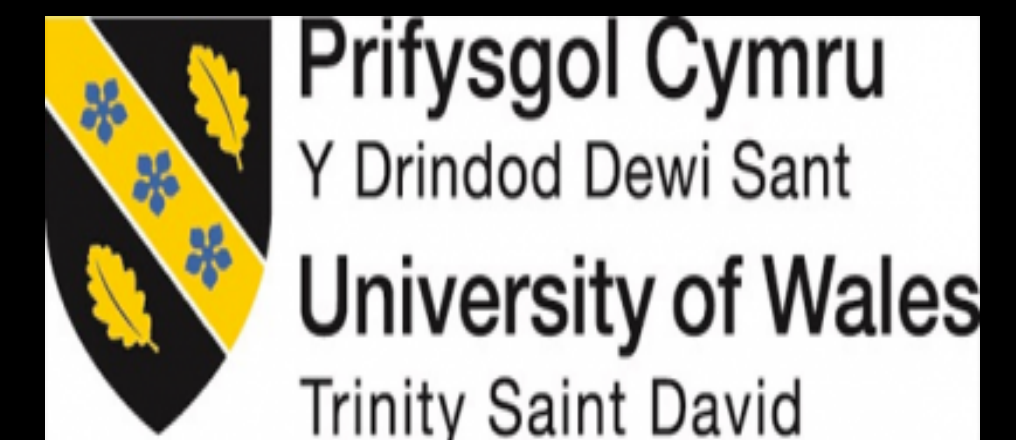


Environmental Impact Assessment and Trimsaran Housing Development

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What is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)?

- *An EIA is a procedure of assessing the impact a project or development will have on the environment.*
- It assists in the decision making of the project.
- The EIA takes the social, economic and environmental issues in to account.
- Helps to decide whether a local authority should grant planning permission.
- Encourages design around the local environment.
- Assess health and safety risks.

When is an EIA Required?

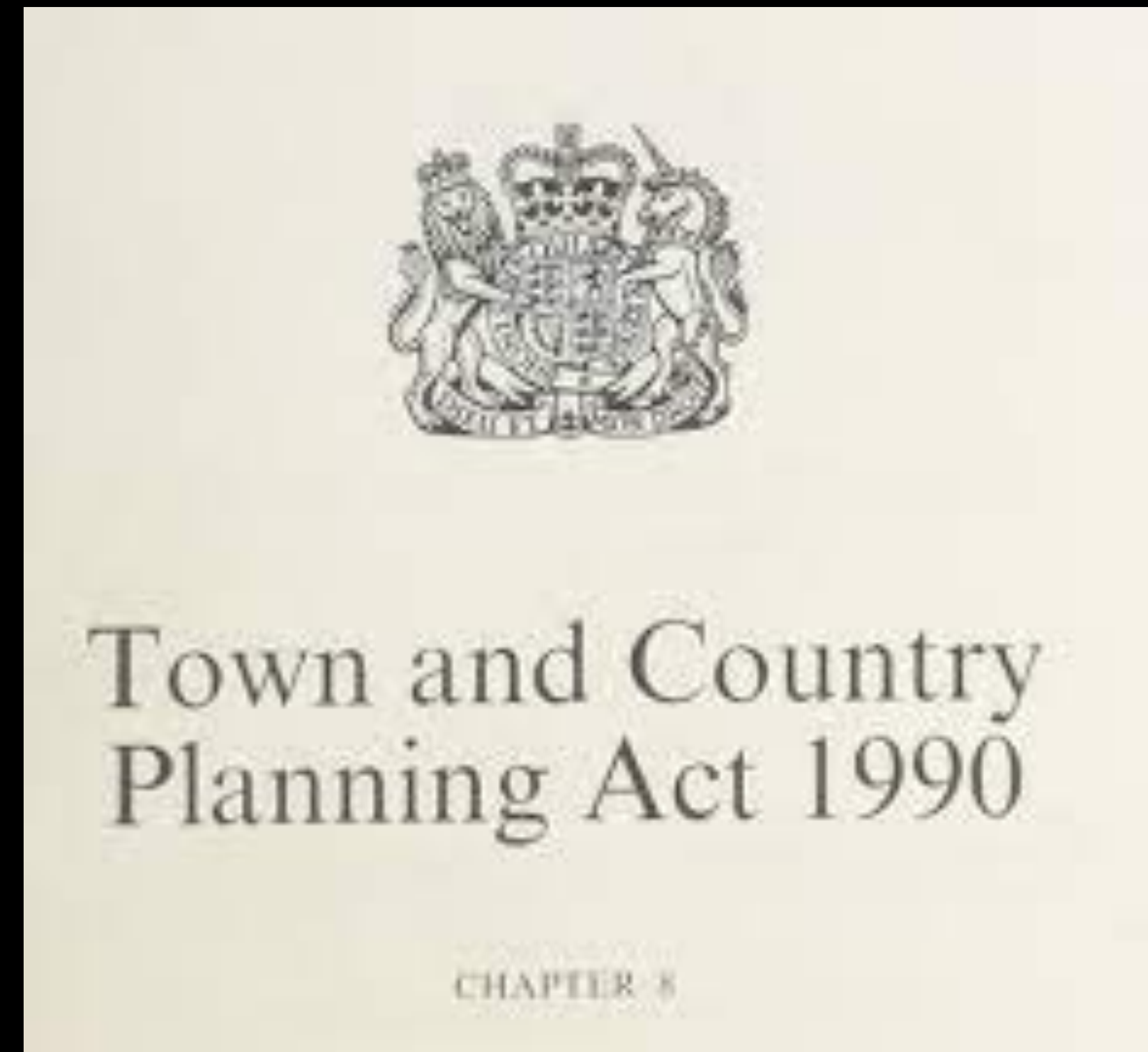
- Is the project 'Schedule 1' or 'Schedule 2'?
- Schedule 1 = *“tend to be larger developments or those with potentially the most significant environmental effects, such as airports, oil refineries, or motorways”* (East Lothian Council, 2021).
- Schedule 2 = *“can include things such as wind turbines, certain industrial developments, golf courses, larger housing proposals, and a wide range of other types of development”* (East Lothian Council, 2021).
- Schedule 1 projects would not be granted planning permission with an EIA.
- Schedule 2 projects would require screening for opinion.
- Large housing developments = Schedule 1.

Stages of an EIA

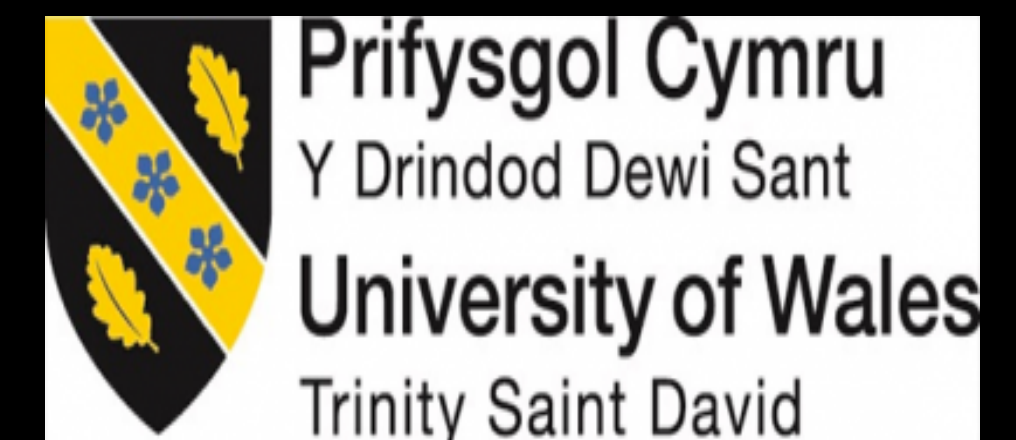
- Screening - Carried out by Local Authority to assess whether EIA is needed.
- Scoping - “*opinion on what information needs to be included (which is called a ‘scoping opinion’)*” (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2017).
- Environmental Statement - The statement should include detailed descriptions of the development/project and the main environmental effects.
- Application - Following the previous stages, the developer can make a publicly accessed application. Allows stakeholders to raise issues.
- Review - EIA and planning application will be assessed and planning approval may be awarded. (For major developments the Secretary of State will assist in the approval).

The Legislation

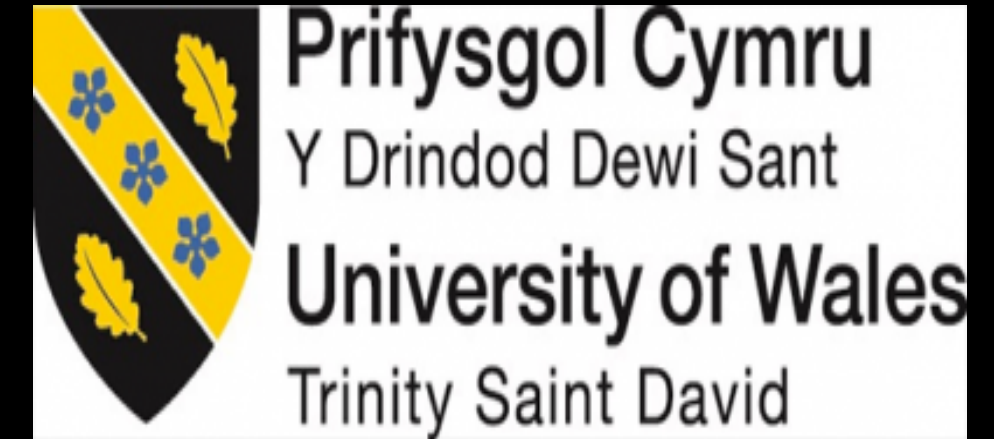
Town and Country Planning Act 1990



“An Act to consolidate certain enactments relating to town and country planning (excluding special controls in respect of buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest and in respect of hazardous substances) with amendments to give effect to recommendations of the Law Commission”



The Proposal



- Large housing development within Trimsaran, West Wales consisting of 139 homes and 29 detached garages, ranging from 2 bedroom terraced houses to 4 bedroom detached homes.
- Eight of the homes will be allocated to be 'affordable homes'.
- Constructed by large housing developer who has built other phases in the area.
- Near Ffos Las Race course, small stream, road and another plot of land.
- Within the development there has been an area of open space planned to include sitting benches and children's playing blocks.

How Does it Impact the Local Community?

- **NEGATIVE** Will increase traffic within the area - Carbon Monoxide fumes, noise, lack of parking.
- **POSITIVE/NEGATIVE** Attract further construction to the area.
- **POSITIVE/NEGATIVE** Social housing.
- **POSITIVE** Much needed homes within the area.
- **NEGATIVE** Construction disturbance.
- **POSITIVE** S106 - provision for e.g. improved roads, kerbs, fencing, trees and plants.

Potential Risks and Health Factors

- Pollution within the stream.
- Unstable ground conditions in the area.
- Previous coal mines.
- Radon gas.
- Damage to potential Wildlife.
- Pollution to air/fumes.
- Litter and rubbish.



Example - Radon

- West Wales is high for Radon within the ground.
- Increased risk of lung cancer.
- Radon barriers must be installed correctly.
- *“If we breath in high levels of radon over long periods of time this exposure can lead to damage to the sensitive cells of our lungs which increases the risk of lung cancer. Radon causes about 1,000 lung cancer deaths in the UK every year” (McColl, 2015).*

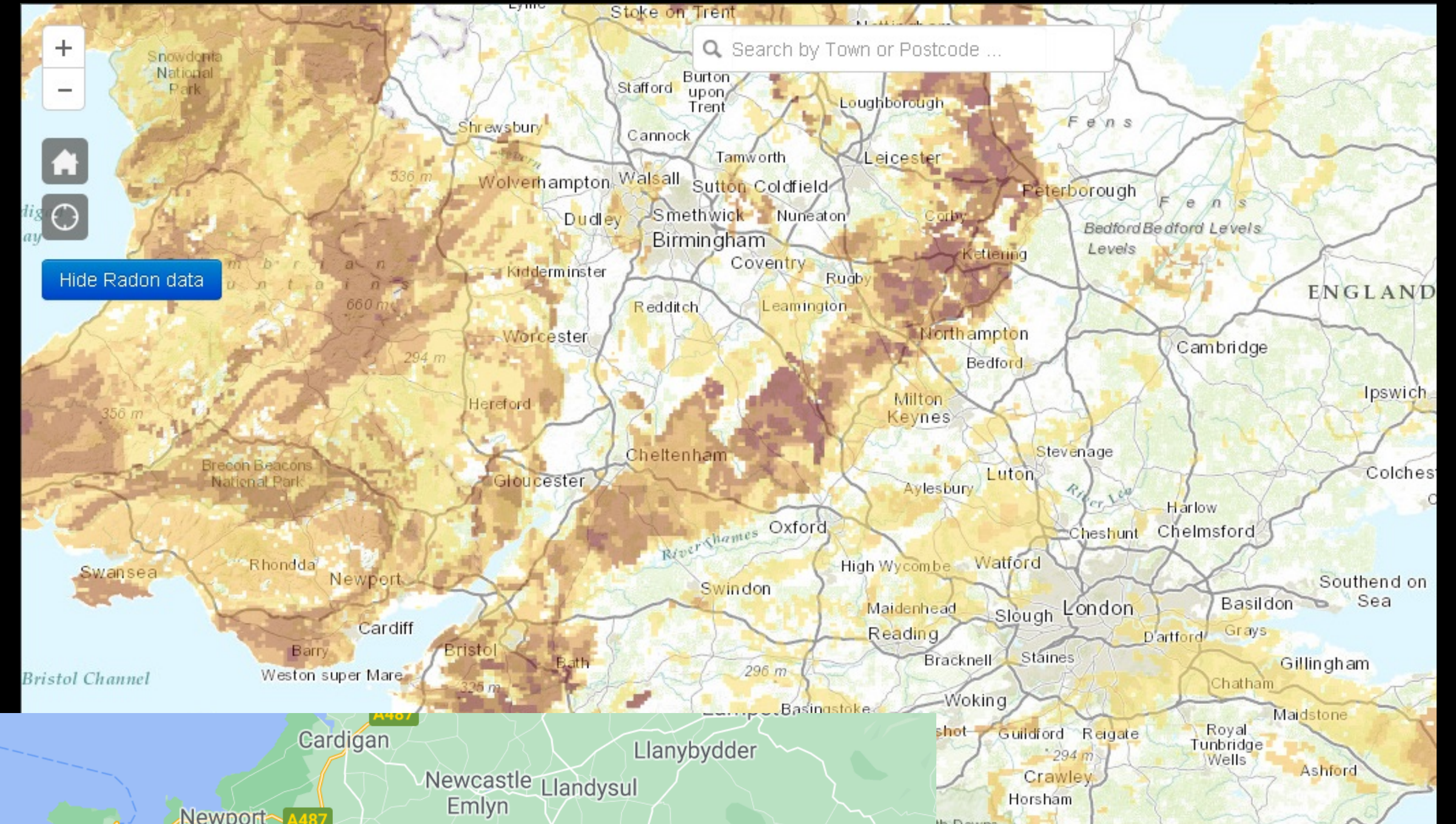


Image 1 - Neil McColl, 2015



Google Maps - 2021

Evaluation of the EIA

Strengths and Weaknesses

- **Strengths**

- Detailed explanation of areas history and location - Coal mining, brickworks and quarries.
- Details of the geology and Stratigraphy.
- Potential risks - Mention of radon and flood risks in the area.

- **Weaknesses**

- No exact locations of coal mining, quarries or brickworks.
- Lack of data behind the issues of radon - no figures or science.
- No regard for social impact within the EIA.
- Limited environmental regard.
- Waste disposal plan.
- Biased.

Critique of the EIA

- Biased/One sided.
- Lack of care for the local environment/Wildlife.
- Local council Affordable Homes Delivery Plan by 2020. *“The purpose of this plan is to provide the detail on how and where we will deliver more affordable homes. The initial programme will deliver over 1000 additional affordable homes over the next five years”* (Carmarthenshire County Council, 2016).
- Issues highlighted are those to the contractor and not local community.
- How will the contractor protect the environment during construction?



Recommendations

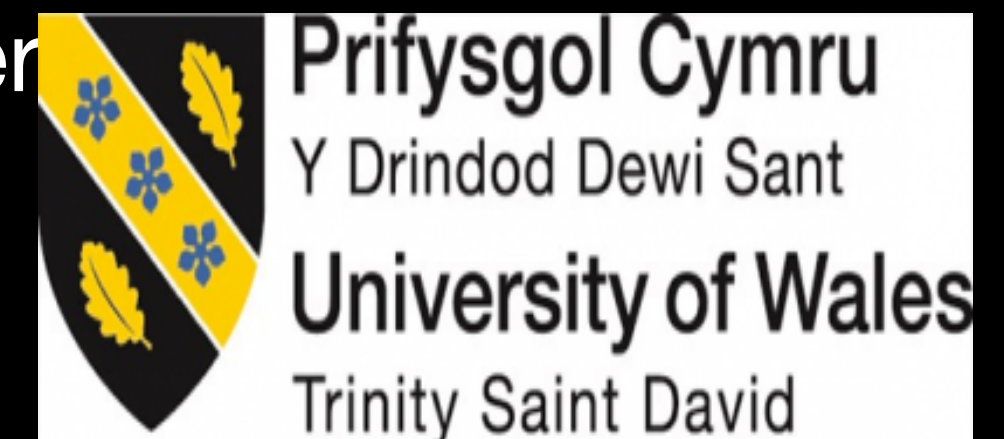
- Increase information regarding the coal mines, quarries and brickworks. Understand location of potential hazards, weak ground and risks.
- Discussion of potential risk on human health - Radon, fumes etc.
- Stakeholder opinions - Social and economic impact.
- Highlight local council aims for providing affordable housing within the area.
- Include waste disposal plan and how the issues of litter and rubbish will be dealt with.
- Include potential environmental risks - Any wildlife?

Conclusion

- EIA should be an eye-opener to the stakeholders.
- How has the developer designed out or improved aspects of the project to reduce impact on the environment?
- EIA not effectively carried out.
- No information or regard for the community or local environment.
- Biased assessment and lack of diversity.
- Developer only highlighted issues which would affect them.
- Need to improve on the issues highlighted within the recommendations.
- Only social regard, is for the production on homes.

References

- Carmarthenshire County Council 2016, Affordable Homes Delivery Plan 2016-20, www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/council-democracy/strategies-and-plans/affordable-homes-delivery-plan-2016-20/ [Last visited 3/4/21].
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Thank you!

