

Strategic Development Plans Manual – Informal Consultation Summary for CJC – December 2022

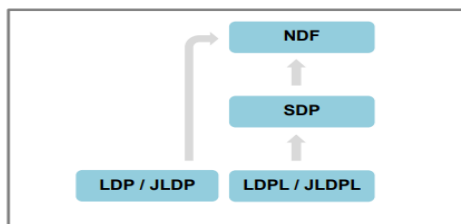
Background

- Welsh Government (WG) have prepared a draft of the Strategic Development Plans (SDP) Manual for an informal stakeholder consultation running until 31st December 2022.
- Formal consultation will take place on the document for 12 weeks in Summer/Autumn 2023.
- Aim of the manual is to provide a practical resource for CJCs and others involved in the SDP process – it sets out practical guidance on how to prepare, monitor and revise an SDP.
- The manual follows the same format as the current Local Development Plan (LDP) manual.

Legislative/Regulatory Background flagged in manual

- Notes primacy of National Development Framework (NDF) - Future Wales – all SDPs and LDPs prepared in Wales have to be in general conformity
- LDPs must be in conformity with both SDP and NDF

Diagram 2.5: Hierarchy of General Conformity



- Legislative and regulatory background (Local Government Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and The Town and Country Planning (Strategic Development Plan) (Wales Regulations 2021
- SDP must specify plan period – guidance suggests SDP plan period should be 25 year minimum, with an operational plan period of at least 20 years when submitted for public examination.
- SDP ceases to be a plan on expiry of plan period.
- SDP must be accompanied by Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Health Impact Assessment currently voluntary but WG advice is should be undertaken – suggest Integrated Sustainability Appraisal to combine.
- SDP should contain a suite of diagrams and maps that comprise the Proposals Map, including both diagrammatic, schematic and/or detailed Ordnance Survey (OS) based maps. Specific allocations above set thresholds can be expressed explicitly, ie via a red line site boundary, or as ‘Areas of Search’.
- Once SDP adopted LDP ‘Lites’ can commence (not until then) although evidence could be gathered once SDP at Deposit stage.
- Tests of soundness are included in the Manual. (1. Does the plan fit? 2. Is the Plan appropriate? 3. Will the Plan deliver?)
- Inspector’s Report is binding for CJC – CJC must accept changes required.
- CJC must undertake monitoring and review SDP no longer than 6 years from date of adoption.

Key Stages of Plan production (reflects LDP approach)

- Delivery Agreement (including Community Involvement Scheme) must be approved by resolution of CJC before submission to WG – Must be publicised and copies available for inspection at Principal Office(S) of the CJC. No formal consultation requirement but advised to consult for 6 weeks. SDP manual proposes that SDP should be capable of being prepared and adopted in approximately 5 years (see example timetable in Table 4.6)
- Call for strategic locations and sites – CJC to determine threshold and include in call eg stating that allocations will be above X in size – will need different thresholds for retail, housing and employment and to consider what type of sites are requested. Call should be accompanied by constraints map.

Table 4.6: The Timetable

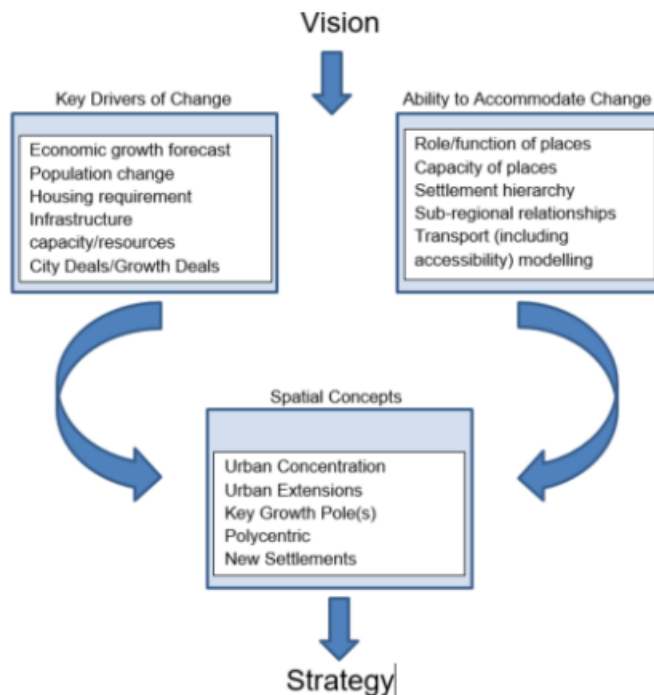
Key Stage		Timescales
Definitive		
Stage 1	Delivery Agreement Preparation and submission	Up to 4 weeks for WG approval (Usually shorter)
Stage 2	Pre-Deposit Preparation and involvement	Approximately 3 years
Stage 3	Preferred Strategy Public consultation	
Stage 4	Deposit plan Public consultation	Approximately 1 year
Stage 5	Submission	
Indicative		
		Approximately 12 months in accordance with Planning Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) Procedural Guidance
Stage 6	Examination	
Stage 7	Inspector's Report	
Stage 8	Adoption	
		Total plan preparation time <u>5 YEARS</u>

Note: Focussed Changes can be added in exceptional circumstances post Deposit (see paragraph 7.3)

Note: For Inspector to determine whether Matters Arising Changes consultation (MACs) is required post Examination (see page 218)

Content of SDPs

Diagram 3.1: Key Aspects Shaping an SDP



- Overall vision and strategy for Plan area – these should deliver on the issues facing each region.
- Clear **settlement hierarchy** and **strategic locations** for future growth and change
- Policies should be expressed as Regional, Sub-Regional or LPA basis (to allow development of LDP Lites)
- Fundamental components of LDP Lites such as placemaking, strategy, **scale of homes/jobs**, **identification of key settlements** and **core issues** must be set out in the SDP (paragraph 3.2)
- A housing requirement is required for the region as a whole – **as well as for each constituent LPA within the region (paragraph 3.16) more details page 44**
- Placemaking and design policies
- Regional retail hierarchy
- Strategic green wedges
- Rural policy if required
- Strategic sites and masterplans
- Gypsy and Travellers – establish numerical need for SDP and disaggregate for each LPA
- Clarify Green belt if applicable
- Standardised region wide development management policies where appropriate

Adapted from Table 4.2 – Content and Structure of SDP

Title
Plan Period
Sub-title
Summary and Contents
Introduction
Regional Strategy
Sub-regional strategy and policies
LDPL ‘Framework policies’
Regional Development Management policies
Reasoned justification of policies
Areas of search / strategic sites
Monitoring Framework
Housing Trajectory (Appendix)
Implementation and Delivery (Appendix)
Appendices
Glossary
Proposals map
Other diagrams

Evidence required

- Manual states that CJsCs should prepare audit of evidence used for LDP preparation and generate standard methodologies for evidence formulation/collation.
- Data captured and recorded should be on single IT system.
- Evidence gathered should be relevant, proportionate and focussed.
- Evidence gathering should be front loaded to inform Preferred Strategy if possible.

Specific reference made to following documents:

- Constraints Map to inform Call for Sites (showing flood risk, BMV, Minerals Safeguarding zones and environmental designations)
- SA assessment criteria to be issued alongside Call for Sites
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (note paragraph 6.22 should consider collective growth levels for homes **and** jobs).
- Strategic Viability Assessment
- Employment Land Review for Region
- Regional Economic Framework
- Infrastructure Plan (including education, health, green infrastructure, sewerage, water supply, energy and hard infrastructure). CJC to determine what is considered strategic infrastructure in SDP.
- Regional Transport Plan
- Settlement Hierarchy Role and Function
- Settlement Assessment
- Strategic Urban Capacity Study
- Regional Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
- Demographic Analysis
- Strategic Green Wedge Definition
- Consideration of Spatial Growth Concepts (eg Urban concentration/Urban Extension/Key Growth Poles/Polycentric Growth/New Settlements)
- Analysis of existing LDP commitments/allocations (where above threshold determined by CJC should be included in Proposals map to provide certainty

Suggestion is that Standardised Core SPG can also be prepared on areas such as Affordable housing viability and S106 calculation as well as Biodiversity, Renewable Energy, Retail frontages and criteria for G and T sites.