
ff/t: 01437 775545 e: programmeofficer@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Guidance Note

for participants in the examination

1. Introduction

My name is Ian Stevens. I am the Planning Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers to examine the soundness and legal compliance of the Pembrokeshire County Council Local Development Plan 2 2017-2033 ('the LDP'). Going forward, the examination will be administered by me as the sole Inspector.

This note provides guidance to participants on how the LDP examination will be run. More detailed information on examination timescales and procedures is set out in published guidance on LDP examinations. This is available on the Welsh Government website at gov.wales/local-development-plan-examinations-procedural-guidance. Participants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this document.

2. Programme Officer

Deborah Williamson is the Programme Officer and is responsible for the administration of the examination. She is independent of Pembrokeshire County Council and works under my direction. Deborah is your point of contact for all examination information. Her contact details are:

Email: programmeofficer@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01437 775545

Postal address: Pembrokeshire County Council, County Hall, Haverfordwest SA61 1TP

3. Accessing examination documents

Copies of submission documents and examination documents are available to view on the examination website: <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/local-development-plan-review/examination-2025>.

Further documents, including in relation to the hearings, will be added to the website as the examination progresses. It is therefore important to keep checking the website for updates.

Any participant who is unable to access the internet or finds it difficult to view electronic documents should contact the Programme Officer so that alternative arrangements can be put in place. Please note that internet access is available free of charge at Council libraries.

4. The Inspector's role

As set out in the Welsh Government's 'Development Plans Manual' I will use three tests to assess the LDP's soundness:

1. Does the plan fit?
2. Is the plan appropriate?
3. Will the plan deliver?

I can only recommend changes to the LDP if they are necessary to resolve soundness or legal compliance issues. Any recommended changes will be binding on the Council and are usually subject to consultation following the hearings.

5. Examination hearings

As part of the examination there will be a series of public hearings. Anyone can observe a hearing, but participation is limited to people who submitted a duly made representation which seeks to make a change to the plan, during the consultation periods on the 'second deposit' LDP or 'focussed changes'.

Hearings will be held **virtually** and will commence at **10:00 on Tuesday 10 November 2026**.

A **draft hearings programme** with a list of potential participants for each session has been published on the examination website. This is an initial version and is likely to change. The final programme, including confirmed hearing participants and a detailed **list of matters, issues and questions** to be addressed at the hearings, will be published on or before **18 September 2026**.

If you intend to participate in a hearing, I would appreciate it if you could confirm this with the Programme Officer no later than **12 noon on 28 August 2026**. Please also let me know if any adjustments need to be made to facilitate your attendance.

How can I request to speak at a hearing?

If you are not listed as a participant in the draft hearings programme but you wish to take part, please contact the Programme Officer as soon as possible. However, to participate and speak at a hearing you will need to have submitted a duly made representation which seeks to make a change to the plan.

Do I need to attend a hearing?

Equal weight is afforded to oral and written evidence. There is therefore no need to participate in a hearing unless you intend to elaborate on points already made in writing or you wish to respond to points made by others.

How do I join or observe a hearing?

The hearings will be held as a video conference on Microsoft Teams. You do not need to have this installed on your system to join. Information and instructions on how to join will be provided nearer the time.

Participants who do not wish to appear on screen will be welcome to leave their camera turned off.

If you have difficulties accessing a computer or smartphone to participate in or observe the hearings, please contact the Programme Officer as soon as possible.

Will hearings be held bilingually?

Participation in both Welsh and English is welcomed. Where one or more participants in a hearing have indicated a preference to communicate in Welsh, translation facilities will be arranged by the Council. To avoid unnecessary adjournments, the Programme Officer will seek to confirm the language choice of participants prior to hearings taking place.

How will the hearings be run?

Each hearing will be a structured discussion which I shall lead. The agenda for each session will normally follow the list of matters, issues and questions published in advance of the hearings. Further information on how the hearing sessions will be run is set out in our examination procedural guidance.

How long will each hearing last?

The start time for each hearing is listed in the programme and they will usually finish no later than 17.00. Lunch will normally be between 13.00 and 14.00. Short breaks will usually be taken mid-morning and mid-afternoon or as needed.

The LDP does not include my 'candidate site'. What does this mean for me?

I do not currently intend to hold a hearing on omitted candidate sites. Instead, I have invited those promoting such sites to participate in hearings concerning the LDP's strategy. This session is not an opportunity to discuss alternative sites, but instead, an opportunity for participants to explain why they do not consider the proposed strategy (including identified settlement boundaries) is 'sound'. If I find that there is a need for new site allocations, an additional hearing may be held to discuss omitted candidate sites.

6. Further written statements

Participants in hearings may submit further written statements in response to the final list of matters, issues and questions, although there is no requirement to do so.

If produced, a separate written statement should be submitted for each hearing that the participant takes part in. Written statements must:

- Respond only to the published matters, issues and questions
- Except for statements submitted by the Council, be no longer than 3,000 words (excluding appendices, but these should be attached only if essential)
- Either relate to the original written representation, or to new matters which have arisen since the original representation was made
- Not simply repeat what was in the original representation, and
- State the representor ID.

An electronic version and 2 paper copies of any further written statements must be received by **12 noon on 23 October 2026**. Late submissions are unlikely to be accepted. Any statements of excessive length, or containing irrelevant or repetitious material, may be returned.

7. Statements of Common Ground

If examination participants wish to engage in statements of common ground with one another, an electronic version and 2 paper copies should be submitted to the Programme Officer by the deadlines specified above for further written statements.

8. Site visits

I will visit relevant sites and areas if needed to assess whether the LDP is sound. I may conduct site visits at any point during the examination. Visits will normally be unaccompanied unless access to private land is necessary.

9. Close of the examination

After the hearings the examination will remain open until my report is submitted to the Council. No further representations or evidence will be accepted during this time unless we have specifically requested it.

10. Further information

If you have any questions about the examination, please contact the Programme Officer.

Ian Stevens
Inspector