

Development Strategy
Rural Employment Premises
Joint Venture Agreement

1. Introduction

Carmarthenshire County Council (“the Council”) and The Welsh Ministers both being (the JV Parties”) have entered into a Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) with the aim of delivering industrial units to satisfy demand at any of ten rural towns within the county of Carmarthenshire. This Development Strategy has been agreed by the parties which shall be subject to the terms of the JV and provides greater detail on how its overall objectives are to be delivered, sites identified and works to be undertaken.

2. Strategic Context

The Council, along with its partners, have produced a new plan to support the economic recovery and growth of Carmarthenshire. This action arises from that plan and the previous Report and Recommendations of the Carmarthenshire Rural Affairs Task Group – June 2019 (aka Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward Strategy) and this work involves developing an Economic Growth Plan for each of the ten identified towns. A link to the Economic Recovery Plan and Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward Strategy is below: -

<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/moving-rural-carmarthenshire-forward/>

<https://democracy.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/documents/g4300/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Jun-2021%2010.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

The ten rural towns identified in the Strategy are Llandovery, St Clears, Whitland, Newcastle Emlyn, Laugharne, Cwmamman (Amman Valley), Llanybydder, Kidwelly, Llandeilo and Cross Hands.

The relevant recommendation of the moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward for this development strategy is “to develop business incubator or commercial accommodation in rural areas”.

The Welsh Government (WG) has published its Economic Action Plan: Property Delivery Plan (PDP), which acts upon:-

- strong grounds for public sector intervention in delivery of property infrastructure.
- differing focus of interventions, depending on location.
- WG and public sector partners should plan to support the delivery of at least 900,000 square feet of new floorspace over a three-year rolling period.

The plan is underpinned by the following reports prepared for WG by SQW: -

- Commercial Property: Market Analysis and Potential Interventions A report to the Welsh Government - March 2020
- Commercial property: Market analysis and potential interventions Supplementary note in the light of the Covid-19 crisis - June 2020

These documents are available via the following link:

<https://gov.wales/commercial-property-market-analysis-and-potential-interventions>

The delivery of industrial premises for letting at any of these ten rural towns would contribute to the delivery of both the PDP and the Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward Strategy. The identification of suitable sites and the type of development will also be informed by the PDP and the Ten Towns Economic Growth Plans.

3. Delivery Objectives

The overall objective of the JVA is set out in clause 3 of the JVA. This and the aspirations and objectives of this Development Strategy will be delivered by the actions set out in an Implementation Action Plan and the Parties via the Project Coordination Group (as referred to in JVA) will prepare and regularly review and where appropriate revise the same. The Implementation Action Plan will form the basis of future investment decisions and include a list of agreed sites identified at any of the ten rural towns, what actions are to be undertaken to deliver agreed objectives at each of those sites and which JV Party (the default being the Council) shall be responsible for taking the lead role in co-ordinating those actions. Decisions on the identification of sites in the ten rural towns and interventions required to deliver industrial units will be in response to satisfying demand identified in the Economic Growth Plans for the ten rural towns.

4. Initial Prioritisation

Initial prioritisation of sites to be brought forward under the JV agreement in line with the aforementioned Strategies and objectives are to be chosen based on an assessment of demand and deliverability.

Following an exercise to ascertain demand and deliverability it has been agreed by both parties that phase one priorities for the JV should include:

- Llandeilo
- Newcastle Emlyn
- One of Llanybydder or Llandovery

5. Sustainability & Cross Cutting Themes

a) Sustainability

As a minimum, all developments must achieve the requirements of the Welsh Government's Sustainable Buildings Standards, which is summarised in the below table and available at the following link:

<https://gov.wales/sustainable-building-standards>

Welsh Government's Sustainable Buildings Standards Table

A BREEAM rating or an equivalent quality assured scheme may be required based on building floor area.

Building floor area	Policy requirement
<=250m ²	Exempt
251 to 1,000m ²	No BREEAM required Part L+10%* required (10% improvement over the Target Emission Rate (TER) for current Part L of the Building Regulations)
1001 to 2000m ²	BREEAM 'Very Good' with 'Excellent' for Energy Credits (ENE01)
2001+m ²	BREEAM 'Excellent'

However, to support the Welsh Government's decarbonisation agenda and in response to its Climate Emergency declaration made in April 2019, and the Council's (*details of any related policies required here*), opportunities to improve on the performance of developments above that provided by the Welsh Government's Sustainable Buildings Standards should be adopted to achieve lower carbon emissions, especially for those developments undertaken directly by the JV Parties. Furthermore, to meet the Welsh Government's (*and Council's?*) objectives for green growth, delivery under this JVA should aspire to provide a new generation of employment premises built to net zero carbon in use standards to accommodate ambitious businesses and provide work environments fit for the 21st century.

b) Welsh Language

The Welsh language is a living language across our ten rural towns and our communities and is a fundamental part of many of our businesses, not only in the workplace but while creating products and providing services. It's an integral part of the business offer.

According to the Welsh Language Commissioner's research paper, 'Welsh in the shopping basket', 68% of consumers like seeing the use of the language within business. The language is seen as a viable service that can be of advantage to local businesses.

Carmarthenshire County Council also holds a statutory responsibility to provide services and promote the Language through the Welsh language Standards. We must provide opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language and ensure that the Language is treated no less favourably than the English language. Responsibilities also include bilingual information, marketing, and internal /external signage. Further information on the Standards can be viewed here:

[The Welsh language Standards](#) Carmarthenshire County Council have prepared a 'Welsh language in Business' guide, in partnership with the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner's Office. The guide offers practical support and guidance and also signposts to local organisations:

[The Welsh language in Business](#)

c) Inclusive design

The JV Parties have legal obligations to ensure that their policies, practices, procedures and working arrangements support the equality and well-being of disabled people. These are set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

To deliver on these equality obligations and the objectives of the JV Parties, appropriate design consideration is to be given to the needs of all occupiers and visitors to the new industrial units. In doing so, the JV Parties will use the Social Model of Disability.