

CARMARTHENSHIRE
REVISED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2018-2033)
EXAMINATION

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Inspectors: Nicola Gulley MA MRTPI and Ian Stevens MCD MRTPI

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We have been appointed by the Ministers of the Welsh Government to undertake an independent examination into the soundness and legal compliance of the Carmarthenshire Revised Local Development Plan (the 'Plan'). This note provides guidance to participants on the procedural and administrative arrangements for the examination and hearings.
- 1.2 The hearings will be held virtually and will commence at **10:00am on 15 October 2024**.
- 1.3 A draft programme for the hearing sessions with a list of potential participants for each session has been published on the Examination website. This is an initial version and details are likely to change. **The final programme, a definitive list of hearing participants and a detailed list of matters, issues and questions will be published on or before 23 August 2024.**

2 PROGRAMME OFFICER

- 2.1 Corinne Sloley is the Programme Officer (PO) and is responsible for the administration of the examination. She is acting independently of the Council and works under my direction. Corinne's role includes liaising with all parties to ensure the smooth running of the examination, managing the availability of examination documents, the website and the library and acting as the main point of contact for all procedural and administrative matters. Her contact details are:

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Place and Infrastructure
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3 THE EXAMINATION WEBSITE

- 3.1 Copies of all examination documents are available to view on the internet via the Examination Library webpages.
- 3.2 The Examination Library comprises of the Submission Documents, which includes the Council's evidence base and supporting documents [CSD]; and Examination Documents [ED].
- 3.3 Hearing session webpages for each hearing detailing participants and any relevant documents will be added to the examination website in due course.
- 3.4 The Council provides internet access to the Examination website at the Council's Libraries.
- 3.5 Any hearing participant who is unable to access the internet should contact the PO so that alternative arrangements for document access can be put in place.

4. SCOPE OF THE EXAMINATION AND THE ROLE OF THE INSPECTOR

- 4.1. The Council consulted on the 2nd Deposit Draft LDP from 17 February 2023 to 14 April 2023. The Plan was not subject to any Focussed Changes therefore the Deposit Draft LDP will be the Plan I will examine.
- 4.2 Our role is to assess whether the Plan has been prepared in accordance with relevant legal and procedural requirements, and to determine whether it is sound. In accordance with Section 8 of the Welsh Government's Local Development Plan Manual Edition 3 (March 2020), we will assess the Plan's soundness in relation to the following three tests:
 - **Test 1: Does the plan fit?** (i.e. is it clear that the Local Development Plan (LDP) is consistent with other plans?)
 - **Test 2: Is the plan appropriate?** (i.e. is the plan appropriate for the area in the light of the evidence?)
 - **Test 3: Will the plan deliver?** (i.e. is it likely to be effective?)
- 4.3. The starting point for the examination is that the Council has submitted a Plan which they consider is sound and legally compliant. Those seeking changes must demonstrate why the Plan does not meet these criteria.
- 4.4. There are two ways by which substantive changes can be made to the submitted plan. These are:
 - Matters Arising Changes (MACs), proposed by the Council and recommended by the Inspector; and

- Inspector Changes (ICs), which are proposed by the Inspector and are binding on the Council.
- 4.5. We can only recommend MACs or binding ICs if they are necessary to resolve problems that would otherwise make the submitted plan unsound or not legally compliant. MACs and ICs materially alter the Plan or its policies and are usually subject to consultation following the hearings.
 - 4.6. In addition, the Council may choose to propose minor changes, for example to correct errors or make factual updates. Such changes do not materially affect the Plan and are not subject to examination.
 - 4.7. For completeness attached at Appendix 1 is an indicative timetable which outlines the key stages in the examination process.

5 THE HEARING SESSIONS

Format

- 5.1 The draft hearings programme sets out the order of the hearings and identifies participants for each session. This is currently in draft form and may be subject to change. The final version will be issued before the hearings and will confirm the list of participants for each session. Please let the Programme Officer know by **12 noon on 31 July 2024** whether you intend to participate in a hearing or if any adjustments need to be made to facilitate your attendance.
- 5.2 The Council will advertise the start of the hearing sessions at least 6 weeks in advance. It is anticipated that they will commence on **15 October 2024**. The dates for the hearing sessions will be set out in the draft hearings programme and in the draft hearings timetable which will be on the examination website and updated as necessary. An initial draft timetable for the hearing sessions is set out in Appendix 2.
- 5.3 The hearing sessions will usually be held all day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Unless stated otherwise all hearing sessions will start at 10:00am and 14:00pm and finish about 17:00pm. Lunch will normally be between 13:00pm and 14:00pm. Short breaks will be taken mid-morning and mid-afternoon.
- 5.4 The hearing sessions will be digital: that is, they will be held on Microsoft Teams with all participants, including the Inspector, the PO, the Council team, and observers logging in via computers. They will also be open to observers in the same way as in-person events. More information and instructions on how to join or view the hearings will be provided nearer to the time. If you would like to participate (and meet the criteria to do so) or observe, but do not have access to a suitable computer or smart phone, please contact the PO in order to discuss your needs.

- 5.5 Please bear in mind that digital events are new, and parties may be unfamiliar with the process and technology. We will, therefore, appreciate your patience and cooperation during hearings. These will, however, operate in much the same way as normally, although there will clearly need to be some differences to ensure they run smoothly. You can be assured though that all participants will be given a chance to address the points raised by the Inspectors.
- 5.5 As all parties will be working from screens, which can be intensive and tiring, the Inspectors will ensure there are regular breaks. These are likely to be every 90 minutes or so.
- 5.6 During the events please could you keep your camera and microphone turned off until you are invited to speak. The Microsoft Teams platform provides a 'raised hand function', by which you will be able to indicate that you would like to speak. Observers at hearings are not able to speak and should ensure that their microphones and cameras are kept turned off throughout the session. Please could you also ensure that if you have a telephone near you, it is turned to silent or divert.
- 5.7 As this is a new format, it is possible that issues may arise during the events that we are not expecting. If any of the participants suffer any IT problems such as losing their connection to the event, in the first instance we will adjourn, initially for 5 minutes. In that period, you should try and log straight back in, in the same way as you did before the event began.
- 5.8 If the problem persists then the adjournment may be longer and if it can't be resolved, we may need to adjourn to another day. Please will you keep the PO's telephone number to hand during digital events so that you can keep her informed if you do have problems.
- 5.9 The hearings will be in the form of structured round table discussions which we shall lead. There will be no formal presentation of evidence or cross examination. Barristers and solicitors, if present, will be treated as part of the respective organisation or team.
- 5.10 The main purpose of the hearings is to enable me to obtain the information we need to conclude on the matters before me. **A list of detailed matters, issues and questions will be published on the examination website on or before 23 August 2024.** These will form the agenda for each hearing session, as well as provide the basis for any further written statements sought from hearing participants.
- 5.11 At the end of each hearing we may confirm with the Council any actions it needs to take in response to matters raised during the discussion. Any 'action points' agreed will be published in the Examination Library.
- 5.12 Please note that no discussion of omission/alternative site allocations is currently programmed. Those promoting such sites will be eligible to

participate in discussions concerning the LDP's strategy. If we determine that there is a need for further site allocations, relevant representors may be invited to make verbal representations at a later hearing.

Participation

- 5.13 The sessions are open for anyone to observe, including those supporting the Plan. Only those who have made representations within the prescribed time periods and who seek changes to the Plan in relation to the issues to be discussed have a right to participate in the hearings. However, we may also invite additional participants if we consider it necessary.
- 5.14 We will afford equal weight to oral and written evidence. There is therefore no need to participate in a hearing unless you intend to elaborate on points already made in writing or you wish to respond to points made by others. Participants who have indicated a wish to be heard will be given the opportunity to do so, but we will only specifically invite further oral or written evidence where we consider there is a need for it.
- 5.15 We will expect participants at hearings to have familiarised themselves with the relevant documents pertaining to the discussion matters, including the Council's Submission Documents and any further written statements. We would also encourage participants to view the Welsh Government's Local Development Plan Manual and the PEDW's Local Development Plan Examinations Procedural Guidance before the hearings.
- 5.16 Participation in the Welsh language at hearings is welcomed. Where one or more participants in a hearing have indicated a preference to communicate in the Welsh language, translation facilities will be arranged by the Council. To prevent avoidable adjournments, the PO will seek to confirm the language choice of participants prior to hearing sessions taking place.

Further Written Statements

- 5.17 The published matters, issues and questions will guide discussions at hearings. As participants should have already set out their full cases in their original representations there should ordinarily be no need to produce further written statements. However, if further written statements are produced, these should:
- state the Representor ID and representation number;
 - be limited to the published matters, issues and questions and either be relevant to their original representation or relate to new relevant matters that have arisen since the original representation was made; and
 - not repeat what is in the original representations.
- 5.18. As all examination and submission documents are available on the internet, participants should not attach extracts of these documents to any statements.

Instead, statements referring to any of these documents should include the relevant reference and page or paragraph numbers.

- 5.19. Further written statements should accord with the following guidelines:
- A separate statement should be submitted for each hearing.
 - Statements should be clear, succinct and no longer than 3,000 words long for each issue. It is the quality of the reasoning that carries weight, not the scale of the documents.
 - Appendices are not included in the word limit but these should only be submitted if they are essential, with references made to the parts of those appendices being relied upon.
 - Statements should be produced in an A4 format where possible. For hard copies, A3 leaves should be folded to A4.
- 5.20.1 Statements must be received by the deadline imposed (**12 noon on 24 September 2024**). Late submissions are unlikely to be accepted. Any statements that are of excessive length or contain irrelevant or repetitious material may be returned.
- 5.20.2 Unlike other participants, the Council is required to respond to each issue and question and therefore the 3,000 word limit does not apply to them. However, any statements should be as succinct as possible. References to existing evidence should be used wherever possible to avoid repetition.
- 5.20.3 An electronic version and 2 paper copies of any further written statements, including the Council's, should be sent to the PO to arrive **by 12 noon on 24 September 2024**.

6 STATEMENTS OF COMMON GROUND

- 6.1 Any statements of common ground between the Council and representors, or between any other representors, which are being prepared to assist the examination should be submitted to the PO as soon as they are produced and to arrive **no later than 12 noon on 24 September 2024**. This should include an electronic version and 2 paper copies.

7 SITE VISITS

- 7.1 Insofar as we consider it necessary to assess the Plan's soundness, we shall visit relevant sites and areas before, during or after the hearings. We will do these unaccompanied unless access to private land is necessary.

8 CLOSE OF THE EXAMINATION

- 8.1 After the hearings, the examination will remain open until my report is submitted to the Council. No further representations or evidence will be accepted during this time unless we have specifically requested it.

9 FURTHER INFORMATION

9.1 Further information about the preparation and examination of Local Development Plans can be found using the following links:

- Welsh Government information on Development Plans: [Development plans | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)
- Welsh Government national policy and guidance: [Planning policy and guidance: national policy | Sub-topic | GOV.WALES](#)
- PEDW Local Development Plan Examinations Procedural Guidance: [Local development plan examinations: procedure guidance | GOV.WALES](#)
- Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Part 6, Sections 62-72: [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)
- Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005: [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Development Plan\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

Nicola Gulley and Ian Stevens
INSPECTORS

APPENDIX 1- INDICATIVE EXAMINATION TIMETABLE

INDICATIVE EXAMINATION TIMETABLE	
Key Task	Date
Council submission of LDP for Examination	10 June 2024
Guidance Note for Participation in the Examination published	09 July 2024
Schedule of Matters and Issues for the Hearing Session published	23 August 2024
Deadline for submission of written statements responding to Matters & Issues for Examination	24 September 2024
Hearing sessions commence	15 October 2024
Hearing sessions close	14 November 2024
[If required] Matters arising changes issued by the Council for 6 week public consultation	TBC
Council to submit an updated Consultation Report	TBC
Submission of Inspector's Report of Findings	09 May 2025

APPENDIX 2- DRAFT HEARING SESSION TIMETABLE

HEARING SESSIONS	MATTERS
WEEK 1	
<p>Hearing Session 1 – Tuesday, 15 October 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00</p> <p>Virtual Hearing</p>	<p>Opening, Plan Preparation and Strategic Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process of plan production • Compliance with legislative requirements • LDP Vision • Strategic Objectives • Spatial Strategy • Policy SP1: Strategic Growth • Policy SD1: Development Limits • Policy SG1: Regeneration and Mixed Use Sites • Policy SG2: Reserve Sites • Policy SP2: Retail and Town Centres • Policy SP3: Sustainable Distribution – Settlement Framework • Policy SP8: Welsh Language and Culture • Policy SP12: Placemaking, Sustainability and High-Quality Design • Policy PSD1: Effective Design Solutions: Sustainability and Placemaking
<p>Hearing Session 2 – Wednesday, 16 October 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00</p> <p>Virtual Hearing</p>	<p>Prosperous People and Places – Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy SP4: A Sustainable Approach to Providing New Home • Policy HOM1: Housing Allocations • Policy HOM3: Homes in Rural Villages • Policy HOM4 - Homes in Non-Defined Rural Settlements • Policy HOM7: Renovation of Derelict or Abandoned Dwellings • Policy RD1: Dwellings in the Open Countryside • Policy RD2: Conversion and Re-Use of Rural Buildings for Residential Use • Policy RD3: Farm Diversification • Policy RD4: Conversion and Re-Use of Rural Buildings for Non-Residential Use
<p>Hearing Session 3 – Thursday, 17 October 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00</p> <p>Virtual Hearing</p>	<p>Prosperous People and Places – Affordable Housing and Gypsy and Traveller Provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy SP5: Affordable Homes • Policy AHOM1: Provision of Affordable Homes • Policy AHOM2: Affordable Housing- Exceptions Sites • Policy SP10: Gypsy and Traveller Provision

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy GTP1: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation
WEEK 2	
Hearing Session 4 – Tuesday, 22 October 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00 Virtual Hearing	Prosperous People and Places – Employment and the Visitor Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy SP7: Employment and the Economy Policy EME1: Employment- Safeguarding of Employment Sites Policy EME3: Employment Proposals on Allocated Sites Policy SP11: The Visitor Economy Policy VE2: Holiday Accommodation Policy VE3: Touring Caravan, Camping and Non-Permanent Alternative Camping Accommodation Policy VE4: Static Caravan and Chalet Sites and Permanent Alternative Camping Accommodation
Hearing Session 5 – Wednesday, 23 October 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00 Virtual Hearing	Healthy Habits – Natural, Built and Historic Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy SP14: Maintaining and Enhancing the Natural Environment Policy SP 15: Protection and Enhancement of the Built and Historic Environment Policy BHE2: Landscape Character Policy PSD7: Protection of Open Space Policy PSD8: Provision of New Open Space
Hearing Session 6 – Thursday, 24 October 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00 Virtual Hearing	Strong Connections – Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy SP 16: Climate Change Policy CCH1 - Renewable Energy within Pre-Assessed Areas and Local Search Areas Policy CCH2: Renewable Energy Outside Pre-Assessed Areas and Local Search Areas Policy CCH7: Climate Change – Forest, Woodland, and Tree Planting Policy SP 17: Transport and Accessibility
WEEK 3	
Hearing Session 7 – Tuesday, 5 November 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00 Virtual Hearing	Prosperous People and Places – Site Allocations (Cluster 1 – Carmarthen) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PrC1/h4 – Land off Parc y Delyn PrC1/MU1 – West Carmarthen PrC1/MU2 - Pibwrlwyd SeC1/h1 – Lime Grove SeC1/h4 – Cae Canfas, Heol Llanelli SuV1/h1 - Adjacent Fron Heulog SuV4/h1- Land at Troed Rhiw Farm SuV12/h1 – Adjacent to Gwyn Villa

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SuV20/h1 – Land adjacent to Llwynhenry Farm
<p>Hearing Session 8 – Wednesday, 6 November 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00</p> <p>Virtual Hearing</p>	<p>Prosperous People and Places – Site Allocations (Cluster 2 – Llanelli)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PrC2/GT1 - Land at Penyfan, Trostre, Llanelli • PrC2/h1 - Beech Grove, Pwll • PrC2/h4 - North Dock • PrC2/h16 - Ynys Las, Llwynhendy • PrC2/h20 - Harddfán • PrC2/h22 - Cwm y Nant, Dafen • PrC2/h23 - Dafen East Gateway • SeC4/h1 - Gwdig Farm • SeC6/h2 - Land between Clayton Road and East of Bronallt Road • SeC7/h1 – Box Farm • SeC7/h3 - Golwg Yr Afon • SeC8/h2 - Cae Linda, Trimsaran • SeC8/h3 - Golwg Gwendraeth • SuV23/h1 - Clos y Parc
<p>Hearing Session 9 – Thursday, 7 November 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00</p> <p>Virtual Hearing</p>	<p>Prosperous People and Places – Site Allocations (Cluster 3 – Ammanford inc Betws and Penybank)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PrC3/h4 - Tirychen Farm • PrC3/h6 - Land Adjoining Maes Ifan, Maesquarre Road • PrC3/h14 - Nantydderwen • PrC3/h19 - Land off Llys y Nant • PrC3/h22 - Adjacent to Pant y Blodau • PrC3/h28 - Land at Factory site between No. 22 & 28 Bethesda Road • PrC3/h36 - Betws Colliery • PrC3/h37 - Clos Felingoes • PrC3/E1 – Cross Hands East • PrC3/E2 - Cross Hands West Food Park • PrC3/E3(i) - Heol Stanllyd (West) • PrC3/MU1 - Emlyn Brickworks • SuV28/h1 - Adjacent to Coed y Cadno
WEEK 4	
<p>Hearing Session 10 – Tuesday, 12 November 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00</p> <p>Virtual Hearing</p>	<p>Prosperous People and Places – Site Allocations (Cluster 4 – Newcastle Emlyn)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SeC12/h1 - Trem y Ddol • SeC12/h3 - Land to rear of Dolcoed • SeC13/h1 – Adjacent to Y Neuadd • SeC14/h1 - Blossom Garage • SeC14/h2 - Land adjacent to Maescader • SuV38/h1 - Maes y Bryn

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SuV39/h1 – Adjacent to Yr Hendre • SuV41/h2 - Cilgwyn Bach
Hearing Session 11 – Wednesday, 13 November 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00 Virtual Hearing	Prosperous People and Places – Site Allocations (Cluster 5 – Llandovery) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SeC16/h1 - Llandeilo Northern Quarter • SeC16/MU1 - Beechwood • SeC17/h1 - Land opposite Llangadog C.P School
Hearing Session 12 – Thursday, 14 November 2024 between 10.00 and 17:00 Virtual Hearing	Prosperous People and Places – Site Allocations (Cluster 6 – St Clears and Pwll Trap) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SeC18/h1 - Adjacent to Britannia Terrace • SeC18/h3 - Land adjacent to Cefn Maes • SeC19/h1 - Land at Park View, Trevaughan • SeC20/MU1 - Laugharne Holiday Park • SuV60/h1 - Land at College Bach • SuV61/h1 - Land at Nieuport Farm • SuV63/h1 - Land at Woodend

1.2 All Hearing sessions will start at 10:00am and 2:00pm each day, with a break for lunch at about 1.00pm, and a finish at about 5.00pm. Reserve days will only be used where the Inspector considers that it is expedient to do so.

1.3 **Hearing sessions to discuss Alternative Sites will only be held if the Inspector considers it necessary to do so.**

APPENDIX 3 – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where can I find the examination documents?

The examination documents, submitted documents and hearings programme can be found at on the Examination website. If you wish to view hard copies of any of these documents please contact the PO.

What if I want to participate in a virtual hearing but do not wish to be screened live?

Participants who wish to take part in a hearing session but do not wish to appear on screen are welcome to leave their camera turned off.

Can I take part in the hearing sessions even though I originally said I didn't want to participate?

Yes. Provided you have a duly made representation that is related to the subject being discussed at the hearing session you wish to attend. If this is the case, please contact the Programme Officer who will make the necessary arrangements for you to attend the session.

Can I take part in the hearing sessions if I haven't made a representation?

No. Generally, only individuals or organisations with a duly made representation can participate in hearing sessions. However, you are welcome to observe the session should you wish.

Do I need to produce a statement?

No. There is no need to produce a statement unless you specifically wish to do so, you can simply rely on your existing representation(s).

Can I observe the hearing sessions?

Yes. Hearing sessions can be observed by members of the public. Please contact the Programme Officer who will be able to provide you with advice about how and when you can view sessions.