

**Bridgend County Borough Council
Replacement Local Development Plan 2018 - 2033**

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales)
Regulations 2004

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales)
Regulations 2005 (as amended by the 2015 Amendment Regulations)

Adoption Statement

13th March 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements of Regulation 25(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended) (the “**2005 Regulations**”), the Local Planning Authority (**LPA**) is required to publish an ‘adoption statement’ following adoption of a Local Development Plan (**LDP**). In addition, and in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 16 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 (the “**2004 Regulations**”), the LPA must also publish a ‘post adoption statement’.
- 1.2 This document has been produced in order to satisfy the requirements of both the 2005 Regulations and the 2004 Regulations through Part 1 and Part 2, respectively, below.

2. Part 1: Replacement Local Development Plan Adoption Statement (“Adoption Statement”) – Requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plans) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended).

- 2.1 The Bridgend County Borough Replacement Local Development Plan (**RLDP**) 2018-2033 was adopted and became operative on 13th March 2024. It supersedes and replaces the previous adopted Bridgend County Borough LDP 2006-2021 (**LDP**).
- 2.2 The RLDP constitutes the development plan (**Plan**) for Bridgend County Borough and will be the basis for decisions on land-use planning in the area. It sets out key policies and land use allocations that will shape the future of Bridgend County Borough and guide development up to 2033.
- 2.3 The adopted RLDP, the binding Inspector’s Report, the Final Sustainability Appraisal (**SA**) Report (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment), and this Adoption Statement are available for inspection during normal opening hours at:
 - BCBC Reception, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB (Mobile Library);
 - Aberkenfig Library, Heol y Llyfrau, Aberkenfig, CF32 9PT;
 - Betws Library, Betws Life Centre, Betws Road, Betws, CF32 8PT;
 - Bridgend Library, Bridgend Life Centre, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4AH
 - Maesteg Library, North’s Lane, Maesteg, CF34 9AA;
 - Ogmores Vale Library, Ogmores Valley Life Centre, Aber Road, Ogmores Vale, CF32 7AJ
 - Pencoed Library, Penybont Road, Pencoed, CF35 5RA;

- Pontycymmer Library, Garw Valley Life Centre, Old Station Yard, Pontycymmer, CF32 8ES;
- Porthcawl Library, Church Place, Porthcawl, CF36 3AG;
- Pyle Library, Pyle Life Centre, Helig Fan, Pyle, CF33 6BS;
- Sarn Library, Sarn Lifelong Learning Centre, Merfield Close, Sarn, CF32 9SW;
- Y Llynfi Library, Maesteg Sports Centre, Old Forge Site, Nant-y-Crynwyd, Maesteg, CF34 9EB.

2.4 The adopted RLDP and associated documents listed under paragraph 2.3 above are also available to view on the Council's website at: <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/development-planning/replacement-bridgend-local-development-plan-2018-to-2033/>.

2.5 A person aggrieved by the RLDP who desires to question its validity on the ground that it is not within the powers conferred by Part 6 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ("**2004 Act**"), or that any requirement of that Act or any regulation made under it has not been complied with in relation to the adoption of the RLDP, may, within six weeks from the date specified on this Adoption Statement make an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the 2004 Act.

3. Part 2: Replacement Local Development Plan Post Adoption Statement ("Post Adoption Statement") – Requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004

- 3.1 Section 62(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires the Council to appraise the sustainability of the RLDP through a Sustainability Appraisal (**SA**). The SA is an assessment of the economic, environmental, and social effects of the RLDP undertaken from the outset of the plan-making process to ensure that decisions are made that accord with sustainable development principles. SA is a systematic and iterative process. It identifies and reports on how far implementation of the RLDP will achieve the environmental, social, and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined. It also identifies opportunities for improving RLDP performance in relation to these objectives.
- 3.2 The LPA must also comply with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (**SEA**) Directive (2001/42/EC), which requires the SEA of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The Environmental Assessment of the Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 transposes this requirement into Welsh law and requires the preparation of an '*Environmental Report*' setting out the consideration of likely significant effects. SEA is a systematic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of plans and programmes to ensure that environmental issues are integrated and assessed at the earliest opportunity in the decision-making process. Welsh Government guidance advises that the SA and SEA of development plans should be carried out together; with the SA incorporating the requirements of SEA through an iterative, single appraisal process. The term 'SA' referred to throughout this statement should therefore be taken to include the requirements of SEA, which acts as the statutory Environmental Report.
- 3.3 The RLDP was also subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (**HRA**), in accordance with Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The HRA was undertaken to determine if any plans, policies or site allocations in the RLDP, whether alone or when considered cumulatively, could potentially result in any likely significant effects on the integrity of European Sites (now part of the National Site Network) in the context of their conservation objectives. This also followed an iterative process and was conducted in parallel to the SA process. The findings of the HRA have therefore informed the preparation of the RLDP and the SA. This assessment accompanied the Deposit RLDP and was reported separately. The development of the HRA for the RLDP does not exempt individual development proposals undergoing project specific HRA through the development management process where necessary.

- 3.4 RLDP preparation has therefore integrated the SA, SEA and HRA process as integral elements of every stage of plan preparation including evidence gathering, identifying issues, setting objectives, evaluating options and consultation.
- 3.5 This section of the Post Adoption Statement describes how the SA process has influenced the progression of the Bridgend County Borough RLDP and how environmental considerations and consultation responses have been taken into account during the development of the Plan. It also outlines why the Deposit RLDP was progressed in the light of other reasonable alternatives and highlights the measures that have been developed to track the effects of the Plan.
- 3.6 In accordance with Regulation 16(4) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004, this statement provides the following information:
- a) How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan;
 - b) How the Environmental Report (contained within the SA Report) has been taken into account;
 - c) How opinions expressed in relation to the consultations on the plan and Environmental Report (contained within the SA) have been taken into account;
 - d) How the results of any transboundary consultation have been taken into account;
 - e) The reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
 - f) The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan.
- 3.7 Each of the above requirements are addressed sequentially below. It should be noted that substantial information relating to these matters is outlined within documents published throughout the RLDP preparation process. These include the Full SA of the Deposit RLDP (SD90) and [screening] SA: Matters Arising Changes (**MACs**) Addendum (MAC2). The latter screened all relevant MACs to the Deposit RLDP to determine whether they had implications on the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90). The screening outcome was published as part of the MAC Consultation (note, the MACs subsequently became binding recommendations of the Inspector's Report without further change). The Initial Consultation Report (SD29) and Deposit Consultation Report (SD4) also refer to the changes made to the RLDP during the plan making process. This Post Adoption Statement does not seek to duplicate this material. Instead, and in accordance with paragraph 6.63 of Welsh Government's Development Plans Manual (Edition 3, March 2020), this Statement makes appropriate cross references to such relevant documents.

3.8 How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Plan

- 3.8.1 The RLDP has been subject to an SEA in order to consider the potential impact of the Plan on the environment and to improve the Plan’s environmental performance.
- 3.8.2 SA and SEA share a common focus on assessing environmental and wider sustainability performance and have therefore been undertaken and reported together within the SA Report. The process has been integral to the preparation of the RLDP; ensuring that it promotes sustainable development through the incorporation of social, environmental and economic objectives.
- 3.8.3 The SA has run in parallel with the development of the RLDP, from the earliest stage of the plan making process through to adoption. The SA process has included several stages and reports, which demonstrate the iterative feedback process between plan-making and the SA. As the Plan progressed through the preparation stages, the policies and proposals were assessed against the SA objectives and public consultation was undertaken on those assessments. This has enabled sustainability considerations to be integrated into the RLDP and plan-making process. Table 1 below illustrates the stages of the RLDP process and the corresponding stages of SA and HRA, together with dates of the consultation stages.

Table 1: Stages of the RLDP, SA, SEA and HRA Process and Consultation

SA, SEA or HRA Stage	RLDP Stage	Purpose	Consultation Timescale
SD89 SA Scoping Report, including SEA Screening Determination, 2018	Pre-Deposit	This Scoping Report outlines the proposed approach to the RLDP’s SA, incorporating SEA. This is the first stage of the SA process to identify, assess and address any likely significant effects on the environment from the emerging RLDP. The Scoping Report also seeks the views of the SEA Consultation Authorities on a draft SEA screening	Targeted stakeholder consultation was undertaken over a five-week period, commencing 23 rd July and ending 27 th August 2018, including SEA Consultation Bodies and other stakeholders. This Scoping Report was also subject to further public consultation as part of the Preferred Strategy consultation, from 30 th

SA, SEA or HRA Stage	RLDP Stage	Purpose	Consultation Timescale
		determination to satisfy procedural requirements and to confirm that an SEA needs to be incorporated within the SA.	September to 8 th November 2019.
SD75b Initial HRA Screening Report, 2018	Pre-Deposit	This Initial HRA Screening Report seeks the views of the Statutory Nature Conservation Body (SNCB) for Wales, namely Natural Resources Wales, on the proposed list of European Sites (now part of the National Site Network) to take forward for a legally compliant HRA of the Bridgend LDP Review. The HRA is required to assess whether there would be any likely significant effects from the RLDP on any such sites.	<p>Targeted stakeholder consultation was undertaken over a five-week period, commencing 23rd July and ending 27th August 2018, including SEA Consultation Bodies and other stakeholders.</p> <p>This Initial HRA Screening Report was also subject to further public consultation as part of the Preferred Strategy consultation, from 30th September to 8th November 2019.</p>
SD87 SA/SEA Initial Report - Preferred Strategy (SA of Candidate Sites), 2019	Pre-Deposit	This SA/SEA Initial Report contributes to the SA of the emerging RLDP by presenting the findings of a proportionate desk-based assessment carried out in respect of candidate sites promoted through a Call for Sites consultation conducted	This SA/SEA Initial Report was subject to public consultation as part of the Preferred Strategy consultation, from 30 th September to 8 th November 2019.

SA, SEA or HRA Stage	RLDP Stage	Purpose	Consultation Timescale
		in Autumn 2018 and existing allocations in the adopted Bridgend LDP (2013) which are being considered for re-allocation in the emerging RLDP as potential rollover sites.	
SD88 SA of Pre-Deposit Documents (RLDP Preferred Strategy), 2019	Pre-Deposit	<p>The purpose of this SA Report is to provide the findings of a SA, incorporating SEA, of the substantive proposals set out within the RLDP Pre-Deposit Documents, i.e. the Preferred Strategy and associated Background Papers. This SA Report responds to relevant statutory requirements, considers the evolution of the emerging RLDP to date and presents an assessment of likely significant environmental and wider sustainability effects from the Pre-Deposit Documents.</p>	<p>This SA Report was subject to public consultation as part of the Preferred Strategy consultation, from 30th September to 8th November 2019.</p>
SD75a Pre-Deposit Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report, 2019	Pre-Deposit	<p>The purpose of this Habitats Report is to document the first formal stage of the HRA process, namely to ascertain whether there would be any likely significant effects</p>	<p>This Habitats Report was subject to public consultation as part of the Preferred Strategy consultation, from 30th September to 8th November 2019.</p>

SA, SEA or HRA Stage	RLDP Stage	Purpose	Consultation Timescale
		on relevant European Sites (now part of the National Site Network) from the emerging Bridgend RLDP, which at this stage comprises the Preferred Strategy.	
SD90 RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021	Deposit	The purpose of this Full SR report is to provide the findings of a SA, incorporating SEA, of the substantive proposals set out within the RLDP Deposit Documents, i.e. the Deposit Plan and associated Background Papers. This Full SA Report responds to relevant statutory requirements, considers the evolution of the emerging RLDP to date and presents an assessment of likely significant environmental and wider sustainability effects from the Deposit Documents.	This Full SA Report was subject to public consultation as part of the Deposit Stage consultation, from 1 st June until 27 th July 2021.
SD75 RLDP Deposit Plan HRA, 2021	Deposit	The purpose of this HRA Report is to document the second stage of this HRA process, namely an appropriate assessment of the RLDP Deposit Plan and any likely significant effects on	This HRA Report was subject to public consultation as part of the Deposit Stage consultation, from 1 st June until 27 th July 2021.

SA, SEA or HRA Stage	RLDP Stage	Purpose	Consultation Timescale
		the integrity of European Sites (now part of the National Site Network) in the context of their conservation objectives.	
MAC 2 SA: MACs Addendum, 2023	MACs	This MACs Addendum (2) considers the MACs to the Deposit RLDP. It screens all relevant changes to determine whether they have any implications for the findings of the 2021 Deposit Stage SA.	This MACs Addendum (2) [Report] was subject to public consultation as part of the Matters Arising Changes consultation, from 31 st July until 11 th September 2023.
MAC 3 HRA: MACs Addendum, 2023	MACs	This MACs Addendum (3) considers the MACs to the Deposit RLDP. It screens all relevant changes to determine whether they alter the conclusions of the 2021 HRA.	This MACs Addendum (3) Report was subject to public consultation as part of the Matters Arising Changes consultation, from 31 st July until 11 th September 2023.
Post Adoption Statement / Final SA of the RLDP	Adoption	This Post Adoption Statement (Final SA) describes how the SA process has influenced the progression of the RLDP and how environmental considerations and consultation responses have been taken into account during the development of the Plan. They also outline why the Replacement Deposit LDP was	RLDP Adoption 13 th March 2024

SA, SEA or HRA Stage	RLDP Stage	Purpose	Consultation Timescale
		progressed in the light of other reasonable alternatives and highlight the measures that have been developed to track the effects of the Plan.	

3.9 How the Environmental Report (within the SA Report) has been taken into account

SA Scoping Report

- 3.9.1 The initial stage of the SA process involved the preparation of a ‘Scoping Report’ (SD89), which reviewed relevant baseline environmental and socio-economic conditions; identifying key sustainability issues of relevance to the LDP Review. The relationship between the Bridgend RLDP and other relevant plans and programmes was also duly considered. These informed the Key Issues and Drivers within the RLDP.
- 3.9.2 This SA Scoping Report (SD89) also defined a proposed SA Framework and appraisal methodology for use in undertaking the SA in respect of the LDP Review. This SA Framework and appraisal methodology was subject to targeted consultation with SEA Consultation Bodies and other stakeholders, forming the basis to assess the likely significant effects of the RLDP. The assessment was an iterative process and involved the development and refinement of RLDP options by testing the strengths, weaknesses and likely environmental effects of proposed components.
- 3.9.3 The emphasis on implementing a holistic approach to improved wellbeing across many of the SA Objectives was designed to ensure compliance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and to align with national policy.

Pre-Deposit Stage

- 3.9.4 The SA of Pre-Deposit Documents (RLDP Preferred Strategy) Report, 2019 (SD88), undertook an assessment of each constituent component of the RLDP Preferred Strategy, including the Vision, Strategic Objectives, three Growth Strategy Options, four Spatial Strategy Options and Strategic Policies. The assessment was first undertaken on a pre-mitigation basis, following which mitigation and enhancement recommendations were incorporated into the final

RLDP Preferred Strategy to address identified uncertainties and strengthen its sustainability performance. Taking account of this mitigation and enhancement, some of the assessment findings changed and a greater number of the RLDP Preferred Strategy components were deemed likely to result in Major Positive and significant effects, with no significant adverse effects being considered likely. The SA process therefore directly informed the preparation of and helped to improve the RLDP Preferred Strategy, as detailed in Section 5 of the SA of Pre-Deposit Documents (RLDP Preferred Strategy) Report, 2019 (SD88). Subsequently, a limited number of further mitigation and enhancement recommendations were also developed to inform the future preparation of the RLDP Deposit Plan as outlined within Section 7 of the RLDP Preferred Strategy Report. Those recommendations were duly considered and informed subsequent preparation of the Deposit Plan.

- 3.9.5 The SA of Candidate Sites Report (RLDP Preferred Strategy) (SD87), 2019 undertook a multi-stage assessment in respect of reasonable alternative candidate new sites and potential LDP rollover sites, as per the methodology set out in Section 3 of that Report. This provided an objective assessment of the likely environmental and wider sustainability effects of allocating proposed new candidate sites and potential rollover sites from the existing adopted Bridgend LDP (2013) within the emerging RLDP. The SA assessment was integrated into the Candidate Site Assessment selection process, ensuring all sites were treated equally as potential 'reasonable alternatives' (subject to the absence of major constraints), before determining which candidate sites were most suitable for potential allocation at Deposit Stage.

Deposit Stage

- 3.9.6 The RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90) presents the findings of an appraisal carried out to identify, assess and evaluate the likely significant environmental and wider sustainability effects of all substantive proposals contained within the Deposit Plan. This includes the Strategic Framework (Vision, Strategic Objectives, Growth and Spatial Strategy) and the Implementation and Delivery components (Strategic Policies, Thematic Policies, Site Allocations and Infrastructure). In doing so, all substantive components or proposals, together with any identified reasonable alternatives, have been subject to a proportionate level of assessment against the 14 SA Objectives defined within the finalised Bridgend LDP Review SA Framework (Appendix C).
- 3.9.7 As detailed in Section 6 of the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90), a suite of further mitigation and enhancement recommendations were made throughout the iterative development and assessment of thematic policies. This was to extend policy coverage of key sustainability issues, remove uncertainties and enhance the clarity of policy wording. These recommendations were

incorporated into the final version of the RLDP Deposit Plan, and the SA was updated to reflect this.

- 3.9.8 As detailed in Appendix G of the [RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA] [above report], a further aspect of the integrated SA site assessment and selection process was the development of mitigation options to provide mechanisms to address unresolved likely significant adverse effects from reasonable alternative candidate sites. This was key in the event such candidate sites were subsequently selected for inclusion within the RLDP. The development of mitigation options was undertaken without prejudice to emerging assessment results for all identified reasonable alternative options and the LPA's view regarding which individual sites should be allocated in the Deposit Plan.
- 3.9.9 The SA considers that all SA recommendations summarised in Section 6 of the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90), have been appropriately addressed, with additional provisions now incorporated within the Deposit Plan. This has made the SA reporting process more efficient and improved the sustainability performance of the Deposit Plan. In particular, the final version of the Deposit Plan is predicted to generate a range of likely significant beneficial effects on the environment and in relation to identified key sustainability issues, with no residual significant adverse effects considered likely. The assessment presented in Section 7 and Appendices D - G of the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90), has been updated to take account of all agreed mitigation now incorporated within the Deposit Plan. In consequence, no recommendations for further changes have been identified following consultation on the Deposit Plan.

Matters Arising Changes

- 3.9.10 The LPA has compiled a Schedule of MACs (**MAC 1**) primarily as a result of Action Points arising from the Examination Hearing Sessions that took place from February to March 2023. An SA Addendum (**MAC 2**) was produced to consider the MACs to the Deposit RLDP, screen all relevant changes, identify those which are considered to be potentially relevant to the obligations under the SA/SEA Regulations and determine whether they have implications on the findings of the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90). This process identified that none of the MACs warranted further assessment and that there were no implications on the findings of the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90).

3.10 How opinions expressed in relation to the consultations on the Plan and Environmental Report (within the SA) have been taken into account;

Pre-Deposit Stages

- 3.10.1 The SA Scoping Report, including SEA Screening Determination, 2018 (SD89) and Initial HRA Screening Report, 2018 (SD75b), underwent targeted stakeholder consultation (including the SEA Consultation Bodies), from 23rd July – 27th August 2018. The representors responded within statutory timescales and agreed that, owing to likely significant effects on the environment from the implementation of the emerging RLDP, a full SEA should be carried out. As detailed in Table 4.1 within the SA of Pre-Deposit Documents (RLDP Preferred Strategy), 2019 (SD88), the SEA Consultation Bodies also recommended several minor modifications to the then proposed SA Framework. Other minor recommendations were made regarding the baseline analysis, policy review and key sustainability issues as set out within the SA Scoping Report (SD89). In accordance with information requirements prescribed within the SEA Regulations, these matters have been addressed in the SA of Pre-Deposit Documents (RLDP Preferred Strategy), 2019 (SD88) and were carried forward to subsequent SA stages.
- 3.10.2 The Preferred Strategy, including the SA of Pre-Deposit Documents (RLDP Preferred Strategy), 2019 (SD88) and SA/SEA Initial Report - Preferred Strategy (SA of Candidate Sites), 2019 (SD87) underwent consultation from 30th September to 8th November 2019. Representations primarily concerned specific sites, with certain representors referring to the Candidate Site Assessment and SA interchangeably. While the two processes are inter-related, they are ultimately separate assessments. The SA of candidate sites and development of mitigation options was undertaken without prejudice to emerging assessment results for all identified reasonable alternative options and the Candidate Site Assessment. The latter determined which individual sites had the potential to support the Preferred Strategy for the RLDP.
- 3.10.3 Some site-specific scoring anomalies were identified by representors, which were due to unavoidable overlaps between the GIS layers of the site boundaries and environmental constraint layers directly abutting the sites. The scoring was therefore subject to a thorough review and, where necessary, manually updated to correct instances where overlapping GIS layers resulted in incorrect scoring outputs.
- 3.10.4 Further comments were also made regarding green infrastructure, biodiversity and placemaking. Whilst substantial changes to the SA Framework were not deemed necessary, the key sustainability issues table and SA Framework were

reviewed and refined prior to undertaking the SA of the Deposit Plan. A summary of relevant representations received and the LPA's response is set out within paragraphs 3.255 – 3.266 of the Initial Consultation Report (SD29).

Deposit Stage

3.10.5 The RLDP Deposit Plan and RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90) underwent consultation from 1st June to 27th July 2021. Representations primarily related to the sustainability of specific sites and/or the level and distribution of growth. Clarification was provided throughout the Deposit Consultation Report (SD4) that the RLDP Deposit Plan has been subject to SA to assess the likely sustainability and significant environmental effects of all substantive components within the Plan (strategy, policies, site allocations, etc.), and any identified reasonable alternatives, with appropriate mitigation measures incorporated. Other minor queries were raised regarding specific SA scoring and objectives, although detailed assessments of likely effects from the implementation of individual policies were provided in Appendices E and F of the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90). No representations were deemed to pose substantive issues for the SA. Refer specifically to the following comments made by and LPA responses to representor numbers: 128 (within Deposit Consultation Report Appendix Volume 15 (SD19)); 400 (within Deposit Consultation Report Appendix Volume 16 (SD20)); and 34, 141 and 142 (within Deposit Consultation Report Appendix Volume 17 (SD21)).

Matters Arising Changes

3.10.6 The Schedule of MACs (MAC 1) and SA: MACs Addendum, 2023 (MAC 2) were subject to consultation from 31st July until 11th September 2023. Queries were raised as to whether the de-allocation of Parc Afon Ewenni, Bridgend as a housing allocation (formerly COM1(1)) and re-designation of Ewenny Road, Maesteg (now COM1(5)) as a housing allocation necessitated further SA assessment. However, this change was not deemed to affect the outcome of the SA, as screened within the SA as set out in: MACs Addendum, 2023 (MAC 2). Other concerns were raised that changes in dwelling capacities at Land South of Bridgend (Island Farm) (SP2(2)) and Craig Y Parcau (now COM1 (1)) were unjustified. However, these changes were detailed in the Council's Hearing Statement (M9(1)) and clarified within Hearing Session 9. The HRA: MACs Addendum (MAC3), also screened this change and determined it does not alter the conclusions of the RLDP Deposit Plan HRA, 2021 (SD75), as set out in Table 1 within the MAC Consultation Report (**MAC 4**).

3.11 How the results of any transboundary consultation have been taken into account;

3.11.1 Adjoining authorities were consulted throughout the SA process and at all stages of RLDP preparation. The RLDP has been prepared following close dialogue with all neighbouring authorities (Vale of Glamorgan, Neath Port Talbot and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Councils,) as well as other essential organisations. This dialogue has been conducted both on an individual and topic basis, but also through the South East Wales Strategic Planning Group and other topic-based forums. Neighbouring authorities have worked in collaboration throughout the different stages of the RLDP's preparation and no objections or concerns were raised regarding the RLDP and its supporting evidence base. Statements of Common Ground were signed with the Vale of Glamorgan (SD239) and Neath Port Talbot (SD102) to this effect.

3.11.2 Whilst the RLDP can only influence planning strategy or development within the boundary of Bridgend County Borough, there may be trans-boundary effects as a result of its implementation. In consideration of this, the HRA utilised a 15km buffer area (zone of influence) around Bridgend County Borough, to identify those European Sites (as classified at the time), that could conceivably be affected by the LDP review. Twelve Sites (11 Special Areas of Conservation (**SACs**) and 1 wetland of international importance (**Ramsar**) site) were identified to take forward for HRA Stage 1. Three of these sites are within the Bridgend County Borough area, seven are within 15 km of the boundary and two are 15 km from the boundary. These are the same sites that were considered previously within the HRA carried out in respect of the first adopted LDP (2006-2021). The RLDP Deposit Plan HRA, 2021 (SD75) considered the information available at that stage of plan preparation, the level of detail appropriate for RLDP policies and proposals and the measures incorporated into the RLDP to protect European Sites (now part of a National Site Network), and provide improvements in air quality. It concluded that the RLDP would not result in a likely significant effect on any of the twelve identified Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

3.12 The reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with

3.12.1 Three growth options were selected at Pre-Deposit stage on the basis of being representative of identified scenarios, reasonable in relation to the evidence base and sufficiently diverse to enable different strategic planning responses. With reference to the Bridgend LDP Review SA Framework (Appendix C to SD90), the Preferred Option (Mid-Growth) was selected at Pre-Deposit stage and now underpins the growth and spatial strategy detailed in Strategic Policy 1 of the

RLDP. It is considered likely to perform best by supporting economic growth, enabling the delivery of key infrastructure, securing affordable housing and improving connectivity without resulting in over-development.

3.12.2 Four spatial options for accommodating the target level of housing and employment growth within the County Borough were developed to inform the preparation of the RLDP Preferred Strategy. As detailed previously in Appendix D of the SA of Pre-Deposit Documents (RLDP Preferred Strategy), 2019 (SD88), the spatial options were selected based on the Bridgend Settlement Assessment 2019 (revised 2021) (SD 91), and the need for 'good growth' linked to a suite of spatially based priorities. This demonstrated that the identified four spatial options were appropriately formulated in relation to identified growth requirements and key sustainability issues. Therefore, at Pre-Deposit stage, spatial options 1, 2 and 3 were considered to constitute reasonable alternatives to the Preferred Option, option 4, which was subsequently developed into a new growth and spatial strategy articulated through Strategic Policy 1 within the Deposit Plan. No other reasonable alternative spatial options could be identified as other possible options would either fail to accommodate the target growth level or fail to address identified key sustainability issues.

3.12.3 The SA process informed the selections of the growth and spatial strategy by providing a mechanism through which the positive and negative effects of each option could be predicted and compared. In accordance with core SEA requirements, all growth and spatial options identified at Pre-Deposit stage were subject to an equal and proportionate level of assessment. As the key parameters of the growth and spatial strategy (now articulated within Strategic Policy 1 of the RLDP), are derived from the preferred spatial and growth options selected at Pre-Deposit stage, reasonable alternative options to the proposed strategy were already assessed and no further consideration of them was required at Deposit Stage. Section 7.2 and Appendix D of Bridgend LDP Review SA Framework SD90 therefore sets out a proportionate assessment of the growth and spatial strategy articulated through Strategic Policy 1 – Regeneration & Sustainable Growth Strategy of the RLDP.

3.12.4 A high-level and GIS based review of sustainability constraints affecting the proposed Sustainable Growth and Regeneration Areas was also carried out to support development of the RLDP Deposit Plan. The purpose of this analysis was to inform the delineation of the Growth and Regeneration Areas, demonstrate that these components are themselves reasonable alternative options (as opposed to being non-reasonable), for inclusion within the RLDP Deposit Plan, and support the creation of masterplan development principles for strategic site allocations within each Growth Area (refer to Appendix D of SD90). Detailed SA of individual candidate sites, including the strategic sites now

proposed for allocation through SP2 and PLA1 – PLA5, was undertaken separately and is provided in Appendix G to the Bridgend LDP Review SA Framework SD90 – SA of Candidate Sites & Infrastructure.

3.12.5 Overall, the Inspector's Report concluded that:

“the SA/SEA of the RLDP's allocations has considered reasonable alternatives, both in terms of scale, siting and design options and that the reasons for selecting site allocations, and rejecting others, are clear and logical” (para 2.6); and

“I am satisfied that the SA/SEA process undertaken, including the consideration of reasonable alternatives, is robust, meets procedural and legal requirements and is consistent with the requirements of PPW” (para 2.7).

3.13 The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Plan.

3.13.1 Regulation 37 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended), requires that the Council prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (**AMR**). This is required to monitor specific items, as well as identifying where and why the policies of the Plan are not being implemented as intended.

3.13.2 Regulation 17 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004 requires the LPA to monitor the significant environmental effects of the Plan with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action. The monitoring of the Plan and its significant environmental effects is therefore a statutory requirement which will be undertaken through the AMR process.

3.13.3 A Monitoring Framework is set out in Appendix 4 of the adopted RLDP (2018-33). The monitoring indicators are categorised by RLDP Objectives and cross reference relevant SA Objectives. This framework will allow for an ongoing assessment of whether the underlying RLDP objectives remain valid or whether the prevailing economic, social, environmental or cultural circumstances have significantly altered since the preparation of the Plan. In essence, the monitoring framework will allow an assessment of the implementation of the RLDP strategy, policies and proposals.

3.13.4 As outlined within the RLDP Deposit Plan Full SA, 2021 (SD90), whilst they relate to individual topics, the RLDP's four Strategic Objectives and supporting Objectives provide strong coverage of the SA Objectives. As such, there are

clear synergies between the SA/SEA Monitoring Process and the RLDP Monitoring Process. These have been maximised through due consideration of the 14 SA/SEA Objectives in the development of the RLDP Monitoring Framework.

3.13.5 Therefore, in addition to monitoring Plan delivery and effectiveness, the Monitoring Framework specifically includes mechanisms to monitor the likely significant effects of the RLDP on the environment, as predicted through the SA process. This includes mechanisms to monitor whether the masterplan development principles (Policies PLA1 – 5) and SA policy level mitigation (SP1 and Schedules in Appendix 6), are subsequently properly implemented.

3.13.6 The Monitoring Framework also includes mechanisms to assess whether key policies fundamental to delivering the Plan are being implemented as intended and with no unforeseen adverse consequences. Specifically, the 14 SA Objectives will be assessed against the indicators that have been identified as most relevant as detailed within Appendix 6 of the adopted RLDP.

3.13.7 An integrated approach to monitoring the implementation and significant environmental effects of the Plan will be undertaken on an annual basis through the AMR process. The first AMR for the RLDP will be published and submitted to Welsh Government by 31st October 2025.