

<b>Isle of Anglesey County Council</b>	
Report to:	Planning Policy Committee
Date:	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2025
Subject:	Ynys Môn LDP – Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) and Habitats' Regulations Assessment (HRA) Scoping Reports
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr. Nicola Roberts (Planning, Public Protection and Climate Change)
Head of Service / Director:	Christian Branch Head of Regulation & Economic Development Service
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Local Members:	Applicable to all Elected Members

## **1.0 Purpose of the report**

### **1.1 The purpose of this report is to:**

- Advise members of the statutory requirements relating to ISA and HRA applicable to LDP in relation to assessing the impacts of spatial and policy choices;
- Outline the statutory consultation processes for both ISA and HRA;

## **2.0 Decision required**

### **2.1 The following decisions are required:**

- Consider and accept the ISA and HRA scoping reports; and
- Acknowledge the statutory consultation requirements and agree to consult on both documents over a 5-week period in line with those requirements and best practice advice.

## **3.0 Reason for the decision**

### **3.1 The scoping reports provide the foundation for assessing the potential impacts of policy choices contained in the new LDP. Given their technical and specialist content, consultation with statutory consultees (Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Cadw) is mandatory to ensure that the scope of assessments will adequately address the potential impacts of policy choices. However, best practice advises consulting with general consultees and the wider public to**

ensure community and stakeholder involvement at each stage of the plan preparation process.

#### **4.0 Background and relevant considerations**

##### ***Integrated Sustainability Appraisal***

- 4.1 The Development Plans Manual confirms the need for sustainable development to be at the heart of the development plan process. As such, Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) are both statutory requirements. These requirements are set out in s39 (2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and SEA Regulations 5(2) and 5(4) respectively.
- 4.2 Whereas the scope of SEA is limited to environmental impacts of plans, SA has a wider remit to cover social, economic and wellbeing effects as well as environmental effects. However, the Manual advises that local planning authorities (LPAs) should consider the value and opportunities for an integrated assessment approach to preparing a development plan. It advises that an ISA will enable a more transparent, holistic and rounded assessment of the sustainability implications of growth options, objectives, policies and proposals. In doing so, it will enable integration of statutory and key elements such as Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 requirements, Equalities Act, Welsh language, Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and the Environment Act (section 6 biodiversity duty) (where relevant) into a single ISA.
- 4.3 The Manual continues that an ISA “can maximise efficiencies, avoid duplication, and provide a clear audit trail to communities and plan users on how the range of issues have been considered, and how they have influenced the plan. An ISA approach provides a robust and thorough mechanism to identify issues, assess effects and assist with monitoring in a holistic manner.”
- 4.4 The ISA Scoping Report, prepared by Land Use Consultants (LUC), provides the context for, and determines the scope of, the ISA of the LDP and sets out the framework for undertaking the later stages of the ISA.
- 4.5 In summary, the Scoping stage involves reviewing other relevant plans, policies and programmes; considering the current state of the environment as well as social and economic conditions on Anglesey; identifying any key environmental, social and economic issues or problems which may be affected by the LDP; and setting out the ‘ISA framework’, which comprises a set of sustainability objectives against which the likely effects of the LDP can be assessed. The Scoping Report also presents the proposed methodology that will be used for the later stages of the ISA including the assessment of Candidate Sites.
- 4.6 The Manual advises consulting on the ISA Scoping Report with statutory authorities (NRW and Cadw) over a period of 5 weeks and adds that it would be best practice “to make the scoping report publicly available.” Given the best practice advice provided in the Manual and the commitment made in the

Delivery Agreement to publish the Scoping Report for public consultation, it is proposed that the document be consulted upon with the following participants/stakeholders:

- Specific consultation bodies;
- General consultation bodies;
- Council Services;
- Environmental consultation bodies; and
- General public.

### ***Habitats Regulations Assessment***

- 4.7 The requirement to undertake a HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations 2007; the currently applicable version being the Habitats Regulations 2017, as amended.
- 4.8 HRA should not be integrated with the SA, or in this case ISA, as it uses a different precautionary testing mechanism. However, the ISA should summarise the HRA findings as part of its assessment of effects on biodiversity
- 4.9 In terms of consulting on the HRA Scoping Report, this should be with NRW as the Welsh Government's statutory nature advisory body and should, as per the arrangements for consulting on the ISA Scoping Report, be held over a period of 5 weeks.

## **5.0 Recommendation**

- 5.1 It is recommended that this Committee considers and accepts the scoping reports and agrees to consultation on both documents for the minimum periods suggested in the report (5 weeks) and in line with the statutory requirements for specific consultees and the best practice advice in relation to general consultees, other stakeholders and the public.