

## LDP Review: Candidate Sites Assessment process

This document briefly sets out the site assessment process which will be used to assess all candidate sites submitted for inclusion in the Replacement Conwy LDP (RLDP). Assessment of larger sites will be prioritised, to enable inclusion in the Preferred Strategy if appropriate.

### Stage 1: Site submission and initial assessment

**Purpose: To identify sites that are unsuitable for allocation, using existing available data to highlight constraints at a high level.**

Sites are submitted to the authority for consideration for inclusion in the RLDP, either through the online site submission form, by email or by post, as detailed on the RLDP website [www.conwy.gov.uk/rldp](http://www.conwy.gov.uk/rldp)

Sites will normally be suggested by site owners or their agent, however third parties may also submit sites – although support of the landowner will be required for a site to be allocated. At stage 1, only basic details of a site are required, i.e. location plan. If the proposer wishes to provide additional supporting information or evidence to this will be beneficial. Proposers are not asked to specify the type of use they would like on their site should it be included in the RLDP; this is because it will be for the LDP process to identify which sites are needed for what purpose, depending on the preferred spatial strategy and growth requirement. Once site assessments are complete

#### Stage 1 assessment

The purpose of the stage 1 assessment is to undertake an initial desk-top analysis of the sites, using known constraint or designation information. The key purpose is to identify sites that are undevelopable due to the presence of significant constraints; in particular flood risk zones. In addition, this stage will filter out sites that are too small to allocate. The threshold for allocation of housing sites is 10 dwellings, or approximately 0.3 ha. Sites that are below this threshold will still be assessed and if appropriate may be included within settlement boundaries to provide windfall opportunities during the LDP period. So any sites that are either too small, or have constraints which would make development clearly contrary to national guidance, will be removed. All others that have some potential for development (even those that have numerous constraints, if there is a possibility that they could be overcome) will move forwards to the next stage, for consultation with statutory bodies, etc.

Constraints may prevent a site from being used for one purpose (e.g. housing) but still suitable for other uses. This is something that will be considered later on in the process. Once the complete list of developable sites and their relative constraints are known, the best sites in each location can be allocated for the purposes to which they are best suited.

Key things to be considered:

- Size – is the site large enough for allocation?
- Location – is the site well related to existing settlements?
- Constraints, such as:

- Flood risk<sup>1</sup>
- Environmental designations such as SSSI, SAC, etc.
- Open space
- Listed buildings/Conservation area
- Agricultural Land classification

Where this assessment indicates that a site is undevelopable, it will be removed from the site assessment process, and the proposer will be informed of this decision and the reasons for the site's removal. Otherwise the proposer will be informed that the site will be progressed to stage 2 assessment.

## Stage 2: Consultation with statutory bodies

**Purpose: to seek the views of statutory bodies on the suitability of proposed sites for allocation and determine whether, based on the comments received, the sites should progress to Stage 3.**

At this stage, sites will be sent to a range of consultees, including utility providers, NRW, relevant Council departments. Dependent on the results of this, sites may be deemed unsuitable for development, or further information may be requested from the applicants to demonstrate whether the site is developable. Constraints that were identified will be explored in further detail, to determine whether the issues can be overcome.

### Stage 2 assessment

Officers assigned to each site will receive responses from the consultees and in some cases may need to follow this up by seeking further information or clarification from both the site proposer and consultee. Subject to the responses received, officers will need to determine whether sites are:

- Deliverable – responses from consultees do not indicate difficulties in bringing forward the site, or that there are constraints relating to this site, but these are not unsurmountable. Progress to stage 3.
- Undeliverable – constraints are so significant that they cannot be reasonably overcome – therefore the sites will be removed at stage 2 and the proposer informed of this decision.

## Stage 3: Consultation with North Wales Minerals & Waste Planning Service

**Purpose: to assess sites based on response from NWM&WPS.**

Sites remaining in the process will be sent to NWM&WPS for consultation, it identify whether any sites are likely to be affected by existing or proposed minerals or waste designations.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that in line with TAN15 6.2 greenfield C1/C2 is normally a showstopper and highly vulnerable (i.e. residential) development should not take place in C2 zone.

### **Stage 3 assessment**

Based on the response received from NWM&WPS, officers will determine whether any further sites need to be removed from the site assessment process, in which case the proposer will be informed of the site's removal. If the site remains deliverable, the proposer will be informed that the site remains in the site assessment process. Large 'strategic' sites will be considered for inclusion in the Preferred Strategy – stage 4, whilst smaller sites skip to stage 5.

### **Stage 4: Preferred Strategy**

**Purpose: to identify strategic sites for the Preferred Strategy, which will be subject to public consultation.**

The Preferred Strategy is the first stage of public consultation in the LDP process. This will include the high-level strategy of the RLDP, as well as strategic sites. For this purpose, strategic sites are taken to be those of over 3ha – to provide more than 100 dwellings or 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace. Key sites falling into this category will be selected for inclusion in the Preferred Strategy.

### **Stage 5: Ranking of deliverable sites**

**Purpose: to rank suitable sites in order of preference.**

At this point, all relevant information about sites should be available from the earlier stages, to enable officers to rank sites in order of preference, based on criteria including deliverability and sustainability to ensure that the most suitable sites are selected for allocation. Once the preferred strategy has been agreed, and the number of dwellings required on new sites will be known; this will allow the most suitable sites to be allocated to meet the identified housing need. Remaining sites that are considered deliverable will be ranked in order of preference to help site selection should they be required in the future.

### **Stage 5: Deposit Plan**

**Purpose: to place the RLDP on Deposit for public consultation.**

A full draft of the RLDP will be placed on 'Deposit' and made available for public viewing and consultation. Prior to submission of the RLDP to WG and the Planning Inspectorate. The Deposit plan will include all sites that are proposed for allocation.