

# Land East of **Bodelwyddan**



Welsh Language Impact  
Assessment



Barwood LaSalle Land Limited  
Partnership

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Welsh Language Impact Assessment (WLIA) has been prepared to accompany a planning application by Barwood Land and Estates Limited (Barwood Land) for a site of 94.38 ha that lies wholly within the Bodelwyddan Key Strategic Site (KSS) as defined in Denbighshire County Council's Local Development Plan (LDP) (June 2013).
- 1.2 The document entitled 'Living, Working, Breathing Bodelwyddan – Masterplanning Strategies for an Integrated Community' prepared by Barwood Land in 2008 and 2009 sets out the approach in relation to the Bodelwyddan KSS.
- 1.3 This influenced the production of a comprehensive suite of technical information in 2010 that was submitted and formed part of the evidence base in support of the Deposit LDP, and Policy BSC5, and which was considered during the LDP Examination in Public.
- 1.4 This report supplements this thorough earlier analysis, provides updates from the 2010 baseline position and outlines more detailed information concerning the site, compliance with relevant aspects of planning and other policy, and the design considerations that need to be taken forward and are being taken forward through this outline planning application.
- 1.5 Throughout the preparation of the LDP, Barwood Land affirmed its commitment to supporting and promoting the Welsh language, and the importance of maintaining and protecting the Welsh language and culture in this part of Wales. Barwood Land considers that respecting and enhancing the Welsh Language and culture and exploring opportunities to strengthen their roles are integral to the success of the proposal and its identity as a sustainable and embracing development.
- 1.6 To achieve this, the WLIA aims to consider the proposals against a series of key indicators relative to population, economic, social and cultural factors.
- 1.7 The Assessment is structured as follows:
  - Section 2 – describes the Proposed Development;
  - Section 3 – explains the rationale for the Language Impact Assessment;
  - Section 4 – details relevant policy;
  - Section 5 – assesses the proposals against key indicators; and
  - Section 6 – concludes the Assessment.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The Bodelwyddan KSS is located to the eastern edge of the town of Bodelwyddan. The town occupies a central, pivotal location in east-west and north-south movement and communications corridors within Denbighshire.
- 2.2 The proposed development will, consistent with Policy BSC5 of the LDP, deliver 1,715 dwellings (including affordable housing) in a range of house types, sizes, tenures and densities to reflect and respect the existing character of the KSS and the town. New retail, commercial and community services to meet daily needs requirements will be provided. Land will be provided for the construction of a new primary school. 950,000 sq. ft. of employment floorspace will be created, providing flexibility in terms of use, size and tenure of units, delivering a statement location along the key strategic investment corridor of the A55 in North Wales, and together with St. Asaph Business Park creating an employment hub of regional significance. The wide range of jobs created will also be enhanced through the delivery of a Care Home and associated close care apartments
- 2.3 A new link between Junction 26 of the A55 and Sarn Road will be provided, together with improved public transport links. Significant areas of public open space will be created with natural features (ponds, streams, ditches, hedgerows, trees) structuring the masterplan for the site, which together with their enhancement and retention will provide nature conservation and biodiversity enhancements for the wider area. Allotments and community orchards will also be provided, with all elements of the masterplan linked by a network of footpaths and cycle ways, providing greater public accessibility to and from the site for both new and existing residents, and providing significantly improved access to the surrounding countryside.
- 2.4 Barwood Land are committed to delivering a scheme that will become a signature location, delivering housing, employment and social infrastructure that meets both the needs of the County and the community. The juxtaposition of land uses contribute to an intrinsically sustainable mix and its strategic location will ensure that the KSS's potential will be fully realised.
- 2.5 The emphasis will be on sensitively accommodating development within the established and resilient landscape structure, creating a green environment within natural boundaries that can deliver long term sustainable growth. Character will reflect locally important attributes enhanced by excellent connectivity to the existing town facilitating a single, successful and integrated community. This significant investment in green infrastructure will deliver an accessible network of green spaces and recreational opportunities that encourages healthy living for the town's population as a whole.
- 2.6 Public transport initiatives that build upon Bodelwyddan's central location in this regard will increase accessibility between Bodelwyddan, the coastal towns and the rural market towns, allowing the opportunities provided uniquely by this location to permeate across the County.

## 3. RATIONALE FOR THE LANGUAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 The Welsh Government (WG) has identified that land use planning - through the allocation and location of new development - plays a crucial role in helping to arrest the decline in the number of communities where Welsh is spoken and to provide opportunities to encourage the use of the language in social, leisure and business activities.
- 3.2 Planning guidance in the form of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 20 on the Welsh Language states that the land use planning system should take account of the needs and interests of the Welsh language when making planning decisions.
- 3.3 In this regard, the impact of new development on the Welsh language was a consideration during the emerging stages of the LDP. The LDP strategy identified the need for growth based on local needs and requirements. To accommodate this, the Council considered a number of options including dispersing development into a large number of smaller sites or on one key strategic site.
- 3.4 From a Welsh language and culture perspective, it was felt that dispersing development growth could lead to a significant negative impact on a high number of communities where Welsh is the first language and used by a high percentage as the day-to-day medium of conversations and business. In addition, a number of these communities had already seen significant change due to development and demographic alterations over the past 10 years and were still adjusting. Accordingly, this approach was discounted for economic, environmental and social reasons.
- 3.5 In contrast, the alternative approach of locating new development at one key strategic site was seen as preferable. Not only was 60% of the county's population close to the Bodelwyddan KSS and its significant employment provision, but the site was well located and benefitted from its proximity close to main public transport networks.
- 3.6 In terms of the Welsh language and culture, it was recognised that the proposed level of development – relative to housing and employment – would create both pressures and opportunities for the Welsh language and, in this regard, Policy BSC5 of the LDP was assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and, in particular, Objective 7, which aims to protect and enhance the Welsh language and culture at various stages of the plan for compatibility.
- 3.7 The SA noted that the area surrounding the KSS currently has a relatively low level of Welsh speakers and that the development proposal's provision of a significant amount of affordable housing for local people would maintain community cohesion, thereby helping to maintain and, perhaps, enhance the use of the language. However, the SA also raised the potential that given that there was no mechanism to control occupancy; the development may attract in-migrants which could impact on traditional community, culture and language of the area.
- 3.8 Consequently, the SA findings felt that the Bodelwyddan KSS could have both a positive and negative impact on the use of the Welsh language and that much depended on how potential mitigation measures could be implemented to address any negative impacts.



- 3.9 It was suggested that there was a need to consider how best to mitigate these effects through the production of a Community Linguistic Impact Assessment. This report was produced by Denbighshire County Council in April 2011. It considered the background evidence, which informed the initial SA view, and assessed the impact of the proposal against a series of key indicators.
- 3.10 The preparation of this document was supported by Barwood Land, as they recognised both the pressures and opportunities that the site could create for the Welsh language and culture in this part of the county.
- 3.11 The Assessment concluded that, whilst the rise in social and economic wellbeing engendered by the development would enable the creation of a thriving community where the Welsh language and culture could prosper, there remained a need to consider the effects of the development and to introduce measures that meant the opportunities were fully exploited.
- 3.12 This matter was further addressed in Barwood Land's representations to the Alternative Site Consultation and the draft Development Brief prepared by the Council with the assistance of Barwood Land. This identified the importance of the Bodelwyddan KSS becoming a signature location with a strong, distinctive sense of place based upon the culture and heritage of the location including the needs and interest of the Welsh language.
- 3.13 Evidently, Barwood Land has consistently recognised the need for the development proposals to respect the Welsh language and culture and for it to form a central part of the development proposals. Given this, the remaining chapters of this report will aim to explore how relevant policy (both planning and otherwise) considers how new development can foster the growth of the use of the Welsh language and how this can be applied to Bodelwyddan. This will be interpreted through the use of key indicators outlined in the Council's Community Linguistic Impact Assessment.



## 4. POLICY REVIEW

4.1 This section of the WLIA outlines the relevant policy context for the proposed development and its potential impacts on the Welsh language. It consists of adopted and emerging guidance at the national and local levels, within both the planning framework and the wider background of developing and safeguarding the Welsh language.

4.2 The following documents have been reviewed:

- Planning Policy Wales (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) – November 2012;
- Wales Spatial Plan 2004 (and update in 2008);
- TAN20: The Welsh Language: Unitary Development Plans and Planning Control – October 2013;
- The adopted Denbighshire Local Development Plan – June 2013;
- Draft Denbighshire SPG – Planning and the Welsh Language - November 2013
- A Living Language – a Language for Living: Welsh Language Strategy 2012 – 2017 - March 2012;
- Iaith Pawb – A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales – February 2003; and
- Planning and the Welsh Language: The Way Ahead - December 2005. .

### **Planning Policy Wales – Edition 5 (November 2012)**

4.3 The fifth edition of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) was published in November 2012 and provides an additional update to the previous versions of the guidance. In regard to the interaction of the planning system and the Welsh language, it considers this at a number of points.

4.4 Paragraph 1.3.5 states that local planning authorities must take appropriate steps to demonstrate that their policies, operational practices and organisational culture do not lead to any systematic unfairness in the treatment of any group in the population.

4.5 The Welsh language is considered in Paragraph 4.13.1, where it is noted that the Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that the Welsh language is supported and encouraged to flourish. However, the guidance recognises that the future well-being of the language across the whole of Wales will depend upon a wide range of factors particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities. The land use planning system should also take account of the needs and interests of the Welsh language and in so doing can contribute to its well-being.

4.6 Paragraph 4.13.3 considers the distribution and phasing of housing development and that such issues should ensure that new development does not erode the position of the Welsh language. The guidance advises that appropriate development plan policies about the broad scale, location and phasing of new development could assist in achieving this aim. However, policies should not seek to introduce any element of discrimination between individuals on the basis of their linguistic ability, and should not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds.

### **Wales Spatial Plan 2004 (Update 2008)**

- 4.7 The Welsh language is not specifically considered within the Spatial Plan, albeit that the relative strength of the language is set out in the 'Respecting Distinctiveness' section. Accordingly, one of its objectives is to develop Wales as a modern bilingual society with increasing opportunities for people in all areas of Wales.
- 4.8 With reference to the proposal, the Plan also identifies a strategic hub around the towns in the northern part of the county: Rhyl – St Asaph – Bodelwyddan – Prestatyn – Kinnel Bay. This is a hub for investment and action, which should aim to strengthen the role and function of the towns individually and collectively. In this regard, the site will help to achieve this objective through ensuring the hub becomes an effective instrument to deliver socio-economic benefits to this part of the county.

### **TAN20: Planning and the Welsh Language - October 2013**

- 4.9 The guidance provided by TAN20 (June 2000) on Planning and the Welsh Language has recently been updated. It sets out how the planning system should consider the implications of the Welsh Language when preparing LDPs and in decision making.
- 4.10 TAN20 notes that it should be read in conjunction with PPW and provides guidance in relation to land use planning subject to Section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and promotion of the use of the Welsh language.
- 4.11 It replicates the advice set out in PPW in that the future well-being of the language across the whole of Wales will depend on a wide range of factors. The land use planning system should, where feasible and relevant, contribute to the future well-being of the Welsh language by establishing the conditions to allow sustainable communities to thrive (Paragraph 1.6.3).
- 4.12 The key mechanism for doing this – as advised by TAN20 – is the SA process, which should be used to assess evidence of the impacts of the spatial strategy, policies and allocations on the Welsh Language (Paragraph 3.2.1). The SA should guide the approach taken by the LDP to addressing the impacts on the Welsh Language. This is an on-going process as the LDP moves towards adoption. For instance, Paragraph 3.6.2 in the TAN states that during the pre-deposit stage, strategic sites should be directed to where evidence suggests that the likely impact on the use of the Welsh language is positive or can be mitigated.
- 4.13 In wider terms, TAN20 states that LDP policies should ensure that there is sufficient range of economic opportunities to support and develop local communities (Paragraph 3.7.3). However, they should not seek to control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds (Paragraph 3.7.4). It also notes mitigation measures that could be implemented, and should be referenced in LDP. These include the provision of local labour contracts, provision of bilingual signs and support for language induction and projects to encourage the use of the language (Paragraph 3.8.1)
- 4.14 Paragraph 3.11.3 advises that local authorities that have an adopted LDP should consider re-visiting their approach to the Welsh Language at the four year review stage.
- 4.15 Paragraph 4.1.2 comments that in determining individual applications – where the needs and interests of the Welsh language are material – decisions should be based on planning grounds only and should be reasonable. Development Plan policies that consider the Welsh Language are

material considerations. Relevant planning applications should also not be subject to Welsh Language Impact Assessments, as this would duplicate the LDP site selection process. Nevertheless, Barwood Land has undertaken an assessment of the development's impact on the Welsh language and culture in order to inform DCC's decision making process.

### **Adopted Denbighshire Local Development Plan – June 2013**

- 4.16 Within the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP), Bodelwyddan has been identified as the Key Strategic Site to meet the needs of Denbighshire in line with the LDP strategy and it is envisaged it will deliver new housing, employment opportunities, open space and community facilities, thus, creating a sustainable community.
- 4.17 However before this is considered, Objective 7 of the LDP should be noted, as it states that there is a need to assess the impact of new development – such as Bodelwyddan - on the Welsh language and culture in all parts of the county
- 4.18 In terms of the allocation, Policy BCS5 sets out the importance of the proposal to meet needs within the north of the County together with the quantum of development envisaged for the site.
- 4.19 The supporting text to this policy acknowledges the requirement set out in the Wales Spatial Plan to identify a hub in this locale and the need to provide a focus for future employment, housing and retail and provide continued support and opportunity for growth and regeneration in the area.
- 4.20 It continues by noting that - whilst a development of this size will bring change to the existing residents of Bodelwyddan – it will help to address strategic county issues while furthering the economic success of the St Asaph Business Park. In addition, the development will provide various community benefits such as providing land for a new school, transport improvements, affordable housing and extra care housing.
- 4.21 The adopted Local Plan also contains Policy RD5, which examines the impact of development on the Welsh language from a wider perspective. It notes that, in determining all planning applications, the needs and interests of the Welsh language will be taken into account. Development could be refused if its size, scale or location would cause significant harm to the character and language balance of a community. It also considers more detailed matters and advises that, for example, developers will be expected to provide bilingual signage as a minimum means of promoting the Welsh language.
- 4.22 It should be noted that Policy BSC5 was prepared in parallel with Policy RD5 under the auspices of Objective 7 with all three forming part of the adopted LDP. By allocating the KSS in Policy BSC5, the Council would have had full regard to the principles set out in Objective 7 and Policy RD5 and, thus, its allocation in respect of the need and interests of the Welsh language and culture.

### **Draft Denbighshire SPG – Planning and the Welsh Language - November 2013**

- 4.23 The draft SPG provides further advice and guidance on how the Welsh language is to be considered on new development proposals submitted via the planning system. It supplements the adopted Denbighshire Local Development Plan Policy RD5 (Paragraph 2.3).
- 4.24 It advises - in Paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 – that the future of the language in the County and across Wales will depend on a wide range of factors, particularly education, demographic change, community activities and a sound economic base to maintain thriving sustainable communities. The

land use planning system is seen as being able to assist in ensuring sustainable communities grow and thrive.

- 4.25 However, the planning system cannot be viewed as a panacea to arrest the decline of the Welsh language; neither should it attempt to discriminate between individuals on the basis of their linguistic ability nor control housing occupancy on linguistic grounds. .
- 4.26 In terms of Policy RD5, the draft SPG comments that in most cases it is more likely that mitigation measures will be sought in association with new proposals on allocated sites which are in conformity with other policies in the LDP (Paragraph 6.1). Examples of mitigation include:
- Affordable housing provision;
  - Signage and place names;
  - Contribution to community facilities and groups; and
  - Employment initiatives and training.

**A Living Language – a Language for Living: Welsh Language Strategy 2012 – 2017**

- 4.27 The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to ensuring that the Welsh language thrives. A Living Language: A Language for Living is the Welsh Ministers' strategy for the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language and to see the Welsh language thriving in Wales. To achieve this, the strategy aims to see an increase in the number of people who both speak and use the language. The six overarching aims are:
- To encourage and support the use of the Welsh language within families;
  - To increase the provision of Welsh-medium activities for children and young people and to increase their awareness of the value of the language;
  - To strengthen the position of the Welsh language in the community;
  - To increase opportunities for people to use Welsh in the workplace;
  - To improve Welsh language services to citizens; and
  - To strengthen the infrastructure for the language, including digital technology

**laith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales – February 2003**

- 4.28 laith Pawb notes that the decline of Welsh-speaking communities is a cause of concern to the Welsh Government, albeit it is recognised that this is part of the process of economic change, population movement and social dislocation which afflicts large parts of Wales, rural and urban, and not merely Welsh-speaking areas (Paragraph 3.2).
- 4.29 Paragraph 3.4 states that the Welsh Government believes that the solution for disadvantaged Welsh-speaking communities rests with national and local strategies for promoting economically and socially sustainable communities.
- 4.30 In terms of planning, Paragraph 3.33 confirms the Welsh Government's commitment to recognising the importance of the Welsh language at a community level. Local planning policy formulation and, therefore, subsequent planning decisions should be sensitive to the ability of different areas and communities to accommodate development without eroding the position of the Welsh language.

- 4.31 However, the paragraph notes that economic development, cultural and educational policies aimed at the same goal of creating sustainable communities will greatly strengthen the prospects of the Welsh language and culture.

### **Planning and the Welsh Language: The Way Ahead (December 2005)**

- 4.32 This paper was prepared by a consortium of organisations made up of local authorities, Bwrdd yr Iaith (the Welsh Language Board), the Home Builders Federation and the Welsh Government in order to develop a better understanding of the relationship between land use planning and Welsh language to promote the wellbeing of the language and the cultural character of local communities.
- 4.33 Accordingly, its tone and content reflects this purpose as it tries to establish the implications of planning on the Welsh language and how this can be objectively assessed and measured.
- 4.34 In these terms, it states in the supporting discussion note that if a proposed development is of a significant scale then a Language Impact Assessment should be sought. It continues by noting that if a Language Impact Assessment is sought the LPA should clearly state their reasons and what issues need to be included in the Assessment.
- 4.35 This paper also examines more detailed matters such as signs and advertisements. Through the planning process, bilingual signs should be promoted and mono-lingual signs refused if they adversely affect the physical environment and have implications for the wider social character and amenity of an area. The promotion of bilingual signs can also be encouraged where advertisement consent is not required in order to change and safeguard linguistic character.

### **Summary**

- 4.36 The policy review indicates that land use planning and the location of new development has a role to play in the future of the Welsh language. However, it is only one of a myriad of factors where demographic change, education and economic conditions are all likely to have much more of an influence.
- 4.37 Notwithstanding this, general policy guidance in PPW and the new TAN20 identify the need to understand the underlying position of the Welsh language when considering new development. It suggests that through this process of assessment, the implications of the proposals on the Welsh language can be judged and measures put in place to encourage the use of Welsh. This process was followed in the allocation of the KSS at Bodelwyddan in the adopted LDP, which was shown to represent the most appropriate means of meeting wider economic, environmental and social objectives whilst respecting the needs and interests of the Welsh language and culture.
- 4.38 LDP Policy BSC5's preparation and subsequent approval, in conjunction with Objective 7 and Policy RD5, demonstrates that full regard was given to the implications of the KSS on the Welsh language and that it was deemed to offer the best solution. The recent draft SPG was prepared in support of Policy RD5 and acknowledges that mitigation measures will be sought to address Welsh language and culture matters occurring from new development proposals.

## 5. ASSESSMENT AGAINST KEY INDICATORS

- 5.1 Policy RD5 in the adopted LDP states that in determining all planning applications, the needs and interests of the Welsh language will be taken into account.
- 5.2 As has been stated, it is considered that the KSS allocation in Policy BSC5 meets the requirements of Objective 7 and Policy RD5 given that they were prepared and adopted in parallel. Moreover, the Council has already prepared a Community and Linguistic Impact Assessment for the KSS, which has been the subject of a detailed response from Barwood Land. This document indicated that the rise in social and economic wellbeing engendered by the development would enable the creation of a thriving community where the Welsh language and culture could prosper. Whilst information submitted with this application – in the form of the Environmental Statement and technical appendices – demonstrate that the critical elements of the development have been tested and found appropriate.
- 5.3 This section of the report will aim to assess the impact of the proposed development on the Welsh language and culture within this part of Denbighshire. To achieve this, it draws upon the work and analysis already undertaken by the Council in their Community Linguistic Impact Assessment and the response prepared by Barwood Land as well as the ‘Living, Working, Breathing Bodelwyddan – Masterplanning Strategies for an Integrated Community’ report.
- 5.4 Accordingly, the proposed development will be considered against five components of community life. These components are as follows:
- Population Characteristics;
  - Housing;
  - Economic Indicators;
  - Education, Local Facilities and Crime; and
  - Social and Cultural Aspects.
- 5.5 The following section will address each of these indicators in turn. It will initially set out the existing position. This will be followed by the impact of the proposals and how it will affect the Welsh language and culture in the area. Finally, it will outline the mitigation measures proposed by Barwood Land to address any matters arising from the development of the site.

### **Welsh Language Development Officer**

- 5.6 Before commencing the detailed analysis of the key indicators, it should be noted that Barwood Land will help fund a Welsh Language Development Officer during the initial years of the development, in the same way as Travel Plan co-ordinators are funded via new strategic development. The Officer’s role will promote Welsh education, support Welsh learners and existing groups, and develop local awareness of cultural history.

### **Population Characteristics**

- 5.7 Census Data from 2011 indicates that there has been a slight increase in the resident population of Bodelwyddan from the data figures in 2001 from 2,106 to 2,129 residents.

- 5.8 In terms of Welsh language statistics, nationally, Wales has seen a decrease in the number of Welsh speakers between the Census from 2001 to 2011, from 21% to 19%. Similarly, the proportion of Welsh speakers in Denbighshire has declined between the census periods from 26.4% in 2001 to 24.6% in 2011. This could be due to a number of factors such as out migration of Welsh speakers, immigration of non-Welsh speakers and the non-continuation of speaking Welsh following school.
- 5.9 In terms of Bodelwyddan, the 2001 Census stated that 18% of the population of the town could speak Welsh. This has slightly dropped to 17.9% which means that it is below the average for Denbighshire and that it remains one of the lowest percentage wards in the County.
- 5.10 The impact of the development on the Welsh language and culture will predominantly relate to the population growth that will occur. As the policy review suggests (Planning and the Welsh Language: The Way Ahead), large scale development is likely to have an impact on the language and culture of communities.
- 5.11 However, a number of factors should be noted. First, the amount of residual speakers in Bodelwyddan is low and whilst it could be stated that the influx of new in-migrants may further weaken this position and the existing population's sense of place, Barwood Land see this as an opportunity to encourage the growth and development of the language through the implementation of new initiatives such as the Language Development Officer, providing land for a new Welsh medium school and ensuring that there are bilingual signs and marketing.
- 5.12 Moreover, the alternative approach - to disperse housing growth throughout Denbighshire - could have a more negative impact than the KSS, as it would spread new development around the county increasing the effect of new in-migrants on a large number of communities thereby widening the potential impact on native Welsh speakers. Some of these areas could be more sensitive to change because of their higher percentages of Welsh speakers and the migration of high levels of non-Welsh speaking people could result in local demographic change and alter the language balance in these sensitive areas.
- 5.13 By focussing development at the site, it will limit the effect of population growth and net in-migration on one location and the proposed development will be of a sufficient scale to introduce the measures set out above that mitigate the impact on the language and help it flourish.
- 5.14 The creation of new housing, which will attract a mixed age group but with a probable bias towards younger families moving as a result of new employment opportunities, is likely to create an opportunity to develop and grow the language through local schools.
- 5.15 Moreover, the opportunity to create a signature location delivering housing, employment and social infrastructure that meets the needs of the county and the local community are greatest with this form of development.
- 5.16 To ensure that Welsh language and culture is at the heart of this process measures such as Welsh street names and a bilingual marketing strategy will be implemented.

### **Housing**

- 5.17 The KSS proposal has been allocated to meet the need for new housing development within the County. Theoretically, this means that all the new units could house people solely from Denbighshire. In practice, this is unlikely to happen and hence there will be a requirement to



introduce measures to ameliorate factors that could have a negative impact on the Welsh language.

- 5.18 In these terms, it is considered that these factors include design, affordable housing provision, phasing and mix of uses.
- 5.19 The design of the houses will be important, as it will be necessary to ensure that there is a sufficient breadth of house sizes, styles and design to ensure that all sectors of the population would be attracted to Bodelwyddan. In addition, the development will include a Care Home, land for a new school and land for local community facilities that will make the site attractive to all ages.
- 5.20 The requirement to meet local needs also means that a suitable proportion of the units will be allocated for affordable housing. The adopted LDP policy on affordable housing (Policy BCS4) indicates that a minimum of 10% of new housing in the KSS will be required to be affordable housing with provision for this to increase as the market improves.
- 5.21 The Council's own Community and Linguistic Assessment acknowledges the role of affordable housing provision in terms of the impact on the Welsh language. It states that affordable housing will help meet local need and will enable the existing population to be retained with Denbighshire. This will hopefully mean that those existing Welsh speakers within Denbighshire will not have to move away to find suitable housing.
- 5.22 The proposed development is likely to be phased and brought forward over a 10 year development period, and will include a range of uses such as strategic employment, new school provision and a range of local community and commercial facilities. This long term phasing will ensure that there is not an influx of properties on the market, which will ensure that the provision of affordable units is delivered in accordance with local demand.
- 5.23 The different range of uses will also be attractive to potential residents, as it will mean that new business and job opportunities are in close proximity to new residential development. This will promote sustainability and a sense of community with many residents, potentially, working in close proximity to their homes. The land for new school provision could also be utilised to encourage the growth of the Welsh language in Denbighshire. Equally, the land for local community and commercial facilities will allow for those who are not as mobile to be in close proximity to key services.
- 5.24 With regard to the impact on the Welsh language, both the Council's own study and Barwood Land's response considered that the site would, overall, have a positive impact through the development of much needed new housing. This conclusion was based on the fact that the site would provide for a sufficient range of housing that will attract all sectors of the population. Such an approach will help retain those within Denbighshire that are seeking a new home and ensure that Welsh speakers have less need to move away from the area.
- 5.25 Another factor that should be considered is the development's provision of a site for new education facilities. The potential delivery of a new Welsh Medium school, which Barwood Land supports, could be used to further grow the language, as schoolchildren and their families learn the language thereby helping to increase the number of Welsh speaking households. School provision of this nature would offer stability to the Welsh speaking community and a basis for improving its position within the community.

- 5.26 Concern has been expressed during the formative stages of this scheme that the site has the potential to become a dormitory town for those who work to the east along the A55. However, the proximity and development of the strategic employment site should provide ample opportunities to ensure that this situation does not arise. By doing so, it will help create a sustainable and embracing location where people live and work locally. This will inherently help foster the use of the Welsh language.
- 5.27 In terms of specific measures, it is again suggested that Welsh street names are implemented and bilingual marketing used in the preliminary stages of the project.

### **Economic Indicators**

- 5.28 When comparing the key economic indicators, it would appear that Bodelwyddan fairs better than both Denbighshire and Wales as a whole. It has a lower percentage of those unemployed, 2.9% compared to 3.9% and 4.1% respectively. It also has a high median and average weekly wage/salary level based on the latest available data, with the figures more akin to the UK average, which is a wage of £607.10 per week than the lower Denbighshire and Wales figures, which is £520.70 per week.
- 5.29 The new housing and the resultant increase in population will support existing local business through the influx of potential new customers. Furthermore, the development of new housing will create opportunities in the construction sector, as there will be a requirement for workers to build the new homes. The local workforce is likely to be the main source for these jobs, and it would be anticipated that a proportion of these workers would be Welsh speaking, thus, the site would provide local work for them.
- 5.30 In addition, the strategic employment allocation that forms part of the development proposals will give rise to considerable opportunities for new business growth and creation. This serviced employment land will develop a range of units relative to size, use and tenure offering a broad range that will help meet local requirements. It is hoped that through the provision of this land, local businesses and entrepreneurs will be encouraged thereby generating local economic growth and employment, which will, in turn, help foster the growth of the Welsh language through the retention of Welsh speakers in the area.
- 5.31 The proximity of the hospital also suggests that such links could be capitalised in this arena with similar benefits occurring.
- 5.32 Barwood Land believes that the site will result in the creation of circa 3,000 jobs in a wide range of business activities and that residents will have an opportunity to work at a sustainable location, in high quality roles. Thus, it is anticipated that the development will both increase the amount and nature of the employment available – improving the employment and salary levels in both Bodelwyddan and neighbouring areas. Implicitly, this will have a positive effect on the Welsh language.
- 5.33 Indeed, it is seen that these social and economically sustainable attributes will help maintain and improve the vitality and viability of the Welsh language, particularly when they are coupled with the other aspects of the site to improve social cohesion and well-being.
- 5.34 In terms of mitigating measures, in this instance, it is suggested that none are required.

- 5.35 However, in order to further embed the language within the proposed development, Barwood Land will seek to put in place local labour agreements to encourage the local workforce (and the proportion of Welsh speakers) to seek jobs at the site during the construction phase, work with local colleges regarding training and apprenticeship schemes and develop a range of units and sites that are attractive to local businesses so that they grow further. Indeed, Barwood Land has already established a relationship and dialogue with Rhyl College.
- 5.36 In addition, businesses locating at the site will be encouraged to secure 'Investing in Welsh' status.

### **Education, Local Facilities and Crime**

- 5.37 Currently, there is a local primary school in Bodelwyddan, which predominantly teaches in English with Welsh as a second language. Secondary school age pupils go to a series of local comprehensives in Rhyl and Prestatyn, both of which are English speaking with Welsh as a second language. There are Welsh medium primary and secondary schools located in Rhyl, Abergele and St Asaph.
- 5.38 There is a small healthcare clinic and a community centre in the town with a series of local commercial units that include shops, takeaways and a petrol filling station.
- 5.39 In terms of crime, the figures set out in the Council's own Community and Linguistic Assessment suggest Bodelwyddan suffers from higher levels of reported crime than neighbouring wards but this is likely to be skewed by the proximity of the hospital. For instance, the Assessment states that there are 7.1 crimes per 1,000 people in Bodelwyddan whilst these figures are 5.1 and 4.3 in Rhuddlan and St Asaph West respectively.
- 5.40 The increase in population created by the new development will impact on existing facilities relative to both existing education facilities and local community/commercial facilities.
- 5.41 Both the Council's own study and Barwood Land's response recognise that the site will require investment into the educational facilities in this area. Barwood Land has previously stated their clear desire to provide a site for a Welsh language primary school within the development in order to anchor the learning environment and improve access to the Welsh language.
- 5.42 Therefore, the provision of new educational facilities will strengthen the role of Welsh in the local community. As suggested elsewhere in this report, this is a critical element in shaping the role of the language in the community as children (and their families) place Welsh at the heart of their communication.
- 5.43 Therefore, the provision of a site, potentially, for a Welsh medium primary school would give rise to a positive impact during the operational phase, providing more accessible Welsh education and widening choice in the town.
- 5.44 Equally, the proposed community infrastructure offer will improve access to local facilities. The proposals will include land for new healthcare facilities and opportunities for new commercial retail. The scale of the development (and number of new residents) will ensure that both existing and new facilities will benefit from an increase in demand. Residents of the proposed development will be within walking distance of a number of local services within the development and in Bodelwyddan itself. Therefore, given the development's good accessibility and connectivity, local services will benefit from the KSS proposed development.

- 5.45 In terms of crime, Barwood Land is committed to ensuring that the site will be safe and that every measure will be taken to minimise the potential for crime. A series of actions will be undertaken to ensure that this occurs in practice. These involve liaising with local community stakeholder groups and the police to ensure the masterplan strategies are in line with current thinking. Barwood Land is confident that appropriate design measures have been put in place –such as the Secure by Design principles – that can be incorporated into the scheme and effectively implemented. Moreover, the improved community facilities that will result from the development will assist in providing facilities for youths thereby reducing the propensity for anti-social behaviour.
- 5.46 In terms of mitigating measures, the land provision and developer contributions for the education and community facilities is more than likely to ensure that there is a positive impact on the Welsh language. However, it forms part of a wider on-going partnership that will see the Council work with Barwood Land to develop and deliver Welsh language education, whilst the community facilities will benefit from bilingual signage and marketing material and will raise local awareness of the Welsh language and culture.

### **Social and Cultural Aspects**

- 5.47 Central to the success of the development – in terms of the Welsh language – will be to ensure that it builds on the culture and traditions of Bodelwyddan. The scale of development will inevitably have an impact, but its design, layout and approach will have a major effect on how it settles into the existing landscape and exists with neighbouring communities.
- 5.48 As documented elsewhere in the supporting documents, the design and masterplanning process has ensured that the proposals respect the sensitivities of the area, whilst also providing solutions that help cultural aspects such as language come to the fore through the sustainable location of community facilities and close proximity of the employment allocations.
- 5.49 In addition, Barwood Land will help fund a Language Development Officer during the early phases of the scheme following receipt of planning permission and the consent being implemented. This initiative will help foster Welsh speaking orientated groups based in the wider area such as the pre-school nurseries.
- 5.50 The key to achieving success in developing and encouraging the Welsh language and strengthening the cultural identity of the place will be for Barwood Land, the Council and local community groups to work in partnership to exploit the opportunities that will become available through the increased number of residents. The anticipated rise in population will have a positive impact and help sustain existing community groups and help set up new ones that arise as the development progresses. It is expected that more people will play a role in the community if they live and work in the same place and foster closer associations through work and social interactions.
- 5.51 However, it is important that the Welsh language and cultural identity of the area play a central part in this process, and the role of the Development Officer and other mitigation measures will help ensure that this occurs and secure a positive impact on the Welsh language future of Bodelwyddan and the wider area.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Barwood Land has from the outset recognised the importance of bringing forward the development in order that it maintains and enhances the Welsh language and culture within Bodelwyddan and, indeed, provides an environment which allows it to thrive.

6.2 As the WLIA demonstrates, this will be achieved through a series of implicit and explicit measures. In terms of implicit factors, the proposed development will:

- Develop a range and mix of housing to meet local needs;
- Create new business and job opportunities through the development of the strategic employment location;
- Provide land for new community services in education, health care and local retail;
- Support local community groups; and
- Design a scheme that enhances the local landscape and built environment.

6.3 More explicit mechanisms include:

- Help fund a Language Development Officer following receipt of planning permission and the consent has been implemented;
- Ensure there is bilingual communication at the heart of the proposal in terms of sale and marketing and other information;
- Support training and skills initiatives; and
- Implement practical measures such as Welsh street signs and directional posts.

6.4 Thus, through the application of measures that contribute positively to well-being, social progress and economic growth, it is considered that Barwood Land will provide the foundations to improve socio-economic growth that can only benefit the Welsh language and culture.

6.5 The attributes of the proposed development, along with Barwood Land and Denbighshire County Council's shared commitment to establishing a distinctive place where people will want to live, work and visit, will therefore create an environment that supports the use of Welsh language through a series of implicit and explicit measures.

6.6 These measures – which have been set out in the preceding sections – will ensure that a co-ordinated and concerted approach will be adopted. This will provide a framework for the key indicators to be met and will lead to the development having an overall positive effect on the Welsh language and culture in Bodelwyddan and Denbighshire as a whole.