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**Representor ID: 287**

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**By Email: [ldp@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:ldp@bridgend.gov.uk) ; [LDPProgrammeOfficer@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:LDPProgrammeOfficer@bridgend.gov.uk)**

C/O Amanda Borge  
LDP Programme Officer  
Bridgend County Borough Council,  
Civic Offices,  
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Dear Sir / Madam,

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXAMINATION**

**RESPONSE TO MATTERS AND ISSUES – MATTER 1: PLAN PREPARATION AND LDP STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

Please find enclosed, on behalf of, and under instruction from the landowner and promoting party (BPM Technology Corp), a submission to the Examination of the Local Development Plan (LDP) in relation to housing allocation ref. COM 1(3) – Land South of Pont Rhyd Y Cyff.

This submission comments on matters and issues raised by, and set out in, the Inspectors' Matters and Issues Agenda to cover Matter 1: Plan Preparation and LDP Strategic Framework.

We look forward to attending the Hearing Session in respect of the matter above in due course. In the meantime, we hope and trust that all is in order with the submission. Please do not hesitate to contact us in the event that further information is considered beneficial.

Yours sincerely,

**Geraint John**  
Director  
Geraint John Planning Ltd

## **PREFACE**

This submission relates to the matters and issues raised by, and set out in, the Inspectors' Matters and Issues Agenda to cover Matter 1: Plan Preparation and LDP Strategic Framework.

Each of the relevant issues raised in relation to the above matters are considered in detail below.

It should be noted that these submissions do not respond to every question raised within the Inspector's Agenda, as not all of these questions necessitate a response by us, and/or earlier submissions made on behalf of BPM Technology Corp Ltd (Representor ID. 287) are considered sufficient to address the matters raised. Accordingly, these representations only provide responses to questions where it is considered necessary and relevant to do so.

## **QUESTIONS**

***Issue – Is the LDP legally compliant, and is the Plan's Strategy justified and likely to be effective in ensuring that development needs of Bridgend can be met in a way that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development?***

### **Plan Preparation**

**1. Has the LDP been prepared in accordance with the requirements of:**

- a. The approved Delivery Agreement, including the Community Involvement Scheme?**
- b. The Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) (2015)? And**
- c. The Equality Act (2010)?**

The Representor wholly agrees that the LDP has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the documents and papers referenced above.

**2. Has the Plan been subject to a robust Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment? and have all the 'likely significant environmental effects' of the Plan and all 'reasonable alternatives' been identified, described and evaluated?**

The LDP has been informed by a suite of impact assessments, including a Sustainability Appraisal (2021) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment, undertaken by Stantec. This assesses and outlines the likely significant environmental and wider sustainability effects of the Plan, and also identifies the reasonable alternatives. The Sustainability Appraisal has been through a number of stages and reporting (i.e. Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2018), and Interim Sustainability Scoping Report (2019) to inform the LDP as submitted, through the incorporation of amendments.

The Sustainability Appraisal concludes that *"the final version of the Deposit Plan is now predicted to generate a range of likely significant beneficial effects on the environment and in relation to identified key sustainability issues, with no residual significant adverse effects considered likely."*

A detailed Sustainability Appraisal of each of the Candidate Sites has been undertaken (as included in Table D.1a of the Sustainability Appraisal (2021)) which has informed the selection of the allocated sites. Moreover, the Candidate Site Submission (and further information submitted by the strategic and allocated site in particular) have been supported by a range of technical reporting and their own viability assessments. As such, it is considered that the Plan has been robustly assessed as well as the site's allocated within it.

### **5. Is the Plan consistent with Future Wales: The National Development Framework?**

It is considered that the Plan has been prepared consistently and in accordance with Future Wales: the National Development Framework (NDF), which considers the issues significant to Wales's prosperity and well-being, such as the economy, housing, transport, energy and the environment.

BCBC have undertaken an assessment of the LDP to demonstrate conformity with the NDF (Background Paper 17: National Development Framework (NDF) Conformity Assessment). The report conclusions outline the following: *"This assessment has demonstrated the RLDP is in general conformity with and supports the delivery of the NDF, thereby providing a sound framework for enabling sustainable development in the County Borough."*

It is understood that the Council have been asked to confirm that the policies and allocations regarding housing requirement and supply contained in the Plan would not have an adverse impact on the future preparation or delivery of the Strategic Development Plan for South East Wales in the Inspector's letter (dated 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023). The Representor considers that this is the case and that the housing delivery is in line with the Strategic Development Plan and therefore the plan is sound as a result.

Moreover, the Welsh Government, within their representations on the Deposit Plan, consider that *"Bridgend's Replacement Local Development Plan (2018-2033) is in general conformity with the National Development Framework."* It is therefore considered that the Plan is suitably consistent with Future Wales and this is supported by this response.

### **6. Has the Plan had regard to the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 with regard to the well-being goals and ways of working?**

It is the Representors position that the Plan has duly considered the seven well-being goals (a prosperous Wales, a resilient Wales, a healthier Wales, a more equal Wales, a Wales of cohesive communities, a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language and a globally responsible Wales) and five ways of working (long-term, integration, involvement, collaboration, and prevention).

The 4 Strategic Objectives (SOBJ1, SOBJ2, SOBJ3, SOBJ4) within the LDP have been defined to cross-reference the goals and objectives of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, and will serve to deliver the overarching vision through the strategic policies. Each strategic policy closely links with and references the pertinent goals of the Well-Being and Future Generations Act, and has been based on an on up-to-date and robust evidence base. It is therefore considered that the Well-being of Future Generation goals and objectives have been appropriately referenced within the Plan.

### **7. Have there been any significant changes in national policy or local circumstances since the LDP was placed on deposit? if there have, what are the implications of these changes for the Plan? do they need to be addressed through the preparation of new evidence and/or revisions to the Plan? what is the intended timescale for this work?**

It is not considered that there have been any significant changes in national policy or local circumstances since the LDP was placed on deposit that could have adverse implications insofar as COM1(3) – Land South of Pont Rhyd-y-Cyff.

It is acknowledged that there has been a change in relation to flood risk and the forthcoming new TAN15 and associated New Flood Map for Planning. However, COM1(3) is not to any extent affected by flood risk, with regards to either the Development Advice Map or the latest publication of the New Flood Map for Planning (November 2022).

### **Vision, Objectives and Strategy**

#### ***8. Is the Plan's Vision sufficiently aspirational and locally specific to form the basis for planning to 2033? and how will they be delivered?***

The Representor agrees that the Plan's Vision is sufficiently aspirational and locally specific.

#### ***10. Does the Plan's Growth and Spatial Strategy represent an appropriate approach for delivering, managing and distributing growth over the Plan period?***

##### ***a. How has the Growth and Spatial Strategy been derived and is it based on robust evidence?***

The Growth and Spatial strategy provides the framework to help realise the regeneration priorities of the Council, whilst also apportioning sustainable growth towards existing settlements that benefit from existing services, facilities and employment opportunities. The Growth and Spatial Strategy has informed and resulted in the formulation of LDP Policy SP1 (Regeneration and Sustainable Growth Strategy), which has been informed by a wide evidence base – as identified within the policy text. This has included, but is not limited to, economic, demographic, housing market, viability, settlement, and Agricultural Land data and evidence.

Insofar as the proposed level of growth, this has been derived from Office of National Statistics data, and based on a 2019 Mid Year Estimate base year, with migration assumptions from a 6-year period (2013/14-2018/19). This period, which was pre-Covid 19, saw a high level of population growth within the County Borough, which can be reasonably expected to continue.

The resultant spatial strategy directs development to the most sustainable location, in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy.

Both the growth and spatial strategy are supported in principle by the Welsh Government in their representations to the Deposit Plan (2021).

Given all the above, the Representor is of the opinion that the Growth and Spatial Strategy has been based on robust evidence.

##### ***c. Does the Growth and Spatial Strategy represent a sustainable approach to planning over the plan period? and does it effectively link transportation, employment and residential growth?***

The Growth and Spatial Strategy, through Policy SP1, seeks to apportion sustainable growth towards settlements that already benefit from significant services, facilities and employment opportunities and are most conducive to enabling transit orientated development. This is reflected by 90% of allocated sites being apportioned to Regeneration Growth Areas and Sustainable Growth Areas (Table 6 of the Plan). This aside, settlements outside of Regeneration Growth Areas and Sustainable Growth Areas will have an important role in the Growth and Spatial Strategy – this is discussed in more detail below. On this basis, the site promoter asserts that a sustainable approach has been adopted.

##### ***d. Does the Growth and Spatial Strategy maximise the use of previously developed land? and adopt the sequential approach to the release of land as set out in Planning Policy Wales?***

The Growth and Spatial strategy includes a number of allocations comprising previously developed land, including COM(3) – Land South of Pont Rhyd-y-Cyff – which was formerly occupied by a service station. PPW 11 sets out a preference for development of brownfield land, and therefore allocation of

COM(3) is wholly compliant with PPW 11 and prevailing national policy with regards to the Plan's Growth and Spatial Strategy.

***e. Is the Strategy and policy framework consistent with national planning policy relating to Flood Risk?***

It is noted that the latest update to TAN 15 and the New Flood Map for Planning was in November 2022, following the submission of the Plan for examination. It is also noted that the Council have been asked to review the policies and allocations in relation to any alterations which may have occurred from the flood zones in the updated maps.

As aforementioned, COM1(3) – Land South of Pont Rhyd-y-Cyff – is not to any extent affected by flood risk, with regards to either the Development Advice Map or the latest New Flood Map for Planning. Therefore, it's continued inclusion in the Plan is considered to be sound.

***11. How was the Settlement Hierarchy derived, and is it based on robust and credible evidence?***

***a. What is the purpose of the settlement hierarchy? will it guide new development to the most sustainable locations? and is it clear what types and amount of development, other than housing, will be appropriate in each tier of the hierarchy?***

The settlement hierarchy, as set out under Policy SF1 (Settlement Hierarchy and Urban Management), defines the settlements in terms of their sustainability: Primary Key Settlement (Tier 1), Main Settlements (Tier 2), and Local Settlements (Tier 3). This has been informed by, and has regard to, the BCBC Settlement Assessment (2019, revised 2021), which analyses the components of existing settlements, their functional relationships with each other plus their current and potential future roles.

It is noted that the Welsh Government, at the Preferred Strategy stage, commented that they were "broadly supportive of this approach."

The resultant settlement hierarchy identifies the most appropriate locations to accommodate future development in order to achieve a sustainable pattern of growth, and has directly informed the spatial distribution of new housing allocations – this is evident through the majority of housing allocations being directed to Tier 1 and Tier 2 settlements, as forementioned.

Notwithstanding this, the Plan recognises "that other settlements [i.e. Tier 3 settlements, including Pontrhydydyff, Llangynwyd and Cwmfelin], in the County Borough will be required to accommodate smaller scales of future development and growth in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy" (Para 4.3.50).

In light of the above, the site promoter considers that the settlement hierarchy has been based on robust and credible evidence, which is reflective of the approach taken nationally.

***b. What is the rationale for the proportions of development split across the tiers?***

Policy SP1 seeks to apportion growth primarily to the 'Tier 1' and 'Tier 2' Settlements in accordance with the LDP spatial strategy. This is evident in Table 6 of the LDP, which outlines that 90% of allocated sites (housing and employment) have been located within Tier 1 and Tier 2, with the remaining 10% to be located within Tier 3 settlements.

The LDP acknowledges, as set out above, that there is a need to direct some development to the Tier 3 settlements, in order to sustain and facilitate local economic development. Para. 4.3.53 states that

*"A combination of different site typologies is necessary to deliver the growth requirements of the LDP. These include a limited number of **Sustainable Urban Extensions**, supported by **Edge of Settlement Allocations** and **Local Settlement Sites**. This Strategy will enable the Council to achieve the most sustainable form of development, meet LDP Objectives and address existing capacity issues."*

The allocation of sites within the Local/Tier 3 settlement Pontrhydydyff, Llangynwyd and Cwmfelin, specifically COM1(3), is therefore wholly consistent with this approach.

***c. Are the settlement boundaries drawn sufficiently widely to enable the predicted amount of growth?***

It is considered that the revised settlement boundary of Pont Rhyd-Y-Cyff has been drawn sufficiently widely to enable appropriate and controlled growth through the development of allocated sites COM1(2), COM1(3) and COM1(4). The proposed settlement boundary of Pont Rhyd-Y-Cyff is therefore supported by the Representor.

***14. Is the approach to site selection sufficiently clear and transparent, and is it founded on a robust and credible evidence?***

***a. Are the allocated sites based on a robust site assessment methodology that takes into account all potential constraints?***

It is considered that the Candidate Sites have been through a rigorous and thorough assessment process. All allocated sites are underpinned by detailed and robust technical evidence to evidence viability and deliverability. This has included the submission of information by site promoters, and review and assessment of potential constraints by BCBC in dialogue with site promoters, as can be seen and summarised at Appendix 5: Implementation and Delivery Appendix of the LDP Written Statement Submission Document. The Representor therefore submits that robust site assessments have been undertaken by the Council – and specifically in relation to site COM1(3).

***b. Have all infrastructure requirements been considered to ensure the timely deliverability of allocated sites?***

The infrastructure requirements to deliver the allocated sites has been considered as part of the candidate site assessment process. Insofar as COM1(3) – Land South of Pont Rhyd Y Cyff, it has been demonstrated that the site is not subject to any constraints in terms of infrastructure or otherwise which could affect the delivery of the site. (This can of course be attributed to the fact that the site is previously developed, and therefore infrastructure is already in place).

Appendix 5 of the LDP Written Statement confirms that this is indeed the case, with no highways/transport upgrades or improvements identified as being required due to the local highways network having sufficient spare capacity. This conclusion has been made following assessment work in the form of an individual Transport Assessment, in addition to a collective Transport Assessment by Asbri Transport for the three proposed allocations in Pont Rhyd Y Cyff: COM1(2), COM1(3) and COM1(4).

Moreover, it is evident in Appendix 5 that existing utility connections and capacity (insofar as water and waste water, electricity, gas, and telecommunications) has been deemed suitable following consultation of relevant utility companies and review of existing connections and capacity by BCBC. Accordingly, no potential constraints have been identified in this regard.

Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) between BCBC and utility providers (namely, Welsh Water and the National Grid) have been produced. The SoCG confirms that the respective parties do not

consider there to be any major constraints regarding the capability of infrastructure to accommodate the proposed development growth.

***15. Is it clear why the Strategic Development Sites were selected over other candidate sites? and is the Plan over reliant on the delivery of these sites?***

It is recognised that the Strategic Development Sites have been selected in order to ensure the implementation of the Growth and Spatial Strategy, by directing growth primarily to Sustainable Urban Extensions. The LDP outlines that Sustainable Urban Extensions are *"necessary to create sustainable communities that will incorporate a mix of complementary uses and deliver improvements to existing infrastructure and/or provide new infrastructure."*

Notwithstanding this, it is not considered that the Plan is over reliant on the delivery of the Strategic sites. 480 dwellings are to be delivered on the non-strategic sites, including COM1(3) – Land South of Pont Rhyd Y Cyff, which is allocated for 102 dwellings. The non-strategic sites are generally able to deliver units earlier on in the Plan period – as reflected in Background Paper 4: Housing Trajectory – as they are not considered by BCBC to require as long lead in times.

Accordingly, together, the strategic and non-strategic allocations will be fundamental to the implementation of the Plan, and achieving the Replacement LDP's Vision and Objectives for the County Borough, and the site promoter is wholly supportive of this approach.

***17. Will the requirements of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, in respect of sustainable drainage systems have an impact on the development capacity, viability and/ or deliverability of allocated sites?***

With regards to housing allocation COM 1(3) – Land South of Pont Rhyd Y Cyff, the testing layout (ref. 001 Rev A, prepared by The Urbanists) submitted to BCBC through the candidate site process demonstrates that the site can suitably accommodate SuDS as part of a surface water drainage strategy, without impacting upon development capacity. This therefore confirms that there is no impact from drainage requirements on viability and / or deliverability for this site.