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| **Bridgend County Borough Council** | Inspector: **Nicola Gulley MA MRTPI** |
| **Local Development Plan** | Programme Officer: **Amanda Borge** |
| **EXAMINATION** | t: 07977 845855 |
| [www.bridgend.gov.uk/ldp](http://www.bridgend.gov.uk/ldp) | e: LDPProgrammeofficer@bridgend.gov.uk |
| Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB |

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 2 February 2023

Mr Richard Matthams

Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager

Development Planning Section

Bridgend County Borough Council

Civic Offices

Angel Street

Bridgend CF31 4WB

Dear Mr Matthams,

**Replacement Bridgend Local Development Plan 2018 - 2033**

I refer to the above.

I have now had the opportunity to review the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP), submitted documents, evidence base and representations in detail. In doing so, I have identified several areas that require either further clarification and / or information from the Council. These matters concern the soundness of the LDP, and the Council should therefore respond in a considered manner. If any of the information I seek has already been set out in the submitted documents, please signpost these rather than duplicate the information.

**Procedural Matters**

During the course of the hearing sessions, it may be necessary for the parties to discuss and agree changes to the structure and / or content of the RLDP. In order to ensure that this process is undertaken in an efficient and effective manner, I would be grateful if the Council could confirm that an officer, with delegated authority to make changes to the RLDP and agree the preparation of additional evidence, will be present at all hearing sessions.

**Contents of the Plan**

Whilst I note that a significant amount of work has been undertaken to formulate the contents of the RLDP, there are nevertheless a number of areas of the Plan which need further clarification and / or revision. These relate specifically to the provisions of:

* Policies COM11, COM12, ENT5, ENT10 and SP14 - which as drafted refer to the actions or role of ‘the Council’. This approach is contrary to the guidance contained in Table 1 of the Development Plans Manual, Edition 3 (March 2020) (DPM) which makes clear that policies should not include statements of intent or descriptions of administrative arrangements.
* Policy PLA9 – which appears to duplicate the requirements of Policy SP3(e) of the RLDP and national policy in respect of Public Rights of Way.
* Policies SP12 and ENT6 – which do not accurately reflect the findings of the Retail Study Update (2022) in respect of the need for new retail floorspace over the plan period or clearly explain how and where this need will be met.
* Policy ENT7 – which, as drafted, does not identify the locations of the relevant commercial centres or explain how criteria 1), 2) and a) would be applied, and
* Policy ENT14 – which, contrary to national planning policy, does not clearly identify the geographical location of the mineral operations and associated buffer zones in the County Borough.

**Flood Maps for Planning**

The latest updates to the Flood Maps for Planning were issued by Natural Resources Wales in November 2022. The updates include a number of alterations to flood zones 2 and 3 across Wales and mapping improvements to the defended zones contained in Technical Advice Note 15.

In light of the updated information, I would be grateful if the Council could review the policies and allocations in the LDP. The findings of the review and any changes necessary to ensure the soundness of the RLDP should be outlined in a brief background paper.

**Future Wales – The National Plan 2040**

I note the contents of Background Paper 17: National Development Framework Conformity Assessment (SD49). However, in light of the requirements of Policy 19 of Future Wales, which provides a framework for Strategic Policies in Regional Planning, it would be of assistance if the Council could confirm that the policies and allocations contained in the RLDP, specifically in relation to housing requirement and supply, would not have an adverse impact on the future formulation or delivery of the Strategic Development Plan for South East Wales.

Please note that my observations are based on my reading of the submitted LDP and supporting documents and that further revisions to the Plan may be required during the Examination.

The Council should submit this further information and a list of proposed changes to the RLDP as soon as it is available, and no later than 23 February 2023.

Yours Sincerely

*Nicola Gulley*

INSPECTOR