



Nathaniel Lichfield
and Partners

Planning Design Economics

**Review of Potential
Employment Sites in
the Aberystwyth Area**

Main Report

Ceredigion County
Council

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Nathaniel Lichfield
and Partners

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Registered Office:
14 Regent's Wharf
All Saints Street
London N1 9RL

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) has been appointed by Ceredigion County Council (CCC) to undertake a study to identify and assess suitable sites to provide for the future economic needs within the Aberystwyth area.
- 1.2 This work follows on from the Ceredigion Employment Needs Assessment which was prepared by DTZ in July 2008. DTZ undertook a review of its initial report in July 2009 and concluded that the employment land requirement figure remains robust even in the context of the current recession.
- 1.3 This assessment of potential employment sites also reflects changes in circumstances and approach that have been set out in DTZ's revised Core Report (August 2010). This most recent update note concluded that the actual land requirement for Ceredigion over the period from 2007 to 2022 is between 25ha and 34ha. This figure took account of the importance of Aberystwyth as a key driver for the area, based upon its role as a key settlement of national importance and its strategic regeneration status.
- 1.4 Focusing specifically upon the Aberystwyth area, the purpose of this study is to consider how the identified future B Class employment requirements (as defined below) might be satisfied within this northern part of the County in a manner that reflects its importance to Mid Wales and the status of Aberystwyth as the main town within Ceredigion.

Use Class	Use/description of development
B1	(a) Offices not falling within Class A2 (b) Research and development laboratories and studios (c) Light Industry
B2	General industry unless falling within B1
B8	Wholesale warehouses, distribution centres, repositories (does not include use of that building or land for the storage of, or as a distribution centre for, radioactive material or radioactive waste.

Table 1 Description of B Class Uses

- 1.5 Following the approach that was taken by DTZ, we have identified sites for office, industrial ('other business space') and warehousing purposes which are defined as follows:

Activity	Use class
Offices	B1(a)/(b)
'Other business space' / industrial	B1(c) and B2
Warehouses	B8

Table 2 Definition of different employment uses

- 1.6 It is not possible to disaggregate the land requirement for B1(c) activities and B2 uses and so these must be considered together as 'industrial' activities.
- 1.7 The location, land and premises requirements of office activities differ substantially from those associated with industrial and warehousing uses (which can be considered together). We have therefore adopted a different approach to the identification and review of sites for each of these types of business activity. An understanding of the specific forms of future business activities within the County and the Aberystwyth area was detailed in the DTZ report and falls outside of the scope of this report.
- 1.8 Although it does not apply in Wales, the Employment Land Review Guidance Note, which was published by the (then) ODPM in December 2004 states that there are 'specialised' employment land requirements which need to be taken into account in the course of the review of employment land requirements in addition to those needs addressed in the scope of general industrial demand. These include specialist waste facilities. On this basis, the land requirements associated with specialist waste facilities that will be required in Ceredigion over the period to 2022 are included within the overall requirement. The requirement for land-fill sites has not, however, been taken into account in this analysis.
- 1.9 The DTZ analysis included a specific land for "relevant" non-B Use Classes. These include sui generis activities which would often be expected to locate on employment sites as well as some institutional and service sector uses which often locate alongside employment uses. Appendix 2 explains how this requirement has been disaggregated between office and industrial/warehousing categories.
- 1.10 The concentration of the entire employment land requirement within the Aberystwyth area would have potentially significant implications upon the economic well-being of other parts of the County and other main centres such as Aberaeron, Llandysul, Tregaron, Lampeter and Cardigan, all of which have been identified by the Wales Spatial Plan as Key Settlements and contain existing employment sites and allocations. The future economic well-being of the County will depend upon ensuring that these larger settlements can continue to perform an employment function.

1.11

As such, the starting point for this study is an understanding of the specific employment land requirement for the Aberystwyth area. The DTZ study did not provide guidance in terms of how the County employment requirement should be distributed. In order to address this matter (which was not part of DTZ’s remit) and to ensure that the identification and assessment of potential development sites through this study could be undertaken in the context of a clear understanding of how much land is required to serve the Aberystwyth area, our initial task was to identify the proportion of the employment land requirement that should be concentrated in the Aberystwyth area.

Assessment of employment land requirement for the Aberystwyth area

1.12

Appendix 1 sets out the methodology, analysis and findings of our assessment process in detail. It also outlines how the Aberystwyth area was defined. To summarise, the Aberystwyth area incorporates the following wards:

Aberystwyth Bronglais	Ceulanamaesmawr	Llansantffraed
Aberystwyth Canol/Central	Faenor	Lledrod
Aberystwyth Gogledd/North	Llanbadarn Fawr - Padarn	Melindwr
Aberystwyth Penparcau	Llanbadarn Fawr - Sulien	Tirymynach
Aberystwyth Rheidol	Llanfarian	Trefeurig
Borth	Llanrhystud	Ystwyth

Table 3 Definition of Aberystwyth Area by Ward

1.13

Of this area, Aberystwyth town and its immediate hinterland can be helpfully defined as including the following wards:

Aberystwyth Bronglais	Aberystwyth Penparcau	Llanbadarn Fawr - Padarn
Aberystwyth Canol/Central	Aberystwyth Rheidol	Llanbadarn Fawr – Sulien
Aberystwyth Gogledd/North	Faenor	Llanfarian

Table 4 Definition of Aberystwyth Town and hinterlands (as part of Aberystwyth Area) by Ward

Baseline assessment

- 1.14 Calculation of the employment land requirement for Aberystwyth involved:
- a An identification of the Aberystwyth area (see Appendix 1), based upon an analysis of travel to work patterns;
 - b An assessment of the proportion of workers in the identified Aberystwyth area relative to the total number of workers in Ceredigion by employment sector; and,
 - c A calculation of the expected growth in each sector.
- 1.15 As set out above, the DTZ analysis tool accounts for the importance of Aberystwyth and the fact that it is expected to act as a major driver in Ceredigion's future employment and economic growth. Given that employment land in Aberystwyth has been constrained by land availability issues, it is not considered that an approach that seeks to apply the current employment distribution to growth forecasts would provide a sufficiently reliable basis for an understanding of future employment land requirements. As such, we have adopted an alternative disaggregation scenario which considers the sensitivity of the employment land requirement for the Aberystwyth area to changes in its relative importance as an employment centre (i.e. in response to its potential and to demand for premises in Aberystwyth rather than in response to constraints upon the availability of employment land).
- 1.16 The basis for this assumption is a higher level of employment growth in Aberystwyth, reflecting its strategic regeneration status and its role as a key settlement of national importance and the level of latent and emerging demand for employment development in the town. It follows that the level of growth that should be accommodated within the Aberystwyth area would not reflect a (constrained) business as usual approach but would instead be greater and geared towards enabling Aberystwyth to fulfil its potential to the benefit of the whole County.
- 1.17 As detailed in Appendix 1, this alternative scenario has assumed that the additional employment growth in Aberystwyth would result in its share of jobs increasing in the key sectors in the town. This additional role would not result in a redistribution of jobs from the Lampeter and Cardigan areas but rather would ensure a more reliable understanding of the anticipated distribution of jobs and employment land that could be achieved once supply constraints have been addressed and removed.
- 1.18 We have tested the implication of this increased importance of the Aberystwyth area through an application of the DTZ growth figures. Appendix 1 shows that it indicated that between 15.5ha and 21ha employment land should be provided within the Aberystwyth area. This set of figures represents a more reliable basis for the planning of future land requirements in Ceredigion.
- 1.19 The disaggregated figures have been discussed and agreed with DTZ and Ceredigion County Council.

Employment Land Requirement

1.20

Taking account of our adjusted density assessments, the employment land requirements within Ceredigion according to these scenarios comprise:

	B1a	B1b/c, B2	B8	Relevant Non B Class	Total
Aberystwyth	5 – 6.75	4.5 – 6.25	4 – 5.5	2 – 2.5	15.5 – 21
Cardigan	1.5 – 2	1.75 – 2.25	1.25 – 1.75	0.5	5 – 6.5
Lampeter	1.5 – 2	1.75 – 2.25	1.25 – 1.75	0.5	5 – 6.5
Total	8 – 10.75	8 – 10.75	6.5 – 9	3 – 3.5	25.5 – 34

All figures in hectares. Figures may not add up due to rounding

Table 5 Employment Land Requirement for the Aberystwyth Area

1.21

As explained in the DTZ report, the range of employment requirement figures is based on the application of different plot ratio figures (3,000 sqm per ha and 4,000 sqm per ha). The selection of which figure to adopt represents a policy choice which is to be made by Ceredigion County Council and which will flow from the general approach of the LDP and the Council's decisions on the strategic direction of growth within and across the County.

1.22

The purpose of this report is to consider strategic land requirements and to assess the suitability and capacity of sites to contribute towards the achievement of these requirements. In this context, our approach has been to divide out the maximum amount of land that is likely to be required over the LDP period to 2022, as follows:

	B1a	B1b/c, B2	B8	Total
Aberystwyth	6.75	14.25		21
Cardigan	2	4.5		6.5
Lampeter	2	4.5		6.5
Total	10.75	23.25		34

Figures include an allowance for the inclusion of relevant non-B uses as part of the employment allocation

All figures in hectares. Figures may not add up due to rounding

Table 6 Land requirement for Ceredigion by area, including provision for relevant non-B Classes within employment sites

- 1.23 The methodology has not sought to appraise existing business premises or to measure their availability to accommodate additional workers. The possible reuse and 'churn' of existing (vacant or occupied) employment premises was considered by DTZ and was therefore taken into account in their quantification of the employment land requirements for Ceredigion. To seek to address some of these needs through the re-occupation of existing premises would therefore result in double counting and a resultant under-supply of premises, to the detriment of the well-being of the local economy.
- 1.24 In addition, DTZ also made provision for a 'safety margin' to allow for losses of existing space, delays in the delivery of new employment space, sites not coming forward, flexibility and choice in provision.
- 1.25 As such, this study has been based upon the requirement for 34ha for Ceredigion and the resultant 21ha requirement for the Aberystwyth area. Whilst we have therefore sought to identify sufficient land to meet the upper requirement, it is for Ceredigion County Council to make the strategic policy decision regarding the amount of employment space within this range that it decides to allocate within the LDP. This decision should be based upon the imperative of ensuring that the LDP is internally consistent in its vision, objectives and policies
- 1.26 We have not sought to re-assess the level of quantitative or qualitative demand for employment premises within the County or the Aberystwyth area.
- 1.27 As a starting point of the study, it was considered prudent to assess the number of completions within Ceredigion between 2007 and 2010 (i.e. within the period covered by the DTZ employment forecasts and the LDP). In Aberystwyth there has been approximately 3,100 sq m of B1, 170 sq m of B2 and 510 sq m of B8 permitted on sites totalling 8.1 ha of land. However, these site areas represent whole site areas and not just those parts which were developed. Therefore, taking a 4,000 sq m per ha plot ratio, this reduces the requirement for Aberystwyth by approximately 1ha.

Report structure

1.28

The report is structured as follows:

- a Section 2 provides a summary of the methodology used to undertake this study;
- b Section 3 provides details and an explanation into the site sifting process;
- c Section 4 explains our assessment process and summarises the outcome of our consultation process;
- d Section 5 provides an assessment of each of the shortlisted sites;
- e Section 6 summarises the conclusions of the Phase 1 study and provides recommendations and next steps;
- f Section 7 sets out the findings of the supplementary A44 corridor study that we undertook following confirmation of the strategic importance of the A44 and its ability to accommodate industrial and warehousing land;
- g Section 8 sets out the conclusions of the details Phase 2 assessment which considered landscape, highways and ownership issues in respect of a number of the sites; and,
- h Section 9 contains our final conclusions and recommendations.

Methodology

- 2.1 The project methodology is set out in Fig 1 below. This summarises the various inputs into the process in terms of:
- a The initial sources of sites;
 - b GIS data;
 - c The site assessment matrix;
 - d Stakeholder consultation; and,
 - e The assessment of the employment land requirement for the Aberystwyth area (i.e. how much land was to be identified).
- 2.2 It also details the analysis process that we adopted and the way that our conclusions from this phase 1 assessment led into the more detailed phase 2 analysis.
- 2.3 Close working with Ceredigion Council afforded officers the opportunity to review and comment upon the study inputs, processes and key decisions. The initial sources of information were obtained from Ceredigion County Council, in conjunction with the lead officers. The consultation process was similarly undertaken in conjunction with the Council Officers who were able to identify key stakeholders that would be able to input into the process and provide the most valuable information regarding the suitability, availability and relative viability of different potential employment sites.
- 2.4 Throughout the study process, the team was aware of the different implications of Class B1(a)/(b) and Class B1(c)/B2/B8 forms of development. Our methodology was designed to be sensitive to the requirements and effects of these different forms of development and to ensure that the project recommendations could provide a basis by which a sufficient amount of appropriate employment land might be identified and allocated.
- 2.5 The consultation process was important in emphasising the strategic importance of the A44 corridor as the main east – west corridor into Aberystwyth. Its potential for industrial and warehousing activities was shown to be associated with this strategic role. In the light of this and given that a number of sites along the A44 were appraised as part of the Phase 1 study, we considered that it would appropriate to examine whether there are any other sites along the A44 which might be suitable, viable and available for employment development.
- 2.6 Key decisions regarding the relative suitability of sites for employment purposes were made at three key stages of the process:
- a Following the initial site sifting process;

-
- b Following the site visits and subsequent scoring and analysis; and,
 - c Following the detailed phase 2 assessment work.

- 2.7 These key stages are highlighted in blue in the diagram below. This approach enabled the increasingly detailed analysis to focus upon those sites which were consistently found to have the greatest potential for employment development. At each stage of the process, our exclusion of sites was undertaken in liaison with Ceredigion County Council so that there could be a clear understanding as to why sites were being excluded and what implications this would have upon the LDP strategy.
- 2.8 Given the relatively small amount of land that is required for development within Ceredigion and specifically within the Aberystwyth area, the methodology was designed in the context of a recognition of the reality that only a limited number of sites would be required for development. It was intended to provide a robust basis by which the difficult choices and trade-offs might be made and by which clear recommendations could therefore be made in respect of the sites that would be most appropriate for allocation and future employment development. It also recognises that some suitable sites would by necessity be excluded by the process due to the presence of preferable sites or the existence of specific availability or viability issues.
- 2.9 Our methodology was designed to address these issues and to ensure that the recommended sites have the greatest capacity of coming forward for appropriate forms of employment development within the LDP period. However, it is recognised that there is no absolute certainty in respect of the delivery of land for development and so the recommendations of this report cannot be taken as an absolute assurance that land will be developed for employment purposes by 2022. Similarly, it is entirely feasible that land that is excluded by this study might come forward within the Plan period. So long as this does not result in the release of unsuitable land, generate sustainability difficulties or compromise the potential for other sites to be released, this should be welcomed as an opportunity to improve the strength of the local economy within Ceredigion.
- 2.10 This report explains the approach and the outcome of the project. The conclusions of the first phase provided the basis for the detailed work which was undertaken at Phase 2 in relation to an identified shortlist of the most suitable sites. This then led to recommendations that will inform the Council's consideration of sites to be allocated for development.

Site Sieving Exercise

Having calculated the amount of land required within the Aberystwyth area and adopted a methodology for the completion of the study the next stage in the process was to consider the potential locations for which a detailed assessment was to be undertaken. This chapter provides details of the identification and site sieving process which was undertaken in order to allow detailed assessment of the most suitable sites.

Initial Site Identification

The first stage in the process was to use all available resources in order to produce an initial list of sites which could be considered for potential employment uses. The following sources were used in order to inform this schedule:

- a **Historical Studies:** Historical employment land studies and site feasibility studies which were completed throughout the 1990's/early 2000's were reviewed in order to see which sites have been identified historically as being suitable for employment development. Studies included the Aberystwyth Future Growth Options Study (1994) and the WDA/RPS Site Matrix (1999).
- b **Aberystwyth Masterplan:** This document, which was published in November 2007, identified a number of sites which were considered suitable for retail, leisure and employment uses within Aberystwyth.
- c **Ceredigion Urban Capacity Study:** This study was completed by ENTEC in October 2008 and identified a number of small sites within and around Aberystwyth which were considered to have the potential for future employment or mixed use development.
- d **Ceredigion Economic Needs Assessment:** This document, which was completed by DTZ in July 2008, identifies a number of sites which could potentially be suitable for employment development.
- e **Candidate Sites:** The Council made a call for candidate sites, the consultation period for which closed in April 2009. This process saw the submission of approximately 1,500 sites for the whole of Ceredigion. Only sites located within the defined 'Aberystwyth area' were considered in the sieving process which resulted in a total of 256 sites.
- f **Officer Discussion:** Given their local knowledge, officers at the Council were also consulted in order to discuss whether any additional sites should be assessed.

3.3 The information from the above documents was collated and all obvious duplications of sites were discarded. This process provided a total of 290 sites for analysis. In view of this very large number of potential opportunities and the reality that many would not be suitable for employment purposes, the sites were made subject to a detailed sieving process. This purpose of this was to identify and remove any sites that were obviously unsuitable or inappropriate for potential employment development. The sieving criteria that were applied are set out below. The approach that we took meant that some sites were removed from the list and were therefore not considered by subsequent assessment stages. This exercise allowed us to ensure that our subsequent detailed assessment could be focused upon those sites with the best potential for development.

Site Exclusions

3.4 The sieving process considered the following factors that were considered to potentially reduce the suitability of the identified sites. Full details of the sites that were considered by this phase of the study are contained in Appendix 5.

Sieve 1: Site Size

3.5 At the inception meeting a site threshold of 0.25ha was agreed for sites in the Aberystwyth town centre and 1ha for sites elsewhere in the Aberystwyth area. All sites below these thresholds were excluded from further assessment.

3.6 This approach was rooted in an appreciation of the role of this study in identifying sites that could be potentially allocated for employment development. It was agreed with Ceredigion County Council that a site of 1ha would be an acceptable minimum size for allocated sites outside Aberystwyth town centre. There is a concern that the allocation of land below this minimum size would necessitate the release of a large number of sites in the Aberystwyth area and may therefore lead to an inefficient pattern and distribution of development. It would result in a failure to provide strategic locations for development. The impact of this in economic, environmental and sustainability terms might be substantial as the identification of smaller sites would fail to generate a level of critical mass that would be required to attract investment. It would also result in a greater amount of land being required for development and associated infrastructure and could therefore result in land being more expensive to develop.

3.7 In the context of these concerns, the threshold of 1ha was considered to be appropriate for sites outside of the town centre. It would reduce the number of potential sites for assessment and would ensure that the detailed assessment (and subsequent allocation) could be focused upon those that are best able and most likely to come forward for employment purposes within the LDP period and that have the greatest capacity to contribute to the employment land requirements within the Aberystwyth area in an efficient and sustainable manner.

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- 3.8 However, a different approach was adopted in respect of the Aberystwyth town centre within which sites of 1ha or more are likely to be less readily available. A threshold of 0.25ha was adopted on the basis that more sites of this size are likely to be identifiable and that, given their town centre nature and the likelihood that they would be most suited to office (and not industrial or warehousing) uses, a higher density of development might be viable and achievable, thereby allowing more employment capacity to come forward on smaller sites. To this end, it was considered appropriate that smaller sites could be allocated for employment purposes within Aberystwyth town centre.
- 3.9 Whilst sites below these thresholds were considered too small to be considered strategic sites and to be allocated, it was nevertheless accepted that the non-identification of smaller sites in this report and the non-allocation of smaller sites in the LDP would not necessarily stop them from coming forward as windfall sites if the owners wished to pursue employment uses. The potential for windfall releases of employment land in addition to the identified release of land to make up the strategic sites was recognised in the DTZ analysis.
- 3.10 This process removed 19 sites, of which 4 were located within Aberystwyth (less than 0.25ha) and 15 were elsewhere in the Aberystwyth area.

Sieve 2: Distance to Aberystwyth

- 3.11 The focus of this study is the Aberystwyth area which is defined in Appendix 1. Tregaron is outside of the defined Aberystwyth area and the 12 candidate sites that were promoted for development in Tregaron were therefore excluded from further analysis.
- 3.12 There is a strong argument in support of making an appropriate scale of employment provision in all of the settlements in Ceredigion that are referred to in the Wales Spatial Plan, namely Aberystwyth, Cardigan, Lampeter, Aberaeron, Tregaron and Llandysul as well as in other centres such as New Quay. The allocation of employment sites in these settlements would be important in enhancing their sustainability and economic viability and would therefore help to meet employment needs and reduce the need to commute long distances to main centres (Aberystwyth, Cardigan and Lampeter). This approach would be in accordance with the policy aspirations of the Wales Spatial Plan and Planning Policy Wales. It would also accord with the provisions of the emerging LDP and would thereby ensure its coherence and the logic of its policies and approaches.
- 3.13 However, it should be noted that apart from Aberystwyth, all of the settlements identified in the Wales Spatial Plan and set out above are in the Cardigan and Lampeter travel to work areas. The amount of land that is to be allocated in these settlements will therefore have no bearing upon the requirement for space in the Aberystwyth area. Rather, this distribution of provision across 5 settlements would help to ensure that the land that is required in each of the

Cardigan and Lampeter settlement areas can be identified and delivered within the LDP period.

- 3.14 A consideration of potential development sites in these areas has been undertaken as part of a parallel study.

Sieve 3: Unrelated to a settlement

- 3.15 Building on from our assessment of sites that were distant from Aberystwyth, the third stage of the sieving process removed all sites which were completely unrelated to a settlement or one of the main trunk roads into Aberystwyth. These were removed due to the fact that employment development on these sites may suffer from very poor accessibility due to the need to travel long distances to Aberystwyth or any other settlement and a lack of high quality public transport services. In the light of their distance from settlements, such sites would not be well located for employees or customers. This would have a substantial implication upon their sustainability and market attractiveness. In summary, it was concluded that the allocation of these sites for employment development would conflict with the strategic objectives of the LDP and would therefore not be appropriate or rooted in a sound analysis of the local context.

- 3.16 This process removed a further 8 sites.

Sieve 4: Sites Deemed Unsuitable

- 3.17 Although certain sites reached the site threshold and were located within close proximity of Aberystwyth they were removed from the search as they were considered unsuitable due to the layout of the site. This only related to three sites which were all very narrow and covered an area of road or railway line. It was therefore concluded that, regardless of their physical size, the capacity of these sites was very limited and that they would not be capable of accommodating an appropriate form of employment development.

Sieve 5: C2 Flood Risk and National Designations

- 3.18 Although TAN15 identifies employment activities as a less sensitive use, it would nevertheless be inappropriate to allocated land that entirely or largely falls within a flood risk zone C2 unless these form defined regeneration areas.
- 3.19 A large number of sites within Aberystwyth town centre that were included within flood risk zone C2 were not excluded by this analysis on the basis that they have been identified by Ceredigion County Council for potential regeneration purposes. However, this analysis excluded all greenfield sites that are entirely or largely located within flood risk zone C2.
- 3.20 This stage also considered the potential impact of employment development upon the site and the surrounding area by excluding any land that was identified by a national designation as being particularly sensitive. It was

recognised that the development of such sites would be neither acceptable nor appropriate and so there was no merit in considering them in more detail.

- 3.21 Such an approach provides the basis for the potential allocation of the most suitable and sustainable land for employment development. Although further assessment work was undertaken in respect of landscape and ecology matters, this sieving stage, which excluded 23 sites, meant that any sites that were particularly sensitive and upon which development would not be appropriate could be removed at an early stage.

Sieve 6: Housing Candidate Sites

- 3.22 The next sift removed all candidate sites which were submitted for residential development. This approach was based on the consideration that as these sites are being actively pursued for other, commercially more valuable uses they would not be available for employment development within the LDP period. Many of these sites would also not be appropriate for employment related development although they were not individually appraised in detail by this study.
- 3.23 Our assumption that all sites that have been proposed through the LDP for residential purposes should not be included in this study was reviewed and tested by Council Officers who were able to verify the approach that we had taken and advise if any of the sites should actually be considered as being potentially appropriate for future employment purposes.
- 3.24 This process removed a further 137 sites.
- 3.25 It is recognised that long term sustainability and well-being within Ceredigion will necessitate a balanced approach to the provision of all forms of development. Achieving alignment between the provision of jobs and houses is particularly important in this regard as it will increase the potential labour supply, increase the local availability of jobs and help to reduce the need to travel long distances to get to work. To this end, restricting the potential supply of land for housing by releasing land for employment purposes (or vice versa) would not be in the best interests of the County. As such, no further consideration was given to those sites that are being promoted through the LDP process for housing.
- 3.26 Given the significance of Aberystwyth, it is therefore evident that the LDP should ensure that sufficient housing provision is made in the Aberystwyth area, to meet the existing and anticipated future requirements and to ensure that a balance can be achieved with the provision of employment land. In respect of all land uses, however, allocations should be made in the context of an appreciation of need, a clear understanding of the environmental capacity of the site and the local area and a recognition of the potential impacts of development.

Sieve 7: Other Uses

- 3.27 All candidate sites which had been submitted for 'other' (i.e. non-employment) purposes which had not yet been removed as part of the process were reviewed in conjunction with Council Officers and were removed where it was considered that they are likely to be pursued for purposes other than employment during the Plan period. The availability of such sites for employment development could therefore not be assured. Given the need for the LDP to provide certainty regarding the potential of its allocations to come forward for development, it was agreed that they should not be subject to further assessment or possible recommendation for allocation.
- 3.28 These sites were later reassessed by Council officers to establish whether they considered it necessary to reassess this decision for any of these sites in particular (see "Officer Comments" below).
- 3.29 This process removed a further 17 sites.

Sieve 8: Site Duplication

- 3.30 In order to focus the assessment work and to ensure that there was no risk of double counting in our analysis (which might result in insufficient land being allocated for development), we reviewed the list of sites to ensure that any duplication was identified and addressed.
- 3.31 Although obvious site duplications were removed from the original list prior to the commencement of the sieving process, establishing the overlap of historic sites and the submitted candidate sites was more complex.
- 3.32 The Council was able to provide GIS mapping of all the candidate sites which allowed for the assessment of where candidate sites were overlapping with the historic sites. We also identified any cases where candidate sites overlapped or where one was incorporated within another and therefore duplicated.
- 3.33 This process allowed for the removal/amalgamation of 19 sites.

Officer Comments

- 3.34 A spreadsheet of the on-going sifting process was provided to Ceredigion County Council Officers for review and comment. The purpose of this was to ensure that there was agreement within the team in respect of the sieving process that had been undertaken and the sites that had been removed and that were going forwards for more detailed analysis. The detailed local knowledge of the Officers was particularly valuable at this stage and provided an important verification of the approach that we had undertaken.
- 3.35 Having reviewed the shortlist of sites that we had proposed for detailed assessment, the Officers were able to use their local knowledge to suggest any sites that were not considered to be suitable for employment development and

to reinstate any sites which had been excluded from the site search but which they deemed to be worthy of further assessment. These refinements were then discussed in order to ensure that the reasoning behind the decisions was acceptable and that both NLP and the Council were comfortable with the reasons being put forward.

3.36 The reasons for the exclusion of sites by Officers included:

- a Some were no longer available for development;
- b Location of the site or settlement and inability to accommodate sustainable forms of development;
- c Knowledge of specific constraints (including access and infrastructure) which would make development in these areas unviable and unlikely to come forwards; and,
- d Capacity of the site to accommodate a coherent form of development.

3.37 Other sites were included by Officers on the basis that, despite having been excluded by particular stages of the sieving assessment, they were considered to be physically suitable for employment development and to have the potential to come forward for this form of development – either entirely or as part of a mixed use scheme – within the LDP period.

3.38 Overall, this process resulted in the removal of 26 sites on the list and the reinsertion of 6 sites (including one that had not been part of the original list of sites). Therefore, this process led to the removal of a further 21 sites but the addition of 1 ‘new’ site.

Sites for Assessment

3.39 Having undertaking the sieving analysis, a total of 258 sites were excluded from more detailed assessment. The final 32 sites comprised:

Reference	Site / Location
S3002	Aberystwyth Harbour
S2011	Cae Neuadd y Pentref, Capel Bangor
S2015	Capel Bangor
S3008	Capel Bangor
A53	Cinema Site, Bath Street
S1122	Glanyrafon Enterprise Park, Aberystwyth
S2006	Glanyrafon Industrial Estate
S3007	Glanyrafon Industrial Estate
S1123	Land at Capel Bangor

n/a	Land at Capel Dewi
n/a	Land at Commins Coch
S0331	Land at Glanyrafon Estate
S0332	Land at Glanyrafon Estate
S0337	Land at Glanyrafon Estate
S0338	Land at Glanyrafon Estate
S0960	Land at IBERS
S0522	Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin
S0131	Land at Y Lanfa, Aberystwyth Harbour
S0964	Land rear of Ty Gwyn, Llanbadarn Fawr
S1045	Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor
S1046	Land to the west of Ty Llwyd
n/a	Land North of Bow Street, up to Dole
S0965	Llanbadarn Fawr Campus
n/a	Lovesgrove
S3003	Mill St Car Park
S0799	Old College
A34	Park Avenue Car Park
A54	Park Avenue South (football ground)
S3001	Park Avenue South Site
S1066	Penglais Farm (East) and Cefn Hendre Land, Clarach
S0956	Site around Llwyn Bedw down to Cery-nant
S0433 & S3098	Southgate

Table 7 Shortlist of Sites for Detailed Assessment

3.40 Full details of the sites that were reviewed as part of this sieving process are set out in Appendix 5.

3.41 It is evident that a number of these sites relate to land in a similar area and could therefore be logically combined. As a result, the following 20 broad sites were agreed for detailed assessment:

Site / Location
Llanbadarn Fawr
Penglais Farm (East) and Cefn Hendre Land, Clarach
Southgate
Land to the south west of Glanyrafon Industrial Estate
Land to the east of Glanyrafon Industrial Estate
Land within Glanyrafon Industrial Estate
Land North of Bow Street, up to Dole
Cae Neuadd y Pentref, Capel Bangor
Land at Comins Coch
Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor
Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin
Land at IBERS
Site around Llwyn Bedw down to Cer-y-nant
Land at Capel Dewi
Lovesgrove
Park Avenue South Site
Cinema Site, Bath Street
Mill St Car Park
Aberystwyth Harbour
Old College

Table 8 Detailed Assessment Sites

3.42

On completion of this final sift, it was then agreed these 20 sites should be taken forward in the assessment process. Details of these sites are contained in Appendices 7, 8 and 9.

4.0

Assessment

Desk Based Assessment

4.1

Following the sieving exercise set out above, 20 sites were brought forward for detailed assessment.

4.2

The first stage of the detailed analysis was a desk based assessment drawing upon information provided by the Council for each of the sites. This included details on:

- a Vehicular, cycle and pedestrian access;
- b The presence of Tree Preservation Orders;
- c Infrastructure;
- d Ecology;
- e Landscape sensitivity;
- f Water quality;
- g Contamination; and,
- h Ownership and availability of the land.

4.3

The information was analysed against the assessment matrix that we had previously agreed with Ceredigion County Council. A copy of the site assessment criteria is contained in Appendix 4. The scores provided an initial indication of the relative suitability of the sites and provided an important context which was subject to detailed assessment following the site visits.

4.4

In establishing the assessment matrix, we took account of Ceredigion County Council's SA/SEA objectives to ensure that the matters that are to be specifically addressed as part of the SA/SEA process were incorporated into our consideration of the sites. The purpose of this was to ensure that a consistency in approach can be achieved and to enable the SA/SEA process to inform this element of the work so that the subsequent appraisal of the LDP policies and allocations might be made more efficient. We did not, however, undertake a full SA of the sites. The site assessment matrix also took account of the Council's site assessment criteria and our experience of undertaking similar studies elsewhere in the Country.

Consultations

4.5

It was agreed with Ceredigion County Council that the involvement of local stakeholders would be an important input into this study and would provide evidence relating to the strength of the local economy and the type and location of employment land that would be most suitable and appropriate for development and most attractive to the market. The Council provided a list of

seven consultees they considered appropriate to speak to regarding the employment land review. This comprised three local commercial property agents, two local developers, a Chartered Surveyors based in Cardiff but working in Aberystwyth and a representative from WAG.

4.6 These seven consultees were contacted in the first instance. We then undertook some desk top research to get the contact details for other agents within the area in order to get as wide a set of opinions as possible. However, only two additional commercial agents were found. Of these nine consultees, we successfully spoke to four with the remaining five either not considering themselves able to contribute to the study or unavailable for comment. Those who were contacted but did not contribute to the study were:

- a Mike Williams of Shearer & Morris;
- b Meirion Jones;
- c Aled Ellis Estate Agents;
- d John Francis Commercial Property; and,
- e Dilwyn Roberts.

4.7 The limited number of agents that were able to input into this study is testament to the character and scale of the local economy within Ceredigion. Similarly their localised operation and lack of dealings with national or regional businesses also reflects the fact that the economy within Ceredigion is dominated by small scale firms which predominantly serve a local catchment area.

4.8 In addition to the above, in order to try and ensure the study could be as robust as possible we undertook further research to establish some additional contacts who could potentially contribute to the study about specific sites. This included the company CB Environmental and CCC's waste officer who were contacted regarding future trade waste needs within Aberystwyth, Arriva Bus, Aberystwyth Football Club and Aberystwyth University's land agents who were also contacted in order to establish site availability. In addition, a number of bodies including the Environment Agency, CCW, CADW, Dyfed Archaeology, Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and other utility companies were also contacted to provide site specific information.

4.9 A detailed summary of the consultations is provided in Appendix 3. The key matters that were discussed are outlined below:

- a It was considered that the character of the local economy is that it is dominated by small scale businesses/solo entrepreneurs looking for small premises rather than large scale units.
- b Several consultees commented that the area is unlikely to attract large scale big occupiers of business parks and that employment land allocations should be made in the context of an understanding of the type of business

activity that can occur in this part of Mid Wales. However, consultees also mentioned that employers/businesses need confidence that land will become available for employment purposes if required. Provision is therefore essential to attract bigger employers. Allocating the most attractive sites will be important in helping to achieve the aspirations for economic development and well-being.

- c In terms of challenges to delivery, it was repeatedly mentioned that a site would be difficult to deliver successfully if it is located away from the arterial routes, is in a flood risk area or if adequate parking could not be provided. Flooding is recognised to be a particular barrier to the possible delivery of employment land within the Aberystwyth area. A shortage of car parking was also recognised by consultees as an existing problem within the town centre and a matter that would need to be addressed by any future development.
- d A number of consultees agreed that demand for offices within Aberystwyth is very limited. A mixed development could help boost investment in the area and the viability of a business park would be improved if developed in conjunction with housing to make the site more commercially viable/appealing to private developers.
- e It was noted that the recently developed new WAG and CCC offices have resulted in a number of existing premises becoming empty. However, the general consensus amongst consultees (who echoed the findings of the DTZ report) is that the vacant office premises within the town are generally of a poor location and do not offer the quality of location or space that would normally be expected by new occupiers.
- f Consultees said that consideration should be given to the impact of large employment sites upon the vitality of Aberystwyth town centre. Accordingly, the town centre should be viewed as an appropriate location for office development. In view of the nature of the existing office stock within the town centre, the need for new office provision was acknowledged. However, even though parts of the town centre that are located within Flood Risk Zone C2 were not sieved out because they could serve regeneration purposes, it was accepted by consultees that the amount of land that is available for employment development within the town centre is limited. In the light of this, consultees noted that consideration should therefore be given to the adoption of a sequential approach to site selection. To this end, one consultee referred to the importance of ensuring that any out-of-centre employment development does not have a detrimental impact upon the town centre.
- g In terms of location, it was agreed by a number of consultees that new employment land should be located within close proximity to the main arterial routes. Of these, the A44 is considered to be the most attractive route as most traffic into Aberystwyth travels along this east – west route. Reference was made to the Wales National Transport Plan which identifies the A44 as the key east – west link from Wales to England. The other trunk roads tend to be less attractive to the market. Distance from the A44

makes commercial property less attractive. A concern was expressed that the potential economic contribution of the A44 would be diluted if employment opportunities were directed away from this strategic route.

- h Although it is the largest existing employment location in Aberystwyth, several agents commented that they do not consider that Glanyrafon Industrial Estate provides an attractive business location and is unlikely to be sufficiently attractive for inward investors. However, in spite of its physical quality, it is too expensive for many businesses.
- i Land for municipal waste disposal is, and could continue to be, accommodated at Glanyrafon Industrial Estate. Planning permission has been granted for a waste transfer station on the edge of the estate and land has been identified adjacent to the existing waste facility at Glanyrafon for the potential future development of an anaerobic digester if this is required in the future (although there is still some debate as to whether this will be located in Ceredigion or Powys). As such, no additional land is needed to be designated for future municipal waste requirements in the foreseeable future.
- j Trade waste is primarily dealt with by private company CB Environmental. CB Environmental currently has facilities at Glanyrafon Industrial Estate and at Capel Bangor although due to changes in waste management legislation the company anticipates that it will require an additional 2ha of land up to 2026 for future waste facilities. CB Environmental would prefer to expand its existing facilities at Glanyrafon. Alternatively the company could either move or could disaggregate into an additional unit. The company's one stipulation is that any future premises must benefit from good access for heavy goods vehicles and must be easily accessible to the A44.

4.10 These comments informed our analysis of the sites and our recommendations regarding the possible allocation of land for employment purposes.

Site Visits and Assessments

4.11 Site visits were undertaken for each of the 20 sites identified in Section 3 with the key purpose being to supplement and validate the information gathered in the desk based assessment.

4.12 Each site visited was appraised against an agreed assessment matrix which looked at 20 separate categories requiring a score of between 1 and 5. These categories were:

a Access:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Road access ii Public transport access iii Public/cycle access
b Site Context:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Proximity to residential area/community facilities ii Brownfield/greenfield status iii Adjoining uses iv Relationship with built environment v Proximity to infrastructure
c Environment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Landscape sensitivity ii Opportunity to remove an eyesore iii Ecology iv TPO v Topography vi Contamination vii Flood risk viii Water quality ix Impact on agricultural land
d Availability and Deliverability:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Viability ii Site ownership iii Pressures for other forms of development

4.13

The following points are important in helping to explain the approach that we adopted in reviewing the sites against each of these criteria. No comment is set out below for those criteria which are considered to be self explanatory.

- a Access was dependant upon the proposed use of the site. For office premises, proximity and accessibility for employees was the key consideration (relationship with Aberystwyth and public transport services) whilst for industrial and warehousing sites, greater weight was given to strategic access for goods into or out of the site. This assessment was based upon an understanding of the different type of vehicle movements that would tend to be associated with the various uses.
- b A hierarchy of main roads was established, as follows:
 - i A44;

-
- ii Other trunk roads;
 - iii Non trunk A roads; and,
 - iv Other routes.

This hierarchy reflects the comments made by stakeholders and will shape the relative accessibility and attractiveness of sites that are located outside of Aberystwyth town centre.

- c Landscape sensitivity was judged on the basis of an initial (overview) consideration at this stage. The need for more detailed landscape assessment work was recognised from an early stage of the project but it was considered that it would be appropriate for this detailed work to form part of the subsequent Phase 2 work (see Sections 7 and 8).
- d The opportunity to remove an eyesore is an important consideration in the assessment of sites and relates closely to potential landscape impact. If the development of a site would remove an eyesore then it would be seen as a benefit. If it created an eyesore then it would be detrimental to the area. If it neither created nor removed an eyesore, then development would be neutral from this perspective.
- e Topography of the site also relates to landscape impact. A steep slope might preclude development. A gentler or undulating topography might not stop development from coming forwards but could restrict the amount of floorspace that could be accommodated and the form of development that could be provided on the site.
- f Although sites that were entirely or wholly located within flood risk C2 zones were excluded as part of the initial sieving exercise, consideration was given at this stage regarding potential flood risk on part of the site. This is rooted in a recognition that an employment use might be acceptable where part of the site is at some risk of flooding but that this would have an impact upon the form and amount of development that could be accommodated on the site.
- g Water quality differs from flooding. It represents a function of the impact of development upon potential groundwater resources and the risk of contamination or pollution.
- h Ownership and pressure for other forms of development can both be viewed as a function of the availability of the site for employment uses. This is a fundamental consideration because, in allocating land within the LDP, Ceredigion County Council needs to have confidence that it is capable of being released within the LDP period and can contribute to the identified employment land requirements. There obviously can be no guarantee that any land will definitely come forward for employment uses within the LDP period but if a site is known to be unavailable – either due to landowner's known aspirations or the presence of a recent development or a clear pressure for other forms of development – it can be assumed that it is unlikely to come forwards within the LDP period and that it should therefore not be allocated. In its subsequent decision making process regarding the allocation of land, Ceredigion County Council should therefore seek to

satisfy itself as far as reasonably possible that the land that is included in the LDP does have the capacity to come forward for the proposed uses by 2022.

- i The viability of development is a function of the likely costs associated with delivering the scheme (including any abnormal costs) and the likely income receipts from its future users or owners. In considering viability, we have not undertaken a residual valuation assessment but have taken account of the likely costs (as identified by the site assessment matrix) and market attractiveness of the development and location (as defined by its location in relation to Aberystwyth and the A44). Detailed viability assessments cannot be undertaken until a specific scheme is known but this overview does have the capacity to provide a broad indication of the likely viability of the sites for employment development.

4.14 It is recognised that the land requirements and likely implications of Class B1(a)/(b) development is likely to differ considerably to that of heavier forms of activity such as B1(c), B2 or B8 uses. The sites were therefore appraised in the context of an understanding of the potential uses for which they might be developed. Our assessment of potential uses was based upon the following considerations which are important in shaping their suitability and attractiveness for the different employment uses:

- a Size of site;
- b Site location;
- c Proximity from Aberystwyth;
- d Ease of access into site; and,
- e Character of the surrounding area.

4.15 Adjustments were then subsequently made in the context of the type of use for which the site is proposed and in order to ensure a consistent approach had been taken in the review of each site in the context of others.

4.16 The sites were categorised as being appropriate for the following types of development:

Site / Location	Suggested form of development
Llanbadarn Fawr Campus	B1a/b / Mixed Use**
Penglais Farm (East) and Cefn Hendre Land, Clarach	B1a/b / Mixed Use**
Southgate	B1a / Mixed Use**
Land to the south west of Glanyrafon Industrial Estate	B1b/c / B2 / B8
Land to the east of Glanyrafon Industrial Estate	B1b/c / B2 / B8
Land within Glanyrafon Industrial Estate	B1b/c / B2 / B8
Land North of Bow Street, up to Dole	B1b/c / B2 / B8*
Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	B1b/c / B2 / B8*
Land at Comins Coch	B1b/c / B2 / B8*
Cae Neuadd y Pentref, Capel Bangor	None suitable
Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin	B1b/c / B2 / B8*
Land at IBERS	B1 b/c / B2 / B8*
Site around Llwyn Bedw down to Cer-y-nant	B1 b/c / B2 / B8*
Land at Capel Dewi	B1 b/c / B2 / B8*
Lovesgrove	B1 b/c / B2 / B8*
Park Avenue South Site	B1a / Mixed Use**
Cinema Site, Bath Street	B1a / Mixed Use**
Mill St Car Park	B1a / Mixed Use**
Aberystwyth Harbour	B1a/b/c / Mixed Use**
Old College	B1a / Mixed Use**

* B1a uses might also be appropriate in these locations if they were developed as business parks. They should not, however, be developed solely for office purposes and it would be appropriate to restrict the amount of Class B1a floorspace within any such development on these sites.

** Mixed use implies that the site could come forward for a range of uses – i.e. employment and non-employment uses

Table 9 Potential Land Uses for Assessment Sites

4.17

The sites were then ranked in accordance with their allotted score and were assessed in terms of their quantitative and qualitative attributes. This assessment relied upon a consideration of the following factors:

- a Total site score;
- b Average site score;
- c The number of criteria for which the site scored either the maximum or minimum possible scores;

- d The nature of the categories for which very high or very low scores were awarded;
- e Whether the presence of any high scores could make up for specific weaknesses;
- f Whether any identified weaknesses could be remedied;
- g The presence of any ‘deal breaker’ attributes which would rule out any potential for employment related development (e.g. availability of the land for employment development);
- h The size of the site (and the amount of the site that is capable of accommodating employment uses) and its potential contribution to the defined employment land requirement;
- i The potential for employment uses to be brought forward as part of a mixed use development scheme; and,
- j The ability of employment uses on the site to make a meaningful contribution towards sustainable development and economic well-being.

4.18 Based upon this qualitative and quantitative assessment process, a traffic light system was then applied to each individual site in order to show their relative attractiveness, as follows:

	Not suitable for employment development
	Potentially suitable for employment development, subject to obtaining further information
	Suitable for employment development

Table 10 Traffic Light Site Scoring System

4.19 The results of this exercise are provided in Appendices 7, 8 and 9 and are summarised below.

5.0

Site Recommendations

5.1

Following the site assessment process, the assessment sites were scored according to the following approach:

Site / Score	Comment
Cinema Site	This site scored well in terms of access and sustainability due to its central location within the town centre. However, the availability and viability of this site coming forward for employment use was considered to be in serious doubt given its continued role as an active cinema. As such this site was discounted from the assessment process.
Mill Street Car Park	This site also scored extremely well due to its town centre location, its brownfield nature and excellent topography. However, this site has a very important function as an existing and well used car park and any redevelopment would need to incorporate a multi-storey car park. Furthermore, the Aberystwyth Masterplan puts this site forward for mixed use development including a multi-storey car park, residential and retail development. This has led to serious doubts regarding the availability of this site as well as the viability of developing it for employment purposes. As such it has been discounted.
Old College	This site scored well in terms of access and sustainability due to its town centre location. However, the existing building is listed and as such could only be refurbished rather than redeveloped. Furthermore, the existing building is in B1 employment use as the University's main administrative building and therefore its inclusion as employment land would not make any additional contribution to future strategic employment requirements. As such it has been discounted.
Land between Bow Street and Dole	This site received a relatively low score given its location in the open countryside away from Aberystwyth. It is also not considered to represent a logical option for employment use in terms of location, accessibility (away from the A44) and its proximity to Bow Street and the small rural settlement of Dole. The availability of this site, which has not been promoted through the LDP candidate sites process, is also unknown. Therefore, overall this site was not considered suitable or viable for employment development and its availability or potential to come forward for development within the LDP period cannot be assured. It was therefore discounted.

Site / Score	Comment
Cae Neuadd y Pentref, Capel Bangor	This is a relatively small site adjoining sensitive uses including a church and graveyard. Although the site scored well given its location adjacent to the A44 within the settlement it is considered that its development for employment uses would create issues regarding conflict with neighbours. It is too small for industrial or warehousing uses and does not represent a sustainable location for office development in sequential terms. As such, this site was discounted.
Comis Coch	Each of these three sites are located in the same broad area within open countryside and a reasonable distance away from Aberystwyth. It is considered that a maximum of only one site should be provided in this broad area which is not directly related to the A44. In view of the strategic importance of this route, we would be concerned that a large concentration of employment development in this particular area might give rise to market attractiveness and deliverability issues.
Capel Dewi	
Llwyn Bedw	The land at IBERS is considered to be more suitable than each of these sites on the basis that any development at IBERS could be related to existing built form and could therefore benefit from existing infrastructure and services and economies of scale. As such, it would also be likely to be less prominent within the wider landscape. Consequently it is considered expedient to discount the other less suitable sites within this area. Moreover, (and notwithstanding the issue of the relative quality of each of the sites) the availability of these sites for development is unclear given that neither Comis Coch or Capel Dewi were submitted as candidate sites and Llwyn Bedw was submitted for “other” development purposes. There can, as such, be no assurances as to the likelihood that these sites would actually come forward for development.
Park Avenue South	This site scored particularly well in terms of access, facilities and location given its position within Aberystwyth town centre. However, the site is occupied by a number of uses, including Aberystwyth football club and Arriva bus. Although there are a number of smaller premises on the site, it is considered that the future availability of the site (in whole or in part) will depend upon the aspirations of these main occupiers. Arriva bus has confirmed that they are not looking to move in the immediate future. Consequently, there are significant questions regarding the availability of the majority of the site. Therefore, additional research regarding the availability of the site should be undertaken in order to get a better understanding of whether

Site / Score	Comment
	<p>the site could come forward for whole or partial redevelopment. The only real prospect for this site to become available for employment purposes would be if the football club was to relocate. In such a context, it is likely that approximately 0.5ha of the site could be released for employment purposes as part of a mixed use development which would include the bus depot remaining in its current form. A clearer understanding of the football club's objectives for the site is therefore required.</p>
<p>Aberystwyth Harbour</p>	<p>The harbour site is a large area which comprises a range of land uses. Although it has all been promoted through the LDP process as a candidate site, much of the area is developed, leaving several relatively small parcels of land which are likely to be suitable for mix of uses. In the light of this, the reality is that the whole site would not be appropriate for a single allocation. Overall the site scored well given its central location and brownfield nature. Despite the score received, the only land parcel considered suitable for employment development would be the former brewery site which amounts to 0.25ha. However, it is understood that the site is currently being pursued for residential purposes. As such, the availability of this site is under question and additional assessment is required. Its very limited size might restrict its potential for employment purposes.</p>
<p>Llanbadarn Fawr</p>	<p>This site, which currently accommodates part of the University, scored well in the site rankings due to the fact that it benefits from an accessible location close proximity from the town centre, is partially brownfield and is not at risk of flooding. It is considered that it would be suitable for B1 use only (office and research and development activities) as it is located away from the strategic highway network (A44) and the gradient of the road serving the site and the scale of the A44 / Primrose Hill junction may be unsuitable for large numbers of HGVs, even though it could accommodate the scale of car movements that might be associated with a mixed use development scheme. It would appear that there is limited scope for the improvement of this route.</p> <p>Part of the site is currently in active use and consideration would need to be given to the presence of protected trees on the site. This would limit the amount of the site that could be used for development. A masterplan for the redevelopment of this site has been prepared. This includes an element of employment use on the site. Therefore, additional assessment of this site is required in order to better understand the University's intentions for this site and the timeframe for it coming forward. Consideration should also be given by Ceredigion County Council regarding the need (or otherwise) for the site to be retained for</p>

Site / Score	Comment
	educational purposes.
Penglais Farm	<p>This greenfield site scored well in the site rankings as it benefits from an accessible location in close proximity from the town centre and is not at risk from flooding, although its sloping nature could potentially impact on market demand. The site is owned by the University and a masterplan has been prepared for the wider site. Further assessment needs to take place in order to get a better understanding of the University's and the Council's aspirations.</p> <p>Again, it is considered that it would be suitable for B1 use only (including offices and research and development) as it is located away from the strategic highway network (A44) and the gradient of the road leading to the site and the scale of the A44 / Primrose Hill and the Primrose Hill / Cefnllan junctions may be unsuitable for large numbers of HGVs. It would appear that there is limited scope for the improvement of this route.</p>
Southgate	<p>This site, which is located a short distance from the south of the town centre, scored relatively highly in the site rankings due to its accessible and sustainable location. Part of the site was submitted as a candidate site for housing which indicates that although it is likely to be available for development, the owner is likely to be looking to pursue residential development. The site is visually prominent and also has significant topographical challenges which would render it unsuited to large scale warehousing/industrial development. A preferable solution would be for any employment uses to be brought forward as part of a mixed use scheme. There is potential that the topography, together with its location to the south of the town and away from the A44 would undermine market demand. Consequently, it is considered that further assessment on the implications development would have on the landscape should be completed prior to determining the future of this site.</p>
Lovesgrove	<p>This site scored poorly in the site rankings given the fact that it is greenfield, in the open countryside, unrelated to a settlement, and partially at risk of flooding. It also contains an important aquifer with ground water protection zone located at the centre of the site which serves the Aberystwyth area. Also, the impact the development would have on the landscape would require further research. As such, additional assessment is required with regards to the suitability of this site. Despite the above, the site is located along the A44 and was mentioned by consultees as a site which would be attractive to the market. The site could accommodate warehousing/industrial uses or a business park which might include offices,</p>

Site / Score	Comment
	<p>depending upon a review of need stemming from the availability of space in the town centre.</p> <p>There are serious questions regarding the availability of this site which is owned by the Crown Estates. It has not been submitted as a candidate site and there is no clarity as to whether it might be available for development even if it was allocated for development in the LDP.</p>
<p>IBERS, Penrhyncoch</p>	<p>As discussed above, the IBERS site was assessed in conjunction with Comis Coch, Capel Dewi and Llwyn Bedw and was determined to be the most suitable for employment development in this area on the basis that any development on this site could be related to existing built form and could therefore benefit from existing infrastructure and services and could provide economies of scale. As such, it would also be likely to be less prominent within the wider landscape. The majority of the site is currently in use by the University and as such it is considered that future employment development would be on land considered surplus to the University's requirements. The University's land agents have been consulted and have stated that due to the establishments international recognition, it is likely that the University will require land here in the future for additional research facilities. As such, the University may not want a major land release for strategic employment site although a small scale release may be more acceptable. Overall, this site is not considered to be as suitable as others being put forward for consideration as it is poorly accessible by all means of transport and its location away from the A44 and Aberystwyth town centre. Therefore, subject to availability and additional landscape assessment, it is considered that part of the site would be suitable for employment development, but only if other preferable sites are not suitable or in the event that a substantially increased amount of employment land is required.</p>
<p>Land at Penygraig, Rhydfeilin</p>	<p>This greenfield site scored averagely in the site rankings due to its limited accessibility, its high landscape value and the close proximity to residential property. However, the site is known to be available for development (submitted as a candidate site for mixed use) and as such could accommodate industrial or warehousing uses or as a business park. However, it is located to the south of Aberystwyth, away from the A44 and links to the important eastern markets. In general, it is considered that this site would be more appropriate for alternative uses. Therefore, similarly to the IBERS site it is considered that this site could be brought forward for employment development, subject to a landscape assessment in the event that other preferable sites are not suitable or if a substantially increased amount of employment land is required.</p>

Site / Score	Comment
<p>Land to West of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor</p>	<p>Following a public Inquiry, outline planning permission has now been granted for the development of a business park on this site. The new business park will occupy a 14.5ha site and will comprise a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses. The masterplan indicates some 25 units with a total of 26,000 sq m employment floorspace and with additional space available for future extension of individual units to some 35,800 sq m floorspace. The masterplan also shows that 30% of the floorspace to be used for office use (Class B1a), 19% for R&D and light industrial uses (Class B1b/c), 29% for general industrial use (Class B2) and 22% for storage and distribution use (Class B8). The B1 uses would be located in the northern part of the site closest to the existing houses and caravan site and the entrance to the business park.</p> <p>Because of the scale of the approved business park, it is expected that its development period would extend beyond 2022 and that it would therefore contribute to the employment land requirement associated with the current and subsequent LDP periods. This means that this site would not satisfy the overall requirement for employment land in the Aberystwyth area to 2022 and so some other sites would also be required to meet the identified need.</p>
<p>Land to the south west of Glanyrafon Industrial Estate</p>	<p>The two sites identified adjacent to Glanyrafon scored well given that they are adjacent to an existing employment area. Glanyrafon is almost full and is viewed as a secondary / sub-optimal location which has limited market potential for strategic expansion. As such, there is uncertainty as to whether any additional land in this location can be expected to come forwards for development. The extension sites would be accessed through the existing Industrial Estate, thereby further undermining its attractiveness to certain developers or occupiers. It is likely that any strategic expansion would contain uses that are largely similar</p>

Site / Score	Comment
<p>Land to the east of Glanyrafon Industrial Estate</p>	<p>to the existing provision. This would restrict the range of facilities and the type of businesses that could be attracted and would thereby reduce its economic contribution to the Aberystwyth area.</p> <p>Although Glanyrafon Industrial Estate does serve an important role within the local economy, it is not considered that additional land should be allocated to allow for its substantial expansion. In any event, expansion would require the development of an area of steep land on the edge of the industrial estate which would not be ideally suited.</p> <p>Whilst the idea of strategic expansion of Glanyrafon has been discounted from the process, an area of 1.8ha has recently been granted planning permission for a waste recycling facility. This will complement the existing waste processing facilities that exist at Glanyrafon and will be important in serving Ceredigion County Council's future waste requirements. This part of the expansion area has been taken forward as it is likely to be implemented and will make an important contribution to the local area. We would recommend a development density in the region of 35% (3,500 sq m per ha).</p>
<p>Land within the existing Glanyrafon Industrial Estate</p>	<p>Some land which is currently allocated as falling within the existing industrial estate remains undeveloped. Although part of the allocated area is largely within the flood risk zone C2 area and has been excluded from this analysis, the remaining vacant area comprises 1.05ha to the south east of the site and a further 0.7ha within the site adjacent to the existing caravan dealership. Neither of these parcels of land have been developed. The caravan dealership area is not included within this assessment as the land is in active use and, even if it were to be relocated elsewhere, it might result in the loss of existing employment land, thereby having a displacement effect elsewhere within the Aberystwyth area.</p> <p>The available land within Glanyrafon which will be taken forward within the assessment process extends to 1.75ha. We would recommend a development density in the region of 35% (3,500 sq m per ha).</p>

Table 11 Summary of Phase 1 Findings

6.0

Conclusions and next steps

6.1

The study has identified:

- a 9 sites that are considered to be unavailable, unsuitable or unviable as employment development locations and consequently can be discounted from the site review process without the need for additional work.
- b 3 site that are considered suitable, available and viable for employment development and as such can be taken forward without the need for any additional work; and,
- c 8 sites that have been identified as having the potential to accommodate employment uses subject to the outcome of additional work or the resolution of existing problems.

6.2

Three of the town centre sites have been discounted on the basis of their non-availability or concerns regarding their viability. Two other small town centre sites are subject to subsequent consideration.

6.3

The amount of land that is potentially available for the employment development from the 11 sites highlighted in categories (b) and (c) above is set out below:

Site / Location	Suggested form of development	Area (ha) for employment
Land to west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	B1b/c / B2 / B8	14.5
Land within Glanyrafon Industrial Estate	B1c / B2 / B8	1.75
Part of land to south with planning permission for a waste transfer facility	B1c / B2 / B8	1.8
Llanbadarn Fawr Campus	B1a/b / Mixed Use**	4.0
Penglais Farm (East) and Cefn Hendre Land, Clarach	B1a/b / Mixed Use**	4.0
Southgate	B1a/b / Mixed Use**	5.1
Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin	B1c / B2 / B8*	6.3
Land at IBERS	B1c / B2 / B8*	7.5
Lovesgrove	Business Park comprising B1b/c / B2 / B8*	23.6
Park Avenue South Site	B1a/b / Mixed Use**	0.5
Aberystwyth Harbour	B1a/b / Mixed Use**	0.25
TOTAL		69.3

* B1a/b uses might also be appropriate in these locations if they were developed as business parks. They should not, however, be developed solely for office purposes and it would be appropriate to restrict the amount of Class B1a floorspace within any such development on these sites.

** Mixed use implies that the site could come forward for a range of uses – i.e. employment and non-employment uses

Table 12 Scale of Potential Employment Land

6.4 This equates to a total amount of 69.3 ha employment land –3.5 times the identified maximum requirement. The supply falls within the following use classes:

	B1a	B1b/c, B2	B8	Total
Aberystwyth Requirement (ha)	7.6	13.4		21
Area Identified (ha)	13.85	55.45		69.3

Table 13 Scale of Potential Employment Land by Use Class

6.5 It is evident that further consideration should be given to the identified sites in order to ensure that an appropriate amount of employment land can be allocated in the LDP. This is required, not only because the amount of land that has been identified as having potential for development is so substantially above the requirement for the Aberystwyth area but also because our previous analysis has highlighted the need for additional work to better establish their availability, suitability and viability of potential sites as office, industrial and warehousing locations. The key issues going forward and the additional work required can be broken down as follows:

- a Landscape assessment;
- b Access review; and,
- c Better understanding of availability of certain sites.

6.6 Not all of these reviews are required for every site. We have identified the additional work that is needed in order to appraise their capacity for development, as follows:

	Site / Location	Additional Work Required
	Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	None, although because the Minister has only recently decided to grant outline planning permission, the following additional work has been undertaken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 479 1257 510">• Landscape assessment. <li data-bbox="911 535 1129 566">• Access review.
	Land within Glanyrafon Industrial Estate	None
	Part of land to south with planning permission for a waste transfer facility	None
	Llanbadarn Fawr Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 763 1342 904">• Understanding of University's aspirations for the site and its availability for employment development. <li data-bbox="911 929 1136 960">• Access review.
	Penglais Farm (East) and Cefn Hendre Land, Clarach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 987 1342 1128">• Understanding of University's aspirations for the site and its availability for employment development. <li data-bbox="911 1153 1262 1184">• Landscape assessment. <li data-bbox="911 1209 1136 1240">• Access review.
	Southgate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 1270 1257 1301">• Landscape assessment. <li data-bbox="911 1326 1129 1357">• Access review.
	Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 1382 1257 1413">• Landscape assessment. <li data-bbox="911 1438 1129 1469">• Access review.
	Land at IBERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 1494 1257 1525">• Landscape assessment. <li data-bbox="911 1550 1129 1581">• Access review.
	Lovesgrove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 1606 1257 1637">• Landscape assessment. <li data-bbox="911 1662 1129 1693">• Access review.
	Park Avenue South Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 1718 1358 1787">• Understanding of availability for employment development. <li data-bbox="911 1812 1129 1843">• Access review.
	Aberystwyth Harbour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="911 1874 1358 1944">• Understanding of availability for employment development. <li data-bbox="911 1968 1129 2000">• Access review.

Site Development Considerations

- 6.7 Although the total amount of land that is potentially available and suitable for employment purposes is very considerable, there are nevertheless a number of concerns regarding the supply of employment land within the Aberystwyth area. An understanding of these is important in seeking to establish an acceptable development and policy strategy for the area.

Office Development

- 6.8 The adoption of a sequential approach to site selection is considered to represent the most appropriate basis for consideration of land for offices. It would concentrate facilities within the urban area where it could be easily accessible for employees and is likely to be more attractive to the market. Given the particular importance of Aberystwyth within Ceredigion and within mid Wales as a whole, the concentration of office functions within the town would provide the most appropriate basis for future development. Against this preferred approach, there is a concern that only 2 sites within the existing town centre have been identified for potential Class B1 development. There are some doubts about the possible availability of each of these sites:
- a The Park Avenue South site is only likely to be available if the football club decides to relocate its activities elsewhere. Indeed, any redevelopment of this site will need to be able to fund the relocation of the stadium and preferably lead to an improvement of the existing facilities. As such, the need to achieve a high value for the site to finance a relocation is in itself likely to have impacts on the viability of redeveloping the site. It is considered that the most appropriate use of the site would be for mixed use purposes including employment, residential, leisure and some retail although the viability or potential deliverability of this use mix is unknown.
 - b It has been suggested that the former brewery site at Aberystwyth harbour could potentially come forward for residential redevelopment. Therefore, there is considered to be a risk that this site may no longer be available by the time that the LDP is adopted.
- 6.9 Whilst the availability of these sites is doubtful at this time, even if they were to come forward for development, they would only contribute 0.75ha towards the total requirement for land for office development. This means that it will therefore be necessary to consider alternative sites.
- 6.10 The University sites at Llanbadarn Fawr and Penglais Farm are both considered to be suitable for office and research and development uses as part of a mixed use development. In both cases, an allowance has been made for up to 4ha B1(a)/(b) space, as part of a mixed use scheme which would also include some university facilities and new housing at Llanbadarn Fawr and university residences, an equine centre and a park and ride facility at Penglais Farm. The employment land element of these sites would equate to approximately 25% of

the total site areas and it would not be necessary for this form of development to be provided in both locations at this time. It is considered that an element of office and research activity would relate well with the existing University functions and would improve the status and character of these sites which are well located on the edge of Aberystwyth and have good connections with the town centre and the A44.

- 6.11 There is, however, uncertainty regarding the University's aspirations for these sites and, as such, a concern regarding whether either site may accommodate any employment use in the future. There is a particular doubt about the timescale of development at Penglais Farm.
- 6.12 The scale of the anticipated development at Llanbadarn Fawr is insufficient to meet the requirement for land for office development in the Aberystwyth area in full. Accordingly, other land would need to be identified. It is considered that office provision would be appropriate as part of a business park development elsewhere in the Aberystwyth area. The recent granting of planning permission by the Welsh Ministers for a mixed business park at Capel Bangor will help to address this need. Indeed, this new permission serves to significantly reduce the need for additional sites to be identified and released in the area.
- 6.13 The inclusion of a mix of uses which are mutually beneficial and compatible at Capel Bangor will help to underline the image and investment profile of the business park. It would also be important in ensuring a viable form of development and in establishing a critical mass for delivery and investment. In addition, the benefits associated with the synergy between different forms of employment activities would not be achieved in the Aberystwyth area, to the detriment of the local area.

Industrial and Warehousing Development

- 6.14 Several parcels of land have been identified which could potentially be suitable for industrial and warehousing uses. A key issue in the consideration of the suitability of land for industrial and warehousing uses should be its proximity to the A44 which offers the best access route into and out of Aberystwyth for this type of land use. Lovesgrove and Capel Bangor are both directly located on the A44 and are therefore most accessible from this key route and the recent granting of planning permission at Capel Bangor will address the majority of the need for this type of premises. In any event, there is concern regarding the availability and specific suitability of the Lovesgrove site.
- 6.15 Sites further away from the A44 are less easily accessible and are less attractive to the market. Similarly, the existing condition of the Glanyrafon industrial estate undermines its attractiveness to the market and its suitability for further development, albeit that the promotion of the undeveloped parts of the site and the area that benefits from planning permission for the waste recycling facility would be important in increasing the efficiency of the land and

could provide an enlarged base for a number of existing operations, including the waste processing facilities.

- 6.16 It is not considered that industrial or warehousing facilities would be appropriate at either Penglais Farm or Llanbadarn Fawr for the following reasons:
- a Direct access for HGVs into the sites could be difficult, up Primrose Hill which is steep and constrained by a small roundabout at its junction with the A44 which might suffer from substantially increased congestion if used by a large number of HGVs. In addition, the junction between Primrose Hill and Cefnllan might also be constrained for HGV movements;
 - b Heavier forms of employment in this location impact upon the adjoining residential area and would have the capacity to impact upon residential amenity, both in terms of vehicular movement and site-specific factors such as noise and odours; and,
 - c Although the sites are both close to the A44, they are not directly served by this route. Consultees have indicated that this would reduce their attractiveness to the market for industrial and warehousing purposes.

Meeting the Strategic Need

- 6.17 A key question raised by this site review is whether one strategic site should be sought for employment development or whether a range of sites should be considered. In explaining the rationale behind the size sieving process, it was explained that the allocation of a large number of very small sites would be neither appropriate nor desirable. However, it would also not be desirable to allocate a single site to provide for all of the employment requirements, even though this is theoretically possible given the scale of some of the available sites. Such an approach would raise concerns about the lack of flexibility and choice for potential occupiers and would also raise very significant concerns regarding the potential non-delivery of the land – i.e. if one site was allocated for employment development and it did not come forwards, then there would be no employment land provision within Aberystwyth. Such an eventuality would be detrimental to the strength and well-being of the local economy and to the role of Aberystwyth within Ceredigion and mid Wales.
- 6.18 The preferred approach is therefore to identify and allocate a range of sites that could serve different purposes. This would provide an element of choice regarding the location and type of employment facilities that are to be provided and would overcome potential difficulties associated with the deliverability (or otherwise) of a single large site. Bearing in mind this approach and the very large scale of many of the identified sites, it might not be necessary to allocate the entirety of a particular site for employment use. As has been shown, some would be suitable for mixed use purposes whilst for others, it is recommended that only part of the site should be allocated at this time, with the remainder acting as a potential future expansion area – either for allocation in subsequent

LDP periods or as required following the delivery of the already identified employment land. In the case of Capel Bangor, it is not expected that the whole site would come forward within the LDP period and so allowance must be made for additional land to help make up any resultant shortfall over the period to 2022.

6.19 In cases where only part of the site is recommended for allocation, we have not sought to define which area would be most appropriate as this will be a matter for consideration by Ceredigion County Council when it considers its response to our recommendations and seeks to allocate land for development. The location of employment uses within mixed use development schemes would be a matter for consideration as part of the masterplanning process by those promoting the scheme, based upon the composition of the development, the amount of other uses and the level of complementarity between the various uses.

6.20 The strategic employment land requirement can only be met if the sites that are identified are available to come forward. Whilst it is not possible to be certain that any site will definitely be developed, our analysis has sought to focus upon the deliverability of the sites and the likelihood that they will be able to make a meaningful contribution towards employment land requirements. Following on from a robust approach to the assessment of site suitability, this will ensure that the employment land strategy contained within the LDP has the best prospect of contributing towards the economic well-being and prosperity of Aberystwyth and Ceredigion more generally.

7.0

A44 Corridor Assessment

7.1

The strategic importance of the A44 was highlighted by a number of consultees. It was widely agreed that this is the key route into and out from Aberystwyth and that it represents the preferred location for industrial and warehousing activity. The following sites which are located alongside or close to the A44 have already been appraised by this report:

- a Capel Bangor;
- b Lovesgrove; and,
- c Glanyrafon.

7.2

All of these sites were deemed to be potentially suitable, subject to further assessment, albeit that Lovesgrove has been shown to suffer from a number of substantial constraints. These relate to its location within a flood risk C2 zone, the presence of an aquifer which is important in providing fresh water to the wider Aberystwyth area, its landscape sensitivity and the fact that its availability for development is not known.



Fig 2 Flood risk south of Lovesgrove

7.3

Whilst the other sites also suffer from some limitations and constraints, these are not considered to be so substantial to preclude future development. The potential deliverability of the other sites is more assured. Consequently, our recommendation is that Capel Bangor and the surplus plots at Glanyrafon could be allocated for development.

7.4

It is important to ensure that any sites that are allocated for development represent the most appropriate options in terms of their site characteristics, sustainability and capacity to come forward within the Plan period.

7.5

In order to gauge whether our recommendation regarding the potential allocation of Capel Bangor and Glanyrafon is sound, it was important to

understand whether these sites represent the most appropriate locations for employment development (along the A44 corridor and in the Aberystwyth area more widely). In discussion with Ceredigion County Council we therefore undertook an A44 Corridor Study. The objectives of this additional work was to understand whether any additional land might be appropriate for employment development along the A44 corridor and, if so, how this might compare to the land at Capel Bangor and Glanyrafon. In essence, it was designed to provide an understanding of whether the sites that had been appraised as part of the main study do represent the best sites to accommodate employment development in the Aberystwyth area.

- 7.6 In so doing, this process was useful to show the following:
- a The availability of additional land along the A44;
 - b Whether a greater proportion of the Aberystwyth area's future employment needs could be accommodated along this strategic corridor;
 - c The potential for the integration of employment uses and sites with other existing and new uses;
 - d The potential for employment sites to further enhance Aberystwyth's role as a the key settlement within Ceredigion and an important economic driver for the County; and,
 - e The potential to accommodate a greater proportion of growth in the Aberystwyth area close to and well related with Aberystwyth but on sites that would not exacerbate any congestion issues and would have sufficient capacity to accommodate the necessary level of growth.
- 7.7 In summary, this process was important in verifying the conclusions regarding the sites that had been identified and in providing clarity in response to future questions regarding the presence of other potential sites along this strategic corridor.

Approach and Analysis

- 7.8 The A44 is a major cross-country route which, save for a short section between Llangurig and Rhyader, connects Aberystwyth with Shrewsbury and the Midlands. It has been identified by the Wales National Transport Plan as being the key east – west link between Wales and England.
- 7.9 Given the known availability of the Capel Bangor site and its potential to accommodate employment development, it was agreed with the Council that this should represent the furthest point of our area of search. It would be sequentially preferable to any site further to the east which would therefore be less capable of accommodating growth related to the Aberystwyth area – particularly given the limited size of the settlements to the east of Aberystwyth.
- 7.10 Given the limited capacity of Aberystwyth town centre to accommodate employment development and the need for land to accommodate industrial and

warehousing uses which are generally less suited to town centre locations, our search was restricted to the area between Capel Bangor and the junction of the A44 (Llanbadarn Road) and the A487 (Penglais Road). This area was agreed with Ceredigion County Council in advance of the study commencing.

- 7.11 From the phase 1 assessment, we were aware of the considerable extent of the area at risk of flooding and the important nature conservation interests that exist in the Aberystwyth area and especially along the A44 corridor. In the light of this, the Corridor Study comprised two stages of analysis: a desk based sieving process in advance of detailed site surveys.
- 7.12 The purpose of the desk-based work was to exclude all areas which would not be suitable for employment development because of their risk of flooding and their nature conservation interests. This approach replicated that taken at the outset of the Phase 1 study in which a large number of potential sites were excluded on the basis of a number of particular constraints and limitations.
- 7.13 This analysis highlighted the presence of flood risk zone C2 to the south of the A44 along the whole of the search area, as well as an area to the north of the road to the east of the junction with the A4159 (Lovesgrove). When on site, it was noted that following a number of days of rain, large areas to the south of the A44 had flooded quite considerably.



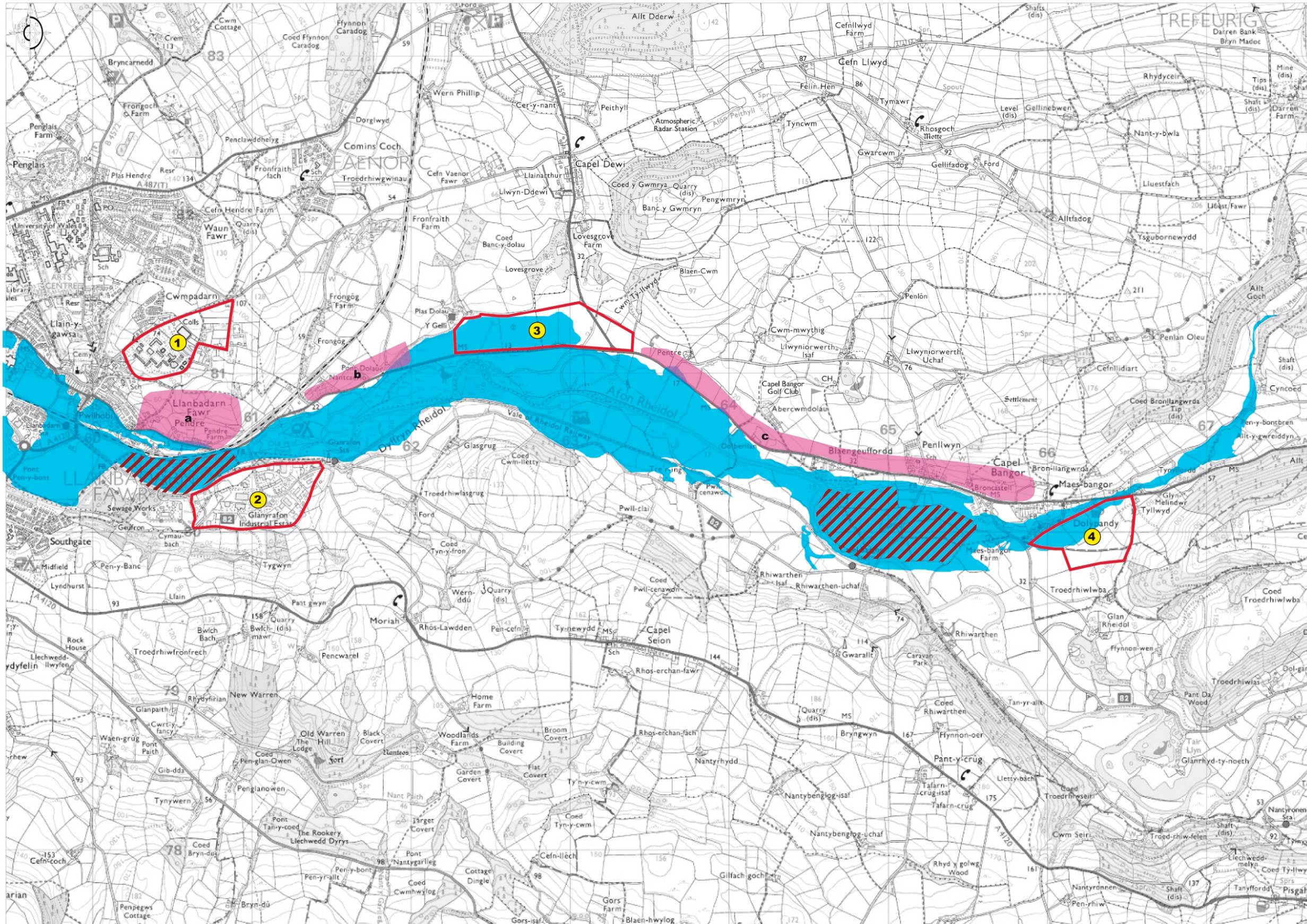
Fig 3 Flooding along the A44 in the Lovesgrove area

- 7.14 In addition, two large National Nature Conservation Sites were identified – to the north of the Glanyrafon estate and west of Capel Bangor. These areas were both located to the south of the A44.
- 7.15 The implication of this is that large areas of the corridor were therefore excluded from our physical search. However, the following three areas were free from any such constraints and were therefore subject to our detailed site survey:

-
- a Area a: land between Pendre Farm and Llanbadarn Fawr - to the west of the railway bridge;
 - b Area b: Pont Dolau - land between the railway bridge at Lovesgrove; and,
 - c Area c: land between Lovesgrove and Capel Bangor.

7.16 A detailed physical search of each of the sites was undertaken in order to review their potential to accommodate employment development. This review of physical attributes was intended to review whether there are any additional sites along the A44 which might merit detailed review. Any sites that were found to warrant further investigations would then have been tested through the application of our assessment matrix before being compared against other locations in order to ascertain whether they might have been appropriate for allocation in addition or in preference to other sites.

7.17 The conclusions in respect of each site are set out below:



KEY

Sites reviewed by study

- 1. Llanbadarn Fawr
- 2. Glanyrafon Industrial Estate
- 3. Lovesgrove
- 4. Capel Bangor

Flood risk zone



National environmental designation



Area of search

- a. Land between Pendre Farm and Llanbadarn Fawr - to the west of the railway bridge
- b. Pont Dolau - land between the railway bridge at Lovesgrove
- c. Land between Lovesgrove and Capel Bangor



nlp Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners

Project Aberystwyth Employment Sites

Title **Figure 1**
A44 Study

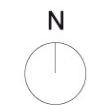
Client Ceredigion County Council

Date November

Scale 1:25,000 @ A3

Drawn by IJ



Drg. No IL30627/29



WE30627

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Fig 4 A44 Corridor Study areas of search

	Area a	Area b	Area c
Road Access	<p>Very difficult given the relative narrowness of the A44 at this point and the likely inability of achieving a satisfactory access route from the A44 (given the gradient and the presence of houses along the A44). An alternative route would have been required from Primrose Hill to the north.</p> 	<p>Potential for safe and satisfactory access would be undermined by the relative narrowness of the A44 at this point.</p>	<p>Safe access should be achievable directly from A44.</p> 
Pedestrian / cycle access	<p>Pavement but no cycle lane.</p>	<p>Pavement but no cycle lane.</p>	<p>No pavements or cycle access to the west. Pavement but no cycle lanes further east (in Capel Bangor).</p>
Proximity to residential areas	<p>Row of houses along the A44 (in front of the site) but closest</p>	<p>Some housing located within the area of search but no community</p>	<p>Housing and community facilities in Blaengeuffordd and Capel Bangor in the</p>

	Area a	Area b	Area c
and community facilities	community facilities in Aberystwyth town centre.	facilities.	eastern part of the area.
Brownfield / Greenfield site	Greenfield		
Relationship with built environment	Located on the edge of Aberystwyth, well located to existing urban form.	Open countryside beyond settlement boundary.	Western part of area in open countryside beyond settlement boundary. Eastern part includes Blaengeuffordd and the west of Capel Bangor.
Landscape sensitivity	Highly visible land behind residential properties	Visible land which forms an important part of Aberystwyth's setting and provides an important and attractive point of arrival into Aberystwyth.	Western part of area comprises visible land which forms an important part of Aberystwyth's setting and provides an important and attractive point of arrival into Aberystwyth. Eastern part of area steeply sloping and highly visible land.
Topography	Steeply sloping	Relatively flat	Western part of the area is low lying but eastern part (close to Capel Bangor) much steeper and more visible.

	Area a	Area b	Area c
			 
Use of land	Fields		Fields but also includes some development including village of Blaengeuffordd and the west of Capel Bangor.
Site ownership / availability	<p>Site owners not known.</p> <p>Sites have not been promoted as part of the LDP Candidate site process and have not been identified in any previous capacity studies or opportunity research.</p>		

	Area a	Area b	Area c
	No assurance could be given that the site would be likely to come forward for employment development in the future.		
Other considerations	None	Some evidence of flooding on part of the site.	A large area which varies in character from west to east (i.e. change from flat, 'parkland' environment to steeply sloping land and countryside framing existing settlement). Area is only slightly sequentially preferable to Capel Bangor and offers no material benefits in addition to the previously identified area.
Conclusion	Not suitable for employment development given topography, visibility and considerable access difficulties.	Not suitable for employment development given access constraints, visibility and important contribution to wider landscape setting of Aberystwyth.	Not suitable for employment development given visibility, topography in part and important contribution (in part) to wider landscape setting of Aberystwyth.

Conclusion of A44 Corridor Assessment

7.18 The purpose of this study has been to identify potential sites that might accommodate the additional employment land that is required within the Aberystwyth area over the period to 2022 and to make recommendations on potential allocations. The amount of land that is required is relatively limited and tough decisions are needed in order to identify the land that is most suitable and that has the greatest potential of contributing towards this level of employment land. Having undertaken an analysis of almost 300 sites and detailed assessments of 20 sites, the purpose of this corridor study has been to gauge whether there are any further sites along the A44 that might warrant review and that might be suitable for possible allocation and future development. In considering these issues, we have taken account of a range of issues, including:

- a Site specific attributes;
- b The relationship of the site to Aberystwyth, other settlements and local facilities;
- c The potential impact of development; and,

7.19 How the sites compare with those which were previously identified as having the potential for development.

7.20 However, the outcome of this review was that none of the additional areas along the A44 corridor were found to be potentially suitable for employment development within the LDP period due to constraints relating to:

- a Topography;
- b Landscape sensitivity;
- c Sense of openness;
- d Lack of connection; and,
- e Access difficulties.

7.21 Consequently, none were identified as worthy of further review. In addition to the identified constraints regarding the attributes of each individual site, the fact that none of the sites had previously been identified for review and had not been promoted for development through the LDP process served to undermine any sense of assurance regarding their deliverability.

Although this process has not identified any further sites for review or allocation, it is important in helping to demonstrate the relative strengths of other sites that have been appraised by this study and the fact that there are no alternative locations that should have been taken into consideration by Ceredigion County Council. It therefore adds weight to the other analysis set

out in this report regarding the most appropriate locations for allocation for future employment development.

8.0

Employment Site Review - Phase 2

Introduction

8.1 Phase 1 of the Employment Site Review identified 11 sites which would appear to be the preferred options for employment purposes in the Aberystwyth area. However, 9 of these sites were identified as requiring additional work in order to better assess their suitability (this includes Capel Bangor, as the study took place prior to the Inquiry). Phase 2 of this assessment therefore discusses the approach for undertaking this additional work and provides the final conclusions and recommendations for the study.

8.2 The additional work undertaken was three-fold, comprising:

- a Detailed highways assessment;
- b Detailed landscape assessment work; and,
- c Additional discussions with landowners.

8.3 The detailed highways assessment was undertaken by Ceredigion County Council's Principal Engineer in October 2009 whilst the Landscape Assessment was undertaken by WSP Environmental in November 2009. The additional discussions with landowners were undertaken by NLP and Ceredigion County Council.

Highways Assessment

8.4 The Council's Principal Engineer provided detailed highways comments regarding each of the 9 sites in October 2009. He was provided details of each of the sites and assessed them with regards to the highway and transportation issues associated with the different scenarios in terms of developing the site for office, industrial and warehousing uses.



Fig 5 The A44 near Capel Bangor

8.5 Each site was first assessed with regards to estimated traffic volumes of the proposed development scenarios relative to the existing/fall back use. Scores of 'materially higher', 'materially lower' and 'materially the same' were given to different transport modes including pedestrians, cyclists, motorcycles, cars, buses, vans and lorries.

8.6 A series of 7 questions were then devised in order to assess the impacts of the proposed developments on highways and transportation interests, as follows:

1A	Is the proposed development likely to prejudice the construction or improvement of any trunk or classified road?
1B	If yes, can the developer do anything to avoid refusal of planning permission?
2A	Is the proposed development likely to result in a material increase in the volume or change in the character of traffic entering, leaving or using any existing or proposed trunk or county classified road?
2B	If answer to question 2A is yes, is / are the road/s needing to accommodate the increase / change developed to the prescribed design standards for that traffic increase / change?
2C	If answer to question 2B is no, can the development bring that road / those roads up to the requisite standard?
3A	Is the development likely to involve formation, laying out or alteration of any means of access to a highway?
3B	If yes, can the developer form / lay out / alter the means of access to the standards required by the highway authority?
4A	Is the proposed development likely to involve the formation, laying out or alteration of any new street?

4B	If yes, can the developer form / lay out / alter the new street to the standard required by the street works authority?
5A	Is the proposed development likely to affect any statutory interest(s) of TraCC?
5B	If yes, can the developer ensure none of those interests are materially prejudiced?
6A	Is the proposed development likely to affect any statutory interest(s) of MWTRA?
6B	If yes, can the developer ensure that none of those interests are materially prejudiced?
7A	Is the development likely to affect any highway or transportation interest of council's Local Service Board partners?
7B	If yes, can the developer ensure none of those interests are materially prejudiced? E.g. is the proposed development likely to prejudice the construction or improvement of any trunk or classified road?

8.7 The detailed assessment for each site is provided in Appendix 9 and a brief summary is set out below:

No.	Site/Location	Suggested form of development	Result of Initial H&T appraisal		H&T appraisal of suggested development
1 (04)	Llanbadarn Fawr Campus	B1a / Mixed Use	B1	Probably Acceptable	Siting and layout of means of access could be critical but probably resolvable by negotiation on design, except B8 due to site approaches.
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Probably Not Acceptable	
2 (07)	Penglais Farm	B1a / Mixed Use	B1	Possibly Negotiable	Siting and layout of means of access could be critical but probably resolvable by negotiation on design issues, except B8 due to location.
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Probably Not Acceptable	
3 (16)	Southgate	B1a / Mixed Use	B1	Possibly Negotiable	Siting and layout of means of access could be critical but probably resolvable by negotiation on design issues and external road alterations.
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Possibly Negotiable	
10 (09)	Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	B1b/c / B2 / B8 plus small scale ancillary B1a	B1	Possibly Negotiable	Lack of cycling facilities would be a problem but may be resolvable by negotiation of design issues and extensive provisions external to site
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Possibly Negotiable	
11 (11)	Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin	B1b/c / B2 / B8	B1	Possibly Negotiable	Substandard adjoining roads but probably improvable by developer, except for B8 which would probably cause too much interruption.
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Probably Not Acceptable	
12 (12)	Land at IBERS	B1b/c / B2 / B8	B1	Possibly Negotiable	Substandard roads and cycling facilities but probably improvable by developer including contributions to provisions external to site.
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Possibly Negotiable	
15 (14)	Lovesgrove	B1c / B2 / B8 plus small scale ancillary B1a	B1	Probably Not Acceptable	Substandard roads and walking and cycling facilities. Isolated nature of site would require extremely extensive provisions external to site
			B2	Probably Not Acceptable	
			B8	Probably Not Acceptable	
16 (08)	Park Avenue South Site	B1a / Mixed use	B1	Possibly Negotiable	Would need rationalisation of siting and design of means of access but probably negotiable. B8 would probably cause too much interruption.
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Probably Not Acceptable	
19 (05)	Aberystwyth Harbour	B1a / Mixed use	B1	Probably Acceptable	Would need rationalisation of siting and design of means of access but probably negotiable. B8 would probably cause too much interruption.
			B2	Possibly Negotiable	
			B8	Probably Not Acceptable	

Table 15 Phase 2 Highways Assessment conclusions

8.8 In terms of the conclusions drawn in Phase 1, the highways comments only change the conclusions relating to 4 sites, namely:

- a Llanbadarn Fawr Campus;
- b Land at Penglais Farm;
- c Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin; and,
- d Lovesgrove.

8.9 The conclusions of the highway assessment for Llanbadarn Fawr and Penglais Farm were that whilst warehousing would probably not be acceptable, industrial uses could be acceptable, subject to negotiation. This differs from our initial view that neither industrial nor warehousing uses would be appropriate in this location. However, we maintain our conclusions that these sites would not be appropriate for industrial activities on the basis of their lack of direct access to the A44 which might undermine its market attractiveness and the potential impact of such forms of development upon the surrounding area. Restrictions on the form of development that might be provided in these locations (i.e. industrial but not warehousing) might also serve to further affect its market attractiveness and development viability as a location for 'heavier' activities. The highway assessment confirms that Class B1 uses would be acceptable in both locations and we maintain that this would be a viable and appropriate form of development.



Fig 6 Llanbadarn Fawr Access

8.10 For Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin, warehousing uses are not considered to be acceptable from a highways viewpoint. As such, when considering the previous conclusions (i.e. that it should not be promoted solely for office activities), it is considered that this site would only viably be able to accommodate industrial uses only. This again leads to additional questions as to whether the restrictions on this site with regards to appropriate uses is likely to impact on its market appeal and subsequently its ability to provide for the future employment needs of the Aberystwyth area.

-
- 8.11 Lovesgrove was found to be unacceptable from a highways viewpoint for all employment uses due to “substandard road and walking and cycling facilities”.



Fig 7 The A44 near approaching Lovesgrove

- 8.12 In further discussions with the Council’s Principal Engineer with regards to the conclusions drawn on the Lovesgrove site he stated the following:

“The Lovesgrove site is very isolated with the nearest settlements being Capel Dewi, Penrhyncoch and Bow Street to the north, Capel Bangor to the east and Llanbadarn Fawr and Aberystwyth to the west. None of these settlements have segregated footway or cycleway links to the Lovesgrove site, which means that all pedestrian and cyclist traffic between them and the site would have to use the public road carriageways.

“With the high speeds of vehicular traffic using these roads (mainly derestricted i.e. 60 mph speed limit) sharing carriageway space in this way would be intimidating for them. This would discourage them from walking and cycling to and from work.

“The roads serving this site are substandard in terms of encouraging employees to walk and cycle to work.”

- 8.13 He did, however, acknowledge that:

“This lack of adequate standards for walkers and cyclists travelling to and from the site could probably be remedied by the developer by agreement with the trunk and county highway authorities concerned, but would probably be exorbitantly expensive for the developer in terms of time and cost.”

- 8.14 The implication of this assessment is that the site at Lovesgrove would not be appropriate for employment development.

Landscape Assessment

- 8.15 A Landscape Appraisal was undertaken by WSP Environmental in November 2009. WSP surveyed six sites in total and made specific conclusions in relation to the suitability of each site for employment development. A full copy of this report is provided in Appendix 10 and the key findings for each site is summarised below.

Penglais Farm

- 8.16 The site is located adjacent to existing built form, including the University of Aberystwyth. Adjoining residential properties are generally set down with no direct views across the site. The site is currently agricultural in nature, and due to its elevated position forms part of the skyline in local, short distance views.
- 8.17 The site would therefore be suitable for employment development although the existing hedgerows and woodland blocks should be retained where possible to retain views of trees on the skyline, particularly around Y Ty Gwyn. Topography should also be reflected within any design and the heights of buildings should be restricted, particularly at the eastern end of the site to maintain a more naturalistic skyline. From longer distance views, the site would be seen in the context of the adjacent built and lit form.



Fig 8 Penglais Farm site

Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor

- 8.18 The site is located adjacent to a small area of existing commercial use, notably the caravan park. Other commercial units nearby include a garage and pub so development on the site would be in keeping with the character of part of the surrounding landscape. However, the more elevated section of the site is visible from local, short distance views with the lower lying portion adjacent to the caravan park being the least visible. Development would therefore be best screened if located in the lowest lying portion of the site, although this area is

most at risk from flooding. This area of the site is also affected by the adjacent caravan park lighting, street lighting and vehicle headlights. The site would therefore be suitable for development, particularly in the lower lying areas but existing hedgerows and trees should be retained and enhanced, particularly at the eastern end, to create a more natural transition to the adjacent hills.



Fig 9 Capel Bangor

Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin

8.19

The site has a functional, edge of urban area feel, containing a number of detracting features. It lies adjacent to both agricultural land and built form, although some residential properties have direct views across the site and there are views across the valley particularly towards the southern end of the site where the topography continues to rise. Existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees are visible on the skyline of localised views to the north, providing a rural backdrop. The site would be suitable for development, particularly at the lower lying northern end, although existing hedgerows and trees should be retained and enhanced where practical. Building height should also be restricted towards the southern end to retain a tree-lined skyline rather than one of built form.



Fig 10 Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin

Land at IBERS, Penrhyncoch

- 8.20 The site already contains numerous buildings of varied architectural quality, age and heights, although much of the site is comprised of open fields and trees. The site has an enclosed in feel due to surrounding vegetation on valley sides, although the western end is more exposed and visible in the surrounding landscape. The site therefore has good capacity for development as an employment site due to the existing screening, character of the existing site, and existing landscape structure of trees and hedgerows.



Fig 11 Land at IBERS

Lovesgrove

- 8.21 The site is located within a rural landscape, whose character is of agricultural fields, woodland blocks and occasional single dwellings, interrupted by roadway. A SSSI is also located close by, further enhancing the surrounding rural character. Employment use on the site would therefore be out of character with the immediate surroundings and would not visually connect into anything

similar. The exception is the far eastern portion of the site which is functional in nature and used for cattle auctions. Whilst aesthetically unpleasing, this part of the site is still open in character and contains some areas of grass and trees. The limited adjacent visual receptors would look directly upon the site.

8.22 This site would therefore not be considered very suitable for development, with the exception of the eastern portion.



Fig 12 Land at Lovesgrove (east of roundabout)

Southgate

8.23 The site is located in an elevated position allowing long distance views from the surrounding landscape. There are few features of note within the site itself apart from its openness and the block of woodland along the western boundary. The visual receptors to the west and south-west have limited views due to the woodland block. The site is surrounded by built form to the north-west, west and south, with agricultural fields to the east. A caravan park is located to the north of the site. Development on this site would therefore connect to the adjacent built form and caravan park, although would be visually prominent on this elevated and open site.



Fig 13 Land at Southgate

Conclusions

- 8.24 The strategic assessment of the six sites has shown that all have some suitability for development. A review of the LANDMAP data has identified Southgate as being potentially the most suitable with the land at Penygraig potentially the least suitable. Further details on the assessment and an explanation of the scores is contained within Appendix 10, but the summary scores are set out below:

Site	Score
Southgate	10
Land at IBERS, Penrhyncoch	9
Penglais Farm	9
Lovesgrove	9
Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	6
Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin	5

Table 16 Landscape Assessment Results – LANDMAP analysis

- 8.25 Reviewing the six sites individually at a local level, IBERS is identified as potentially the most suitable for development, followed by Southgate. Lovesgrove is the least suitable for potential employment development:

Site	Score	Suitability
Land at IBERS, Penrhyncoch	4	Suitable
Southgate	3	Mainly Suitable
Penglais Farm	3	Mainly Suitable
Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin	3	Mainly Suitable
Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	2	Some Suitability
Lovesgrove	1	Little Suitability

Table 17 Landscape Assessment Results – local analysis

8.26

Comparing the LANDMAP data and individual site data together, site Southgate and IBERS are most suitable, and site Capel Bangor and Rhydyfelin are the least suitable for development. This difference is perhaps because the LANDMAP data is at a slightly more strategic level than the individual site surveys, which take account of localised changes in character and views:

Site	Score
Southgate	13
Land at IBERS, Penrhyncoch	13
Penglais Farm	12
Lovesgrove	10
Land to the west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	8
Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin	8

Table 18 Landscape Assessment Results - composite scores

8.27

In spite of these scores and relative ranks, the strategic assessment of the six sites has shown that all have some suitability for development. It has also concluded that any site chosen for development would require suitable mitigation such as retention of trees and hedgerows, reflection of existing topography and appropriate layout and design of buildings, including consideration of building height, scale, mass and materials.

Additional Discussions with Landowners/Occupiers

- 8.28 Phase 1 of the report identified a number of sites where additional information was required which included detailed conversations with the respective landowners/occupiers of the preferred site options in order to better ascertain the likelihood of these sites coming forward for development. The outcomes of these investigations are provided in summary below.

Park Avenue South

- 8.29 The Park Avenue South site has a number of different occupiers with the two largest land owners being Arriva Bus and Aberystwyth Football Club. NLP spoke to representatives from both these organisations in order to better understand the availability of land within the site.
- 8.30 When asked whether they had any intentions for moving the existing bus depot, Arriva Bus stated that the company have no plans for relocation and had recently refurbished the depot, highlighting their commitment to the town. It was also commented that the existing premises is very well located for access to the town centre and to move it further from the centre would result in additional operational costs.



Fig 14 Arriva Bus Depot, Park Avenue South

- 8.31 By contrast, Aberystwyth Football Club stated that it would be willing to relocate the club if it could achieve a price for the land which would allow it to build a new stadium elsewhere within Aberystwyth. From a policy perspective, redevelopment of this site is only likely to be acceptable if a new stadium could be provided elsewhere in the town. However, the club commented that only a retail developer acquisitioning the land was likely to achieve the kind of land revenues to make this possible. Accordingly, it is considered that employment uses on this site would be unlikely to assist the club in achieving their aspirations.



Fig 15 Aberystwyth Town Football Club, Park Avenue South

- 8.32 On the basis of the above, it is not considered likely that the Park Avenue South site will come forward for employment development within the LDP period unless as part of a retail-led mixed use scheme. Consequently, it is not considered expedient to allocate this site for employment purposes and as such this site should be discounted from the site review.

Aberystwyth Harbour

- 8.33 It has not been possible to obtain any further details regarding the availability of the 0.25 former brewery site in Aberystwyth Harbour. In the light of this, it not possible to be sure that the site is likely to come forward within the LDP period. It is therefore not considered that it should be allocated for employment purposes.



Fig 16 The Old Brewery site, Aberystwyth Harbour

University Sites – Llanbadarn Fawr, Penglais Farm and IBERS

8.34 Extensive discussions have taken place between Ceredigion County Council and Aberystwyth University regarding their sites at Llanbadarn Fawr and Penglais Farm. The masterplanning process is on-going and the precise mix and amount of land that is to be used for different purposes remains subject to agreement and subsequent confirmation by the University board. However, we do understand that employment provision is to be included within the masterplans and that the following mix of land uses represents the current basis for assessment and consideration:

Site	Land Use	Amount (ha)
Llanbadarn Fawr	New employment	4.5
	Existing education	3.5
	New housing	8.5 (2 phases)
	Future development (post 2015)	12.5
Penglais Farm	University residences	28.2 (2 phases)
	Equine centre	10.9
	Park and Ride	3.3
	Possible employment	9.2
	Strategic landscaping	7.8

Table 19 Proposed mix of land uses at Llanbadarn Fawr and Penglais Farm

8.35 It has been confirmed by the University that Llanbadarn site will be available for development within the next 2-5 years – with the employment/housing site being almost immediately available and therefore office facilities being deliverable well within the LDP period. In addition, we have been advised that the University would also wish to have flexibility to redevelop the existing University buildings for B1 purposes if the education uses become surplus to requirements and if Ceredigion County Council has no requirement for them for education purposes. However, there is no guarantee that this part of the site would become available for employment purposes within the LDP period and so we do not recommend that it should be allocated.

8.36 It has been suggested that the Penglais Farms site will also be available within the next 5 years although the University intends that this site would not be released for employment purposes until the Llanbadarn Fawr site has been developed. In the light of this, there is no clear assurance that it would come forward for development within the LDP period.

8.37

In the light of this and given the amount of land that is required for office development in the Aberystwyth area, we recommend that:

- a The identified land at Llanbadarn Fawr should be allocated for employment development. This is to comprise 4.5ha office and research and development space. This area is to be served by a direct enhanced access from Primrose Hill and will be bounded by strategic landscaping. Provision should also be made for strategic landscaping and to ensure that the development takes adequate account of the topography of the site and the presence of TPOs to the south of the site;
- b The additional space shown on the draft masterplan could be used for strategic landscaping, to provide appropriate car parking facilities and to take account of the gradient and the presence of protected trees on the site;
- c The area highlighted on the masterplan to be retained for education purposes should not be allocated for employment development but may be safeguarded for the future expansion of the employment area in the event that the university facilities become surplus to requirements; and,
- d No land should be allocated to come forward for employment land at Penglais Farm within the current LDP period although it should be safeguarded for future release during a subsequent Plan period. This will ensure that it will be preserved for future development and that its capacity to contribute towards the economic well-being of the Aberystwyth area might be realised in the future.

8.38

It is accepted that the University would be unwilling to release any land at IBERS that would undermine its on-going research operations. Discussions about the potential future availability of land at this site have not led to any clarity regarding the level of employment development that might be accommodated. It therefore cannot be assumed that this site would be available within the LDP period.

9.0

Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1

In the light of the additional analysis set out in this Phase 2 assessment, we set out our conclusions on each of the sites below. These are based upon the following traffic light system:

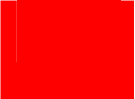


	Not suitable for employment development because of the nature of the site, its location and market viability/attractiveness and its availability for employment development within the LDP period.
	Recommended to be safeguarded for future employment development – either in a future LDP period or in the event that additional land is required for employment purposes within the current LDP period.
	Suitable for employment development. Site considered to be in an appropriate location for the proposed type of development, likely to be attractive to the market and capable of accommodating a viable form of development and likely to be available for development within the LDP period.

Table 20 Traffic Light Site Scoring System

Site / Score	Comment
Park Avenue South	<p>This site scores well in locational and sequential terms but is not available for employment development or expected to become available within the LDP period. Given the requirement for development to fund a replacement stadium, it is also not considered that employment development in this location would be viable.</p> <p>Whilst we recognise the benefits of the site, it is not recommended that it should be allocated for employment development.</p>
Aberystwyth Harbour	<p>This site scores well in locational and sequential terms but is not available for employment development or expected to become available within the LDP period.</p> <p>Whilst we recognise the benefits of the site, it is not recommended that it should be allocated for employment development. In the event that it does become available, however, it could be supported as an appropriate windfall employment site.</p>
Lovesgrove	<p>Despite its strategic location along the A44, this site suffers from a number of constraints, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Unknown ownership or availability; b Access constraints; c Conclusion from the landscape site assessment that it has ‘little suitability’ for development; d Presence of and potential impact of development upon aquifer which serves the Aberystwyth area; and, e Extent of Flood Risk Zone C2 over the site. <p>In addition, in view of the recent granting of planning permission for the Capel Bangor scheme, there is no need for this site to be released for development at this time.</p> <p>In the light of these matters, it is not considered that the site is suitable for development and is therefore recommended that it should not be allocated for employment purposes.</p>

Site / Score	Comment
<p>Southgate</p>	<p>This site has been promoted through the LDP candidate site process as a housing location. Its availability for employment development is therefore not assured. It is also located to the south of Aberystwyth and away from the A44. In this location, it is less likely to be attractive to the market as an employment location.</p> <p>In the light of its location and availability, this site cannot be relied upon to come forward for employment development within the LDP period. It is more likely to be promoted as a housing site. In any event, in view of the recent granting of planning permission for the Capel Bangor scheme, there is no need for this site to be released for development at this time.</p> <p>In the light of this uncertainty and its location (compared to other sites that are better related to the A44), it is not recommended that it should be allocated for development.</p>
<p>Land at Penygraig, Rhydyfelin</p>	<p>This site has been promoted through the LDP candidate site process for mixed use. It is unknown whether this might include employment uses. It is located to the south of Aberystwyth and away from the A44. As such, it is less likely to be attractive to the market as an employment location. In view of its location away from the Aberystwyth urban area, it has been considered for industrial and warehousing purposes. Of these uses, the highways assessment has shown that it would only be appropriate for industrial purposes. This would serve to restrict the potential development solution that could be accommodated on the site and may thereby affect its attractiveness to future occupiers and hence its viability. It is considered that this site would be more appropriate for alternative uses.</p> <p>In addition, in view of the recent granting of planning permission for the Capel Bangor scheme, there is no need for this site to be released for development at this time.</p> <p>In the light of this, it is not recommended that this site should be allocated for employment development.</p>
<p>IBERS, Penrhyncoch</p>	<p>A potentially attractive site upon which employment development could complement the university research operations. However, it is located away from the A44 and the market attractiveness of any activities may thereby be reduced. Most importantly, however, it is unknown how much (if any) of the land might become available for development and when this might happen.</p>

Site / Score	Comment
	<p>In addition, in view of the recent granting of planning permission for the Capel Bangor scheme, there is no need for this site to be released for development at this time.</p> <p>In the light of this, it is not recommended that this site should be allocated for employment development.</p>
Penglais Farm	<p>This site is well located to Aberystwyth and could accommodate offices as part of a mixed use development. The draft masterplan (which remains subject to agreement and subsequent confirmation by the University board) shows a 9.2ha employment area although it is not intended that this will come forward until the Llanbadarn Fawr site has been delivered. As such, its deliverability cannot be assured at this time. In addition, the site could (on its own and in conjunction with Llanbadarn Fawr) accommodate more development than is required for office or research and development purposes.</p> <p>As set out elsewhere in the report, it is not considered to be appropriate for industrial or warehousing purposes due to its location away from the A44, highway restrictions and its potential impact upon the amenity of residential neighbours. Restrictions on the form of development that might be provided in these locations (i.e. industrial but not warehousing) might also serve to further affect its market attractiveness and development viability as a location for ‘heavier’ activities.</p> <p>Whilst it is not recommended that this site should be allocated for employment development, we recommend that it should be safeguarded for future development.</p>
Llanbadarn Fawr	<p>The draft masterplan (which remains subject to agreement and subsequent confirmation by the University board) for this site proposes a 4.5ha area for employment development. The site is to be released in the next 2-5 years and the employment element is to be the first development to be delivered. It will therefore be available and deliverable well within the LDP period. We recommend that the site should accommodate office and research and development space. Provision should also be made for strategic landscaping and to ensure that the development takes adequate account of the topography of the site and the presence of TPOs to the south of the site.</p> <p>It is not considered that these ground conditions would adversely affect the deliverability of the site. Its location on the edge of the existing urban area means that is the most sequentially appropriate site</p>

Site / Score	Comment
	<p>and thereby offers considerable potential for a high quality, attractive and viable commercial development.</p> <p>This site represents a good opportunity for new office and research and development facilities in Aberystwyth and its development should be supported through allocation for employment purposes. We would recommend a development density of 35% (3,500 sq m per ha) for this site given its location within the urban boundary but away from the town centre.</p>
<p>Land adjacent to Glanyrafon Industrial Estate</p>	<p>An area of 1.8ha has recently been granted planning permission for a waste recycling facility. This will complement the existing waste processing facilities that exist at Glanyrafon and will be important in serving Ceredigion County Council's future waste requirements. This part of the expansion area has been taken forward as it is likely to be implemented and will make an important contribution to the local area.</p>
<p>Land within Glanyrafon Industrial Estate</p>	<p>Some land which is currently allocated as falling within the existing industrial estate remains undeveloped. Although part of the allocated area is largely within the flood risk zone C2 area and has been excluded from this analysis, the remaining vacant area extends to 1.75ha and comprises 1.05ha to the south east of the site, 0.7ha within the site adjacent to the existing caravan dealership. This is proposed for Class B1b/c, B2 and/or B8 uses.</p>
<p>Land to West of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor</p>	<p>This site is known to be available for employment development and, following a public inquiry, outline planning permission has now been granted for a business park comprising a mix of B1, B2 and B8 uses. Although the site scores relatively poorly in terms of landscape characteristics, which was an issue also highlighted by the Inspector, it was accepted that these issues are outweighed by the need for the site and the lack of alternatives to meet the local requirement for additional employment land.</p> <p>This site represents a good opportunity for new commercial facilities in Aberystwyth and it is expected that the 14.5ha development will come forward. Whilst this almost represents Aberystwyth's entire lower range requirement, the development will be phased and therefore it is expected that some of the 14.5ha will come forward for development after 2022.</p>

Table 21 Conclusions on Phase 2 assessment sites

9.2 Drawing upon these conclusions, we recommend that the following sites should be allocated for development:

Site / Location	Suggested form of employment development	Area (ha) for employment
Llanbadarn Fawr Campus	B1a/b	4.5ha offices and research and development premises
Land within Glanyrafon Industrial Estate and part of land to south with planning permission for a waste transfer facility	B1b/c / B2 / B8	3.5*
Land to west of Ty Llwyd, Capel Bangor	B1 / B2 / B8	14.5ha to include 4.4*ha offices and 10.1*ha B1b/c / B2 / B8 uses
TOTAL		22.5

* Figures include an allowance for the inclusion of relevant non-B uses as part of the employment allocation.

Table 22 Recommended allocation sites

9.3 In allocating this land for development, the LDP policy should specify:

- a The types of employment uses that are to be provided in each location;
- b The package of local and environmental enhancements that would be expected to come forward as part of any development, including highway/access improvements and adequate landscaping and screening; and,
- c The location of any employment development within the larger sites.

9.4 These sites have the capacity to meet the identified employment land requirements for the Aberystwyth area:

	B1(a)/(b)	B1 (c) / B2	B8	Relevant Non-B Class	Total
Requirement (ha)	7.6		13.4		21
Area (ha)	8.9		13.6		22.5

Figures include an allowance for the inclusion of relevant non-B uses as part of the employment allocation

Table 23 Proposed employment land split

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- 9.5 As we have emphasised throughout this report, the decision regarding the actual amount of land that is to be provided in the Aberystwyth area must be a policy one, based upon the Council's aspirations for Aberystwyth relative to the other settlements in Ceredigion and also for those other settlements that have been identified in the Wales Spatial Plan and which serve an important economic and social role within the County.
- 9.6 The figures set out above are based upon the assumption that 21ha employment land would be provided in the Aberystwyth area. We have consistently applied this high figure in order to identify sufficient land to meet the maximum requirement. This approach has also been further supported by the lack of town centre sites with the implications of this being a requirement for more out of centre sites which will be developed at a lower density thereby increasing the amount of land required.
- 9.7 If the selected policy approach is for a lower level of provision to be made in this area, then consideration should be given a proportionate reduction in the allocation of land for employment purposes – although we recognise that this may be difficult given the scale of existing planning permissions at Glanyrafon and Capel Bangor and the different character of Llanbadarn Fawr, for which there is a clear need.
- 9.8 In order to ensure that the strategy that is established at this stage has the capacity to deliver long term benefits, it is proposed that the following sites should be safeguarded for future development:
- a Penglais Farm; and,
 - b The area of land that is to be retained for existing education purposes at Llanbadarn Fawr.
- 9.9 The LDP should ensure that these sites are not brought forward for early development if this would undermine the deliverability of the allocated sites. Their identification is, however, important in providing the basis for a longer term economic development strategy. Importantly, it shows that Ceredigion County Council understands how future needs might be met if there is an additional requirement for employment space above the identified 21ha for the Aberystwyth area and the 34ha for Ceredigion as a whole.