



LDP Process Review Consultation
Plans Branch
Planning Division
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NQ

22 December 2014

Dear Sir / Madam,

Consultation on the Local Development Plans Process Review

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Review.

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) is a professional body for the study and care of the historic environment. It promotes best practice in archaeology and provides a self-regulatory quality assurance framework for the sector and those it serves. The Institute was granted a Royal Charter of Incorporation on 03 June 2014

CIfA has over 3,150 members and more than 70 registered practices across the United Kingdom. Its members work in all branches of the discipline: heritage management, planning advice, excavation, finds and environmental study, buildings recording, underwater and aerial archaeology, museums, conservation, survey, research and development, teaching and liaison with the community, industry and the commercial and financial sectors.

CIfA's Wales / Cymru Group has over 300 members practising in the public, private and voluntary sector in Wales.

The Local Development Plans Process Review

General

CIfA strongly supports the plan-led, planning system in Wales, recognising its importance in the management and protection of the historic environment of Wales. Furthermore, the Institute recognises the problems inherent in an unduly cumbersome and protracted local development planning process which is inefficient and costly in terms of time, resource and public confidence.

Consequently, in principle CIfA supports proposals to streamline the local development plan process. However, the Institute remains concerned to see that such streamlining is not at the expense of the historic environment and that there are adequate safeguards to ensure that

local development plans continue adequately to address the implications of development for the historic environment. Levels of consultation, engagement and protection in relation to the historic environment should not be materially reduced.

Specific Questions

Front-loading / alternative sites

1. With the proposed greater front-loading of the process in terms of sites and a more defined and informative Preferred Strategy, do you agree that no-one would be disadvantaged by the elimination of the 'alternative sites' stage (Regulations 20&21)?

1.1 No comment

Review report

2. Do you agree that the LPA should prepare and publish a Review Report to justify whether a full or partial plan revision is appropriate, and that this should form part of the package of required documents at pre-deposit, deposit and submission?

2.1 Yes.

Short-form Revision Procedure

3. Where an authority is proposing to make partial revisions to an adopted LDP and the plan strategy remains sound, do you agree with the provision of the short-form revision procedure (quicker, shorter and more proportionate)?

3.1 Only if the short-form revision procedure does not preclude appropriate consultation upon, and consideration of, issues relating to the historic environment at the early stages of any revision (for instance, with regard to the identification of new sites in the local development plan).

3.2 CIfA recognises Welsh Government's commitment to community engagement (as reiterated, for instance, in section 4.1 of the draft Local Development Plan Manual) and to engagement with other stakeholders, but is concerned to see that such commitment is not in any way undermined by a desire to streamline the system.

Soundness tests

4. Do you agree with the proposed package of soundness tests?

4.1 Yes. It is helpful to have the 'package of soundness tests' clearly and simply set out in Planning Policy Wales and further elaborated in subordinate documents (such as the Local Development Plan Module).

4.2 Nonetheless, while 'does it fit? is it appropriate? will it deliver?' may be a simpler and less technical formulation than 'consistency, coherence and effectiveness', care needs to be taken

not to over-simplify some of the detailed aspects of plan-making. For instance, appropriateness and coherence are not necessarily synonymous. Although the draft Local Development Plan Manual in the text box under paragraph 8.3.1 identifies '*Is it coherent and consistent*' as one consideration under Test 2 ('*Is the plan appropriate?*'), the more detailed guidance in the current Manual ('*The plan sets out a coherent strategy from which its policies and allocations logically flow*') more effectively identifies a key issue.

Integrated approach

5.a Do you agree that an integrated approach to incorporating sustainability appraisal (including strategic environmental appraisal) fully into LDP preparation will produce savings and reduce complexity?

5.1 Yes, provided that such an appraisal (as incorporated into LDP preparation) fully reflects the contribution which the management and protection of the historic environment makes to sustainability.

5b Do you agree that this integration would not conflict with any statutory process?

5.2 CIfA is not aware of any such conflict.

Resources

6. In the LDP Regulations, do you agree with adding 'resources' as a matter to which regard must be had at Regulation 13, given that LDP strategies should be deliverable within the plan period?

6.1 No. It is fair to say that LDP strategies should be deliverable within the plan period and that proposals which are unlikely to come forward within that period for whatever reason (including economic reasons) should not be included in the LDP. However, this is not the case with general policies whose aim, for instance, is to protect the historic environment. Any reference to resources in Regulation 13 should not be phrased in such a way as to permit the argument that such policies can be precluded (or overridden) simply on the basis that compliance is likely to be expensive.

6.2 We accept that the aim, wherever possible, is to facilitate sustainable development and not to constrain it. Nonetheless, in the minority of cases where development is likely to cause unacceptable harm to the historic environment and it is not economically viable to avoid or otherwise appropriately mitigate that harm, such development should not be permitted and policies which reflect that fact should not be undermined.

End date

7. In the LDP Regulations, do you agree with adding the end date of the LDP period (i.e. the end of the period for which the LDP is planning) to the LDP sub-title at Regulation 11(1)(b)?

7.1 Yes.

Notice by local advertisement

8. In the LDP Regulations, do you agree with removing the requirement to give notice by local advertisement (e.g. at Reg22(5)(b); Reg23(1)(c); 24(2)(b); 25(2)(c); 26(b))?

8.1 Yes, provided that other means of securing public engagement are maintained.

Consultees

9. Do you agree with the revised list of statutory consultees?

9.1 No comment.

Guidance package

10. Do you agree with the principle of having a succinct two-document guidance package that excludes the need for *LDP Wales*? (Please note that we will in due course be revising the public guide, *Planning Your Community: A guide to Local Development Plans 2006*, to reflect changes taken forward.)

10.1 Yes, provided that the two documents remain substantial enough to provide comprehensive, practical guidance.

Errors

11. Are there any factual errors in the revised LDP documentation?

11.1 None of which we are aware.

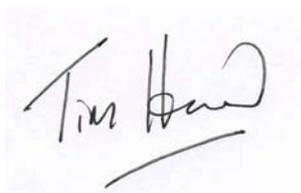
Any other comments

12. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

12.1 No comment.

If there is anything further that I can do to assist please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours faithfully,



Tim Howard LLB, Dip Prof Arch
Senior Policy Advisor