



Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) (2022-2037)

Background Paper: Call for Candidate Sites: Ecology Survey Guidance Note

May 2023

Executive Summary

*This document is available in Welsh
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Ecology Survey Guidance Note (May 2023) has been prepared to assist proposers of candidate sites with regards the ecological information required to support Candidate Site Assessment for the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). In summary, there are two requirements. Firstly, any site for which there is a known ecological resource should provide the appropriate survey work with the initial site submission.
- 1.2 Secondly, all sites progressing to Stage 2 of the Assessment will need a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report to be submitted during the Second Call for Sites / Call for Additional Supporting Information.
- 1.3 This Ecology Survey Guidance Note is being provided at the earliest opportunity to enable maximum available time during the 2023 summer season for survey work to be prepared.

2. Overview of the Call for Candidate Sites

- 2.1 The Council will undertake an initial 8 week Call for Candidate Sites, where submissions will be invited from interested parties who wish to have land considered for inclusion within the RDLP. The Council's candidate site assessment methodology is available on the Council's web site and provides more detailed information on how the Council will consider the information provided on the candidate site submission form.
- 2.2 Previously submitted candidate sites (2018 or 2020/21) and existing Local Development Plan allocations without current planning consent will need to be resubmitted.
- 2.3 If a candidate site was ruled out previously, or the site was allocated but has not been developed, any new submission should consider the reasons why the site has not

progressed and provide any additional information (e.g. surveys) to explain how any constraints can be overcome and why the site should be reconsidered for allocation.

- 2.4 A Second Call for Sites running concurrently with the Preferred Strategy consultation will accept new sites and provide existing site proposers the opportunity to submit additional supporting information to address any outstanding issues. Preliminary Ecological Assessment Reports will be required at this time. It is not expected that the Council will accept any new Candidate Sites following the close of the Second Call for Sites.

3. Baseline Ecological Information

- 3.1 Baseline ecological information to inform the Candidate Sites Assessment process should be presented in a report and describe the existing ecological value of the proposed Candidate Site, principally based on botanical survey but with consideration of other potential Protected or Priority species that may be present. Sites must be also assessed for their potential to qualify wholly or in part as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) using the Guidelines for the Selection of Wildlife Sites in South Wales.
- 3.2 All Appraisals must comply with the CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and be undertaken and reviewed by CIEEM members only. All appraisals must include a summary sheet to be used by the Council (provided as an Appendix to the Ecology Survey Guidance Note (May 2023)).
- 3.3 An evaluation of status or potential impact on the biodiversity of the site must be made and classified as either: High, Medium or Low value. This status will be quality assured and checked by the Council through the Candidate Sites Assessment process.
- 3.4 In addition to this, GIS (Geographical Information Systems) data in the format of shape files should be provided to provide visual representation of the ecological status of each site.
- 3.5 Additional useful documents are the Council's:
- Candidate Sites Assessment Methodology (May 2023)
 - Call for Candidate Sites: Submission Guidance Note (May 2023)
 - Revised Planning Obligations SPG (adopted Feb 2023)
 - Site Design, Masterplanning and Development Briefs SPG (adopted Feb 2023).

Appendix 1: Overview of the Candidate Sites Process

