

## 3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### 3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 In order to avoid duplication, and to ensure that the ES is as concise as possible, a summary of the planning policy context associated with the proposed development is provided below (this is set out in full within the accompanying Planning Statement).
- 3.1.2 The principal planning policy context for the scheme (from the national through to local level) comprises the following documents:

#### National

- Wales Spatial Plan (2004 and 2008 Update)
- Planning Policy Wales (2002)
- Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement 01/2008: Planning for Good Design
- Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement 01/2009: Planning for Sustainable Buildings
- Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (1996)
- Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2009)
- Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004)
- Technical Advice Note 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (2009)
- Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (2007)
- (Draft) Technical Advice Note 22: Planning for Sustainable Buildings (2009)

#### Regional

- Regional Planning Guidance for South East Wales (2001)

#### Local (Figure 11 Planning Policy)

- Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (adopted 2006)
  - Emerging Bridgend Local Development Plan
  - BCBC strategy / guidance documents (various)
- 3.1.3 A table is attached at in Volume 3, 'Appendices for Chapter 1-4' - Planning Policy Overview which documents (in full) the planning policies contained within the adopted development plan of relevance to the proposed development. Commentary is also provided within the table in regards to the scheme's adherence to these policies.

## 3.2 National Planning Policy

3.2.1 The relevant national planning policy guidance comprises Planning Policy Wales (PPW), which is supplemented / amended by a series of Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statements (MIPPS), and supported by a range of Technical Advice Notes (TANs).

### PPW

3.2.2 PPW was published in March 2002 and sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG). The document states that land use planning should set the framework for the development and use of land, taking full account of economic, social and environmental issues.

3.2.3 The overall aim of PPW is to promote sustainable development through the planning process – a number of key policy objectives are identified to assist in achieving this aim. Those of particular relevance to the Island Farm development include the following:

- Promoting access to employment, shopping, education, health, community, leisure and sports facilities and open and green space, maximising opportunities for community development and social welfare.
- Promoting quality, lasting, environmentally-sound and flexible employment opportunities.
- Developing an inclusive society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential.
- Contributing to climate protection by encouraging land uses that result in reduced emissions of greenhouse gases, in particular energy-efficient development, and promoting the use of energy from renewable sources.
- Contributing to the protection and improvement of the natural environment and ensuring the conservation of the historic environment and cultural heritage.

3.2.4 WAG are supportive (in principle) of sports and recreation-related development, recognising the importance of such development in both social and economic terms, as is highlighted at Paragraph 11.1.3 of PPW:

*“Sport and recreation contribute to our quality of life. The Assembly Government supports the development of sport and recreation and the wide range of leisure pursuits which encourage physical activity. They are important for the well being of children and adults and for the social and economic life of Wales”.*

### Wales Spatial Plan (WSP), (2004 & 2008 Update)

3.2.5 The WSP integrates the spatial element of all WAG strategies into a comprehensive framework, which sets the context for local and community planning as a long-term strategy for the sustainable development of Wales. There are five key guiding themes to the plan:

- Building sustainable communities
- Promoting a sustainable economy

- Valuing our environment
- Achieving sustainable accessibility
- Respecting distinctiveness

3.2.6 As well as the above principles, which apply across Wales as a whole, a unique 'vision' has been developed for each area of the country.

3.2.7 Within the WSP, Bridgend is located within an area identified as the 'South East Wales Capital Region', and is listed as one of the fourteen 'key settlements' which are considered to have a critical role to play in the success of the 'Capital Region'. The region's 'key settlements' are anticipated to offer a range of services and facilities, as well as opportunities for employment, for the surrounding population.

### **MIPPS**

#### *Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement 01/2008: Planning for Good Design (January 2008)*

3.2.8 MIPPS 01/2008 focuses on the wider implications of the design process in contributing to tackling the causes of climate change. The MIPPS advises that an integrated and flexible approach to design, including such things as location, density, layout and built form, will be an appropriate way of contributing to climate responsive development.

#### *Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement 01/2009: Planning for Sustainable Buildings (January 2009)*

3.2.9 In line with WAG's overall aspiration to secure zero carbon buildings, MIPPS 01/2009 sets out how development proposals should mitigate the causes of climate change by minimising carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions associated with their design, construction, use, and eventual demolition. MIPPS 01/2009 sets out specific sustainable building standards and targets which WAG expects new development to meet.

### **TANs**

3.2.10 The following TANs are of relevance to the proposed development – these are listed below and their contents is considered in greater detail within the accompanying Planning Statement:

- Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (1996)
- Technical Advice Note 12: Design (2009)
- Technical Advice Note 15: Development and Flood Risk (2004) (Figure 12 Flood Map)
- Technical Advice Note 16: Sport, Recreation and Open Space (2009)
- Technical Advice Note 18: Transport (2007)
- (Draft) Technical Advice Note 22: Planning for Sustainable Buildings (2009)

### 3.3 Regional Planning Policy

- 3.3.1 Regional Planning Guidance for South East Wales was produced by the South East Wales Strategic Planning Group in January 2001. The group comprises representatives from Local Authorities across Wales, including BCBC. The document provides a regional framework which sets out a series of agreed planning policy principles and guidelines. It provides a profile of South East Wales before setting out regional guidance on key issues such as sustainable development, the economy, transport and infrastructure.
- 3.3.2 The themes of the regional guidance for South East Wales largely mirror those already described with regard to PPW. However, the regional guidance contains specific reference to the importance of the sport / recreation / leisure sector to the South East Wales regional economy, and highlights the potentially complex land use implications associated with such development.

### 3.4 Local Planning Policy

- 3.4.1 The site lies within the administrative boundary of BCBC. The Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (UDP), (Fig 11 Planning Policy) adopted by the Council on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2006 and which will guide the future use of land within the Authority until 2016, forms the statutory 'development plan' for the area.
- 3.4.2 Notwithstanding the importance of national planning policy guidance (as outlined within the preceding paragraphs), development plan policies are of the greatest relevance when assessing specific proposals. A detailed assessment of the compliance of the proposals for Island Farm against the relevant development plan policies is provided within the accompanying Planning Statement – a summary is provided below (and further detail is provided within the table attached in Volume 3, Appendices for Chapters 1-4,- Planning Policy Overview).

#### UDP Strategic Policies

- 3.4.3 Due to the nature of the development proposed (i.e. a large-scale development of regional importance), a number of the plan's overarching 'strategic' policies are of relevance. In particular, these policies include:
- Environment – UDP Part One Policy 1, 2 & 3
  - Employment – UDP Part One Policy 5
  - Transportation – UDP Part One Policy 6 & 7
  - Sports & Recreation – UDP Part One Policy 12
  - Social & Community Services – UDP Part One Policy 13
  - Regeneration – UDP Part One Policy 21
- 3.4.4 The proposed development will contribute to, and assist the County Borough in achieving, a number of the plan's overall aims and objectives. The overarching aims of the UDP of particular relevance to the Island Farm development are summarised on the following page.

### Environment

- To continue to protect the countryside for the sake of its landscape, natural resources, and to conserve and enhance its agricultural, ecological, geological, physiographic, historical, archaeological and recreational value.
- To promote and conserve the biodiversity of the County Borough and to encourage the management of features of the landscape which are of major importance for wild flora and fauna.
- To define, protect, maintain and enhance the historic built environment, i.e. the ancient monuments, archaeological sites, listed buildings, conservation areas, and historic parks, gardens and landscapes of the County Borough.

### Employment

- To promote equality and opportunity by providing all residents with the right of access to employment opportunities appropriate to their skills.
- To ensure that sufficient land is available to meet the job requirements of the population and varying needs of industry, wherever possible close to existing and proposed residential communities.
- To enrich the economy by safeguarding existing employment in terms of sites and opportunities, and securing new investment.

### Transportation

- To protect and improve the environment by the introduction of various transportation and traffic measures that reduce the use of cars, and encourage cycling and walking.
- To encourage the use of public transport as a major mode of travel.
- To encourage development to locate in areas where all sections of the community have equitable access.

### Tourism and Leisure

- To balance and integrate the needs of tourism, host communities and the environment, including support for ecotourism, whilst protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
- To encourage environmentally sustainable tourist and leisure developments in and around Bridgend and in the M4 corridor. This should be linked to improvements in tourism, leisure and cultural facilities and activities in the town centres of the County Borough.

### Sport and Recreation

- To remedy the existing deficiencies in the provision of recreation facilities where these are compatible with the conservation of the urban and rural environment.
- To provide the required range of recreation facilities in accessible locations throughout the County Borough, compatible with the conservation of the urban and rural environment and in accord with the Council's Countryside Strategy.

### Regeneration

- To safeguard past investment particularly in urban areas, provide greater certainty for future investment and support the regeneration sector of the economy.
- To support community development, remove social exclusion and reduce crime.

### Energy

- To increase energy efficiency through appropriate development design, having regard for features such as the layout, orientation, mix of uses, density of development, use of materials and landscaping.

## **UDP Local (Site-Specific) Planning Policies**

3.4.5 In addition to the strategic policies outlined above, the development will be assessed against a number of the UDP's more site-specific policies. These are summarised below (and are reproduced in full in the Planning Policy Overview).

### **Policy E6(1)**

3.4.6 A portion of the northern section of the application site is allocated within the UDP as a 'Special Employment Site', under Policy E6(1).

3.4.7 As part of the Island Farm scheme, a Phase II extension to the existing Bridgend Science Park will be developed, encompassing low density, high-technology offices and employment space, providing high-quality employment opportunities for the surrounding region. In addition, the creation of a prestigious sports development of regional and national importance and status will provide a diverse range and breadth of quality jobs in the sports / leisure-related sectors (as outlined in further detail within Chapter 5).

### **Policy M14(3)**

3.4.8 A portion of the southern section of the application site is allocated within the UDP as a safeguarded sand / gravel resource, under Policy M14(3).

3.4.9 The masterplan for the Island Farm scheme ensures that much of the sand / gravel allocation lies beneath playing fields, away from the main built development and thus minimising the extent of any conflict.

- 3.4.10 A full Minerals Assessment is attached in Volume 3, 'Appendices for Chapter 1-4' – Minerals Assessment, which should be referred to for further detail in regards to Policy M14.

**Policy EV10**

- 3.4.11 The application site is located directly adjacent (to the south-west/north-west) to the boundary of a 'Special Landscape Area'.

**Policy EV42**

- 3.4.12 In addition, located directly to the south-west of the application site boundary is an area of land designated as a 'Historic Landscape'.
- 3.4.13 The impact of the proposed development (in both visual and physical terms) upon the surrounding sensitive areas (i.e. the designated Special Landscape Area and Historic Park) is a key planning consideration. In this regard, it is the applicant's intention to secure a high quality development in a landscaped setting appropriate to the surrounding landscape and ecological interest of the site (as outlined in further detail in Chapters 9 and 10 of the ES).

**Policy T14(11)**

- 3.4.14 Policy T14 of the UDP requires major improvements to be undertaken to certain sections of the highway network in the County Borough. Policy T14(11) requires improvements to be undertaken in regards to the access to Bridgend Science Park.
- 3.4.15 The proposed vehicular access to the Island Farm site would be achieved using a new signal controlled junction on to the A48, with a secondary access through the existing science park (accessed from Ewenny Road via Technology Drive). Accordingly, these highways enhancements would ensure that the development does not adversely affect the safe and efficient movement of traffic along the A48.

**Policy T13(6)**

- 3.4.16 Policy T13(6) is of relevance to the proposed development, which states that any development along the A473-A48 corridor which would adversely effect the safety and movement of traffic along this corridor will not be permitted.
- 3.4.17 In regards to Policies T13(6) and T14(11), enhancements to the highway will be undertaken in order to ensure that the development can be accessed safely and efficiently (as fully outlined within Chapter 6 of the ES).

**Policy T1**

- 3.4.18 Policy T1 sets out that in general location terms, new development should be sited in areas served by, or capable of being served by, modes of transport other than the private car.
- 3.4.19 The scheme has been designed to encourage maximum use of walking, cycling and public transport – the Island Farm scheme is well placed to draw both employees and visitors alike from the locality arriving on foot or by public transport, and further enhancements will be made in this regard as part of the proposed development.

**Policy EV35**

- 3.4.20 The UDP aims to protect the historic environment and the retention and protection of historic buildings is strongly supported, as set out within Policy EV35 of the UDP.
- 3.4.21 The former PoW Camp located towards the north of the site has been levelled leaving only Hut 9 which enjoys statutory protection as a Grade 2 Listed Building. Hut 9 will be retained and protected as part of the Island Farm scheme.

**Policy TM1**

- 3.4.22 The development of new leisure and tourism facilities within Bridgend is guided primarily by the provisions of Policy TM1, which states that (within urban areas) new or extended facilities should contribute to the regeneration of existing town centres, should be accessible by a range of modes of transport and should be compatible with surrounding uses.
- 3.4.23 The scheme when fully complete will be unique in South Wales, providing a destination for high profile and prestigious sporting events for both participants and spectators alike, in a highly accessible location situated directly off the A48 corridor, greatly enhancing the leisure / tourism offer (and image) of the County Borough and wider surrounding region (as discussed in further detail within Chapter 5).

**Policy EV20**

- 3.4.24 Policy EV20 aims to achieve a balance between the location, design, and layout of development, and the need to conserve a site's biodiversity, whilst also taking into account the interests of any adjacent nature conservation resource(s).
- 3.4.25 The proposals for the Island Farm site have been drawn up with ecological interests as a key consideration, with the retention of important trees and hedgerows and the provision / extension of habitat areas providing a network of linked habitats through the site. Substantial enhancements to the site's biodiversity are proposed as part of the Island Farm development – this will include the creation of a Nature Conservation Area, providing approximately 43 acres of natural habitat (as outlined within Chapter 9).

**Policy EV45**

- 3.4.26 In line with national planning policy which places significant emphasis on the need to consider and achieve good (and sustainable) design in all new development, the UDP contains detailed guidance relating to good design, as set out within Policy EV45.
- 3.4.27 From the outset, it has been an aspiration of the applicant and design team that the Island Farm scheme is designed to the highest standards, incorporating superior sustainability features across the development. The full range of sustainable design features which could potentially be incorporated into the development are outlined in detail within the Sustainability Statement which accompanies the application.

### Emerging LDP

- 3.4.28 BCBC commenced formal preparation of the Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP) on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2005. The LDP is scheduled for adoption by December 2011 – once adopted the LDP will formally replace the UDP and will guide development within the Authority until 2021.
- 3.4.29 In terms of progress in the preparation of the LDP, public consultation on the LDP Pre-Deposit Proposals was undertaken during February / March 2009, and it is anticipated that the draft LDP will be placed on Deposit during early 2010.
- 3.4.30 In regards to the future development of Bridgend, the LDP Preferred Strategy aims to promote Bridgend as a 'regional hub' where major development should be focused. One of the LDP's objectives in regards to Bridgend (OBJ 1a) is as follows (as set out within the LDP Pre-Deposit Proposals Document, December 2008):

*"To promote Bridgend as a regional hub and the key principal settlement of the County Borough where major employment, commercial and residential development is focused".*

- 3.4.31 Island Farm is identified (amongst others) as one of the County Borough's strategic '21<sup>st</sup> Century Employment Sites' within the Council's Regeneration Strategy 'Fit for the Future'. The Preferred Strategy retains between 160 -170 hectares of the committed employment land, including those sites identified as 21st Century Employment Sites. The LDP Preferred Strategy highlights (at Paragraph 7.2.19 of the Pre-Deposit Proposals Document) that:

*"The development of all of these strategic employment sites are considered vital to the success of the Regeneration Strategy and the transformation of the economy".*

## 3.5 Local Strategy Documents

- 3.5.1 A number of local strategy documents (listed here for reference) are of relevance to the proposed development – the scheme proposals have taken the contents of these strategies into consideration:

- Fit for the Future – Bridgend County Borough's Regeneration Strategy 2008-2021
- Bridgend County Borough Community Strategy (2005-2016)
- Bridgend County Borough: A Smart Future Sustainable Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough (2005-2008)
- Bridgend County Tourism Strategy (2002-2006)
- Countryside Strategy for Bridgend County Borough (2002-2007)
- Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough (2002)

## 3.6 Committed Development

- 3.6.1 In terms of the surrounding highway network, further to consultation with BCBC, three committed developments, which are anticipated to have an impact on the neighbouring

highway network, were identified and incorporated into the Movement Assessment which is appended to the Environmental Statement (Appendix 6.1), these being:-

- Waterton Development (Application 08/320) - comprising 2 No. non food retail units. As classified and described in a previous TA dated March 2003 and supplementary report dated June 2008 prepared by Turner Lowe Associates on behalf of the Dovey Group. Total area 5345m<sup>2</sup>;
- Broadlands Development – comprising 358 residential dwellings. Privately owned; and
- Brocastle Development (Application 05/933) - comprising 30 units allocated for sheltered / retirement accommodation.

3.6.2 The above listed committed developments and potential associated impacts are afforded further consideration within relevant chapters and Volume 3, Appendix 6.1 - Movement Assessment.

### **3.7 Summary and Conclusions**

3.7.1 The planning policy framework as relevant to the proposed development has been outlined within this chapter of the ES – overall, it is considered that the scheme proposals accord with the key principles of national, regional and local planning policy guidance.

3.7.2 The application envisages a prestigious development which would consolidate the leading position of Bridgend in the region and which would bring a wide range of benefits to the town and County Borough as a whole.

3.7.3 As outlined above, the creation of high-profile sporting centre of excellence as proposed at Island Farm will assist in fulfilling a number of the overarching aims and objectives for the County Borough.

3.7.4 It is considered that any potential adverse impacts would be outweighed by the benefits associated with the proposed development, namely the provision of a prestigious sports development of regional and national importance and status and the provision of significant job opportunities of a high quality (both within the science park, and provided for by the sports / leisure related facilities).