A number of consultation exercises have been undertaken in relation to the LDP and SA/SEA process. The public, interested stakeholders and the statutory consultation bodies, namely the Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency Wales and Cadw, were consulted on each occasion.
- 2.3.2 Responses to the consultation on the LDP were broad and covered many social, environmental and economic matters. Most responses were related to the Plan's strategy, the level of growth proposed and the distribution of this growth across the county. A significant number of responses were also received to the allocation of land. Details on the LDP's Community Involvement Scheme, which includes the public consultations on the various LDP documents, can be found in the Initial Consultation Report (Ceredigion County Council, 2010), Initial Consultation Report Appendices (CCC, 2010) and the Addendum to the Initial Consultation Report (Ceredigion County Council, 2011).
- 2.3.3 In accordance with Regulation 12 (5 & 6) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004, an SA/SEA Scoping Report was published in January 2008 with a consultation period of 5 weeks.

However due to an error in the length of time of the first consultation period, the Scoping Report was re-consulted on, therefore the consultation period lasted eleven weeks in total. The consultation periods ran from January 7th to February 4th, 2008 and March 20th to April 28th, 2008. Detailed information on all the consultation responses and changes made to the scoping report was made available on the Council website as part of the published Cabinet and Council reports, June 24th and July 29th 2008, respectively. Responses highlighted the need for up-to date baseline information to inform the assessment process; this was taken into account in the creation of the LDP itself as well as in the production of subsequent SA reports. The public can view hard copies of responses upon request from the Council Offices, Penmorfa, Aberaeron.

- 2.3.4 Following consultation on the Scoping Report, representations were considered and the LA began the process of reviewing all the SA/SEA work undertaken to date. Principally, additional plans and programmes were reviewed, new baseline information was considered, key issues were updated and the SA Framework of Sustainability Objectives and indicators were amended as part of work on the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report.
- 2.3.5 In accordance with Regulation 15 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005, the SA/SEA Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report (March 2009) was then placed on public consultation alongside the LDP Preferred Strategy for 6 weeks over March and April 2009. A summary of the issues raised and how they were taken into account are presented in the Appendix 8 of the Deposit Sustainability Appraisal Report (December 2010). Representations received during the consultation were considered for inclusion in the Deposit SA Report. This process highlighted where additional considerations could be made within future assessments and suggested additional plans, policies, programs and sources of evidence that might be relevant to the assessment process.
- 2.3.6 In accordance with Regulation 13 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 and Regulation 17 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005, the SA/SEA Deposit Sustainability Appraisal Report (December 2010) was placed on public consultation alongside the Deposit LDP for an 8-week period between December 2010 and February 2011. A summary of the issues raised and how they were taken into account are presented in Appendix 1 of the Addendum to the Deposit Sustainability Appraisal Report (December 2011). Changes resulting in this process included several points of clarification, the insertion of additional plans, policies and programmes and small adjustments to certain policy and site assessments.
- 2.3.7 The Council recommended a number of Focused Changes to the LDP in response to representations received during the Deposit Consultation. These proposed changes and their accompanying SA/SEA appraisals were subject to an 8-week consultation between December 2011 and February 2012. Further proposed changes specific to the Strategy arising from the EiP and their accompanying SA/SEA appraisals were consulted on over a 4 week

period between July and August 2012. No comments were made in relation to the SA/SEA elements of either of these consultations.

2.4 How The Results Of Any Transboundary Consultations Have Been Taken Into Account (Regulation 16 (4) (d))

2.4.1 This requirement of the SEA regulations specifically relates to consultation with EU Member States. It is not therefore applicable to Ceredigion and consequently, no transboundary issues were raised through the SA/SEA process and the LDP's SA/SEA reports do not provide any information relating to it.

2.4.2 The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the LDP considered effects beyond the County Council's boundaries but concluded that the Plan would not realise any adverse impacts outside of Ceredigion. No transboundary issues were raised through this assessment either.

2.5 The Reasons For Choosing The Plan As Adopted, In Light Of The Other Reasonable Alternatives Dealt With (Regulation 16 (4) (e))

2.5.1 Alternative spatial strategies, policies and allocations were considered as part of the LDP preparation and subject to SA/SEA appraisals at various stages within the process. These three aspects are considered separately below.

2.5.2 With regard to alternative spatial strategy, the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report considered five options for growth:

- Option 1: Meet projected household growth.
- Option 2: Provide for more than projected household growth
- Option 3: Provide for less than projected household growth
- Option 4: Provide for projected growth in affordable housing sector only.
- Option 5: Provide for household growth within a range spanning the principal household growth projection to take account of household growth arising from new household formation amongst Ceredigion's existing residential population and from incoming population.

2.5.3 And nine options for distribution:

- Option 6: Across the whole county, focus growth opportunities on the 6 main towns only.
- Option 7: Across the whole county, focus growth on the 6 main towns and larger settlements only.
- Option 8: Across the whole county, focus significant % of opportunity for growth in the 6 main towns but ensure opportunity also exists elsewhere in both large and small settlements.

- Option 9: Across the whole county, allow a more dispersed provision of opportunity for growth– allowing all settlements to grow (with no specific hierarchy for growth).
- Option 10: Split the whole county into local zones each identified on the basis of a number of settlements which have a relationship with each other and set a level of growth for that zone (group) rather than for each settlement. Identify the 1 or 2 key settlements within the zone where a large proportion of the growth should be located.
- Option 11: Split the county into a number of ‘character’ areas and within those into local zones around a number of settlements which have a relationship with each other and set a level of growth for that zone (group) rather than for each settlement. Identify the 1 or 2 key settlements within the zone where a large proportion of the growth should be located.
- Option 12: Across the whole county, focus opportunity for growth in the 6 main towns but ensure opportunity also exists elsewhere by splitting the whole county into local zones each identified on the basis of a number of settlements which have a relationship with each other; and set a level of growth for zones (groups) rather than for each settlement. Identify the rural service centre settlement(s) within each zone, where most growth should be located.
- Option 13: Regardless of which general distribution pattern is chosen, apply sequential release of sites to provide for any time-phased release of land for housing if a range of growth is to be catered for.
- Option 15: Adjust Household growth provision taking account of adjacent unitary authority needs and the ability of boundary area settlements to service an appropriate level of housing

2.5.4 Each strategy was assessed against the SA framework and as a result, Options 5 and 12 were found to have the greatest potential to become the most sustainable option provided there are stringent policies in place to minimise any social or environmental impacts associated with development. This combination of options was presented at the pre-deposit consultation as the LDP’s Preferred Strategy.

2.5.5 Policy options have been progressively developed and considered from pre-deposit stage through to the completion of the LDP Examination. At the pre-deposit stage this involved the SA/SEA appraisal of Strategic policies, which then formed the basis for the detailed policies contained within the Deposit LDP. The Deposit policies were also subject to SA/SEA appraisal throughout their development and it is considered that the Plan’s policies provide an effective and sufficiently tailored framework to help facilitate Ceredigion’s sustainable development.

2.5.6 In respect of allocation site options, a five stage Candidate Site assessment methodology was used to assess potential sites. This involved an SA/SEA appraisal of all sites that passed initial stages of the Candidate Site process; the results of which are presented within Appendix 5 of the Deposit SAR (2010).

2.5.7 At the end of the process the most appropriate sites were incorporated into the Deposit LDP as allocations. These proposed allocations were also subject to additional SA/SEA appraisal which helped identify more detailed mitigation and enhancement measures where necessary and helped inform the contents of the Allocated Site Schedule, found within Volume 2A of the final LDP, for each site.

2.6 The Measures That Are To Be Taken To Monitor The Significant Sustainability Effects Of the Implementation of the Plan (Regulation 16 (4) (f))

2.6.1 LDP Regulation 37 requires the council to prepare, and subsequently submit to the Welsh Government (WG), an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) that is required to monitor specific items as well as identifying policies that are not being implemented. In addition to this, Regulation 17 of the SEA Regulations requires that the council must monitor the significant environmental effects of the plan. For the LDP this will be widened to cover significant sustainability effects.

2.6.2 Therefore, monitoring the plan and its significant environmental effects are statutory requirements. WG guidance indicates that the findings of SA monitoring should be included within the AMR alongside the findings of LDP monitoring. An integrated approach to monitoring the implementation and significant sustainability effects, as well as those uncertain effects that could result in unforeseen adverse effects, of the Plan will therefore be undertaken on an annual basis and the AMR will be published each October.

2.6.3 In respect of the SA/SEA element of the AMR, an SA monitoring framework has been developed as part of the SA/SEA process, which covers social and economic as well as environmental aspects. The SA monitoring framework sets out targets and indicators against each SA Objective and sources of information are also identified. Draft monitoring frameworks were contained within both the Initial and Deposit Sustainability Appraisal Reports. These have since been worked into a detailed framework, which can be found in Section 10 of the Final Sustainability Appraisal Report (April 2013).

Further Advice

If you require any further advice or assistance in relation to the Local Development Plan or wish to be placed on the Authority's consultation database, please contact the Planning Policy Section at Planning Policy and Research Services, Ceredigion County Council, Penmorfa, Aberaeron, Ceredigion, SA46 0PA
Or telephone on: 01545 572123 or email ldp@ceredigion.gov.uk