

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

16th October 2014

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

**Draft Safeguarding Employment Sites Supplementary Planning
Guidance (SPG)**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the 'Safeguarding Employment Sites Supplementary Planning Guidance' document and approve its content for the purposes of public consultation. (Appendix 1).

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP) is one of the high level strategies which must be prepared and approved for the County Borough. The LDP should express, in appropriate land-use terms those community priorities (expressed in the Community Strategy and its successor, the Single Integrated Partnership Plan) that relate to the development and use of land provided they are in conformity with national and international policy.
- 2.2 A key objective of this SPG is to expand on the employment land safeguarding and protection policies contained in the adopted LDP, providing clarity to users and stakeholders and assist in the decision making process.

3. Background

- 3.1 Policies SP9, REG1 and REG2 of the adopted Bridgend Local Development Plan (LDP) allocate and safeguard employment sites throughout the County Borough for specified B1, B2 and B8 employment uses. These uses are defined as follows:
- **B1 Business** - Offices (other than those that fall within A2), research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area.
 - **B2 General industrial** - Use for industrial process other than one falling within class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste).

- **B8 Storage or distribution** - This class includes open air storage.
 - Some of the sites identified in Policy REG1 have also been identified as being acceptable in principle to accommodate **waste treatment facilities**.
- 3.2 These policies aim to ensure the continued availability of a wide range of employment opportunities throughout the County Borough.
- 3.3 However, Policy REG2 of the LDP recognises that employment areas operate more effectively if they can provide complimentary or ancillary services for employees/patrons of the employment areas.
- 3.4 Policy REG3 also recognises that other D2 (Assembly and Leisure) uses require buildings of a certain scale which may not be available in locations other than on established employment sites and would be suitably accommodated on industrial land.
- 3.5 Notwithstanding the flexibility provided by Policies REG2 and REG3 strict criteria are prescribed to demonstrate the acceptability of such proposals in the interest of protecting the integrity of employment sites for their primary employment functions and nearby retail centres.
- 3.6 In the past there has been some misinterpretation of these criteria and a lack of detailed evidence/justification which would allow the local planning authority to determine planning applications in the context of the criteria.
- 3.7 The purpose of this SPG therefore is to expand on the policies and provide clarity in respect of their future interpretation.

4. Current Situation

- 4.1 This draft guidance, attached as Appendix 1 supplements Strategic Policy SP9 and Policies REG1, REG2 and REG3 of the adopted Bridgend Local Development Plan. Its purpose is to provide greater clarity and advice to developers and officers in respect of submitting and determining planning applications for non-‘B Class’ uses on allocated employment sites.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The draft SPG expands upon the existing land-use planning policy framework contained within the Local Development Plan giving the public and developers more certainty in the Council’s expectations in relation to proposals on employment land in the County Borough.

6. Equality Impact Assessment.

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken and the proposed recommendations are unlikely to have an impact on equality issues.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 None.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That the Development Control Committee:

- (1) approves the draft Safeguarding Employment Sites SPG (**Appendix 1**) as the basis for public consultation; and
- (2) authorises officers to make appropriate arrangements for public consultation; and awaits a further report on the outcome of the consultation process.

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Background documents

Draft Safeguarding Employment Sites SPG