

WELSH GOVERNMENT
Examination Hearing Statement

Snowdonia National Park
Local Development Plan
First Revision (Short Form Procedure)

Hearing Session 3 – 19^h July 2018

Chapters 3 & 4: The Natural, Cultural and Historic
Environment

Matters & Issues

1. Strategic Policy D ‘Natural Environment’:

a) Although no changes are being proposed to this policy, does it continue to fulfil its purpose in protecting natural resources, biodiversity, geodiversity and the special qualities of the National Park?

2. Dark Skies Reserve and Dyfi Biosphere Reserve (Development Policy 2):

a. The additional text within the Plan clearly recognises the importance of these designations. However, should the Plan acknowledge that development within certain parts of the National Park will inevitably have an impact on these designations?

b. Will the Dark Skies Reserve designation result in a ‘blanket approach’ to the assessment of developments? And should there be a differentiation between different areas of the National Park?

c. Do the policies provide sufficient clarity on the way in which development proposals, which are likely to impact on these designations, will be considered and where mitigation and compensation measures will be required? Should this be included within policy?

d. Does the Plan provide sufficient guidance to developers/applicants on what information they need to provide in support of any planning application? Should this be clarified within Development Policy 2?

The Welsh Government has no comments in respect of 1a – 1d.

3. Development Policy 3 ‘Energy’:

a. The changes to the Plan (supporting text to Development Policy 3) acknowledge the importance of hydro power stations and micro generation schemes. Although no changes are proposed to the policy, how will the plan assess future schemes?

b. The Plan recognises that the landscape of the National Park is sensitive to wind turbine developments. Does the Plan comply with National Policy regarding the thresholds for different technologies, and should the Plan provide additional guidance to developers on the nature and scale of proposed renewable energy schemes within the Park?

c. How will proposals on the boundary of the National Park within adjoining LPAs be assessed.

The Welsh Government has the following comments on Renewable Energy. What are the ‘planning considerations’ in the SPG? The policy should contain everything it needs to determine a planning application; in essence it is not appropriate to decant policy criteria to SPG. Some explanation on this matter would be beneficial to ensure

that the policy will work as intended. What are the 'considerations' in bullet point two? What part of the policy does it relate too? The policy is unclear in this respect and would benefit from further explanation.

The authority should include the Table set out in Appendix 2 of the revised REA within the LDP setting out the installed capacity for the plan period by technology to align with national policy. The monitoring framework should also reflect this approach. The authority should look at recently adopted LDPs on this basis prior the hearings sessions.

4. Minerals:

a. Do the changes proposed to Strategic Policies E1, E2 and E3 comply with national policy and provide a clear basis for dealing with developments on safeguarded aggregate or mineral deposits, as well as assessing new proposals for mineral extraction within the National Park?

b. Does the Plan provide sufficient guidance to developers/applicants on what information they need to provide in support of any planning application? Should this be clarified within the Plan?

The Welsh Government has the following comments in respect of Strategic Policy E: Minerals Safeguarding Policy. Policy E1 still only safeguards Category 1 mineral resources on the Proposals Map. WG Deposit objection remains as an objection as the policy should safeguard Category 1 & 2 mineral resources, as per Chief Planning Officer (CPO) Letter (14 November 2012) – see link to BGS Map which clearly shows Category 1 & 2 being safeguarded. This requires amendment.

Buffer Zones – Paragraph 3.2 (Background Paper 9 – Minerals, November 2017) has removed reference to 100m & 200m buffer zones. However, it is unclear if these have been amended on the Proposals Map in line with WG objection at Deposit stage.

5. Waste:

a. Does Development Policy 4 provide a clear framework for assessing applications for new waste management facilities?

b. Does the Plan provide sufficient guidance to developers / applicants on what information they need to provide in support of any planning application? Should this be clarified within Development Policy 4?

No outstanding concerns.

Cultural and Historic Environment

6. Strategic Policy Ff 'Historic Environment':

a) Is the reference to the Candidate World Heritage Sites within the policy and on the constraints map premature given that it is only included on a tentative list submitted to UNESCO?

b) How will planning applications within these areas be assessed during this interim period?

7. Development Policy 9 'Conversion and Change of Use of Rural Buildings'

a) What is meant by the term 'rural diversification scheme'? Should this be 'agricultural diversification' in line with Development Policy 20 for consistency? If so, should both policies cross refer to each other.

b) Should the policy provide clarification and further justification on the requirement for the payment of a commuted sum for open market dwellings? Should the policy cross refer to Strategic Policy Ch?

No comment.

8. Does the Plan provide a sound basis for implementation and monitoring of the natural, cultural and historic environment?

No comment.