



Local Area Energy Plan: Well-being Impact Assessment Report

This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number: 1393

Brief description: A Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) has been developed for Denbighshire, as part of a Welsh Government project, and created by a wide stakeholder group. It is not a Denbighshire County Council project or plan. The LAEP provides an evidence-base and identifies the most effective route for the local area to contribute towards meeting the national net zero target, as well as meeting its local [area based] net zero target.

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Responsible Service: Corporate Support Service: Performance, Digital and Assets

Localities affected by the proposal: Whole County,

Who will be affected by the proposal? Everyone in the county will be affected by the LAEP

Was this impact assessment completed as a group? Yes

Summary and Conclusion

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

3 out of 4 stars

Actual score : 31 / 36.

Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term

This long-term (to 2050) plan was created through involvement of many stakeholders. Focus is on energy and carbon reduction, not net biodiversity gain. LAEP will inform the DNO and grid. Energy infrastructure (eg substations) and some highways info has been included but broader infrastructure has not been considered. LAEP does not consider what land should be avoided in identified energy creation eg for food production. There is uncertainty over funding and further research would be needed.

Prevention

LAEP focus is on energy and carbon reduction. It proposes approaches to build independence and resilience and proposes deploying resources to prevent the problem of climate change from getting worse.

Integration

The LAEP is a jointly produced plan and actions are for many parties including District Network Operator (local electricity grid operator), it is not for the Council alone. For the proposed actions, feasibility studies would be needed. There is uncertainty over how all actions would be funded.

Collaboration

Local Area Energy Plan

The LAEP was produced through a collaborative process , including workshops, with partners across Denbighshire. It has produced a clear, shared route map for social, environmental and economic outcomes to 2050, which are illustrated in the LAEP reports.

Involvement

LAEP was created through involvement of many stakeholders. As part of it, the consultants engaged with Registered Social Landlords, DNO, other public bodies eg NRW. Every person in Denbighshire could be affected by the LAEP. However, the LAEP is not DCC's owned plan or policy. DCC is one of the stakeholders and has actions within its remit and the opportunity to influence the wider county. Engagement was carried out by consultants commissioned by Ambition North Wales and funded by Welsh Gov.

Summary of impact

| Well-being Goals | Overall Impact |
|---|----------------|
| A prosperous Denbighshire | Positive |
| A resilient Denbighshire | Positive |
| A healthier Denbighshire | Positive |
| A more equal Denbighshire | Positive |
| A Denbighshire of cohesive communities | Neutral |
| A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language | Neutral |
| A globally responsible Denbighshire | Positive |

Main conclusions

Local Area Energy Plan

The Local Area Energy Plan is a long-term, collaborative plan (to 2050) that applies the sustainable development principle ie proposing actions that seek to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It has a positive impact on five well-being goals and a neutral effect on two well-being goals. This WIA shows how the plan's proposals provide opportunity for: decarbonisation of energy supply and delivery in Denbighshire, new non-temporary/non-seasonal jobs, better energy efficiency in homes that can increase quality of life and health and reduce energy requirements, reduced air pollution and increased energy resiliency. For the proposed actions, feasibility studies would be needed and these studies or related projects would be likely to require a further impact assessment.

The likely impact on Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

The aim of the LAEP is decarbonisation of energy supply and delivery in Denbighshire. Recent experience in Denbighshire shows that increasing renewable energy sources is already creating new jobs, with long term prospect of the sector and demand for those skills.

Further actions required

Retrofit energy efficiency works should be planned in association with homeowners.

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society

LAEP is about decarbonisation in the whole of Denbighshire

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

LAEP provides information on existing and potential improvements to energy infrastructure across the county

Economic development

Opportunity to create new jobs. Opportunity for social benefit for renewable energy schemes

Quality skills for the long term

Opportunities to develop skills in the renewable energy sector, which has a long term prospect

Quality jobs for the long term

Local Area Energy Plan

Non-seasonal, non-temporary jobs that are required over the medium to long term are likely to be created by implementing the LAEP. There is likely to be development opportunity within the sector, eg from apprentice, to graduate, to expert

Childcare

Improving energy efficiency of homes could improve quality of life and health for children

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society

None

Quality communications, infrastructure and transport

If there were not feasibility studies, there could be a risk to existing landscape

Economic development

None

Quality skills for the long term

Lack of skilled people at the moment

Quality jobs for the long term

None

Childcare

Works to improve energy efficiency of homes (retrofit) could cause disruption to families

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

LAEP proposes renewable energy supply and delivery within the county and therefore Denbighshire would be much more resilient in terms of energy. The LAEP is a high level plan and therefore some of the responses above are unknown because they will depend on specific projects.

Further actions required

No negative impacts identified. Depending on specific projects, biodiversity and other considerations should be considered.

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Unknown - will be based on delivery.

Biodiversity in the built environment

Unknown - will be based on delivery.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Unknown - will be based on delivery.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

LAEP is primarily designed to reduce energy consumption in Denbighshire

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

Any projects are likely to increase people's awareness of the environment, particularly carbon emissions, pollution and air quality

Flood risk management

No

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment

Unknown - will be based on delivery.

Biodiversity in the built environment

Unknown - will be based on delivery.

Reducing waste, reusing and recycling

Unknown - will be based on delivery.

Reduced energy/fuel consumption

No

People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity

No

Flood risk management

No

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Actions in the LAEP, if carried out, would reduce air pollution.

Registered Social Landlord's reported, at the LAEP workshops, that individuals with solar panels are less worried about using hot water or turning their heating on.

Further actions required

Mitigating actions would be to continue communications, climate change education and behaviour change in Denbighshire to help people understand the benefits of renewable energy and the impact of climate change.

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

Renewable energy sources will result in reduced air pollution and therefore fewer air quality health problems

Access to good quality, healthy food

Opportunity to use potential community funding as a result of schemes for creating eg allotments

People's emotional and mental well-being

LAEP may provide hope to those who are anxious about climate change, energy security and variability of energy costs

Access to healthcare

None

Participation in leisure opportunities

None

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being

None

Access to good quality, healthy food

None

People's emotional and mental well-being

Some people are against renewable energy and climate change so may find the transition difficult

Access to healthcare

None

Participation in leisure opportunities

None

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

LAEP is based on grid infrastructure, so anyone off grid would not be included in proposals. However, Welsh Government's Planning for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy - A Toolkit for Planners (September 2015) does not have grid as a constraint and therefore off grid properties/ locations would be considered.

Further actions required

Due to the high level and theoretical nature of the LAEP, inequalities of outcome resulting from socio-economic disadvantage have not been modelled or identified. Specific projects would require feasibility studies and these should include WIA considerations.

Positive impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

Not identified

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

Energy efficiency actions in the LAEP could reduce fuel poverty

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

Energy efficiency actions in the LAEP could reduce fuel poverty

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

Energy efficiency actions in the LAEP could reduce fuel poverty

Negative impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation

Not identified

People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage

None

People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes

None

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage

None

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

Although there are opportunities, there may be a lack of willingness or ability for communities to make best use of them.

Further actions required

There are opportunities for micro-renewable schemes in local areas. There may not be sufficient people to be able /want to develop and deliver them.

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

None

Community participation and resilience

Long-term energy resilience for communities. Opportunity for community participation in identifying and delivering specific projects

The attractiveness of the area

Unknown - depends on specific projects

Connected communities

Potential access to local energy

Rural resilience

Some of the actions identified in the LAEP could improve rural resilience. There is more capacity in the local grid in many rural areas in Denbighshire

Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals

None

Community participation and resilience

Actions in the LAEP are likely to be reliant on external businesses/ organisations/ resource to develop them

The attractiveness of the area

Unknown - depends on specific projects

Connected communities

None

Rural resilience

None

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact

Neutral

Justification for impact

The LAEP is produced in Welsh and English.

Further actions required

Projects and communications should take into account Welsh language.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh

None

Promoting the Welsh language

None

Culture and heritage

None

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh

None

Promoting the Welsh language

None

Culture and heritage

None

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact

Positive

Justification for impact

Actions in the LAEP will reduce carbon emissions and therefore help prevent the problem of climate change getting worse. Local energy production could better prepare Denbighshire for a resilient future with climate change (adaptation).

Further actions required

Work with suppliers to source materials and staff as locally and ethically as possible.

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

Depends on delivery. Local and national suppliers could be used in projects

Human rights

None

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

Local renewable energy provision and energy efficiency may improve the ability of other services and organisations to deliver their objectives

Reducing climate change

The proposal is likely to prevent the problem of climate from getting worse and to better prepare Denbighshire and beyond for a future with climate change

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains

Products may have to be sourced outside of UK, eg large renewable infrastructure items

Human rights

None

Broader service provision in the local area or the region

None

Reducing climate change

None