

LDP Spatial Options – Key Stakeholder Forum

Notes meeting - Alyn & Deeside Room - 12/10/16

Attendees

Colin Everett, Chief Executive Officer
Andy Roberts, Service Manager, Strategy
Elwyn Thomas, Planning Aid Wales
Officers: Ste James, Adrian Walters, Sandie Lloyd, Vicky Weale, Glyn Jones, Eleanor Carpenter.
Tony Hughes – AONB Joint Advisory Service,
Mike Pender Anwyl Homes and Mark Waite Bloor Homes - Home Builders Federation
Carolyn Fleming and Catalina Peters – Airbus
Mike Moriarty - Campaign for the protection of Rural Wales
Lara Griffiths and Luci Duncalf - Denbighshire CC
Gill Smith – Cheshire West and Chester
Gerald Kitney – 50+ Action Group (Flintshire)
Steve Jackson - Coleg Cambria, Deeside
John Roberts - Ramblers Association Wales
Linda Sharp - Wrexham County Borough Council
David Harding - Mineral Products Association
Andrew Frazer Wirral Metropolitan Council
Dewi Griffiths - Welsh Water/ Dwr Cymru
Niall Waller - Regeneration Flintshire County County

1. Introduction

AR gave an overview of the LDP, setting out the need to establish the core of the plan and to decide upon an amount of growth and the distribution of that growth.

ET (Planning Aid Wales) introduced a discussion on 'context' and 'roles' asking why are we all here? That we need a range of views from different sectors to get a good understanding of the issues in the county.

Sustainable Development

AR set out the need for the plan to deliver Sustainable Development.

ET introduced a subsequent discussion on Sustainable Development (SD). Participants put forward their understanding of what elements made up SD :-

- The plan needs to protect and develop land and get that balance right.
- Enough land must be available for houses to provide for the broad range of society's needs.
- Brownfield land should be built on before greenfield sites.
- Wrexham and Flintshire are seen a hub for economic growth that is emphasised in the Regional Economic Plan and so a regional housing plan is also needed.

ET grouped these under the three 'strands' of sustainability which are

- economy,
- community
- and environment.

ET stressed the need to have regard to this in preparing the Plan.

AR outlined the progress which had been made on the LDP so far; the Delivery Agreement, Call for Candidate Sites, Key Messages and Settlement Hierarchy options. The outcome is that we have;

- agreed the vision, issues and objectives,
- agreed the key messages,
- agreed the 5 tier settlement hierarchy.

AR briefly set out how each of the growth option had been calculated. Option 1, using Welsh Government statistics, Options 2 and 3 using population forecasting statistics taken from a period of recession and Options 4 and 5 took statistics from a period of economic growth. Option 6 was a 'reverse engineered approach' starting with a figure for employment creation and using that to estimate how much new housing would be needed to support that figure. A range of options have been created which are realistic and based on sound evidence.

2. Workshop – Growth Options

ET explained a workshop looking at growth options. Members split into groups on 5 tables and were assisted by Policy Officers in reviewing the 6 growth options.

Feedback:

Following the workshop discussion, each group reported back on which were the most appropriate Growth options and finally which was the Preferred Growth Option. One group felt that option 3, 6 and 4 were realistic options but that they preferred option 6. This was reflected in the other group's feedback whereby options 4 and 6 were all noted as the preferred options. The groups felt that the mid-range was more likely, realistic and therefore achievable and that the same final figure had come from two different ways of calculation.

Preferred Growth Options

- Option 6 - 6,550 to 7,350 houses (440-490 houses per year)
- Option 4 – 6600 houses (440 houses per year)

3. Workshop - Spatial Options.

AR briefly discussed how initially 10 Spatial options were considered how this was cut down to 5 realistic Spatial options:

- Option 1 - Proportion Distribution
- Option 2 - Focused Urban Growth
- Option 3 - Growth Area

- Option 4 - Hubs and Corridors, along transport routes.
 - Option 5 - Sustainable Distribution plus Refined Approach to Rural Settlements
- Diagrammatical map illustrated each option.

ET facilitated a workshop looking at spatial options. Each table looked at a single spatial option, participants were asked to consider the good and bad points of each option.

Feedback:

Option 1 - Proportion Distribution

- Pros - spreads the benefits, very prescriptive/ certain (planning by numbers).
- Cons - not deliverable, not SD driven, spreads the pain

Option 2 Focused Urban Growth

- Pros – aligns well with existing employment plan and infrastructure, maintains protected landscapes, sustainable transport system, brownfield sites.
- Cons – won't sustain smaller settlements or meet rural housing needs.

Option 3 Growth Area

- Pros – Most Sus dev option existing transport and infrastructure,
- Cons – inflexible, misses large towns outside the growth area, misses small rural villages lots of pressure.

Option 4- Hubs and Corridors

- Pros – some commuting choice, can the Plan strategy align with national infrastructure strategy?
- Cons – too dispersed, not aligned with employment sites, are corridors at capacity, inflexible.

Option 5- Sustainable Distribution plus Refined Approach to Rural Settlements

- Pros – aligns with economic growth agenda, takes account of settlement diversity, range of housing sites, flexible, deliverable, potential to conjoin Options 5 and 4?
- Cons – could lead to unbalanced growth.

AR finalised the meeting by outlining the next steps of the consultation exercise Town and Community Councils meetings to be held 21st, 24th and 25th October and a public exhibition to be displayed in the main libraries in the county from 28th Oct to 9th December.

AR also thanked everyone for their contribution and stated that he would send the notes of the meeting to all attendees.