

Cynllyn Datblygu Lleol Abertawe

Ail Adroddiad Monitro Blynyddol – Cyfnod 2020-21

Crynodeb Gweithredol

Swansea Local Development Plan

2nd Annual Monitoring Report – Period 2020-21

Executive Summary



Cyngor **Abertawe**
Swansea Council

Introduction

- 1 As part of the statutory development plan process, following adoption of the Local Development Plan (LDP), the Council is required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) setting out how the objectives of the plan are being achieved, how the strategy, key policies, allocations, and infrastructure requirements are being delivered, and identifying any challenges, opportunities, and contextual changes in which the Plan operates. This document provides the second AMR of the Swansea LDP (AMR 2) and covers the period April 1st 2020, to March 31st 2021.
- 2 The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to have a significant impact on societies and economies across the world. The country has experienced lockdown measures to combat rising infection rates which have affected so many aspects of life and at times brought planning and development to a halt. The pandemic has, therefore, impacted on the ability to efficiently report on some indicators during 2020-21 and has had a big impact on the activities monitored. The impacts are described at the relevant points throughout this document.
- 3 In terms of new policy and legislation, various new or updated national planning guidance and Ministerial Letters were published, alongside the publication of new legislation. In combination these served to alter the planning context in which the LDP operates. The most notable of these was Future Wales published by Welsh Government in February 2021. While this represented a major change at national level, it should be noted that Future Wales largely reflected the placemaking approach already adopted in the Swansea LDP, which the Council has been at the vanguard of advancing, and the LDP is considered to be in-line with Future Wales.

Summary of Findings

- 4 The Monitoring Framework is based around the Strategic Policies, with indicators to measure the effectiveness of the policies and the progress in delivering allocations and infrastructure. Overall, the monitoring process has shown that the LDP strategy and Plan policies are largely being implemented effectively. Actions have been highlighted requiring further investigation on some indicators relating to the delivery of sites, but overall, there is no cause for review at this stage.

LDP Monitoring Summary for 2020-21 – AMR 2

Assessment	Action	Number of Indicators
Indicators suggest that the Plan policies are being implemented effectively and there is no cause for review	Continue Monitoring (Green)	101
Indicators suggest that the Plan Policies are not being implemented in the intended manner.	Training Required (Blue)	0
Indicators suggest the need for further guidance in addition to those identified in the Plan	SPG required (Purple)	0
Indicators suggest the Plan Policies are not being effective as originally expected.	Further investigation/ research required (Yellow)	21
Indicators suggest that Plan policy/ies are not being implemented.	Policy Review (Orange)	0
Indicators suggest the Plan strategy is not being implemented.	Plan Review (Red)	0

- 5 Good progress is being made in bringing forward development in-line with the Plan strategy and placemaking principles both on SDAs and other allocated sites, along with associated infrastructure and other development requirements. However, some delays are being encountered on the delivery of sites allocated in the Plan, with the COVID-19 pandemic being a key determinant.
- 6 There are various factors related to the COVID-19 crisis have been identified as having a particularly noticeable impact on delivery of housing in 2020-21, as evident through engagement with the HBF.
- 7 Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) have taken longer than originally anticipated to progress to a stage that will enable delivery of homes on site. The LPA has however continued to engage closely with the relevant site promoters and

developers since the LDP was prepared and adopted, and many have been brought forward to detailed planning application stages. This close working has ensured the sites progress in-line with the detailed placemaking principles and sustainability requirements that are clearly set out in the Development Plan and national policy, and that infrastructure and other measures are secured through complex Section 106 agreements. Overall, the close engagement with site promoters and work to progress applications has resulted in some significant progress in 2020-21 on key sites. The Reserved Matters (RM) application for SD B was close to determination in April 2021 and has since been approved. The hybrid application at SD C was approved during 2020-21. The LPA is continuing to work with the relevant developers and applicants to facilitate the necessary discharge of conditions applications to enable work on the sites to commence swiftly. On the basis of discussions with the developers, it is considered likely that required conditions will be discharged enabling work to commence on site in 2021-22. Progress is also continuing on bringing forward other SDAs, with engagement ongoing between the LPA and the developer towards the determination of a RM application for SD D, and pre application engagement to bring forward applications on SD sites A, E, F and H.

- 8 In addition to the progress made on SDAs, good progress has been made on non-strategic allocations. The Council determined several Discharge of Condition and S73 Applications relating to existing allocated sites already permitted. Delivery was achieved at a number of sites including Upper Bank; Heol Ddu; Land South of Glebe Road; Summerland Lane and sites in SA1 and City Centre. It is also significant that further affordable housing has been delivered by the Council's More Homes programme, with pre application work ongoing on several additional sites.
- 9 In addition, several windfall sites have come forward and delivered housing in the period since the Plan was adopted. This includes large windfall sites that have obtained detailed planning consent, which together contribute in excess of the forecasts included in the LDP for annual windfall delivery. These are expected to be built in the next 2 years. This suggests that the windfall assumptions adopted in the LDP for large windfall sites were conservative and an underestimate and that it can be expected that further windfall sites will come forward in the later years of the Plan period, above and beyond the annual rate assumed in the LDP, which will benefit supply in future years of the Plan.
- 10 Based on the updated site forecasts, which have been formulated through engagement with developers, the updated supply forecasts from 2021-22 onwards show that housing supply is expected to be close to the Average Annual Requirement (AAR) rate in the next 12 months. This is based on the delivery of sites with planning consent, before exceeding the AAR in the subsequent years of the Plan when the SDAs will comprehensively get underway to deliver

significant numbers of new homes, with more than one outlet on these large sites. Meanwhile, other sites identified in the updated trajectory will also have progressed through the development pipeline.

- 11 It is also important to note that the latest evidence suggests the housing requirement backdrop in which the Plan is operating has changed since the LDP was adopted. The latest (2018 based) Welsh Government projections published in August 2020 generally suggest a lower rate of growth compared to the previous WG projections which informed the adopted LDP growth targets. Further uncertainty has been introduced since these latest WG projections by the emerging impacts of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be important for the LPA to monitor emerging demographic evidence over the next 12 months on the impacts on the housing requirement.
- 12 Overall, development of some plan allocations has not progressed as originally forecasted due to several factors. However, the sites included in the LDP are considered to be sound and are progressing, with two residential led Strategic Development sites due to commence in 2021-22 and others progressing through detailed engagement between the LPA and developers to bring them forward in-line with the placemaking principles of the Development Plan. It is not considered at this stage that a review of the sites in the LDP is necessary. Whilst a delivery lag is being experienced, there is a good supply of large and small deliverable and viable sites. Significant work has been undertaken by both applicant and LPA to progress several complex sites to an advanced stage of the planning process, such that they are well placed to soon deliver homes on site and create excellent examples of new sustainable places. It is worth highlighting that any new site put forward of such a scale by a speculative developer would need to go through the same level of placemaking and master planning which would require significant lead in times and not benefit the short-term housing supply. However, resources do need to continue to be focused on bringing the sites in the existing supply forward efficiently. The Council will, in response to the monitoring indicators flagged as yellow, undertake further investigation of the issues affecting the delivery of sites in order to focus the continuing efforts to proactively work with developers and site promoters to bring forward the housing supply included in the adopted Plan.
- 13 In terms of affordable housing, 209 affordable homes were built through the planning system in 2020-21, 180 social rented and 29 intermediate tenure, while planning consent was granted in the 12-month period for a further 273 affordable homes.
- 14 The proportion of HMOs within the HMO Management Area, as a proportion of the residential properties, has been monitored. Overall, within the HMO Management Area, HMOs were identified as comprising 23.7% of all residential

properties. The percentage remains within the +/-2% range identified in the monitoring indicator, highlighting that the indicator target has again been achieved in 2020-21.

- 15 Development of new Gypsy and Traveller pitches on the land west of Pant y Blawd Road, which is identified in the Plan will accommodate the 7 pitches needed in the period up to the end of 2021, has not yet commenced as of the base date of the AMR (April 1st 2021). The monitoring indicator highlights that the identified trigger for this indicator is if development has not been completed by the end of 2021. The indicator is flagged yellow for further investigation and liaison to be undertaken with the Council Departments with responsibility for delivering the pitches, in order to facilitate efficient progress to be made in meeting the identified accommodation requirements.
- 16 In addition to the 2.7ha that was consented during 2019-2020, the 0.8 ha of total employment land granted planning consent in 2020-21 equates to a total of 3.5ha or 6% of the overall LDP allocation of 60 ha. Significant progress continues to be made on the delivery of the mixed-use Swansea Central regeneration projects within the City Centre. Several economic contextual indicators are identified which show positive findings for the County. However, it should be noted that there are some time lags in the available data and monitoring will need to continue to see the emerging impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 17 Monitoring of other policies such as design and placemaking, Green Infrastructure, Welsh language, the historic and cultural environment, tourism, transport, and safeguarding public health and natural resources has shown that they are being implemented effectively, delivering placemaking objectives and preventing inappropriate development. A small number of minor amendments and clarifications have been made to monitoring indicators to reflect changes in data availability and context; or to clarify what the indicator seeks to record.
- 18 Overall, it can be concluded that the LDP strategy and its key policies and targets remain relevant, appropriate, and up-to-date and good progress is being made towards achieving them. Further investigation is required regarding the delivery of housing sites, especially for several allocated Strategic Development Areas, which will inform the Council's efforts in continuing to proactively work with developers and site promoters to bring forward the adopted LDP housing supply targets. Fundamentally it has been established that there is currently no cause for Plan review.

- 19 Monitoring will continue during 2021-2022 and, again, will need to take account of changes in the context in which the Plan operates, in-line with the WG guidance, particularly regarding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the activities being monitored.