

Community Scrutiny

11th May 2018

Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance – Wind and Solar Energy Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- To consider the Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance set out within the report for formal public consultation for 6 weeks.
- To note the publication of the Cumulative Impact of Wind Turbines on Landscape and Visual Amenity Guidance and the Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Studies as supporting documentation to the SPG and the forthcoming Revised LDP.

Reasons:

- To reflect the requirements and commitments set out within the Adopted Local Development Plan.
- To support implementation of, and provide guidance and elaborate on the policies and provisions of the Adopted Local Development Plan.

To be referred to the Executive Board / Council for decision: YES

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr Mair Stephens

Directorate : Environment

Designations :

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Scrutiny

11th May 2018

Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance – Wind and Solar Energy Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan

1. Brief Summary of Purpose of Report.

This Report presents the Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Wind and Solar Energy prepared to support and elaborate on the policies and provisions of the adopted Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP). The aim of the report is to seek authorisation to undertake formal public consultation on the SPG and then formally adopt it, reflecting the commitment set out within the LDP, particularly in Appendix 3.

It should be noted that it is not the purpose of the SPG to devolve policy matters from the LDP, SPGs set out more detailed guidance on how the policies of the LDP will be applied.

2. Background

The Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted by Full Council on the 10th December 2014 along with 8 thematic and site specific SPG prepared concurrent to the LDP. Since this date, the LDP has been the development plan for the County (excluding that area contained within the Brecon Beacons National Park). The LDP is one of the statutory high level strategies which must be prepared and approved for the County, setting out in appropriate land-use terms, the priorities expressed in the Integrated Community Strategy.

In recognising the role of SPG in supporting the Plan, and as a means of providing more detailed policy guidance, Appendix 3 of the LDP sets out a series of proposed SPG for preparation during the Plan period through to 2021. These SPG, range from thematic policy guidance through to site-specific Development Briefs. Each of these is accompanied by an indicative date for their publication and represents commitments within the Plan. The preparation of the SPG, are key indicators in the LDP Monitoring Framework and will be subject to reporting to the Welsh Government through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

3. Draft Wind and Solar Energy SPG

The appended Draft SPG provides further, more detailed guidance for facilitating the development of renewable energy schemes, focusing in particular on wind and solar energy. The SPG is generally split over three sections: general guidance; onshore wind; and solar. The SPG is not applicable to wind farm schemes located within the two Strategic Search Areas within the County (SSA G: Brechfa Forest and SSA E: Pontardawe) as guidance for renewable energy schemes within the Strategic Search Areas is covered within Technical Advice Note 8.

General guidance is provided for onshore wind and solar energy applications on issues such as pre-applications, Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitat Regulations Assessment, grid connection, community energy, community benefits, agricultural land, ecological considerations, mitigation and enhancement.

The Onshore Wind section includes issues such as landscape, cumulative impact, design considerations, noise, ecological considerations, historic environment and highways. The Solar section includes issues such as landscape, design considerations, noise, cumulative impact, ecology, historic environment and highways.

Two studies are referred to in the guidance as providing more detailed information on the consideration of landscape aspects of the SPG, which are: the Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire: Cumulative Impact of Wind Turbines on Landscape and Visual Amenity Guidance; and the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Studies for Wind Turbine Developments and Solar PV Developments. These Studies are not intended for public consultation, they have been commissioned by the Council to provide support to these policy areas.

4. Supporting Studies

The following two studies have been produced and support the content of the SPG:

- Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire: Cumulative Impact of Wind Turbines on Landscape and Visual Amenity Guidance
- Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Studies

The content of the above studies are available for inspection from Planning Services and will be formally published to coincide with the consultation on the SPG.

Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire: Cumulative Impact of Wind Turbines on Landscape and Visual Amenity Guidance - This guidance provides good practice guidance for applicants, developers, consultees and Council officers in the Pembrokeshire County Council planning area. The guidance was commissioned by this Council in conjunction with Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council and was published in 2013.

Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Studies - The Studies have been commissioned and completed by Anthony Jellard Associates. The Studies address the landscape capacity and sensitivity of Carmarthenshire to: -

- Wind turbine development
- Solar PV development

The overall purpose of the studies is to provide guidance to inform the appropriate design and siting of wind turbine development through setting out a baseline assessment of landscape and visual sensitivity and capacity in relation to different development classifications.

The studies will form a useful tool for the Local Planning Authority's Planning Policy and Development Management Officers in the assessment of the landscape and visual effects of proposals for wind turbine and Solar PV development. The studies are intended to provide a baseline to help achieve a context for consistent and robust decision making, by both officers and elected members, when considering planning applications and as guidance for developers.

The studies use a common methodology deriving data from LANDMAP aspect datasets, to provide baseline assessments of landscape and visual susceptibility and landscape value through 80 distinct landscape units covering the entire authority area. Assessments of the sensitivity of each landscape unit to different development classifications, primarily based upon scale, are derived from the baseline assessments. The studies also provide landscape unit specific comments on landscape capacity and guidance for siting, and overall guidance on design, site context, and siting.

5. Next Steps

The Draft SPG will be published for formal public consultation for a six week period, during this time

comments will be invited from a range of organisations, interested parties and members of the public. There is no identified requirement in relation to the length of any consultation in respect of SPG within National Planning Policy and statutory regulations. However, the use of the six week period proposed within this report would ensure that any consultation is consistent in length with the statutory consultation period for an LDP set out within Local Development Plan Regulations.

The Draft SPG and the representations received will be reported back to a future meeting of Council for consideration prior to its formal adoption.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?	YES
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: L Quelch

Head of Planning

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	NONE	YES	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The provisions of the SPG are compatible with Carmarthenshire County Councils well-being objectives and notably, Objective 12: Looking after the environment now and for the future. It also aligns with the national Well-being Goals set out within the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 in relation to the creation of 'A Prosperous Wales'.

The Draft SPG is an elaboration on the policies and provisions of the Local Development Plan. Through land use planning policies, the LDP seeks to promote the principles of sustainability and sustainable development by facilitating the creation of communities and local economies which are more sustainable providing access to local services and facilities and reducing the need to travel.

The integration of sustainability as part of the preparation of the LDP is reflected in the undertaking of a Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment reflecting national and international legislative requirements. This iterative approach ensures sustainability is at the heart of the Plan and that it is reflective of the requirements emanating from the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act 2015 and the emerging Carmarthenshire Well-being Plan.

Finance

Financial costs (including production of the final SPG, translation, publicity etc.) are covered through the financial provisions in place - including reserves.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: L Quelch

Head of Planning

1. Scrutiny Committee

11th May 2018 – Community Scrutiny.

2. Local Member(s)

Members will be consulted as part of the SPG's preparatory process.

3. Community / Town Council

Community and Town Councils represent a statutory consultee within the LDP process and will be consulted as part of the SPG's preparatory process.

4. Relevant Partners

Statutory consultees, the public, interested parties and key agencies and bodies will be consulted as appropriate.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Contributions have been sought from relevant internal consultees to ensure the draft SPG reflects the specialist and detailed nature of their subject matter.

Title of Document	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan	http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/planning-policy/local-development-plan-2006-2021/
Annual Monitoring Reports	http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-services/planning/planning-policy/annual-monitoring-report-amr/
Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire: Cumulative Impact of Wind Turbines on Landscape and Visual Amenity Guidance	Available to view at Planning Services with formal publication to coincide with the consultation on the SPG (details to be confirmed).
Landscape Capacity and Sensitivity Studies	Available to view at Planning Services with formal publication to coincide with the consultation on the SPG (details to be confirmed).