

Swansea Local Development Plan

Settlement Boundary Review 2016



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The City and County of Swansea's (henceforth the County) countryside is a valuable resource that merits protection from inappropriate development. Because of the increasing development pressure that is being placed on the countryside, a robust planning policy framework is essential to reconcile appropriate rural development with the need to protect the countryside and to enable the necessary settlement growth in a sustainable and controlled manner.
- 1.2 The Council considers that the most effective way to achieve this is by defining clear, defensible boundaries around urban settlements in the form of 'settlement boundaries'.
- 1.3 The Swansea Unitary Development Plan (UDP, 2008)¹ has defined settlement boundaries. The UDP will be replaced by the Local Development Plan (LDP) for the period up to 2025. This assessment therefore seeks to take the UDP boundaries as a starting point and revise them where necessary for the purposes of effectively delivering the Local Development Plan (LDP) Strategy². The settlement boundaries will need to balance the need for growth to meet unprecedented housing requirements and the conservation of the countryside by allowing for sustainable new neighbourhoods, urban extensions and rounding off where appropriate. Beyond the settlement boundaries there will continue under the LDP to be specific Policies to protect the countryside from development which would harm its distinctive character.

2.0 Policy Background

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 8 2016

- 2.1 The importance of protecting the countryside is outlined in National Planning Policy³, para 4.6.states:

'The countryside is a dynamic and multi-purpose resource. In line with sustainability principles, it must be conserved and, where possible, enhanced for the sake of its ecological, geological, physiographic, historical, archaeological and agricultural value and for its landscape and natural resources, balancing the need to conserve these attributes against the economic, social and recreational needs of local communities and visitors.'
- 2.2 In accordance with National Planning Policy outlined in para 4.7.8 it is considered appropriate for the LDP to use development boundaries to define:
 - Those areas which are considered to be open countryside, where development must continue to be strictly controlled; and

¹ [Swansea - Unitary development plan \(UDP\)](#)

² LDP Final Preferred Strategy 2013

³ [Welsh Government | Planning Policy Wales \(Edition 8, January 2016\)](#)

- Those areas which are considered to be within the existing settlement where infilling or minor extensions may be acceptable (subject to relevant LDP policy)

2.3 Para 4.7.8 states:

‘Development in the countryside should be located within and adjoining those settlements where it can best be accommodated in terms of infrastructure, access and habitat and landscape conservation. Infilling or minor extensions to existing settlements may be acceptable, in particular where it meets a local need for affordable housing, but new building in the open countryside away from existing settlements or areas allocated for development in development plans must continue to be strictly controlled. All new development should respect the character of the surrounding area and should be of appropriate scale and design.’

2.4 Fundamental to the delivery of this overarching national planning policy is the definition of appropriately drawn boundaries around settlements which are seen as important development management tools, providing greater certainty to developers and communities alike.

Swansea UDP

2.5 Policy EV 22 defines the countryside of the County as all the land outside the built up settlements and identifies the built up areas with settlement boundaries and states that development beyond the settlement boundaries will not be permitted unless justified against Policies EV20 & EV21 New Dwellings in the Countryside and Rural Development.

2.6 As stated above, these settlement boundaries have been used as a starting point for revision in accordance with the methodology applied in Section 3 of this report.

Swansea LDP – Preferred Strategy and Pre-Deposit Proposals Map

2.7 The LDP sets objectives and policies to control land use development throughout the County over a plan period until 2025. Over this time the population of the County will grow which will in turn result in a demand for new homes and associated infrastructural requirements.

2.8 In order to achieve the vision and objectives of the LDP there is a particular focus on the provision of employment growth opportunities, regeneration and delivering good quality residential accommodation in suitable cohesive communities, whilst conserving the County’s valuable natural heritage, cultural and historic environments.

2.9 The delivering of the LDP vision and objectives has dictated the LDP spatial strategy and informed the settlement boundary review. The County’s

settlement pattern basically consists of a main urban area with outlying villages. The LDP growth strategy utilises this existing settlement pattern to provide for the required growth in the most sustainable manner and the settlement boundary has been positioned accordingly. For the urban area this involves the creation of a limited number of sustainable new neighbourhoods at Strategic Development Areas (SDAs), plus non-strategic medium scale settlement extensions and more dispersed and smaller allocations to round off the urban area. For villages, selected as being suitable to accommodate limited development, the settlement boundary has been positioned to allow for appropriate infill and rounding off of the settlement where compatible with the character and cohesion of the village. Rural exception sites primarily for Affordable Housing for Local Need are identified outside the settlement boundary and will only be permitted where specific circumstances can be met.

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 Using the above as guidance a thorough review of settlement boundaries has been undertaken, to ensure the delivery of sustainable patterns of development that will effectively deliver the LDP Strategy.
- 3.2 The village boundaries have been identified in a separate study⁴. The village boundaries required a separate approach as not all the villages have existing boundaries in the UDP. The remainder of this assessment is focussed only on the settlement boundary of the main urban area.
- 3.3 The purpose of the assessment is to ensure the application of a consistent approach to the definition of the urban area settlement boundary.
- 3.4 Amendments to the boundary comprise:
 - i. Minor amendments and necessary updates to the boundary (both inclusion and exclusion). Such amendments comprise:
 - Include curtilages of dwellings within settlement,
 - Include extant planning consents on the edge of the UDP settlement boundary which have been deemed as being part of the settlement,
 - Include small-scale development opportunities which would provide infill and rounding off opportunities that are logical in terms of being physically, functionally and visually related to the existing urban area – taking account of any environmental development constraints.
 - Include Facilities that serve the settlement such as recreation grounds and cemeteries
 - Exclude large infill plots where growth is not required
 - Exclude large residential curtilages
 - Exclude camping and caravan sites
 - Exclude rural exception sites for Affordable Housing for Local Needs

⁴ Add link to Village appraisal

ii. Appropriate boundary extensions to allow for the delivery of the LDP Strategy. Such sites have been identified through the candidate site assessment and allocation process. Amendments to the settlement boundary will be to allow for the allocation of:

- SDAs
- Non- strategic medium scale settlement extensions
- Smaller allocations (10 plus dwellings) to round off settlements.

3.5 The assessment has been undertaken on a ward by ward basis. Maps have been produced for each ward containing an element of the settlement boundary. Starting with the existing UDP settlement boundary a review has been undertaken using map and aerial photography data, information on extant planning permissions and candidate site submissions. The review has been undertaken initially as a desk top exercise followed by site visits. A list of standard reasons for boundary amendments with an individual code for each type of change has been prepared and can be found in Appendix 1. Where a boundary amendment is deemed necessary it has been coded, given a unique reference and annotated on the corresponding ward map.

4.0 Assessment Findings and Implications for the LDP

4.1 The results of the review consisting of annotated maps showing the UDP boundary and proposed LDP boundary together with schedules detailing any proposed boundary changes, are shown in Appendix 2 and reflected on the Proposals Map of the Deposit LDP.

4.2 As a result of the newly defined settlement boundaries, the County's countryside and corresponding urban and rural settlement areas are clearly identified within the LDP. This enables the proper implementation of LDP policy relating to the development of urban and rural settlements to meet the identified need and countryside protection policy which allows for appropriate rural development.

4.3 The settlement boundary plays a significant role in the delivery of the LDP strategy.

5.0 Monitoring and Review

5.1 The LDP will be subject to monitoring and review inline with National Planning Policy and Guidance to ensure that all of the Policies within it are up-to-date and remain consistent. In light of this, and relevant existing and emerging guidance, the effectiveness of the settlement boundary policy will be monitored to assess the relative 'strength' of the settlement boundaries and where any further amendments maybe necessary.

List of Standard Reasons for Amendment

Code	Potential boundary amendment
M	Minor amendments/corrections <i>Where possible development boundaries should follow a defined feature on the ground (field boundary, road, stream, wall or fence. (as set out in PPW)</i>
M1	Defined Features on the Ground Inclusion or exclusion of minor sites to align with defined features.
M2	Correction of drafting Errors Inclusion or exclusion of land to correct historic drafting error.
M3	Local Authority Boundary Changes Inclusion or exclusion of land to follow changes to the Local Authority boundary.
PP	Planning Permission
PP1	Extant Planning Permissions Include sites outside existing settlement limit with extant planning permission. Exclude sites where planning history <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishes that the principle of development not acceptable. • that an extended residential curtilage does not have lawful use • show that site subject to conditions which require areas of site to be protected/retained for open space etc.
S	Land beyond the settlement that may be more suited to being part of the settlement
S1	Recreation & Open Space Include all ANGs and FIT standard sites identified in the Open Space Survey which are located on the edge of settlements.
S2	Allotments – Exclude all allotment sites
S3	Community Facilities Generally included where they relate to the settlement from. Exclude where they are visually or functionally separate to the settlement.
S4	Cemeteries Include all cemeteries
S5	Residential curtilages Review residential curtilages Curtilages should generally be included within the boundary, Except Where they are considered visually or functionally separate to the dwelling Or Where there are large gardens or other open areas, which would be inappropriately included in the built up area as they are not suitable for development (Refer to SPG - Infill & Backland Development SPG)
S6	Existing non-residential uses Generally included where they relate to the existing form

Code	Potential Boundary Amendment
S7	<p>Tourism Use Exclude temporary camping fields Exclude static campsites Include static caravan sites that have become 'urbanised'</p>
DS	<p>Development Sites <i>Sites identified for potential development to be shown on a separate layer to enable further review of the cumulative impact on a ward/zone level before final decision is made</i></p>
DS1	<p>Large sites identified as potential Strategic Development Areas or Non-strategic settlement extensions Amend development boundary to include allocated sites.</p>
DS2	<p>Small sites Amend development boundary to include Candidate sites appropriate for development of less than 10 dwellings.</p>
DS3	<p>Additional Small sites/Infill Amend development boundary to include previously unidentified sites suitable for development 10 or less dwellings Including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brownfield sites on the edge of settlements • Land to round off settlement or take settlement to more logical edge. <p>Use guiding questions to assess whether the site is suitable for development</p>
DS4	<p>Additional large sites Sites of 10 or more dwellings to be referred to the allocation process</p>
DS5	<p>Areas more appropriately excluded Where land should be excluded to bring in line with the Preferred Strategy. i.e. large infill plots in areas where growth not required. Large residential curtilages.</p>
DS6	<p>Identify sites with potential for Traveller sites Refer to GIS to make further detailed assessment of suitability using approved assessment process.</p>
DS7	<p>New Camping Sites Refer to John Campion Study for identified areas of search for new camping & caravanning sites in urban area</p>
DS8	<p>Affordable Housing Exception Sites Identify potential exception sites in a fringe location. Exclude All small sites within Gower and Gower Fringe to be exception sites – shown as hatched.</p>
DS9	<p>Hospital Contingency land</p>

Revised Settlement Boundary for LDP: Annotated Ward Maps and Schedules