

WELSH GOVERNMENT
Examination Hearing Statement

Merthyr Tydfil
Local Development Plan Examination

Hearing Session 2 – 25th June 2019

Plan Strategy, Delivery and Infrastructure

Matters & Issues

2.1. Plan strategy (including policies SW4 and SW5)

a. Would the planned distribution of growth support National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes in all parts of the County Borough?

This is a matter for the Authority.

Policy SW6: Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area has been updated by the Council (in FC11) to embed key principles from the framework masterplan (SD49), it is logical to identify these principles spatially on a concept/schematic framework. This would not involve any additional work for the Council as the detail is already set out in the masterplan, but add clarity and certainty to the plan, assisting in the delivery of the National Sustainable Placemaking Outcomes.

b. Has the spatial strategy been formulated in a manner consistent with the site search sequence outlined in Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 (PPW), including in relation to accessibility, previously developed land and ‘Best and Most Versatile’ agricultural land?

This is a matter for the Authority

c. Does policy SW4 set out sufficiently robust assessment criteria for managing the form of the County Borough’s settlements?

This is a matter for the Authority

d. Policy SW5 permits small scale affordable housing schemes “adjoining settlement *boundaries*”. Should it also apply to small settlements lacking designated boundaries?

Yes. Settlements without designated boundaries should be considered for small scale affordable housing taking into account their requirements and the appropriateness of scale. Policy SW5 should be amended accordingly.

Policy SW5 also sets a limit of 10 units for small scale affordable housing schemes. The Council may wish to consider if this limit (set in accordance with TAN 2) is still appropriate for schemes in settlements without boundaries? It is important that the size of any new development is proportionate to the existing settlement.

2.2. Delivery and infrastructure

a. The Council has submitted a schedule of infrastructure required to deliver the Plan.

i. Is there sufficient certainty regarding the funding and delivery of the required or safeguarded infrastructure identified in the schedule?

This is a matter for the Authority.

ii. Should the schedule (in whole or part) be included as a Plan appendix, with delivery of infrastructure monitored against the indicative timescales?

Yes. It is the Welsh Governments understanding that the Council has already transposed the findings of the infrastructure schedule into Appendix 1. The detail in Appendix 1 should be used by the Council in the monitoring framework.

b. Does the viability evidence adequately take account of policy and legislative requirements on the delivery of site allocations?

This is a matter for the Authority. Please see our response to Question 2.2.a.i

c. What are the practical implications of the new sustainable drainage consenting regime on the delivery of the Plan? Is there evidence to demonstrate that allocated sites could viably support sustainable drainage and be delivered as per assumed timescales?

This is a matter for the Authority. The Welsh Governments position is that SUDs is cost neutral on new development.

d. Is the strategy flexible enough to deal with future changes, including external economic factors?

This is a matter for the Authority

2.3. Planning obligations (policy SW9)

a. Is the reference to an “indicative” level of affordable housing in criterion 1 of policy SW9 sufficiently clear?

No. The level of affordable housing should be linked to the results and conclusions in the Council’s viability assessment. Policy SW9 should be amended to remove the word “indicative” in this respect.

b. Paragraph 6.5.59 indicates that open space provision will be determined in accordance with standards included in the Open Space Strategy (OSS).

i. Are the standards expressed in the OSS sufficiently clear and/or should they be summarised within the Plan itself?

This is a matter for the Authority

ii. Would Section 106 pooling restrictions or conflicts with infrastructure included on the adopted Community Infrastructure Regulation 123 list prevent the effective application of criterion 3 of policy SW9?

This is a matter for the Authority

2.4. Transport infrastructure (policy SW12)

a. The Council has proposed changing Plan paragraph 1.11 to clarify that the Constraints Map does not form part of the Plan. As Active Travel routes are designated under the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 should approved routes be identified on the Constraints Map rather than the Proposals Map?

Spatial areas determined by other bodies and processes, such as 'existing' Active Travel Routes should be illustrated spatially on the constraints map. Policy SW12 also identifies new and 'proposed' Active Travel Routes and these have been represented correctly by the Council on the Proposals Map.

b. Does the Plan support the implementation of schemes identified in the Local Transport Plan and programmed investments by Transport for Wales? Are these adequately captured in the submitted infrastructure schedule?

This is a matter for the Authority

c. Are the safeguarding designations for the Cwm Bargoed rail line extension to Dowlais Top and the new Metro station at the Hoover Strategic Regeneration Area justified by the transport evidence?

This is a matter for the Authority
