

Ref: SharePoint/Scrutiny/Env/Correspondance15.06.2023

Date: 21st June 2023

Cllr Dan De'Ath
Cabinet Member, Transport & Strategic Planning



By email

Annwyl Cyg De'Ath / Dear Cllr De'Ath

REPLACEMENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – PREFERRED STRATEGY

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee held on 15th June 2023, I would like to thank you and officers for attending Committee to facilitate our consideration of the Replacement Local Development Plan – Preferred Strategy. Members agreed that I pass on the following observations, and you will find our requests listed at the end of the letter.

Members asked that I pass on thanks and congratulations to officers on the robust and comprehensive nature of the preferred strategy that they feel will stand up to scrutiny during the consultation.

In relation to consultation the members raised concerns that the proposed consultation period was over the summers holidays when people may not be available. The Cabinet Member and officers acknowledged this but stated that conversely during the holiday period people may have more availability if taking time off work. They also confirmed that the consultation period would be 10 weeks up to the end of September rather than the required 6 weeks.

A member also raised concerns about the consultation regarding the proposed growth options where Option A with the smallest growth was preferred by consultees, but Option B is being recommended in the draft preferred strategy, therefore could the public have confidence that they will be listened too? Officers stated that evidence has been provided to support the preferred Option B, they also noted that there is sufficient land already 'banked' to enable delivery of the proposed new homes. Member were also

reassured that all voices will be listened to and that the final plan will contain a lot more detail and explanation.

The issue of 'NIMBY'ism during consultation was also raised by a member and the response from officers was that everyone's voice is valid and that they want to support the development of communities that people want to live in and next to, whilst accepting that during the construction phase it is difficult for existing households.

A member commented that volunteers had been supporting new residents on a development in their ward, welcoming them and signposting them to local services and that the recruitment of a Community Engagement type worker on new developments would be beneficial. The Cabinet Member advised that funding had recently been announced by Cllr Sangani which may be suitable to support this work.

The inaccuracy of the population estimates in the previous LDP were commented on by a member and officers responded that the Council is in a very different place in relation to what it needs to deliver in the RLDP

The committee raised concerns about the lack of green space in new developments as gardens and verges provide a better environment for air quality and biodiversity. The concerns were echoed by officers although they also confirmed that as part of the master planning process, they are looking at the types of trees to be planted to ensure that they support biodiversity but are also resilient in terms of our changing climate. Officers also informed the committee that the council has duties under biodiversity legislation and there is emerging national policy which may provide opportunities to be more creative as the new LDP is about quality housing and shaping communities and therefore providing more green spaces.

Members asked for clarification on the definition of a 'green field' site as the terms, 'greenfield' and 'brownfield' are used without any real understanding. Officer clarifies that a 'greenfield' site is one that has not been previously built on, they also reiterated that the current land bank appears to be sufficient to meet the identified needs going forward.

The committee also asked about Supplementary Planning Guidance to support the protection of biodiversity. Officers confirmed that there is currently a significant amount of guidance in place and that this will be reviewed alongside the development of the final plan as existing SPGs will be superseded. They also noted that there is an opportunity to strengthen areas of the guidance by bringing them into the plan itself.

A member asked for further information on protecting and enhancing river corridors, as noted on the key diagram, and what this actually means, officers responded that further details would be provided in the final plan but in general terms provide better access to rivers but not exacerbate any flood risk.

The exclusion of the **transport hub for Fairwater** on the key diagram was also commented on, and officers will seek to clarify if this is an accidental omission, or it has not been included as work is already in progress.

The committee asked how the number of jobs created by each of the proposed options has been calculated and what types of job would they be. Members were informed that a crude estimate had been made based on the additional number of households that would be created and therefore the extra number of jobs needed by the new households.

Members asked if the proposed growth of social housing in the plan would address the needs of the approximately 8,000 currently on the housing waiting list. The committee were informed that collaboration was needed with housing associations but that officers were optimistic that with more affordable housing that a significant contribution to the market would be made, although they acknowledged that more strategic work was needed in relation to brownfield sites.

The committee commented on the fact that whilst there has been an emphasis on insulating homes and buildings to ensure their energy efficiency, the impact during hot spells of weather, as seen recently, is that the buildings become too hot as they do not have air conditioning or adequate cooling. Officers agree that how homes and buildings are being used post pandemic

has changed and that changes in design standards may be need to address this issue.

Members finally noted that the inclusion of some Community Infrastructure Levy development towards the end of building is difficult to understand if houses have been built and are being lived in, the critical mass need before the building of a new school was understood, but the same logic does not necessarily apply for recreation areas. Officers commented that this was a negotiation with the developer however income from the sale of houses is often needed to progress these issues.

To confirm a response to the letter which responds to the following points is requested:

- Clarification of the omission of the **Fairwater transport hub** on the key diagram.

Once again thank you once more for attending Committee and for considering our comments and observations.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely / Yn gywir



Councillor Owen Jones

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc: *Members of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee*

*Andrew Gregory, Director Planning Transport & Environment
Simon Gilbert, Head of Planning*

*Cllr Adrian Robson, Group Leader, Conservatives
Cllr Andrea Gibson, Group Leader, Common Ground
Cllr Rodney Berman, Group Leader, Liberal Democrats*

*Gavin McArthur, Chair Governance & Audit Committee
Chris Pyke, OM Governance & Audit*

*Tim Gordon, Head of Communications & External Relations
Claire Deguara, Acting Cabinet Business Manager*