

Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033
Background Paper

BP46: Place plans



Deposit Plan

September 2025



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd.

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1. Introduction

The Local Development Plan (LDP) is first and foremost a land use plan that identifies site specific development opportunities in response to the needs of the community for more housing, jobs, services and facilities. It also seeks to preserve, protect and enhance where appropriate, those aspects of the built and natural environment which are important in defining the quality and sensitivity of the places we value, enjoy, move through, and live in. The ultimate aim of the LDP will be to deliver sustainable development.

The LDP is a vehicle for the Council to define its key growth and development priorities and will provide the ongoing framework of policies to guide decisions on planning applications.

2. Purpose of this Background Paper

This is one of a series of Background papers which have been put together to inform the production of the Conwy Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). The aim is to interpret the relevant evidence and guidance and identify the key issues that the Plan will need to address as well as possible policy approaches to be incorporated in the Plan.

Background papers contain data related to key subject areas covered by Topic papers which establish a baseline position and identify the key issues facing the County Borough which the RLDP will need to address.

This Background Paper covers key issues relating to Place Plans and is intended to provide an early opportunity for stakeholders and the public to have an input into the Plan.

3. Current LDP Position

The LDP was adopted in October 2013 and has to date been through the Annual Monitoring process four times. As the LDP predates the notion of Place Plans there is no reference to them in the current LDP.

4. Key Changes to Legislation and Policy

4.1. Place Plans

The notion of Place Plans was first introduced in 2013 in the Welsh Government's consultation paper 'Positive Planning: Proposals to reform the planning system in Wales'. They have since become a formal part of the Welsh planning system; namely

- The Development Plan Prospectus (2015),
- The Planning Prospectus Overview (2015) and
- Planning Policy Wales (2016).

Place Plans are intended to form a suite of national, regional and local policy documents all of which will form the planning policy framework for Conwy in the future.

4.2 Development Plan Prospectus

Why are we proposing to introduce 'Place Plans'?

Place Plans are proposed as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) that must be consistent with the LDP. They will not have development plan status, instead 'status' will be achieved by the link to the LDP. Place Plans will encourage greater community engagement in local planning decision making by allowing communities to shape their localities. Place

Plans will set out the more detailed thematic or site specific guidance to supplement the policies and proposals presented in an LDP. Town and Community Councils will be able to work pro-actively with LPAs so that resources are used more effectively.

Who will be responsible for preparing and delivering Place Plans?

Town and Community Councils will engage with local communities, business and the LPA to deliver Place Plans. We wish to identify pilot projects to demonstrate practical approaches.

How will communities and businesses be engaged in the preparation of Place Plans?

Place Plans should be prepared in consultation with the communities, businesses, and other interested consultees. All views will be taken into account and any changes made as a result, documented before the plan is finalised. It should then be approved by LPA Cabinet resolution and formally adopted by the LPA (following adoption of the LDP).

What issues and topics will Place Plans cover?

Place Plans could specify the finer details of planning proposals to ensure that they reflect local distinctiveness. This could take the form of a development brief, a more design orientated master plan or provide the location for small scale development where this was not already addressed by the LDP. They could also provide a steer to distribute funding raised from a Community Infrastructure Levy, potentially accessing 15% of funds to support local 'infrastructure'.

Will Place Plans have development plan status?

Place Plans will be Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the adopted Local Development Plan and must be in conformity with it. A Place Plan where produced in the way described above will be a material consideration when deciding planning applications.

When will they be prepared?

Place plans may be prepared in parallel or after adoption of the LDP. They can only achieve SPG status once the LDP is adopted. The LDP delivery agreement should provide an indication of when Place Plans will be prepared.

How will the implementation of Place Plans be supported?

In order to fully support the development of Place Plans and strengthen their position in local communities Conwy County Borough Council will be looking to sign up to the Placemaking Charter PlacemakingWales_Charter.pdf, The Placemaking Wales Charter has been developed in collaboration with the Placemaking Wales Partnership which is made up of stakeholders representing a wide range of interests. Additionally, Conwy County Borough Council, in collaboration with Planning Aid Wales has developed a Placemaking & Place Plans Compliance guide (BP 73). This guide explains what Place Plans are, how they can be prepared and what they will need to contain in order to be adopted by Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC) as formal 'Supplementary Planning Guidance'

4.3 Alignment with The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill

The principle that connects the Planning (Wales) Bill, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill and the Environment (Wales) Bill is our commitment to sustainable development as the best way to improve the well-being of Wales now and for future generations. The five key connections are:

- Working to a single unifying definition of a sustainable Wales;
- How we tackle larger than just local issues;
- Involving people in the decisions that affect them;

- Tackling climate change; and
- Welsh Language.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill proposes six well-being goals:

- A prosperous Wales;
- A resilient Wales;
- A healthier Wales;
- A more equal Wales;
- A Wales of cohesive communities;
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.

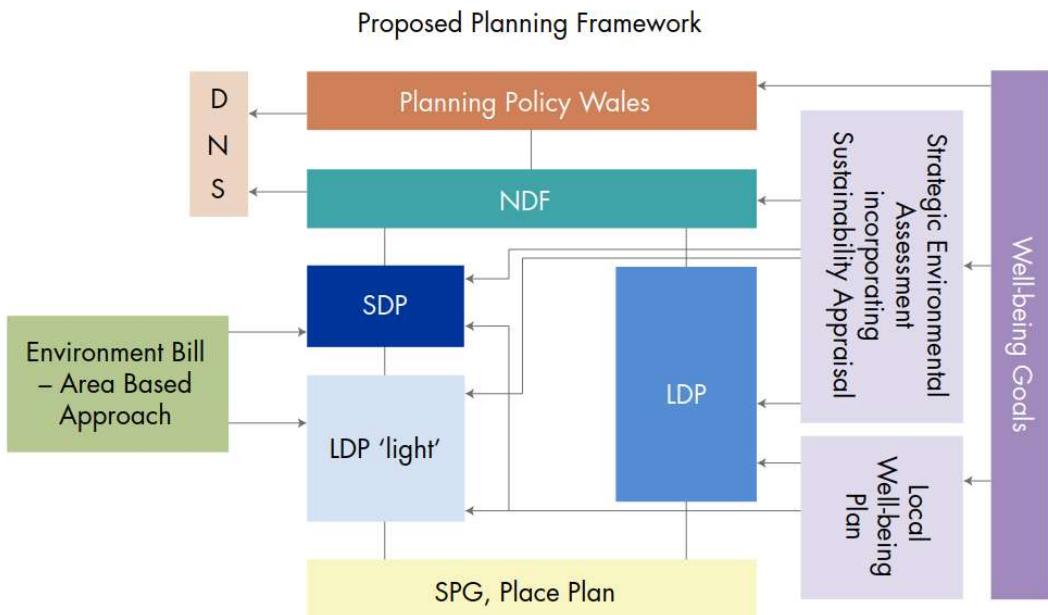
Five governance principles are also proposed:

- Long term;
- Integration;
- Collaboration;
- Prevention;
- Involvement.

Sustainable Development has been at the heart of the planning system, its policies and practices, since the introduction of PPW in 2002. The six well-being goals and five governance principles are already delivered when plans are prepared and decisions on planning applications made. The six well-being goals will inform and provide structure to our programme of working going forward to revise the LDP.

PPW and the NDF will provide the mechanism to translate the well-being goals into the proposed national planning framework and ensure SDPs and LDPs are shaped by the well-being objectives. Local Well-being Plans will further shape LDPs and help embed the well-being goals across the planning system. The preparation of all development plans (NDF, SDPs and LDPs) will require a Sustainability Appraisal to test policies against sustainability objectives. This will ensure that all planning decisions, including Ministerial decisions on Developments of National Significance (DNS), are taken in the context of sustainable development.

A summary of the proposed development plan system and the linkages to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Bill is set out below



4.4 Corporate Plan

The purpose of the Corporate Plan is to present Conwy County Borough Council's Priorities for the five years from 2017 to 2022. The priorities are the areas that the Council want to focus special attention on in order to support the achievement of the citizen outcomes.

The outcomes are as follows:

- People are educated & skilled
- People are safe and feel safe
- People have good quality homes they can afford and that make their lives better.
- People are healthy & active
- People live in a county that has a prosperous economy
- People value and look after the environment
- People live in a county where heritage, culture and the Welsh language thrive
- People in Conwy contribute to their community. They are informed, included and listened to.

5. LDP AMR findings and Review Report Conclusions

The notion of Place Plans was first introduced in 2013 in the Welsh Government's consultation paper 'Positive Planning: Proposals to reform the planning system in Wales'. They have since become a formal part of the Welsh planning system; namely the Development Plan Prospectus (2015), the Planning Prospectus Overview (2015) and Planning Policy Wales (2016).

Place Plans are intended to form a suite of national, regional and local policy documents all of which will form the planning policy framework for Conwy in the future. As such there is no reference in the current LDP although reference was made in the 2016 AMR where it was

noted the implications at national level resulting from the new Planning Act 2015 and the requirement to prepare an A55 Corridor Strategic Development Plan/Place Plans would impact on a review in the future.

A Place Plan produced now should fully comply with the policies and land-use allocations presented in the Adopted Conwy LDP (2007 – 2022). Place Plan preparation can also be aligned with Local Development Plan reviews and can inform and connect with the financial mechanisms in planning such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106. It is anticipated that the majority of Place Plans in Conwy are likely to come forward through the LDP Review process, where more opportunity will arise through robust evidence to identify local specific policy and land-use requirements.

Place Plans are non-statutory documents. They may be prepared at the initiation of the local community and are a powerful tool to promote collaborative action and placemaking. Place Plans should support the delivery of LDP policies and are adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

Place Plans could specify the finer details of planning proposals as identified in an adopted LDP to ensure that they reflect local distinctiveness. This could take the form of a development brief, a more design orientated master plan or provide the location for small scale development where this was not already addressed by the LDP.

Local planning authorities should develop through their development plans a clear strategy and policies for retail development which seek to achieve vibrant, attractive and viable retail and commercial centres. They should set out a framework for the future of retail and commercial centres in their area which promotes a successful retailing sector supporting existing communities. The use of masterplans, development briefs or place plans can complement these strategies. In developing strategies, plans and policies to revitalise and increase the attractiveness of existing centres, local planning authorities should consult the private sector and local communities and should consider the character of historic centres and conservation areas and any plans already in place to manage them.

They could also provide a steer to distribute funding raised from a Community Infrastructure Levy, potentially accessing 15% of funds to support local ‘infrastructure’.

Place Plans should be prepared in consultation with the communities, businesses, and other interested consultees. All views will be taken into account and any changes made as a result will be documented before the plan is finalised.

6. Updated LDP Evidence Base

To aid the Council’s mentoring role and assist T&CCs in the preparation process the following suite of supporting Place Plan documentation has been created:

- Conwy Place Plan Toolkit ‘Shaping Conwy’s Communities’
- Conwy Place Plan Toolkit Summary

The Conwy Toolkit is also supported by an animated promotional video and bespoke Place Plan website, which will also be made available when launched. In addition to the areas identified in the Conwy Toolkit, the Planning Policy Service will also provide further supporting guidance as it progresses and as lessons are learnt. For example, further supporting guidance is already underway to support communities in various subject areas e.g. funding avenues and processes, community engagement tools, site assessment and evidence gathering tools.

7. Potential Land Use Policies and Proposals

Place Plans are a way to address land use and development issues and concerns at the local, community level, as well as to achieve local aspirations. They should set out more detailed thematic or site specific guidance to supplement the policies and proposals presented in the Local Development Plan (LDP). As such they are intended to be produced post adoption of the LDP. For example, a Place Plan produced now should fully comply with the policies and land-use allocations presented in the Adopted Conwy LDP (2007 – 2022).

Place Plan preparation can also be aligned with Local Development Plan reviews and can inform and connect with the financial mechanisms in planning such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106. It is anticipated that the majority of Place Plans in Conwy are likely to come forward through the LDP Review process, where more opportunity will arise through robust evidence to identify local specific policy and land-use requirements.

Place Plans should become Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and act as a material consideration in determining planning applications alongside the LDP. They therefore must relate to the adopted LDP and only offer a finer grain of formal planning policy detail (thematic or site specific guidance).

For example, place plans could form the development briefs or a more design orientated master plan for already allocated sites in the LDP (e.g. Abergele South East Development Brief). They could address locally distinctive design, improve community facilities or provide for a town design guide. They could also identify local issues and assist small local development sites to inform the LDP review. As a further example, a Place Plan could be used to support a LDP by identifying local infrastructure gaps that could later inform development contributions through Community Infrastructure Levy schedules and / or Section 106 Agreements to ensure that new development is supported by the necessary infrastructure. It is important to note that a Place Plan cannot allocate lands for development but can suggest lands for inclusion in the LDP Review. However, Place Plans can still be prepared by Communities to inform the LDP Review process in the future.

8. Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

Even though SPG is non-statutory and does not require a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations may apply to some types of SPG – for example some site briefs/master-plans/place plans. Where screening indicates that SEA applies and there are likely to be significant environmental effects, the local planning authority will need to ensure it has met the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

9. Conclusion

Place Plans are intended to be a material planning tool adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), and as such should be prepared in line with the Local Development Plan (LDP) and be limited to land use and policy development projects. Place Plans have an important role and should be prepared and led by Town & Community Council's working collaboratively with the Council and other internal and external departments. As a new concept they will require close monitoring going forward.

TWO ROUTES TO AGREEING & IMPLEMENTING YOUR PLACE PLAN

