

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2011-2026)



GUIDE TO SUBMITTING AN ALTERNATIVE SITE



The content of this Guide should be read in conjunction with the Local Development Plan (LDP) Deposit Representation Form.

Where appropriate, the tables in this guide should be printed and detached for inclusion alongside the representation in respect of the Deposit LDP.

All forms must be returned by **midnight on Tuesday 15th October 2013**. Representations received after the deadline will not be accepted.

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Alternatively, you can submit your comments directly online at www.npt.gov.uk/consultation

PART 1: PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended to supplement the Deposit Representation Form and Guidance Note in relation to the Local Development Plan (LDP) and its associated documents. It is intended to assist promoters of Alternative Sites for development in submitting their representations.

Once adopted, the LDP will become the Development Plan for Neath Port Talbot, superseding the current Unitary Development Plan (UDP), and be the primary document for use in the determination of planning applications.

The LDP includes a range of policies and proposals for promoting sustainable development and is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal.

In preparing the LDP, the Council has already taken a significant number of sites into consideration, assessing them and their various attributes in order to arrive at a selection of allocated sites. However, alternative sites may still be submitted for consideration and this guide aims to ensure that all sites are assessed and compared on a 'like for like' basis.

PART 2: WHAT INFORMATION TO SUBMIT

At this stage, designs for a site's development are not expected and should not be submitted. Likewise, a full impact assessment is not required. Site promoters should however present the information requested and can, if desired, go on to discuss any risks of negative impacts and how they might be managed, as well as the opportunities for beneficial impacts. Supporting evidence which addresses the specific questions asked in this guide is welcomed and it should be made clear which question such evidence is relevant to.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A certain amount of background information will be required in order to understand a site's context. Such information includes:

- Map / Plan on an Ordinance Survey (OS) base identifying the site boundary that you wish to be included in the Plan (in red) and the land in your ownership (in blue);
- Site Reference (where applicable);
- Name of Site and Address;
- Site Area in hectares (ha); and
- Proposed Use of the Site.

In addition, the information in Table 1 is also required. Where the questions or features indicated are not relevant to the site, please include 'none' in the Comments column.

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL

Any new site(s) proposed should be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment). This information must be consistent with the scope and level of detail in the Sustainability Appraisal undertaken by the Council.

Submissions in respect of proposed housing sites of less than 0.29 hectares (Coastal Corridor Strategy Area) and 0.33 hectares (Valleys Strategy Area) however will generally not be required to complete this process unless subsequently notified to do so. It should be noted that only site-specific responses will be required to undertake this process.

Table 2, which sets out the framework for the assessment of sites against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives, will be required.

An alternative site which has not been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal is unlikely to be considered suitable for allocation in the Plan by the Inspector.

TABLE 1: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED	WHERE TO FIND THIS INFORMATION	COMMENTS	
STRATEGY			
How does the site relate to the Spatial Strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the site located within the 'Coastal Corridor Strategy Area' or the 'Valleys Strategy Area' 	Deposit Local Development Plan [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop, Pontardawe / all Libraries]	The site is within the Coastal Corridor Strategy Area, located on the edge of Skewen.
Is the site greenfield, brownfield or a mixture of both?			Greenfield
What is the probability of the best and most versatile agricultural land being present?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there likely to be any Grade 2 or Grade 3 Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) soils within the site 	Stage 2: Sustainability Appraisal: LDP Pre-Deposit Interim Report [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp]	At the time of planning application P2007/0887 the Environment Agency and NPT planning officers found the soil quality to be poor. The site has generally been used as paddock land rather than for productive agriculture for a number of years.
How does the site relate to the existing settlement pattern?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within an existing settlement Adjoining / adjacent to an existing settlement Within the open countryside 	Deposit Local Development Plan [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop, Pontardawe / all Libraries]	<p>The site would be the final, most western part of Skewen, similar to the land to the north, on the other side of Crmylyn Road, which is being expanded by Barratt Homes.</p> <p>It is noted that in their Candidate Site Assessment, the LPA consider that the development of the site could lead to coalescence with Coed Darcy. This is completely unfounded upon inspection of the Coed Darcy masterplan. Although an access road connects Coed Darcy past the reservoir to Crymlyn Road, there would be no part of the development site beyond the line of the reservoir's southern bank. This would be at least 300m from the site proposed herewith at Maes Y Gwilog and would be separated by existing woodland that would be unaffected by a small development of c18 dwellings.</p>
Would there be any potential adverse impact from existing or proposed adjoining uses?			No, the site is screened from the seldom-used freight line to the west.
Is the site located within a Mineral Buffer Zone or within a Safeguarded Mineral Resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mineral Buffer Zone Coal Category 1 Sandstone Resource 	Deposit Local Development Plan [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop,	No.

Area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 2 Sandstone Resource • Category 1 Sand & Gravel Resource • Category 2 Sand & Gravel Resource 	Pontardawe / all Libraries]	
Is the site located close to employment opportunities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What employment opportunities are located nearby 		The site is well-related to the settlement of Skewen and the emerging settlement of Coed Darcy, plus the further employment opportunities afforded by the Coastal Corridor and Swansea.
Does the site offer an opportunity to improve the sustainability of the existing community through planning gain (i.e. through extra facilities / commuted sum)?			At 0.8ha, the site could deliver sufficient homes to require small S106 contributions, dependent on the prevailing policy framework at the time that permission is granted.
Is the site located within a Language Sensitive Area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amman Valley • Swansea Valley • Pontardawe • The community of Crynant, Dulais Valley 	Deposit Local Development Plan Deposit Welsh Language Topic Paper [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop, Pontardawe / all Libraries]	No
NATURAL & HISTORIC HERITAGE			
Is the site located within or adjacent to a European, National, Regional or Local Landscape Designation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Park • Country Park • Special Landscape Area • Green Wedge • Undeveloped Coast 	Deposit Local Development Plan Deposit Environment Topic Paper [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop, Pontardawe / all Libraries]	No
Is the site located within or adjacent to a European, National, Regional or Local Historical Designation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape of Historic Interest • Historic Park and Garden • Conservation Area • Scheduled Ancient Monument • Listed Building 	Deposit Local Development Plan Deposit Environment Topic Paper [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop, Pontardawe / all Libraries] CADW website: www.parksandgardens.ac.uk Listed Building website: www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk Council website: www.npt.gov.uk and use link 'Find My Nearest'.	No
Would development of the site present an opportunity to remove an eyesore?			No
Would development on the site			No. The site is well screened by mature

<p>have an impact upon views / vistas?</p>			<p>vegetation along boundaries that would be retained as part of a development scheme. There may be distant or oblique views from across the valley, but the site would thus be viewed within the context of Crymlyn Grove to the north and the Coed Darcy redevelopment to the south.</p>
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS</p>			
<p>Is the site located within or adjacent to a European, National, Regional or Local Ecological Designation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Area of Conservation (SAC) • Ramsar Site • Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) • National Nature Reserve (NNR) • Local Nature Reserve (LNR) 	<p>Deposit Local Development Plan [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop, Pontardawe / all Libraries]</p> <p>Natural Resources Wales website: www.ccw.gov.uk/landscape-wildlife/protecting-our-landscape/protected-sites-map</p>	<p>The site is 470m from the closest designated land, namely the part of Crymlyn Bog that is SSSI and SAC. The part of the bog designated as a Ramsar site is further away. See Figure 1 below. This designated land is separated from the site not only by open land and tree belts, but by the railway line. The site is only marginally closer to the SSSI/SAC than the new developments to the north of Crymlyn Road. Moreover, the redevelopment of Llandarcy also extends closer to the designated area.</p> <p>It is noted that during their Candidate Site Assessment the LPA were concerned about potential impact upon water quality within Crymlyn Bog SAC, but this was found to be acceptable by NPT during their consideration of planning application P2007/0887 that was refused solely because the site was outside of the settlement limits (i.e. there were no 'technical' reasons for refusal).</p>
<p>Are there any important habitats / species located on the site?</p>		<p>Local Biodiversity Action Plan [www.npt.gov.uk/ldp]</p> <p>Natural Resources Wales website 'What's in your back yard?'; www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby</p> <p>Ordnance Survey website: www.getamap.ordnancesurveyleisure.co.uk</p>	<p>During the determination of planning application P2007/0887, there were no objections to the proposed 18 dwellings from any statutory consultees or interested stakeholders on the grounds of biodiversity, environmental impact etc. Similarly, the Inspector's appeal decision only referred to the policy conflict (i.e. the site was outwith the settlement as shown in the UDP) and some concern over loss of vegetation along the highway to create the access, which was unfounded and is entirely capable of being overcome.</p>

			Therefore, it is unreasonable to discount this site on perceived ecological grounds. It is noted that the Candidate Site Assessment found the site periphery to be “constrained by biodiversity of significant value” but there seems to be no evidence within the LDP evidence base to support this opinion.
Will development of the site adversely affect ecologically or visually important natural features?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees and Woodlands • Hedgerows / Field boundaries • Watercourses / Ponds 		As above, during the determination of planning application P2007/0887, there were no objections to the proposed 18 dwellings from any statutory consultees or interested stakeholders on the grounds of biodiversity, environmental impact etc.
Will development on the site cause an exceedence of any Air Quality Objectives or raise pollution levels in an area where there is an existing AQMA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the site within, or in proximity to the Margam / Taibach ‘Air Quality Management Area’ 	Council website: www.npt.gov.uk/pdf/aqap2012.pdf	No, the site is not close to the AQMA.
Would development of the site exacerbate prevailing noise problems?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the site within, or in proximity to a ‘Quiet Area’ 	Deposit Local Development Plan www.npt.gov.uk/ldp / Neath Civic Centre / Port Talbot Civic Centre / One Stop Shop, Pontardawe / all Libraries]	No, the site is not in proximity to a Quiet Area and the proposed residential use would not generate significant noise outside of its construction period. The site would be screened from the seldom-used railway by existing woodland.
Is there any contamination on the site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List any former industrial or waste management land uses and /or past pollution incidents 	Natural Resources Wales ‘What’s in your backyard’ webpage: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby	No, the site has long been used as paddock land.
Are there any ground stability problems that would present any obstacles to development?			No.
Does the exposure and orientation of the site maximise resource efficiency?			Yes it is a flat site which although contained by trees to the north, west and south, would be able to be developed to maximise solar gain as it is on the northern side of the local valley.
TRANSPORT & HIGHWAYS			
Is the site accessible from the public highway?			Yes. There is an existing access onto Crymlyn Road with satisfactory visibility in either direction. Very little, if any, vegetation would need to be removed to facilitate safe access. It is noted that an access to Coed Darcy is

			proposed to the east of the site, demonstrating the acceptability of accesses from the southern side of this highway; there is adequate separation from that potential access and the proposed site access to avoid any conflict.
Is the nearby highway network capable of accommodating the resulting traffic movements?			During the determination of planning application P2007/0887, there were no objections to the proposed 18 dwellings from the Highways Authority on highway or access grounds. The Inspector determining the appeal did have concerns over the access, but this was solely on the grounds of impact upon vegetation which was unfounded. .
Proximity to public transport routes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify any bus routes / train stations within 250m of the site Identify any bus routes / train stations between 250m and 500m from the site Identify any bus routes / train stations between 500m and 1km from the site 	Public Transport website: www.traveline-cymru/info	Bus stop in Crymlyn Parc approximately 200m from site. There is a second bus stop approximately 400m from the site on Crymlyn Road. These stops are served by service 155 from Neath to Llandarcy, with a bus roughly once an hour. This is of course applicable to the Crymlyn Grove development as well. Skewen railway station is approximately 1.75km from the site, which would be the same distance as the dwellings in the western and northern parts of the new Crymlyn Grove development.
Proximity to Cycling / Walking network?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List any National Cycle Network Route within the site Distance to the nearest National Cycle Network route List any Public Rights of Way within the site Distance to the nearest Public Rights of Way 	Sustrans website: www.sustrans.org.uk/Cycle-Network Council website: www.npt.gov.uk and use link 'Find My Nearest'. Ordnance survey website: www.getamap.ordnancesurveyleisure.co.uk	There are no PROW within the site or adjacent to the site. However to the northwest of the site, on the western side of the railway line, there is a network of footpaths connecting Trallwn, Skewen and Llansamlet.
INFRASTRUCTURE			
Are there identified existing water, sewerage, drainage, electrical, gas and telecommunications systems provision difficulties (Yes / No)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If yes, please specify and outline how the problems can be overcome 		None according to public agency reviews conducted in 2007/8 by all relevant agencies. NPT planning, EA, DCWW etc.
Are there identified existing water, sewerage, electrical, gas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If yes, please specify and outline how the problems can be overcome 		None according to public agency reviews conducted in 2007/8 by all relevant agencies.

<p>& telecommunications systems constraints (Yes / No)?</p>			
<p>Is the site located within an area of flood risk?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of the site in Flood Zone C2 • Percentage of the site in Flood Zone C3 • Can any identified problems be overcome 	<p>Natural Resources Wales website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods</p>	<p>No. The closest flood zones are the Tawe valley to the west and the southern part of Crymlyn Bog.</p>
<p>Is the site identified as being susceptible to surface water flooding?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of the site susceptible to surface water flooding • Can any identified problems be overcome 		<p>No</p>
<p>Is the site likely to be problematic in terms of the provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)?</p>			<p>No.</p>
<p>Is the site within walking distance of at least 2 community facilities? [Allowing for topography, 400m is generally accepted as being within walking distance]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the distance to the nearest Health facility (i.e. GP Surgery / Dentist Surgery / Pharmacy / Hospital) • What is the distance to the nearest School (i.e. Primary / Secondary) • What is the distance to the nearest adult education facility • What is the distance to the nearest Shop / Post Office / Community Hall 	<p>Council website: www.npt.gov.uk and use link 'Find My Nearest'.</p>	<p>No. As with the Crymlyn Grove developments, the site is approximately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1.3m from GP Surgery - 1.6m from Primary School - 2.9m from Secondary School - 2.9m from Adult education - 1m from Post Office <p>There will in due course possibly be better access to the community facilities provided in the northern phase of Coed Darcy.</p>
<p>Where relevant, are there community facilities located in neighbouring authorities that could meet the needs of residents?</p>			<p>Llansamlet has a further railway station, post office, schools and shopping facilities etc accessible via Crymlyn Road.</p>
<p>Is the site within 400m of recreational open space?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the distance to the nearest children's play area • What is the distance to the nearest recreational facility (i.e. playing fields / pitches, sports facilities or any other proposed recreation or amenity areas) • What is the distance to the nearest open access land / countryside 		<p>The nearest children's play area is 320 metres away. The nearest playing fields are 950 metres away. The site is directly adjacent to open countryside. The closest open access land is 320 metres away.</p>
<p>Does the proposal result in the loss of open space or recreational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, please specify. 		<p>No</p>

facilities or community facilities (Yes / No)?			
Is there the potential and feasibility for the provision of renewable technologies on or off-site?			Yes, at the micro-scale (i.e. domestic). Currently solar heating is used in the landowner's adjoining house and plots will be sold at discount to highly insulated designs using renewable technologies. The orientation of the site will also allow for energy-efficient design.
DELIVERABILITY & VIABILITY			
Are all landowners in agreement with the proposed land use?			Yes
Are there any restrictive covenants relating to the use of the land / buildings contained within the proposed site?			No
Are there other land uses on the site that are unable to immediately vacate?			No
Would development of the site be viable once contributions to Code for Sustainable Homes 3-6, s106 agreements and Affordable Housing are taken into account?			Being a greenfield site in one ownership, then the site is unconstrained. There is no reason, based on currently available evidence, to dispute that quick delivery of the site for housing would not be viable having taken into account CSH and potential S106 contributions – dependent on the prevailing S106 and Affordable Housing policy at the time of consent.

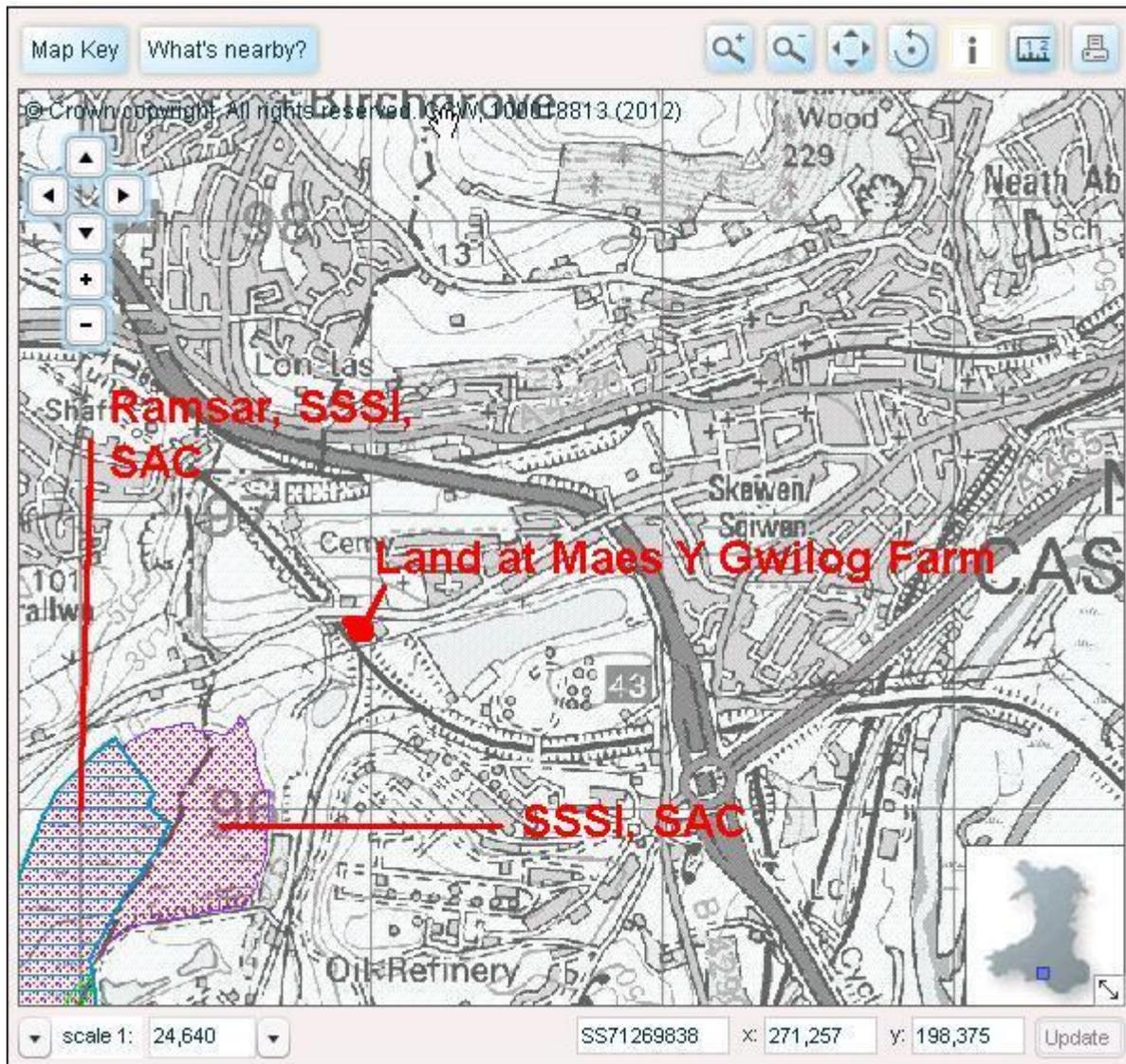


Figure 1: Extract from CCW's Protected Areas Map.

TABLE 2: SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL - SITE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

Site Name / Reference (if applicable):						
SA Category	SA Objective	Commentary	✓	0	X	?
1 Climate Change	A. Ensure that all development takes into account likely future changes resulting from climate change	The site is not in an area of flood risk and is not particularly exposed.		✓		
	B. Achieve relevant Government targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions	Similar to the LPA's allocated sites at Crmlynn Grove, the site is on the edge of Skewen with few facilities in the immediate neighbourhood. Journeys to shops/facilities would be feasible by walking, cycling or (currently infrequent) bus service. Most journeys likely to be by private car. However renewable technology and energy efficient design would be used as a financial incentive to plot purchasers.		0		
2 Resources & Waste	A. Minimise loss or degradation of water and soil resources while ensuring that they are used only in a sustainable way	The site is flat with poor quality grass and surrounded by trees and shrubs. Tree and shrub loss will be minimised to less than 10% of the new plantings done privately over the last 18 years.		✓		
3 Biodiversity & Geodiversity	A. Prevent any further net loss of biodiversity	There are no valuable biodiversity resources according to public agency reviews conducted in 2007/8 by all relevant agencies (planning application P2007/0887) as hedgerows and most trees would be retained. Similar to Crmlynn Grove, "the site could have an impact on Crmlynn Bog SAC, either through drainage or additional air pollution." (quoted from SA of the Deposit LDP: Background Papers page 27), However those allocations were tested under planning application P2012/0370 for 76 dwellings on Phase 2 of the site, which "concluded that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect on the bog either by itself or in combination with any other development or project." It is advocated that the same applies to this Alternative Site.		0		
	B. Exploit all reasonable opportunities to secure biodiversity enhancements	The site offers the potential to secure biodiversity enhancements as part of its development.		✓		
	C. Minimise adverse effects on designated Geodiversity sites	The train line is an impassable barrier to the west and woodland to the south divides the site from the Coed Darcy redevelopment. The site is not subject to any			0	

		geodiversity assets.	
4 Landscape, Townscape & Historic Character	A. Protect and/or enhance the area's landscape and townscape	The site is well-screened by vegetation and less exposed than some development sites such as Crymlyn Grove (all three phases). Although it may be visible in the wider landscape, these views will be distant and in the context of the new settlement being built at Cord Darcy and 325 houses being built or proposed to be built to the north by Barratt Homes.	✓
	B. Protect and/or enhance the area's historic environment including architectural and archaeological resources	The current farmhouse is to be retained and is the only remotely historical building nearby.	0
5 Pollution (Air Quality, Noise & Light)	A. Achieve acceptable levels (meet European / National standards) of air quality throughout the County Borough	<p>Firstly, it is noted that the LPA's own SA of their allocations do not consider the air quality matter for some if not all of the allocations.</p> <p>Nonetheless, acceptable levels of air quality will be maintainable.</p> <p>Moreover solar heating is currently used in the landowner's house and plots will be sold at discount to highly insulated designs using renewable technologies. Further the new Coed Darcy site will provide closely accessible local schools, supermarkets etc. via the North Road being built to link Skewen to Coed Darcy.</p>	✓
	B. Achieve acceptable noise levels and protect quiet areas throughout the County Borough	The site is surrounded by trees which will remain allowing lower than normal noise levels to be achieved by the site.	✓
	C. Reduce light pollution	The site is surrounded by trees which will remain allowing lower than normal light pollution (i.e. from housing developments) levels to be achieved by the site, but there would inevitably be a minor increase in light pollution. This is not likely to be significant given the scale of development to the north and to the south.	0
6 Community Cohesion	A. Improve social inclusion and minimise the incidence of social exclusion by addressing the causes of social exclusion	<p>One of the biggest causes of social exclusion is the high cost of housing within NPT. Self-build plots are the cheapest high quality method of building affordable housing. Numerous local families have indicated their support and wish to build better housing at a lower cost than is available via national builders.</p> <p>Furthermore, as with Crymlyn Grove, the site would extend Skewen and may help strengthen the local neighbourhood and community, however residents would need to travel either to</p>	✓

		Skewen town centre of Llansamlet for their closest facilities/	
	B. Protect and enhance the culture and character of communities including cultural resources and Welsh language	Building one's own house in conjunction with others generates a high level of community interaction quickly as people seek new ideas and share methods of reducing cost and increasing quality. Joint projects across communities have been proven many times as a powerful cohesive force for bring them together. The site is not located in an area of importance for the Welsh language though.	0
7 Health & well Being	B. Reduce / minimise the incidence and impacts of ill health by addressing the causes and consequences of ill health, health inequalities and poor well being	Similarly to Crymlyn Grove, "the site should provide a good quality environment with reasonable access to open space and the countryside. Most key services are likely to be available in Skewen, with reasonable access by modes of travel" – as quoted in the LPA's SA background paper on housing allocations.	✓
8 Economy	B. Develop and support an economy that safeguards while complementing, promoting and enhancing investment in, and use of, local resources and environmental assets	Self-build plots are one of the few methods of building that supports the local economy directly. Many national builders use labour and materials sourced nationally and internationally mostly bypassing the local economy and creating a larger environmental impact.	✓
Summary	<p>Positive: climate change, resources, biodiversity enhancements, landscape/townscape, pollution, community cohesion, health/wellbeing, economy (8).</p> <p>Negative: none.</p> <p>Although the site is on the edge of Skewen, shops and services are beyond walking distance and public transport links are currently infrequent. Landscape and biodiversity impacts are however not severe.</p>		

Symbol Key:

Positive Impact
 No Impact
 Negative Impact
 Impact Unknown

PART 3: FURTHER INFORMATION

In some cases, further evidence will be required to support or mitigate for positive or negative impacts respectively. The Council must make a judgement about the feasibility and likelihood of benefits being achieved, however certain evidence that can be provided will assist this process.

This evidence is requested in the questions below. Please specify in the answer boxes if you are including a more detailed response or supplementary information attached to these questions, and provide a reference linking the two.

Please note that answering 'yes' to any of the questions below will not guarantee a greater chance of inclusion of the site. Conversely, answering 'no' will not necessarily reduce the chance of the site being taken forward.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

For any features (open space, green space, woodland etc) existing within the site, is it your intention to maintain and enhance them? Please explain what exactly you wish to do.

Over 100 trees and bushes have been planted by Mr Miller (the landowner and promoter of the site) and the previous landowner around the edges of the site over the last 18 years to enhance and beautify the area. It is anticipated that less than half a dozen of these would need to be removed as part of a development scheme. Further planting between the plot and the train line boundary is expected to be done to replace them and to lower noise from the line which is occasionally used.

Do you intend to provide open space or green space as part of the development? Please describe how any such space will link with neighbouring areas to the site (if at all).

The development area is surrounded on two sides by grass and woodland which would be retained and is outwith the alternative site. The other two sides are the railway line and the Crymlyn Road with some several hundred houses directly opposite which includes a playground and open space 320 metres away.

However a development of 15-20 dwellings, as is likely from a site of this size, would probably include some incidental green amenity space at the centre of the development.

Are you aware of any nature conservation benefit that developing the site can offer, on or off-site (e.g. a habitat you would like to enhance)? Please describe why it would be valuable and what wildlife you believe may benefit.

The site itself has had an environment review approximately 5-6 years ago when planning permission was previously applied for and it was not found to have any nature conservation features of significant value. Planning permission was refused solely on the grounds that the scheme was open countryside in the UDP. As indicated above, the landowner has committed to improving the site boundaries with planting in the past and it is expected that further enhancements would be ancillary to housing development.

Are you aware of any previous contamination issues on the site? If so, how do you intend to rectify this problem?

None on the site. However the nearby old BP cleaning reservoir has had major contamination but has now been cleaned up by St Mowdens as part of the Coed Darcy redevelopment. However land at Maes Y Gwilog Farm is at a higher level than the old reservoir and would be unlikely to be affected by its contamination.

If the site contains a body of water or is adjacent to water, how do you intend to use the land closest to the water?

The nearest body of water is the old BP reservoir approx. 200m away from the nearest point. It is surrounded by a large safety fence as it used to be contaminated. NPT and St Mowdens have proposed many plans from simple isolation to a water park after further cleaning. It is unknown how they will go forward with this and it is assumed that it will remain isolated from use by the public at this time. However it is not adjacent to the proposed alternative site and there would be no interrelationship that would prejudice development at Maes Y Gwilog (and vice-versa).

If the site is in proximity to an Internationally Important Nature Conservation Site (e.g. SAC or RAMSAR site) you are required to submit further information:

- Does the designation include mobile species (e.g. otter, bat etc)?
- Are there any links between the site and the designation such as streams, woodland or habitats within the site that could be used by mobile species?
- If the site designation includes marsh fritillary, then please confirm whether or not the proposed use of the site will be suitable for the butterfly.

The Crymlyn Bog is nearby in the Swansea area and separated from Maes Y Gwilog completely by the railway lines. The Coed Darcy redevelopment shares a similar relationship, as does the Crymlyn Grove scheme.

Moreover various stakeholders have already reviewed an earlier planning application for this site and found no reason to refuse development on the grounds of effects upon the natural environment.

According to Defra's webpage on the SAC/Ramsar site (<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0012885>) and CCW's online resource, it is designated and protected predominantly for its plant species rather than fauna.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Do you have any plans to maintain or enhance any designated historical features such as Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments on the site? Please explain how you intend to do this.

N/A.

Are there any designated cultural heritage features visible from the site? Is there any historical connection with the site?

N/A

TRANSPORT

If there are any transport features such as public right of way on the site, are they to be maintained or enhanced? If so, how do you intend to do this?

There are no rights of way on the site.

If the site is developed, what is the furthest distance from within the site to the nearest bus stop?

Approx. 200M within Crymlyn Parc. The school bus currently stops adjacent to the site entrance to drop off local children after school.

Is there potential to create or expand a public right of way, cycle path or something similar?

The land is flat and easily cycled and the local park in Skewen is easily cycled to and already has a cycle track that most local people use.

Is the site near a motorway or trunk road and what measures are there to minimise travel by car?

It is approximately three minutes by road to junction 43 of the M4. The North link road proposed by St Mowdens and NPT council from Coed D'Arcy will pass within 200m of the site and will provides easy walking/ cycling links to the three schools, supermarkets and parks planned there.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

For any services or facilities such as community halls, shops, schools, health facilities, pharmacies, play space, open space or other recreation within the site, do you intend to keep those facilities within the site? If your intention is to withdraw them, please state why this is the case?

N/A

Could a new community facility be provided as part of your proposal? [Community Centre; Shop(s); Post Office; Education facility / School; GP Surgery / Health Centre; Indoor / Outdoor Recreation]

The local area already has these facilities with extensive expansion planned at Coed D'Arcy and none are planned for this site.

Are there any local community facilities / services near to the site that need upgrading?

Several hundred houses have been built opposite the site and approx. 3000 more being built nearby with extensive facilities. It is not felt that this development could add in any significant way to the current plans.

COMMUNITY

Are there any open spaces near the site that need improving? Describe their current condition and how you would improve them.

None

Are there any other ways in which you believe developing the site enhances the local community (e.g. such as opening up a cycle route across the site)?

The application is to provide a number of residential plots for individuals to purchase and develop themselves. This will allow local people to build houses that meet their requirements for a far cheaper amount than available from builders who develop sites at their own risk. This will also help stimulate the local economy as it is far more likely that local builders will be used and goods will be purchased locally. Given the shortage of local jobs at present this would be a major benefit.

There is considerable backing for self-build projects at both Westminster and the Welsh Government and is seen as a suitable means for helping deliver homes to meet national and local need, stimulating the local economy and helping to create social and equitable communities.