

Draft Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) 2022

Summary



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Introduction

WelTAG is our guidance on planning and appraising transport programmes, policies, plans and projects in Wales.

Welsh Government will only fund programmes and projects that meet our priorities for transport in Wales, and WelTAG is designed to help develop programmes and projects that address these priorities from the outset. This will avoid wasting time and money later.

WelTAG should be used at both a strategic level, to assess regional and larger transport interventions or groups of sustainable travel interventions, as well as at an individual project level.

The Wales Transport Strategy

Our priorities for transport are set out in the Wales Transport Strategy.

This sets a vision for an affordable, sustainable, efficient transport system. There are four long term ambitions – good for people and communities, good for the environment, good for the economy and places and good for culture and the Welsh language.

Those ambitions are underpinned by tough targets, including a target to increase the percentage of journeys by sustainable transport. Following the publication of **Net Zero Wales**, this has been set to 48% by 2040. Transport is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. We need to change the way we travel in order to tackle that, and that means making more use of public transport, more walking and cycling, and fewer emissions from vehicles.

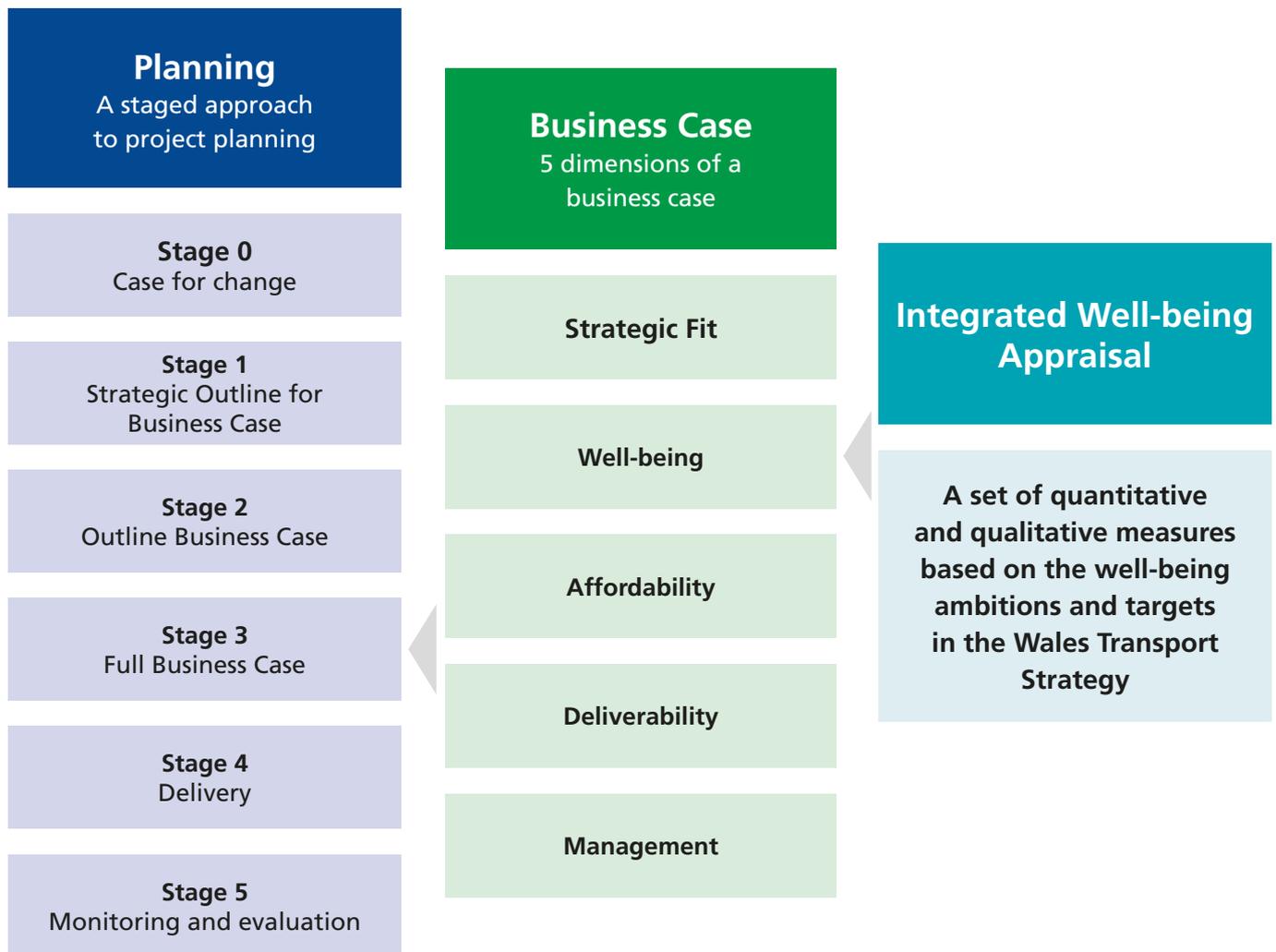
The Wales Transport Strategy sets three priorities to help achieve these ambitions – the first involves reducing the need to use cars on a daily basis by looking at where we are locating new services and housing. The second involves investing in sustainable transport services and infrastructure, starting with maintaining and upgrading existing infrastructure.

Where we need new infrastructure, we use the sustainable transport hierarchy to give priority to walking and cycling, public transport and ultra-low emissions over other forms of road travel. The third priority is behaviour change. There is no point in investing in sustainable services and infrastructure unless we also enable and encourage more people to use them, so all programmes and projects funded by Welsh Government must address behaviour change.

We need to understand why people don't use sustainable transport, identify the barriers to overcome and the motivations to encourage people to do so, in order to identify solutions and interventions.

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The three WelTAG elements – planning, business case & integrated well-being appraisal



Value-for-money

All projects, policies and programmes must be supported by a business case that shows how they will deliver value-for-money against these criteria

WelTAG 2022 sets five criteria that we will use to decide whether to consider supporting a programme or project. They are:

- **Strategic fit** – does the programme or project meet the priorities in the Wales Transport Strategy?
- **Well-being** – does the programme or project deliver well-being benefits set out in the Wales Transport Strategy including targets on modal shift?
- **Affordability** – is the programme or project affordable in terms of its short term and long-term costs?
- **Deliverability** – can the programme or project be effectively and efficiently delivered?
- **Management** – will any risks be properly managed?

Unless a project, programme or policy meets the first two criteria, it will not be considered for further development, funding or support.

The WelTAG business case

All projects, policies and programmes must be supported by a business case that shows how they will deliver value-for-money against these criteria. The five sections must show how the project or programme will address the five criteria – strategic fit, well-being, affordability, deliverability and management. Whilst the business case itself should be a short high-level summary, it will need to be supported by more detailed information including details of the projects, costs, an integrated well-being appraisal and further modelling of the future benefits and impacts (see below).

The WelTAG stages

Programme and project development starts with making the initial case for change, then selecting options, developing the business case, delivering the programme or project and reviewing or evaluating it afterwards.

All programmes and projects must start by setting out the case for change – why something needs to be done and what the objectives are. There is no point in developing a programme or project further unless this is clearly set out.

After that, complex programmes and projects will require more detailed work than smaller, more straightforward ones, so the new WelTAG 2022 includes more guidance on how to adopt a proportional approach.

Most projects in Wales simply need to prepare a business case, before delivering the project and reviewing it afterwards (WelTAG lite). Large complex projects may need more detailed options appraisal and additional work on modelling costs and benefits.

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Integrated well-being appraisal

All programmes and projects must support their business case with an integrated well-being appraisal. This ensures that well-being considerations are designed into a programme or project from the outset. It also helps us to assess value-for-money.

The appraisal should answer four simple questions – is the programme or project good for people and communities? Is it good for the environment? Is it good for the economy and places? And is it good for culture and the Welsh language? These are based on the four ambitions in the Wales Transport Strategy, aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The answers to the questions should be supported by robust qualitative and quantitative evidence including how the programme or project will contribute to modal shift targets. WelTAG 2022 includes a framework of measures to help do this, that incorporates key information from statutory and regulatory impact assessments.

Engaging with people

Engaging with people before, during and after developing a transport programme or project ensures that it will meet people's needs. It helps address the barriers that they face in, for example, making better use of sustainable transport. WelTAG 2022 explains how to engage people as part of the planning and appraisal process.

Roads, rail and other transport modes

Any project, programme or policy that requires support from Welsh government must use WelTAG. This includes projects involving any mode of transport, such as active travel, bus, rail, roads, freight, maritime, third sector, taxis and public service vehicles and aviation.

Although it is important to take an integrated approach – for example by including active travel considerations in roads or public transport programmes and projects – some transport modes also have specific criteria.

For example, the current Roads Review Panel are developing criteria for future roads investment in Wales. We cannot assume that investing in new roads will solve issues such as congestion or deliver economic benefits. They are also likely to lead to increased carbon emissions. The new criteria for roads investment will need to be considered as part of the five value-for-money criteria.

WelTAG reports should be short and easy to read, but supported by more detailed information as needed.

Quality checklists

WelTAG 2022 includes a set of checklists to make sure that the information in WelTAG reports is relevant and fit for purpose.

The most important thing is to explain how the programme or project will address Welsh Government priorities and how well-being has been taken into account in the way it will be designed and delivered. WelTAG reports should be short and easy to read, but supported by more detailed information as needed. They should be tailored to the needs of the programme or project, address the WelTAG requirements and avoid standardised and repetitive information. Repeated assertions are not a substitute for good evidence.

WelTAG and TAG

Programmes or projects that also require funding from the UK Government must follow the UK Government guidance on transport assessment. However, to be supported by Welsh Government they must also explain how they are a strategic fit with Welsh Government priorities, and address well-being in Wales.

Technical Guidance

We are developing more detailed guidance and templates to illustrate key aspects of WelTAG 2022. This includes, for example, a model brief to commission studies from consultants if needed, guidance on assessing well-being and more detailed guidance on technical appraisal methods.



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