

Our Ref.: 1074a/RAB

Date: 3rd April 2023

Forward Planning Manager
Place & Sustainability
Sustainability & Infrastructure Department
Carmarthenshire County Council
3 Spilman Street
Carmarthen SA31 1LE

Dear Forward Planning,

**Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan 2018-2033 – Second Deposit Draft
Objection on Behalf of Miss V. Davies, Mrs A. Davies, Mr & Mrs E. Jones
and Mr & Mrs J. Davies
Land at Waunfarlais Road, Llandybie, Ammanford**

We are instructed by Miss V. Davies, Mrs A. Davies, Mr & Mrs E. Jones & Mr & Mrs J. Davies to make a formal representation to the “soundness” of the Second Deposit Draft of the Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan.

Our clients made a formal Candidate Site Submission in August 2018, which was referenced **SR/082/002**, seeking inclusion of their land for future residential development within the settlement limits of Llandybie in the Replacement Local Development Plan. The Candidate Site comprises of part of a grazing field fronting the eastern side of Waunfarlais Road.

We have noted that the settlement limits within the Second draft Proposals Map have encircled the existing built development of Waunfarlais Road, which essentially comprises road frontage development off both flanks of the minor road, extending south from the railway level crossing of that highway to residential properties about Aberlash.

The Council have published a “Site Assessment Table” (January 2023) which provides details of the Council’s analysis of each received Candidate Site submission, and in the case of our clients’ submission, reasons why the site was not selected for inclusion within the draft settlement limits of Ammanford, as contained within the Deposit Draft.

We note that the submission successfully passed through Stage 1 (site compatible against the location of future growth presented in the Preferred Strategy) and Stage 2A (Initial Detailed Site Assessment) of the Council’s site assessment. However, it was rejected at Stage 2B (further detailed site assessment), for reasons reported as follows:

“Development of the site would result in a ribbon patten of development contrary to general planning principles. Furthermore, the access roads to the site falls within the C2 flood zone as identified in the TAN15 Development Advice Maps.”

Our clients consider the LDP is “unsound” and should be changed, as it fails to meet the tests for “soundness,” in that the Plan “is not appropriate,” and “will not deliver,” as defined by the Planning Inspectorate’s LDP Examinations Procedural Guidance.

Specifically, our clients consider that the draft settlement limits for Llandybie, as defined under Policy SD1 “Settlement Limits”, **should be amended to include the land as edged in red upon the extract of the Proposals Map, as reproduced below in Figure 1.**

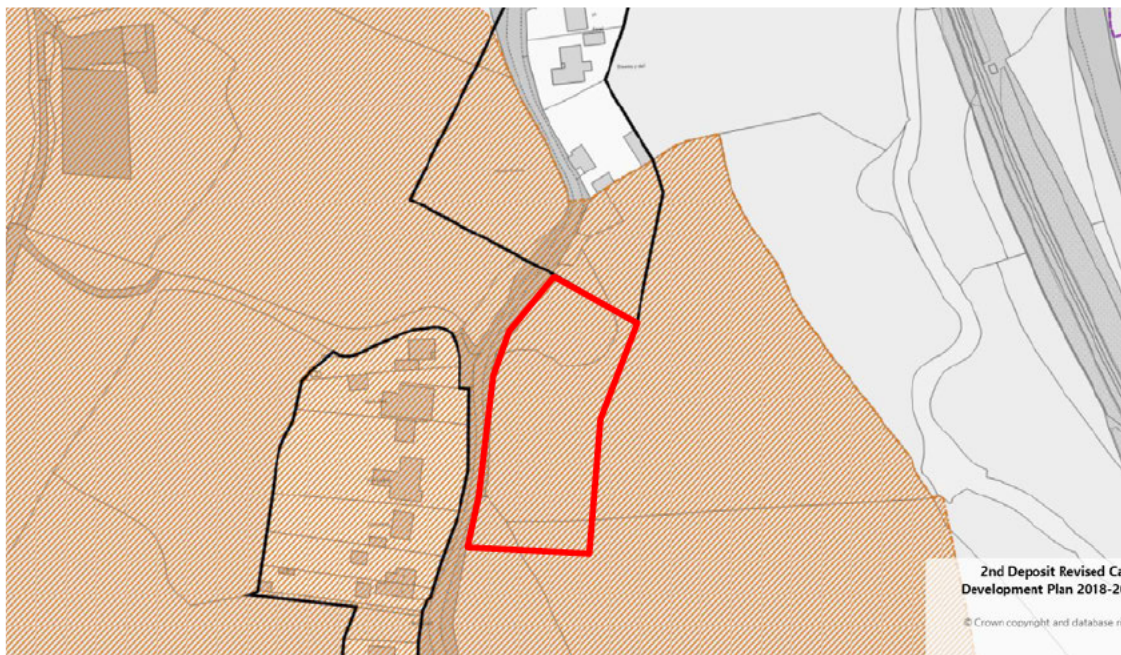


Figure 1 – Extract from Proposals Map with Representation site edged in red

This formal representation letter supplements the following documents which comprise a complete submission to the Second Deposit Draft Consultation stage:

- Completed Deposit LDP Representation Form
- Completed Sustainability Appraisal form
- Location plan and Indicative Site Layout plan

Response to Council's Reasons for Non-Inclusion of Site within Settlement Limits

1.0 Perception of Ribbon Development

- 1.1 The Council consider that the inclusion of the site within defined settlement limits would be likely to result in a ribbon pattern of development, contrary to general planning principles. In response, our clients would point to the prevailing spatial pattern of development at Waunfarlais Road. We consider that the setting of the draft limits to encompass the established form, which **is** "ribbon development" in character.
- 1.2 Waunfarlais Road includes for two groupings of frontage dwellings, the respective settlement limits of each are literally separated by only some 20 metres, as shown in Figure 1 above.
However, there are instances where the Council have allowed for the settlement limits to cross to the opposite, undeveloped flanks of the minor highway, and beyond the end of each grouping of properties. Such breaks from the established form have allowed the respective landowners of those undeveloped parcels to seek planning permission for further residential properties. We have noted that since the Candidate Site consultation stage completed in August 2018, two detached houses have been constructed with planning permission granted off the opposite flank of the minor road. Their presence is shown in the current version of Google Earth dated April 2021 at Figure 2 below.
- 1.3 The new development appears stark in contrast to the pre-development appearance of that field frontage, which took a form as that displayed at the Candidate Site. Google Earth from June 2018 illustrates the locality at Waunfarlais at the time of the Candidate Site stage (Figure 3).

The completion of those two new houses has dramatically reduced the gap between the two clusters of built development at Waunfarlais to a level where the further development proposed by the Candidate Site will mirror that experienced opposite, and not lead to any detrimental effects, in the form of ribboning, as suggested by the Council.



Figure 2 – Google Earth – April 2021



Figure 3 – Google Earth – June 2018 – pre-development off the western flank of Waunfarlais Road

- 1.4 An indicative site layout plan has been prepared to illustrate for 5 detached dwellinghouses across the site frontage, and is reproduced below as Figure 4. The setting of detached dwellinghouses set fronting the eastern flank of Waunfarlais Road will be complementary in form to adjacent established forms of residential development along this highway and particularly the existing and proposed form of frontage development off the opposite, western flank of Waunfarlais Road.



Figure 4 – Indicative site layout plan of proposed Representation Site

2.0 Proximity to Zone C2 Flood Zone & Means of Emergency Access / Egress

- 2.1 The Council indicate that the Candidate Site fails to be included within defined settlement limits as access to the site is likely to be gained through a “C2 flood zone as identified in the TAN15 Development Advice Maps.” The Council are referring to the designated flood zone of the River Lash as reproduced below as Figure 5.

The newly compiled “Flood Map for Planning” (Figure 6) also shows that extreme fluvial flood waters are predicted as flowing over the public carriageway of Aberlash Road, where that highway underpasses the Heart of Wales railway line. The Afon Marlais is also predicted to overtop its natural banks in an extreme event, and partly flow over the Waunfarlais highway.



Figure 5 – Extract from NRW DAM map for Waunfarlais / Aberlash locality with the Representation site edged in red

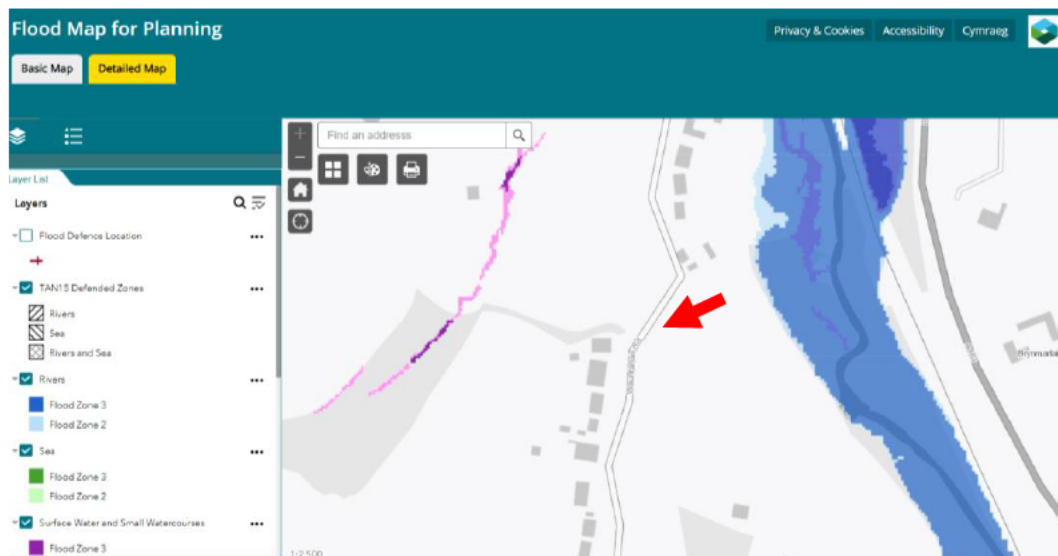


Figure 6 – Flood Map for Planning

2.2 Our clients would point to the recent implementation by Natural Resources Wales of their flood alleviation works to this section of the River Lash, as part of their capital expenditure programme for the town of Ammanford. NRW concluded that “a combination of measures is needed to reduce the risk of flooding. We believe that the best option is to construct a series of flood defence embankments and walls in

several areas in the town to contain flood water in the River Loughor, and installation of Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures to houses on Aberlash Road.

- 2.3 We therefore submit that flood prevention matters are being put into place by NRW to effectively manage the effects of flood waters during such extreme events. Furthermore, we submit that the land subject of this Representation **remains within Zone A, and as such is not subject to flood risk.** In accordance with TAN 15 advice, new residents could remain in their properties, as a place of safe refuge, and await those extreme floodwaters to recede. We submit that in any extreme event the depth of floodwaters at this point and are of a depth so as to not to prevent emergency vehicles from accessing Waunfarlais Road properties.
- 2.4 **The nearby presence of a flood plain did not prevent planning permission being granted for two new dwellinghouses opposite the Representation Site as shown above in Figure 2. Planning Permission E/34695 in May 2017. New residents and visitors to those new houses will have to travel “through floodwaters” as suggested by the Council, in response to this Candidate Site submission. However, no objections were received from Natural Resources Wales as to any potential risks to people or property as a result of nearby flood risk. The Council’s argument in relation to flooding at our clients’ representation site is therefore tantamount to being complete inconsistency when applied formally at Waunfarlais Road.**

3.0 **Overall Housing Supply at Ammanford with Deposit Draft**

- 3.1 The proposals under this Representation merely seek the addition of five residential units to the overall housing supply of Ammanford. Waunfarlais forms part of the principal service centre centring upon the Ammanford Cluster as defined within the Second draft LDP.
- 3.2 The new Draft Proposals Map reveals that the Council have allocated a total of 8 sites at Ammanford as shown below.

Ammanford (inc Betws and Penyban)		
PrC3/h1	Land at r/o No 16-20 & 24-30 Betws Road	9
PrC3/h2	Former Petrol Station, Wind Street	6
PrC3/h3	*Land at Gwynfryn Fawr	28
PrC3/h4	Tirychen Farm	150
PrC3/h5	Yr Hen Felin, Pontamman Road	6
PrC3/h6	Land Adjoining Maes Ifan, Maesquarre Road	18
PrC3/h33	Llys Dolgader	9
PrC3/h36	Betws Colliery	66

- 3.3 The above eight allocated sites proposed for Ammanford reveal a combined total of 292 units, however upon analysis it is clear Wind Street, Llys Dolgader, Gwynfryn and Yr Hen Felin have already been constructed, totalling 49 dwellings.
- 3.4 Of the other four Ammanford allocations, it is immediately noteworthy that they are predominately “roll-overs” from earlier Development Plans with those sites showing no commitment whatsoever to commit to the implementation of a planning application. We would comment on the two largest of those sites as follows:

Site PrC3/h4 - Tirychen Farm, Dyffryn Road, Penybanc - for 150 units.

Planning permission was last granted in 2014 for 289 dwellings, under Application E/21633. However, that permission was **only granted in outline form**. It subsequently lapsed, and the landowners sought to vary conditions upon that permission to extend the validity of the outline permission. That Variation of Condition application was finally approved in October 2019, under Application E/38686.

The recently approved Variation of Condition permission does little to display any real progress in the deliverability of the site. It merely amounts to the landowners seeking to continue to benefit from an outline planning permission at the site. Full planning permission was granted as far back as 1992 (D6/19332), which subsequently lapsed. The Land continued to be allocated within the Dinefwr Local Plan (1996), and subsequent Carmarthenshire Unitary Development Plan (2003). No progress was made in bringing the site forward, and yet it was allocated within the Local Development Plan in 2014. Consequently, **thirty years of Development Plan allocations** have elapsed without any signs of delivery of this site. Clearly, there is no historic demand for a site of this scale in this part of the Ammanford area. More physically challenging sites, such as the re-development of the Betws Colliery site at Betws and Cae Pound at Cross Hands West Tip have come forward long before Tirychen, and yet still the Council is prepared to allocate the site once again in a new Development Plan.

The decision to retain Tirychen Farm after a period of 30 years within the LDP is shown to be inconsistent, as does not sit with LDP Procedural Guidance which encourages Local Planning Authorities to only re-allocate sites based upon firm evidence of deliverability.

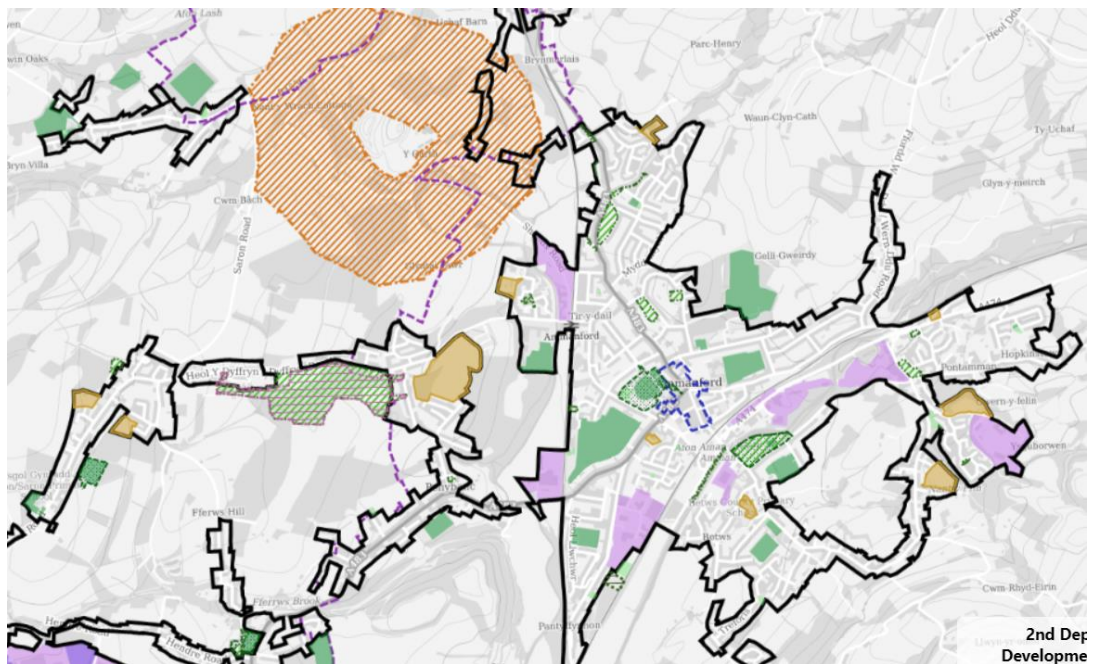


Figure 7 – wider view of Ammanford draft Proposals Map

3.5 Site Prc3/H36 - Betws Colliery – for 66 units

Outline planning permission was first granted for residential development on the allocation as far back as **2005** (Application E/09584), with reserved matters being granted in 2011 (Application E/24724). A Non-Material Amendment (Application PL/04568) has been granted in September 2022 for the 'Removal of chimneys and raising the height of window sills'.

The site was allocated in the *Carmarthenshire Local Development Plan (2014)* as part of a larger allocation (GA3/h9), and Allocation PDB27 of the *Carmarthenshire Unitary Development Plan (2006)*, which included the land south of Ffordd y Glowyr, which has been developed.

However, the northern element continues to be allocated for 66 units in the Second Draft LDP. This is despite having almost 20 years of support for the principle of residential development at the historic allocation from the Council, with **not a single housing unit has been delivered to date.**

In conclusion, this Representation to the Deposit Draft of the Revised LDP has sought to examine the Council's reasons for non-inclusion of a Candidate Site. It has successfully addressed two technical issues. The new dwellings' occupants will be able to access the A483 Ammanford Road via Aberlash Road where the NRW have embarked upon a series of flood prevention measures, with the aim to lessen the effects of fluvial flooding upon the locality. The site itself nevertheless remains flood-free.

This Report has also painted an inconsistent rationale applied by the Council in continuing to allocate historic allocations in the LDP, without the majority of those units having been brought forward over the last 20 years. Their continued retention within the Plan renders the Plan as undeliverable, contrary to Planning Policy Wales guidance. Those sites should be omitted, and more modest alternatives included such as that promoted at Waunfarlais Road.

Our clients have presented their indicative proposals to promote a frontage development of only four additional dwellinghouses. The proposals will be compatible with existing and proposed development along both flanks of Waunfarlais Road, and thus ensuring that future development respects the character and setting of the locality.

We respectfully request that this Representation be given careful examination, and consequently the defined settlement limits of this part of Ammanford /Llandybie realigned to include the Representation Site in the Proposals Map of the adopted Local Development Plan.

Yours sincerely,



Richard A. Banks
Director

Enc.

Cc client