

Quinquennial Review and Evaluation of the Wales Planning Research Programme

Final Report to the Welsh Assembly Government

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Executive Summary

The Wales Planning Research Programme (WPRP) is intended to support the research needs of planning policy development in Wales. The WPRP's activities have been carried out based on a Scoping Study completed in 2000. The aim of the Programme according to the Study is:

"to support the Assembly's objectives for the planning system by engaging in research which will guide development of sustainable and effective planning policy, facilitate guidance on good practice and ensure the monitoring and evaluation of planning policy and its associated implications."

Over the five years since the Scoping Study was developed a number of institutional and policy changes have taken place and therefore the context within which Wales Planning Policy operates has now changed. These changes include:

- Responsibility for spatial planning research has been transferred to the Assembly's Strategic Policy Unit, to support the Wales Spatial Plan work;
- The Welsh Assembly Government's corporate policies have evolved; and,
- Strands of research relating to minerals and waste have been undertaken using ring-fenced funds from the WPRP.

It is now opportune to evaluate and review the WPRP. The Client's brief for this study sets out the following remit:

- Consider whether the objectives as set out in the Scoping Study have been met;
- Explore how the research undertaken has either influenced or translated into policy; and
- Provide pointers for the next five year research programme.

The aim of the review is:

"To evaluate the Wales Planning Research Programme in the light of the Assembly's strategic policies to provide draft objectives and themes for the 2005-2011 period."

The study is based on a combination of desk research and stakeholder consultations. This work has included:

- A review of the corporate Assembly policy framework and specific planning policy development;
- A review of the Programme's management and research projects supported;
- A detailed desk review of a selection of ten research projects funded by the Programme;

- A review of the future policy environment for which the WPRP will need to consider;
- A review of the Programme's administration arrangements; and,
- The interim findings were discussed at two round table workshops – one with Assembly officials and a second with external stakeholders.

Context

Since the start of the Programme in 2000 the WPRP has been set within an evolving policy context, as set out in section 2. The Welsh Assembly Government has been responsible for substantial policy development, both at the corporate Assembly level and that specific to land use and minerals planning policy. The review considers the policy context which is now in operation which will affect the future operation of the WPRP.

Effectiveness of the Current Programmes

In section 3 we have considered how the WPRP has been managed at both the Programme level and in terms of the management of the individual research contracts. From this review we come to the following strategic conclusions:

- The model used to have the same official managing the research contracts and subsequently developing the related policy is positive. It provides the opportunity to ensure the research is relevant to the policy development needs.
- There are presently limited overall programme management procedures, which can reduce the ability to strategically manage the Programme. This is exacerbated by the split between land use planning and minerals and waste aspects to the WPRP. There needs to be joint development of the Programme and progress reporting, in addition to flexibility with regard to the budget in order to ensure that the maximum benefit is derived from the Programme each year.
- The use of the User Panel is a positive mechanism for developing the WPRP and involving external stakeholders. This could play a greater role in the selection of projects and the monitoring and review of the Programme. This would provide a more strategic application of the WPRP.
- The application of all of the options available under the procurement rules should be applied by ensuring staff are fully briefed of the requirements and the alternative means of commissioning contracts. This would assist in reducing officials' time taken in administering the procurement requirements and also increase the opportunity to

commission additional projects towards the end of a year, to maximise the use of the budget.

- The project steering groups are a positive way of overseeing a research project, and provide the opportunity to involve relevant external organisations with specialist knowledge to inform the research.
- There is dissemination of the Programme's activities; however there is room for improvement. The current Assembly web site lacks structure and a good search function to support the WPRP. However, the WPRP annual newsletter was a positive method of keeping organisations up to date of the WPRP's activities.

Meeting of the Original Objectives and Themes

In section 4 we considered whether the research undertaken has actually met with the Scoping Study's original objectives and research themes. It is important to emphasise that the Scoping Study provided the parameters under which the WPRP could operate. However, the WPRP also needed to meet the research needs of emerging policy and Ministerial priorities and was therefore not constrained by the Scoping Study's recommendations. Here we draw together the main conclusions emerging from the review of the projects supported under the WPRP with regard to the Scoping Study's objectives and research themes.

- Almost 60% of the research projects supported are directly aligned with the Scoping Study, accounting for approximately 76% of expenditure. The remaining 40% of the projects were principally for supporting the RAWP Groups, editing and compiling policy documents or case specific research.
- Even though 60% of the projects can be allocated to an individual Scoping Study objective, in most cases they are able to support more than one of the objectives. For example they may be principally collecting information but this would either contribute towards policy formulation or to informing systems needed to improve the functioning of the planning system.
- When compared with the original Scoping Study objectives there is a clear difference between the projects pursued by land use planning research and those by waste and minerals. Waste and minerals have mainly focused on the information base, whereas land use planning has focused on research to support the development of policy.

- In terms of the original research themes proposed by the Scoping Study they have all been supported as themes. However, since that time the strategic policy framework of the Assembly has changed and developed. This has led to the development of corporate sustainable development and spatial plan approaches. Therefore spatial planning activity has diminished under the WPRP. However, sustainable development remains a strong theme.
- Waste has been included under the Programme. However, activity related to this has been funded by the Assembly's Wise About Waste strategy, although the Planning Division is involved in commissioning contracts to meet planning policy needs.

Informing Policy Development

Section 5 has considered whether the research commissioned has informed the development of planning policy. We have considered whether the research has been timely, how the WPRP interacts with other research programmes, including whether there are alternative sources to the WPRP to undertake the research. Our key conclusions are set out below.

- The Programme has been in operation since late 2000, and there is now a pattern of research informing the development of policy emerging. There are some specific cases where research has been undertaken and the related policy has either been issued or is under development. These include TAN2 Planning and Affordable Housing, TAN8 Planning for Renewable Energy, TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk and MTAN1 Aggregates.
- This pattern in the linkage between the development of the evidence base and policy also indicates the emergence of a policy cycle approach to planning policy development, although at this stage it is too early to illustrate the full cycle for any particular policy.
- There is some joint commissioning of research with other Assembly Departments and Divisions within EP&C, for example those related to waste. However, it is felt that links between policy areas could be strengthened to ensure complementarity.
- There are linkages with external organisations to carry out joint research projects, for example CCW and EAW. These are considered to be a positive method of commissioning research by pooling resources and ensuring different skills and knowledge are able to input into the research briefs and their management.

- There are joint working relationships with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)¹. However, since devolution and the reorganisation of the research function within ODPM, the joint working is not as extensive as previously. Leading on from this, there is also a degree of confusion, principally with external interests, as to whether research undertaken by ODPM is relevant to Wales.
- Given the weakening of the links with the ODPM and the emergence of a distinctive Welsh policy, there is support for the continuation of specific Welsh research, with joint working, particularly where there are resource benefits.
- In terms of barriers to research informing policy development, the principal issue relates to the capacity of the Planning Division to commission and manage research projects and to develop the policy.

Future Programme

In section 6 we have discussed the future content of the WPRP.

- There are a number of policy areas, related directly and indirectly to planning policy, which are facing developments over the next five years. These developments will invariably impact on the need for changes in planning policy.
- In determining the future content of the research programme there is a need to prioritise the policy areas which are in need of review. This needs to be done by evaluating the latest version of the current policy and developments taking place which will have an affect on planning policy. It is likely that these priorities will change annually, principally depending on external factors.
- Ministerial and Assembly corporate priorities will also be of importance in determining activities under the WPRP. There is a need for the Programme to remain responsive to changes in Assembly policy, so that the planning system is able to respond.
- The research themes of sustainable development, spatial planning and rural issues should continue to be pursued by the Programme. New themes should also be added to cover urban issues, the urban: rural interface and regeneration.

¹ The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was created on 5 May 2006 with a powerful remit to promote community cohesion and equality, as well as responsibility for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government. Previously responsibility for these areas was with the former ODPM.

- The objectives proposed by the Scoping Study remain relevant and aptly cover the research needs of planning policy development.

Recommendations for the Future Implementation of the Programme

Based on the research a number of recommendations are made for the future operation of the WPRP in section 7. These are set out in outline below.

Developing a Relevant Framework

Recommendation 1: Using a matrix to guide the selection of research projects.

The matrix proposes a number of areas which should be met when selecting research projects. These are:

- Welsh Assembly Government Core Priorities
 - ▶ sustainable development;
 - ▶ equality of opportunity; and,
 - ▶ social inclusion.
- Welsh Assembly Government Spending Priority Areas
 - ▶ Education and Learning;
 - ▶ Economic Development and Transport;
 - ▶ Culture, Welsh Language and Sport;
 - ▶ Social Justice and Regeneration;
 - ▶ Environment, Planning and Countryside;
 - ▶ Health and Social Services; and,
 - ▶ Local Government.
- Research Themes:
 - ▶ Sustainable Development;
 - ▶ Spatial Planning;
 - ▶ Rural Issues;
 - ▶ Urban Issues;
 - ▶ Rural : Urban Interface; and,
 - ▶ Regeneration.

- Research Areas

Based on Assembly policies and priorities the following areas are likely to have land use planning policy implications requiring research in the next five to six years:

- ▶ Agriculture and rural development;
- ▶ Housing;
- ▶ The Environment;
- ▶ Spatial planning;
- ▶ Economic Development;
- ▶ Transport;
- ▶ Waste;
- ▶ Telecommunications; and,
- ▶ Planning Processes e.g. Local Development Plans.

- Research Objectives

We recommend that the objectives established by the Scoping Study remain relevant to the aims of the WPRP in support of PPW and MPPW. These are:

- to support the development of Welsh planning policy which responds to the special needs and circumstances of Wales;
- to contribute to the improved functioning of the planning system in Wales;
- to enhance the information base for managing and delivering planning in Wales; and,
- develop best practice and guidance.

Management and Administration of the Programme

Recommendation 2: Introduce a structured process for the coordination and management of the Programme.

Recommendation 3: Reinvigorate the User Panel and provide it with a wider remit.

Recommendation 4: Review the Programme at the mid-point (three years).

Recommendation 5: Raise research staff's awareness of the procurement process.

Recommendation 6: Investigate alternative procurement methods, including call off contracts.

Financial Management

Recommendation 7: Budget to remain at least at its current level.

Recommendation 8: A single budget.

Recommendation 9: Continue collaborative financing of research projects.

Recommendation 10: Explore co-financing opportunities.

Recommendation 11: Initiatives to support the Research Programme should be pursued, in particular where they are able to maximise the use of the budget.

Recommendation 12: Rename the Programme to expand its scope.

Recommendation 13: Introduce a fund to support small scale research by external organisations, if the budget was to increase.

Communications

Recommendation 14: Embrace the work of OCSRO to improve joint working within the Assembly.

Recommendation 15: Work with the Strategic Policy Unit to ensure planning policy needs are taken account of in the application of the Policy Gateway Tool.

Recommendation 16: Use the structural reorganisation (merger) to ensure improved joint working with economic development activities in particular, focusing on land and property functions.

Recommendation 17: Work with OCSRO to establish a Home Countries land use planning research network.

Recommendation 18: Exploit the enhanced Assembly website for establishment of a research library and updates on the progress of research and policy development.

Recommendation 19: Reinvigorate the annual newsletter.

Recommendation 20: Establish a Wales planning research community, using an e-mail alert service.

Recommendation 21: Continue to hold dissemination events for research which is produced.

Management of Research Projects

Recommendation 22: Introduce an evaluation / review of each research project as they end to reflect on the process.

Recommendation 23: Maximise the linkages with the Assembly's central expert teams, including economists and statisticians to advise on projects.

Recommendation 24: Continue to form project steering groups, but ensure they have a clear remit for managing whilst not influencing the research findings.

Overcoming the Barriers to Research Informing Policy

The principal barrier identified during the review relates to the capacity within the Planning Division to manage research and develop policy. The time difference between the research and the issuing of policy development is mainly due to the time intensive process for drawing up policies. We make one recommendation to address this issue.

Recommendation 25: Optimise current resources to commission research and develop policy.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 ECOTEC Appointment

ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited was appointed by the Welsh Assembly Government² in November 2005 to undertake a quinquennial review and evaluation of the Wales Planning Research Programme (WPRP).

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Review

The tender documentation³ provides a clear articulation of the aim and objectives of the review.

1.2.1 Aim

The aim of the review is *"to evaluate the Wales WPRP in the light of the Assembly's strategic policies to provide draft objectives and themes for the 2005-2011 period."*

1.2.2 Objectives

The objectives of the review are:

- *To review the research produced to date and consider how it meets the original objectives / themes of the WPRP.*
- *To consider how completed research has translated into policy and to identify any barriers.*
- *To consult with stakeholders about how the Programme has operated and to seek opinions about the future content of the Programme.*
- *To advise on the future administration of the Programme.*
- *To provide advice on future priorities of the Programme.*
- *To consider whether the Programme's initial objectives are still valid and if necessary to propose a new set of objectives / themes against which the Programme should be realigned in the future.*

² The National Assembly for Wales was created in 1999, and the Welsh Assembly Government introduced in 2001. References to the Welsh Assembly Government are related to the main body of Civil Servants and policy development; whereas the National Assembly for Wales refers to the elected Assembly Members and the legislature of the Assembly.

³ Specification for a Contract to Undertake a Quinquennial Review and Evaluation of the Wales Planning Research Programme, Contract 92/2005, Welsh Assembly Government, October 2005.

1.3 Background

1.3.1 Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales⁴ (PPW) is the Assembly's land use planning policy and is supplemented by a series of 21 Technical Advice Notes (TANs), and Ministerial Interim Planning Policies (MIPPs)⁵ to form Wales's national planning policy. Policy is also contained in Circulars and clarification letters. Minerals Planning Policy Wales⁶ (MPPW) specifically sets out the land use planning policy guidance of the Assembly in relation to mineral extraction and related development in Wales. Local Development Plans Wales sets out Assembly Government policy on the preparation of Local Development Plans (LDPs). PPW and MPPW's purpose is to set the context for sustainable land use planning policy, within which local planning authorities' statutory land use plans are prepared and development control decisions on individual applications and appeals are taken.

PPW supports the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic goals⁷ in a number of ways including:

- Sustainable development, guiding land use to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs;
- Building a dynamic and advanced economy, supporting economic regeneration, creating wealth and good quality jobs;
- Tackling social disadvantage, developing an inclusive society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential; and,
- Equal Opportunities, promoting a culture in which diversity is valued and equality of opportunity is a reality.

1.4 The Wales Planning Research Programme

The WPRP is intended to support planning research needs, aiming to ensure that research relevant to Wales' needs is carried out. The Wales Planning Research Programme underpins the Planning Delivering for Wales (PDW) programme⁸.

⁴ Planning Policy Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2002

⁵ MIPPs are used to ensure PPW remains current, without the need for a complete review, and are issued to update parts of PPW.

⁶ Minerals Planning Policy Wales, The National Assembly for Wales, 2000

⁷ WAG's strategic policies are outlined in Section 2.

⁸ The overall vision of PDW is to radically improve the ethos/culture of the planning system within Wales. It involves the Assembly working in collaboration with the main deliverers of the planning system i.e.: the twenty-five local planning authorities and the Planning Inspectorate for Wales. Together, these stakeholders with others will ensure that the planning system will: be open, fair and transparent; inspire public and business confidence; deliver improved quality and speed; integrate with other plans, processes and actions; and, meet the Welsh Assembly's objectives set in the Plan for Wales.

A Scoping Study⁹ was developed to establish the parameters for the Programme. However, it is also noted that in practice the Programme remains reactive to issues which arise. The aim of the WPRP, according to the Scoping Study is:

"to support the Assembly's objectives for the planning system by engaging in research which will guide development of sustainable and effective planning policy, facilitate guidance on good practice and ensure the monitoring and evaluation of planning policy and its associated implications."

Examples of research and data collection carried out under the WPRP are provided in Annex Two.

1.4.1 Programme Objectives

The Scoping Study established three objectives for the WPRP. The Study stated that it was *"essential that any research project can be clearly linked to one or more of the underlying objectives."* The objectives which were established are:

- 1. to support the development of Welsh planning policy which responds to the special needs and circumstances of Wales;*
- 2. to contribute to the improved functioning of the planning system in Wales; and,*
- 3. to enhance the information base for managing and delivering planning in Wales.*

The Scoping Study stated:

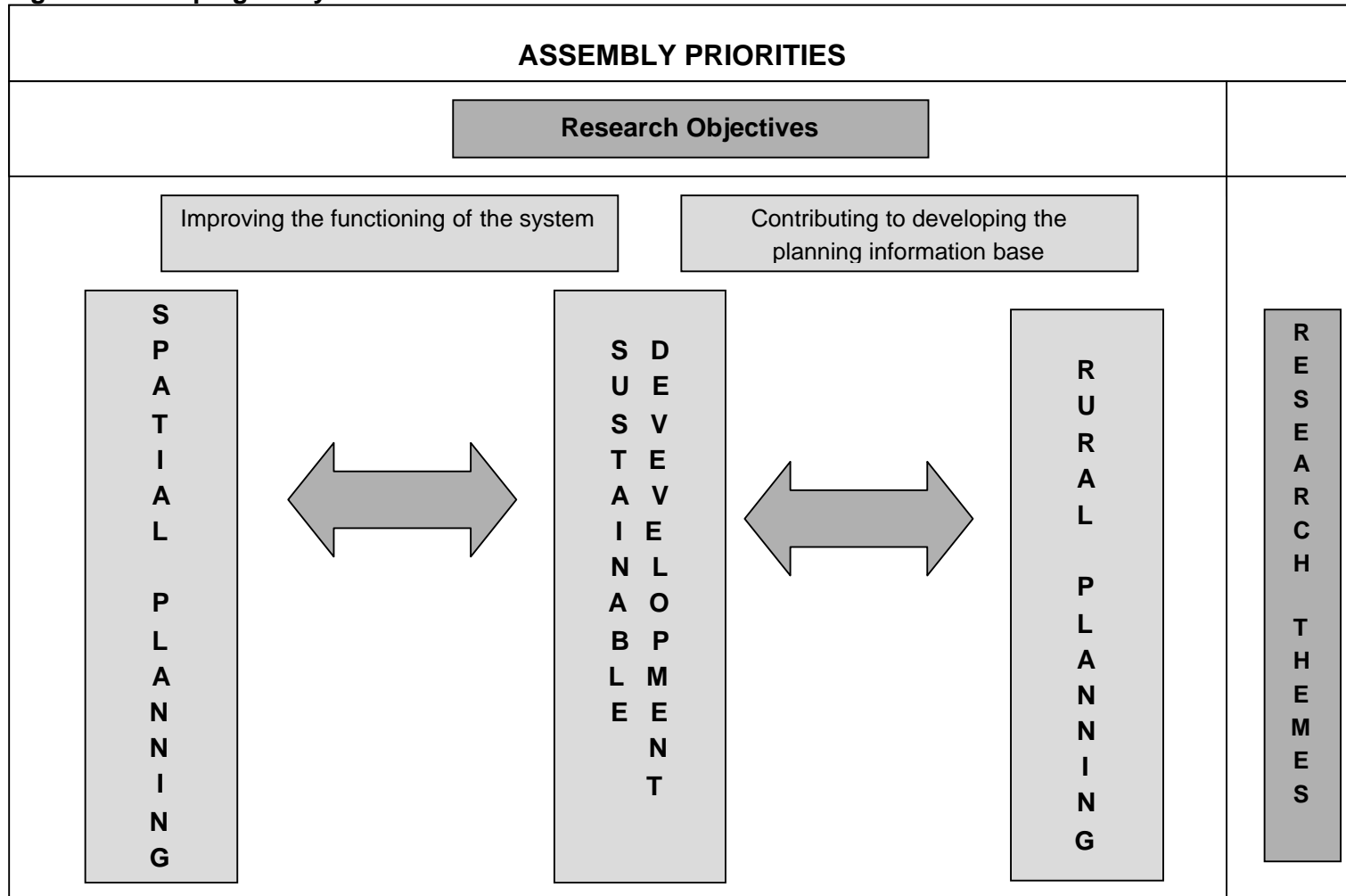
"Our research has confirmed that land use patterns, decision making and cultural characteristics combine to provide a unique and distinctive range of issues facing the land use planning system in Wales."

1.4.2 Research Themes

The Scoping Study recommended three themes around which to develop the Programme – sustainable development, spatial planning, and rural planning policy – on the basis that they *"encompass the issues which have emerged as being of particular importance to planning in Wales."* The rural theme recognises that the majority of Wales is rural in its nature and this is a particular factor which distinguishes Wales from England. These objectives and themes form part of the research framework proposed by the Scoping Study, as illustrated in Figure 1.1 overleaf.

⁹ Land Use Planning Research Scoping Study, Final Report, DTZ Piedad Consulting, 2000

Figure 1.1 Scoping Study Research Framework



Source: Scoping Study, 2000

1.5 Approach and Work Undertaken

The review was carried out through a phased approach, with a number of tasks run in parallel:

- Stage 1 - Inception
- Stage 2 – Desk Research
- Stage 3 – Programme Review
- Stage 4 – Project Reviews
- Stage 5 – Review of the Policy Environment
- Stage 6 – Programme Administration Review
- Stage 7 – Consultation with Key Stakeholders
- Stage 8 - Analysis and Report Writing and Dissemination

1.5.1 Inception

Our broad approach and methodology for the study is set out in full in our Proposal Document.¹⁰ This was rehearsed with Assembly officials and members of the Study Steering Group¹¹ at an inception meeting. Importantly, we have met with the Study Steering Group on a further two occasions over the course of the study, and this has provided a valuable opportunity for sharing and testing the study findings.

1.5.2 Desk Research

In order to provide a framework for the review a matrix was established for tracking policy development since 2000. This was also used later in the study to ascertain the influence that the Programme's activities have had. This considered a range of policies including planning specific policies and wider strategic Assembly policies such as the Wales Spatial Plan¹² and the Sustainable Development Scheme.¹³

¹⁰ Quinquennial Review and Evaluation of the Wales Planning Research Programme: A Proposal to the Welsh Assembly Government, ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited, 2005.

¹¹ The Study Steering Group was convened by the Welsh Assembly Government and has the following representation: Neil Hemington (Planning Division), Jonathan Fudge (Planning Division), Sue Martin (Planning Division (Minerals)), Mike Harmer (Social Justice and Regeneration), and Gareth Endicott (Environment, Planning & Countryside).

¹² People, Places, Futures - The Wales Spatial Plan, Welsh Assembly Government, 2004,

<http://www.wales.gov.uk/themesspatialplan/content/spatial-plan-e.htm>

¹³ Learning to Live Differently, Welsh Assembly Government, 2000.

1.5.3 Programme Review

As part of this stage we carried out a review of the data on the research projects funded by the Programme, including: the final costs of projects; tender procedures; small-scale projects; contributions to other agencies' research; and project start dates and original and actual end dates. This provided us with an overview of the Programme's activities and performance. In addition, a series of interviews with key stakeholders were conducted to ascertain views on the role and performance of the Programme. In total, 11 stakeholders with direct experience of the WPRP were contacted from a range of organisations and representing different perspectives – e.g. academics, users of the research, contractors etc. Stakeholder input was secured through a series of nine semi-structured face to face meetings.

1.5.4 Project Reviews

A brief overall assessment of all projects led by the Planning Division under the WPRP was carried out. In addition, 10 projects from those listed on the web site¹⁴ were selected for a more detailed desk review. Projects were selected to reflect a range of issues, budget size, and timing. This was carried out in conjunction with the desk research described above and added to by comments from officers of the Planning Division. This only included projects which were directly commissioned and funded by the Planning Division. The Planning Division also contributes towards other research such as that commissioned by the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and now the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), or the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). However, only one of these research projects was reviewed, as the focus was on the Planning Division as the lead. Project reports were reviewed. Where information could not be gleaned from the reports, the responsible nominated officers were interviewed to gain a deeper appreciation of the effectiveness of the research undertaken and the management arrangements adopted. These case studies were mapped against the matrix developed under the desk based research, to provide an indication of the contribution the research has had on policy development.

1.5.5 Review of Changing Policy Environment

This stage of the review involved considering the changes underway in terms of wider strategic Assembly policy which is relevant to the WPRP. This examined whether any changes are required to the Programme's objectives or the themes pursued, as established by the Scoping Study. The aim of this is to ensure that a policy relevant research framework is pursued over the next five years.

¹⁴ <http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/topics-e.htm> (Research section)

1.5.6 Programme Administration Arrangements

This element of the study involved addressing the following issues:

- Financial management arrangements and performance;
- Programme development; and
- Project management.

This was undertaken through considering the data collected for the Programme-level analysis. In addition consultations with Planning Division staff were undertaken to ascertain current management arrangements.

1.5.7 Consultation with Key Stakeholders

In addition to the individual consultations carried out under the Programme Review, two round-table workshops were held with internal and external stakeholders, at which interim findings were presented and discussed. The aim of the workshops was to present the findings to date, test them and where appropriate add to them. This provided the opportunity to capture stakeholder views on essential areas and build these into the conclusions.

1.6 Status of Report

This is the final report and has been prepared for the Planning Division of the Environment, Planning and Countryside Department of the Welsh Assembly Government.

1.7 Structure of the Report

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2: Strategic Policy Context.** This provides a summary of the broader Assembly strategic framework in which to set the study in context.
- **Section 3: Effectiveness of the Current Programme.** This section discusses the Programme and project management arrangements and the financial performance of the WPRP.
- **Section 4: Meeting of Original Objectives and Themes.** This analyses the performance of the research in the context of the original objectives and themes established by the Scoping Study.
- **Section 5: Informing Policy Development.** This examines whether the Programme has been able to support policy development and what, if any, barriers to this have been experienced.

- **Section 6: Future Programme.** This explores the likely future policy priorities for planning policy in Wales, which will influence the research needs to be met by the WPRP.
- **Section 7: Conclusions and Recommendations.** This highlights the key findings from the review, and sets out our recommendations for the future operation of the Programme.

The report is supported by the following annexes:

- Annex 1 – Bibliography
- Annex 2 – Projects commissioned under the WPRP
- Annex 3 – Study Consultees

2.0 Strategic Policy Context

2.1 Introduction

In order to set the review in context it is appropriate to explore emerging policy development and institutional changes which have taken place within the Welsh Assembly Government during the period of delivering the WPRP. The National Assembly for Wales was created in 1999, only one year before the Scoping Study was published. Since then the Assembly has evolved and developed a series of strategies which now mesh together to form a corporate framework. This section of the report considers the principal changes affecting the WPRP and planning policy that arise from this.

2.2 Core Values

Underpinning the Assembly's strategies are three core values – sustainable development, equality of opportunity and social inclusion.

2.2.1 Equality of Opportunity

It is National Assembly for Wales policy to promote and integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of its business. Section 48 and 120 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 impose on the Assembly a duty to further the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all. An Equality of Opportunity Committee (EOC) has been set up to ensure that the Assembly has effective arrangements to promote the principle of equality of opportunity for all people in the exercise of its functions and the conduct of its business. The Committee has a strong interest in seeing that a dialogue with groups representing minority and disadvantaged interests takes place at all levels in the Assembly. In order to help to achieve this, the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, Stonewall Cymru and the Welsh Language Board have standing invitations to attend meetings of the Committee as advisers.

As an example of its activities the following issues have received the attention of the Committee:

- Review of service provision for gypsies and travellers;
- Mainstreaming equality;
- European Year of Disabled people and the international congress of young disabled people;
- Gender balance in local authorities and consideration of the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) Equality Unit's annual report; and,

Specifically relating to land use planning, Section 39 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that any functions relating to the Wales Spatial Plan or a local development plan, including national policy relating to these, "*must exercise the function with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.*"

2.2.3 Social Inclusion

Social inclusion, also referred to as social justice, is an underpinning principle for Assembly policies. This core value aims to ensure that everyone in "*Wales has the chances and opportunities to make the most of our lives and use our talents to the full.*"

"With a firm commitment to social justice at the heart of policy-making, all our policies and programmes, across areas of health, education, economic development, transport, housing and the environment, are focused on making Wales a more prosperous, healthier and better-educated country."

The Assembly is focusing on the four key areas of:

- *helping more people into jobs;*
- *improving health;*
- *developing strong and safe communities; and,*
- *creating better jobs and skills.*

2.3 Corporate Assembly Strategies

The Assembly's core values are put into effect through a number of strategic policies. These policies cross over all policy areas of the Assembly with the aim of integrating the Assembly's work.

2.3.1 Wales: A Better Country

Wales: A Better Country¹⁶ describes the strategic agenda of the Assembly. This sets out a broad vision:

"for a sustainable future for Wales where action for social, economic and environmental improvement work together to create positive change."

Underpinning this broad vision are a number of specific objectives that are relevant to the WPRP. These include:

¹⁶ Wales: A Better Country, Welsh Assembly Government, 2003

"action in our built and natural environment that enhances pride in the community, supports bio-diversity, promotes local employment and helps to minimise waste generation, energy and transport demands."

Key components of this objective include:

- The Wise About Waste agenda,¹⁷ which has set a course of radical change towards recycling and reducing the amount of waste for land filling.
- The Planning: Delivering for Wales Programme¹⁸ to ensure significant improvements in the quality of the planning service, and that communities including businesses are involved in plan-making and decision making.
- The Farming for the Future¹⁹ plan which set out a vision for a sustainable future for land-based industries in Wales and action to help as many family farms as possible to adapt and survive, based on adding value to products, concern for the environment, and synergy with tourism.

Another relevant objective of Wales: A Better Country relates to:

"action on social justice that tackles poverty and poor health, and provides people and their communities with the means to help themselves and break out of the poverty trap."

Notably, this vision supports attempts which are incorporated in PPW to tackle social disadvantage by developing an inclusive society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential.

2.3.2 Sustainable Development Scheme

The Sustainable Development Scheme²⁰ states how the Assembly will promote sustainable development in the exercise of its functions. Two Schemes have been developed within the last five years. The first scheme Learning to Live Differently was adopted in November 2000. Subsequently, a revised strategy Starting to Live Differently²¹ was adopted in March 2004.

The 2004 Scheme sets out the commitments which the whole of the Assembly is making towards sustainable development, the principles it will observe, and some of the processes

¹⁷ Wise About Waste: The National Waste Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2003

¹⁸ Planning Delivering for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2003

¹⁹ Farming for the Future, National Assembly for Wales, 2001.

²⁰ Starting to Live Differently: The Sustainable Development Scheme of the National Assembly for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2004 <http://www.wales.gov.uk/themessustainabledev/content/action-plan-e.pdf>

²¹ Ibid.

it will apply to promoting sustainability in all its work. The Scheme's Action Plan²² is intended to:

- *Implement the new Sustainable Development Scheme;*
- *Stand as a formal addition to Wales: A Better Country;*
- *Fulfil commitments made internationally through membership of the sustainable development networks;*
- *Form part of the framework for the sustainable development strategy of the UK;*
- *Complement the Wales Spatial Plan; and,*
- *Ensure progress is kept under review.*

It is clear from the above that the Assembly's Sustainable Development Scheme and its Action Plan form an overarching strategic framework, which works in conjunction with other relevant planning related strategies.

2.3.3 People, Places, Futures – The Wales Spatial Plan

The Wales Spatial Plan²³ originated in the Planning Division and initial research to support the Plan was undertaken under the WPRP. Since then, the Wales Spatial Plan has developed into a key strategic Assembly policy and is no longer focused only on land use planning, instead it is relevant to all of the Assembly's operations, providing a spatial framework across Wales. It is because of this that it was transferred to the Assembly's Strategic Policy Unit. It is therefore no longer a direct component of the WPRP. However, it remains inextricably inter-linked. The main vision of the Wales Spatial Plan is identified as follows:

“We will sustain our communities by tackling the challenges presented by population and economic change; we will grow in ways which will increase our competitiveness while spreading prosperity to less well-off areas and reducing negative environmental impacts; we will enhance our natural and built environment for its own sake and for what it contributes to our well-being; and we will sustain our distinctive identity.”

This vision is guided by sustainable development principles as follows:

- *Building sustainable communities;*
- *Valuing our environment;*
- *Increasing and spreading prosperity;*
- *Achieving sustainable accessibility; and,*

²² The Sustainable Development Action Plan 2004-2007, Welsh Assembly Government, 2004.

²³ Ibid

- *Respecting distinctiveness.*

The Spatial Plan is an important part of the Assembly's new approach to public service delivery. It cuts across issues relating to the economy and the environment, as well as providing the agenda for delivering work in a holistic way nationally and locally. The Plan therefore forms one of the high-level strategic guidance building blocks of the Assembly, alongside Wales: A Better Country and the Sustainable Development Scheme and Action Plan.

2.3.4 Making the Connections: From Vision to Action

Making the Connections²⁴ sets how the Assembly aims to deliver public services in Wales. The vision states:

"Excellent public services are essential to a prosperous, sustainable, bilingual, healthier and better-educated Wales. Joint working is vital to deliver public services of top quality: they must be responsive to the needs of individuals and communities, delivered efficiently and driven by a commitment to equality and social justice."

Making the Connections is underpinned by four principles for better service:

- *Citizens at the centre;*
- *Equality and social justice;*
- *Working together as the Welsh public service; and,*
- *Value for money.*

The Assembly published its five year action plan Delivering the Connections: From Vision to Action²⁵ to implement the Making the Connections Vision. The Assembly has committed itself to a number of headline actions to achieve the vision:

- *Responsive and accessible services;*
- *Joining up and simplifying the public service;*
- *Better use of resources;*
- *Engaging the workforce; and,*
- *Support the changes.*

Making the Connections lists a number of service-by-service headlines, and those with direct relevance to planning are:

²⁴ Making the Connections: From Vision to Action, Welsh Assembly Government, 2004.

²⁵ Delivering the Connections: From Vision to Action, Welsh Assembly Government, 2005

- *Revise guidance to ensure that communities and business are involved early and continuously in formulating Local Development Plans; and,*
- *Support all local authorities in developing e-planning services.*

The action plan states that the Assembly will be: *"Radically reducing overtime the number of plans we require from local authorities so that managers can focus more on supporting front-line staff."* However, the development plans required from local authorities to implement planning policy locally will still be required. This emphasises the recognition of their importance by the Assembly.

2.3.5 laith Pawb

laith Pawb²⁶ represents the Assembly's strategy for the promotion of the Welsh Language. This is a key policy area of the Assembly and underpins all policies that are produced. It focuses on the current geographical variations in Welsh speaking, and the need to decrease the level of disparity that currently exists to promote social and cultural cohesion. The main focus of the document is to provide an action plan for promoting the Welsh language. The key elements of the strategy are:

- *The Welsh language will become a permanent cross-cutting issue across all policy fields;*
- *The language will be incorporated into mainstream areas such as economic development and health care as opposed to traditional areas such as culture and education;*
- *The 'mainstreaming' of Assembly Welsh language policy will be sought through partnerships with organisations and public bodies influenced directly by Assembly policy, i.e. local authorities, and voluntary organisations;*
- *Maximise the potential for legislative change, to further the usage of Welsh across the entire country; and,*
- *Expand the role of the Welsh Language Board to promote a strategic focus on the promotion of the Welsh language through a range of policies and guidance.*

In terms of planning and the WPRP the Assembly's initiatives to promote the Welsh language will have a direct impact on a number of aspects of the planning system. The document emphasises that the Welsh language should be at the heart of regeneration strategies which presents planners with the challenge of engaging with the topic in greater depth. Other Welsh language issues that may impact upon planning in Wales include:

²⁶ laith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2003.

- The Rural Development Programme and Rural Community Action will also engage with Welsh speaking communities to a higher degree than has previously been seen;
- The document also makes reference to TAN 20 - The Welsh Language – Unitary Development Plans and Planning Control which has been formulated to ensure that the policies are sensitive to the needs of local communities, particularly where use of the Welsh language is commonplace; and,
- The document states that planning authorities must be sensitive to communities where the Welsh language is strong when dealing with proposals for new housing development.

2.4 Policy Specific Strategies

The various functions of the Assembly produce strategies, which seek to implement the core values and corporate strategies within their own specific policy areas. These also include PPW which was discussed in Section 1 of this report.

2.4.1 Better Homes

Better Homes for Wales²⁷ is the Assembly's first National Housing Strategy. It provides a broad range of policies, objectives, and strategies aimed at delivering the requisite level and standard of housing in Wales in the future. It has been designed to provide a policy framework that supports and encourages action at a local level to create a better standard of housing throughout the country. The document is structured to account for the regional disparity that exists in Wales and produces strategies that account for the social, cultural, political, and economic variations. The document looks at a number of key themes in detail including: the strategic role of the local authority, regenerating disadvantaged communities, the role of the Welsh language, housing needs and demands, tenure, homelessness, housing standards, specific group needs and housing benefit. The main objectives of the strategy are to:

- *Create a clear strategic vision for the future of housing in Wales;*
- *Outline the way that the Assembly aims to achieve its housing aims, through joined up policy agendas (i.e. its commitment to sustainable development, social justice, and the Welsh Language); and,*
- *Address the housing needs and demands in Wales through all tenures.*

Housing is inherently linked to land-use planning and therefore the strategy addresses development plans, the role of the planning system, sustainable development, spatial

²⁷ Better Homes for People in Wales: A National Housing Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2001

planning, design standards, and a wealth of other planning related themes. Specific references to land-use planning in the document include:

- Reference to the guidance published for Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) in 2001;
- A commitment to the National Spatial Planning Framework for Wales; and,
- Monitoring and promoting the use of brownfield land in Wales.

2.4.2 Environment Strategy

The Environment Strategy for Wales²⁸ focuses on the *"priority issues for the environment in Wales"*, and is backed up with an action plan which stresses priority areas for attention across the country. The scope of the document encompasses a wide range of issues including climate change, landscape management, sustainable resource usage, biodiversity, and quality of life. The main objectives of the Strategy are to:

- *Address ways in which Wales can reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide levels;*
- *Formulate methods of managing and preserving the Welsh land/seascape;*
- *Address the need to make more prudent usage of resources;*
- *Enhance biodiversity in Wales;*
- *Focus on the importance of a high quality built environment and public spaces;*
- *Encourage the Assembly to adopt new structures of organisation to accommodate the necessity for more environment based policies; and,*
- *Address the Assembly Government's commitment to sustainable development and social justice.*

As the environment is at the root of the land use planning system, research undertaken into planning issues is particularly pertinent to the Environment Strategy, influencing topics such as landscape preservation, the built environment, and biodiversity preservation. This means that the planning system is vital to the successful completion of the targets outlined in the action plan, with references to planning including:

- Rural Wales – Linkages include topics such as rural communities, and landscape preservation; and,
- Renewable Energy - The strategy makes note of the Assembly's strategy for tackling carbon dioxide emissions and looks at the renewable energy options that exist.

²⁸ Environment Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2006.

2.4.3 Wise About Waste

Wise About Waste²⁹ aims to improve the management of waste in Wales. The strategy includes *"measures to increase the use of recycled and composted materials by businesses and the public sector in Wales, a public sector waste minimisation campaign, an education campaign to raise awareness and understanding across Wales of the need to manage waste in a more environmentally friendly manner."*

The strategy sets out how Wales will comply with relevant European and UK legislation. It also seeks *"to make Wales a model for sustainable waste management by adopting and implementing a sustainable, integrated approach to waste production, management and regulation (including litter and fly tipping) which minimises the production of waste and its impact on the environment, maximises the use of unavoidable waste as a resource, and minimises where practicable, the use of energy from waste and landfill."*

There are obvious direct links between Wise About Waste and the land use planning system in terms of planning for waste facilities and renewable energy sources.

2.4.4 Farming for the Future

Farming for the Future³⁰ sets out a vision for the future of Welsh agriculture to address the changes facing Welsh farming. The strategy aims to:

- Develop high quality, value-added, branded products;
- Creating a more integrated Welsh agri-food industry;
- Encouraging environmentally sustainable farming;
- To broaden the agricultural base; and,
- Strengthening the appeal of the countryside for tourism and leisure.

There are strong links between this strategy and planning given its focus on rural land use and communities.

2.4.5 Wales – A Vibrant Economy

Wales – A Vibrant Economy³¹ (WAVE) is the economic development strategy for Wales. It sets out a vision for a vibrant Welsh economy to deliver strong and sustainable economic

²⁹ Wise About Waste: The National Waste Strategy for Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, 2002.

³⁰ Farming for the Future, A New Direction for Farming in Wales, the Government of the National Assembly for Wales, 2001

³¹ Wales – A Vibrant Economy, Welsh Assembly Government, 2005.

growth by providing opportunities for all. The main approach to achieving this vision is through the exploitation of core strengths such as: an increasingly skilled, innovative and entrepreneurial workforce; an advanced technology and knowledge base; strong communities; a stunning natural environment; and, an exceptional quality of life.

It is linked to the WPRP through the opportunity it provides to ensure that economic development activities dovetail closely with the action being taken on the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The key principles underpinning the strategy are:

- *Ensuring that the mergers of the Welsh Development Agency (WDA), Wales Tourist Board (WTB) and ELWa (Education and Learning Wales) with the Assembly in 2006 deliver more effective and efficient services to Welsh firms and individuals.*
- *Joining up policy agendas across the Assembly and meeting its corporate commitments to social justice, sustainable development, equality and the Welsh language.*
- *Working in partnership to deliver improvements across Wales through the Spatial Plan.*
- *Focussing support where it can make most difference.*
- *Promoting closer working between the public and private sectors on business advice and finance, to ensure that firms in Wales have access to world-class support.*

2.4.6 Climbing Higher

Climbing Higher³² is the Assembly's strategy designed to increase participation in sport in Wales. It produces a series of key quantified targets in terms of elite sport performance, through to community participation and leisure space provision. The strategy specifies a number of key objectives including:

- *To increase physical activity across all age/social groups;*
- *To utilise the economic potential of sport and leisure help drive the Welsh economy;*
- *To optimise the social and cultural benefits of sport;*
- *To use sport and leisure to strengthen communities;*
- *To maximise the link between sport and the environment (i.e. walking, cycling, running); and,*
- *To ensure that Wales is competitive at a world stage in terms of elite athletic performance.*

In terms of planning and the WPRP the key action areas are the provision of sports facilities, open space and pedestrian and cycle routes. Planning obviously has an

³² Climbing Higher: The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Sport & Physical Activity, Welsh Assembly Government, 2005.

important role to play in delivering this strategy successfully in conjunction with other Assembly policy commitments such as sustainable development, and social justice. Within the document the main linkages to planning and the WPRP are:

- *Ensuring that pedestrian and cycle access is improved* - Climbing Higher addresses the need to promote sustainable modes of transport to boost health and reduce reliance on the car;
- *Ensure that planning processes and transport policies support this strategy* - The document is keen to assert that there should be adequate provision of open space and formal play-space in Wales and sets quantified targets which will need to be attained; and,
- *Increase participation without adverse affect on the environment* - The strategy is also keen to assert that any increase in participation must be facilitated without any adverse affects to the landscape which falls under the remit of the planning system.

2.4.7 Rural Development Plan 2000-2006

The Rural Development Plan (RDP) for Wales intends to address the needs and priorities of rural Wales, paying detailed attention to the geographical variation that exists in rural Wales. It looks at the topography of the various regions of Wales, the soils, designated environmental planning areas (i.e. AONBs, SSSIs, National Parks), and the economic, and social context of rural Wales. The document provides a comprehensive designation of the various schemes that are currently in operation in Wales, including: European programmes such as LEADER, mainstream Structural Fund programmes³³, and Welsh / UK programmes such as Tir Cymen³⁴. The document sets a range of targets which tend to be quantified and targeted as opposed to the more strategic vision documents such as the Environment Strategy and Better Homes. With this background information the document produces a series of objectives which hope to raise the status of rural Wales. These key aims include:

- *To provide a range of measures (with justification) for the effective management of rural Wales, in terms of biodiversity, rare species, traditional farming methods and landscape management;*
- *To provide a rural management plan that is closely integrated with other Assembly polices, ensuring that the cross-cutting aims are also addressed;*
- *Ensure that the proposed measures are coordinated and monitored at the national, regional, and local scale;*

³³ Relevant mainstream Structural Fund Programmes include Objective 1 and Objective 2.

³⁴ CCW's good farming practice programme.

- *Provide objectives for area-specific sites; and,*
- *Outline the timescales for delivery for the specified objectives.*

In terms of planning, the RDP is linked to a number of the themes of the WPRP. It has influenced the creation of thematic maps, constructed through the Wales Spatial Plan, by presenting the regional variations in land-use, soil quality, areas of natural/scientific interest and a number of other key themes. This mapping has allowed action points and policies to be created that are specific to local needs and priorities. Retaining rural distinctiveness and traditional rural landscapes, is also an important consideration for planning departments when forming development plans.

2.4.8 Transport

The Transport (Wales) Act 2006 is intended to:

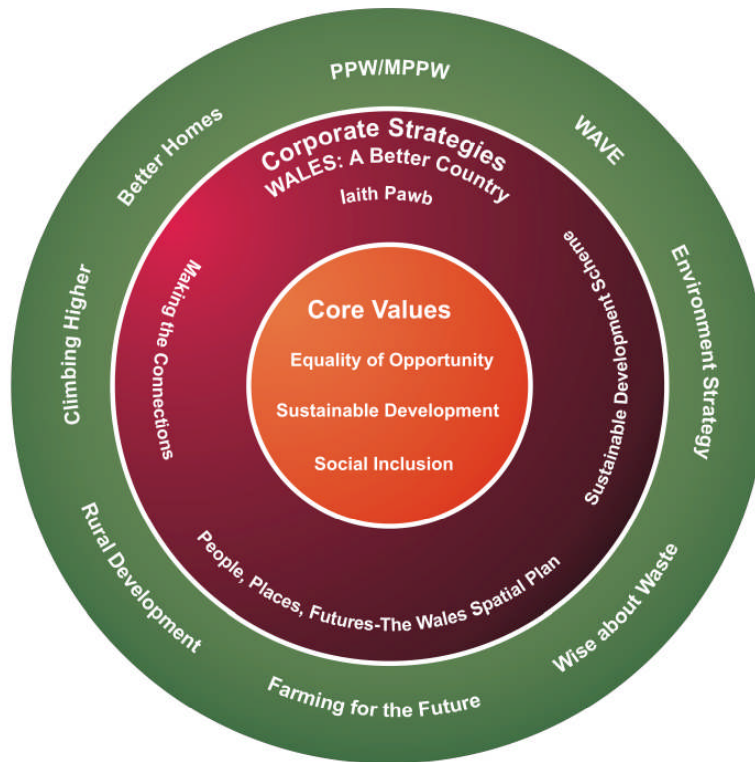
".... provide the National Assembly for Wales with additional powers in the field of transport which, together with its existing powers, will enable the Assembly to develop and implement, in partnership with Welsh local authorities and other bodies, a safe, integrated, sustainable, efficient, and economic transport system serving Wales."

The aim of the Act is to provide the Assembly with powers with which it is able to *"plan a more coordinated and integrated transport system for Wales."* To this end, the Act requires the Assembly to prepare a Wales Transport Strategy for implementing its policies and actions with regard to transport. This strategy is currently under preparation by the Assembly.

2.5 The Strategic Context

The core values and strategies set out in this Section provide the strategic policy building blocks of the Welsh Assembly Government. They all impact upon the work of the WPRP and PPW. This policy framework has been developed over the past five years and now forms a corporate Assembly strategy; this marks a useful point in time to review the WPRP to ensure that it is in line with this framework. The framework is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Assembly Policy Context



Understanding the strategic context in which the WPRP operates is important in that it provides a framework against which any changes in the approach of the Programme may be explained. However, more importantly it provides the strategic context in which to consider the future of the WPRP.

3.0 Effectiveness of the Current Programme

3.1 Introduction

This section considers how the WPRP has operated. It sets out our findings with regard to the management of the Programme, its financial performance and the management of the individual research projects commissioned. It also considers relationships between the WPRP and other research programmes and communications with both internal and external stakeholders.

3.2 Programme Management

3.2.1 Overall Management

The Planning Division is organised through five branches (P1 to P5), each with a particular focus. The P2 Branch has responsibility for planning policy and research including the coordination and management of the WPRP. Commissionings under the Programme are carried out by a small number of officials located across the branches. They are all involved with policy development as well as commissioning research.

The benefit of this is that an individual official is able to commission and manage the research and also develop the policy, providing integration between the evidence base and policy. However, only a small proportion of their time is able to be allocated to managing research.

There are limited Programme-wide management procedures in place and this appears to prevent a structured approach to the management and review of the Programme during any single year. The Programme is nominally split between land use planning and minerals and waste planning and in reality they are managed separately, which further reduces the opportunity to strategically manage the Programme.

3.2.2 Financial Management

Expenditure by the Welsh Assembly Government is organised through a series of Main Expenditure Groups (MEGs) which each have a number of Budget Expenditure Lines (BELs). The WPRP is a multi-annual research programme and falls under the Environment, Planning and Countryside (EP&C) MEG. The WPRP is organised under a single BEL. However, the budget is split through an informal arrangement, between the two each year by the same amount, with just over half of the budget allocated to land use

planning research (52%) and just under half to support minerals and waste planning research³⁵ (48%). The BEL conforms to the requirements of the Assembly's financial standing orders. However, the split between land use planning and minerals and waste research means that management of the BEL overall is limited both overall and in terms of financial management of the Programme itself. This separation of the BEL means that in practice two research programmes are run, reducing the ability to maximise the strategic application of the WPRP. Effectively two smaller budgets are available to use and reduced the ability to run a programme of research. This also reduces the flexibility and options for ensuring the budget is fully used to meet the needs of the WPRP.

3.2.3 Programme Size

Based on Assembly records 26 projects were begun and mostly completed over the period 1999/2000 to 2005/06³⁶ with a total value of approximately £2.3 million. The average cost of each project is approximately £72,500. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the total expenditure under the Programme between 1999/2000 and 2005/06.

Table 3.1 Total Planned and Actual Expenditure by Year

	Planned Programme Expenditure (£)	Final Outturn Figure (£)	Difference between planned & actual expenditure (£)	Final Outturn as a % of Available Budget
1999/00 & 2000/01 ³⁷	840,000	632,246	207,754	75%
2001/02	420,000	373,093	46,907	89%
2002/03	420,000	441,725	21,725	105%
2003/04	420,000	352,414	67,586	84%
2004/05	420,000	304,726	115,274	73%
2005/06	420,000	228,464	191,536	54%
Total:	2,940,000	2,332,668	607,332	79%

Source: Welsh Assembly Government

The budget has been defrayed all but one year. Only in 2002/03 was the budget spent (105%) and in fact overspent by 5%. There has been an average final expenditure of 79% of the total budget available each year.

³⁵ However, in reality research covering waste planning policy is funded outside the WPRP.

³⁶ The review is essentially a five-year period, however 1999/2000 has been included as some projects crossed over into 2000/01. The current year – 2005/06 – has not been completed and is therefore not a complete year for analysis.

³⁷ Note the figures for 1999/2000, 2000/01 and 2001/02 were prior to the implementation of the Assembly's electronic accounting system and have been calculated on a different basis.

3.2.4 Communications

An annual newsletter was published and circulated widely as part of the dissemination of the WPRP. These were considered to be informative and useful by external stakeholders, keeping people up to date on activity underway and were well received. It also provided a useful early alert source for potential contractors who may be interested in bidding for work. However, internally within the Planning Division it was considered to be resource intensive to produce. Requests for the continuation of the newsletter were made by the majority of the external stakeholders that contributed to this review.

The Assembly's web site is the principal dissemination and communication tool for the WPRP. However, the website was cited as a particular problem by all of the review's stakeholders, and in this form it was not considered to be a good communication mechanism. More specifically, the layout was difficult to follow and principally comprises a list of publications. However, this issue is being addressed and a new Assembly website was launched in April 2006 and is currently being populated.

3.3 Programme Development

The individual research projects are selected through a largely internal process which considers the forthcoming planning policy needs. This process can, and has been influenced by Ministerial priorities, such as an earlier focus on renewable energy. The proposed annual plan for research is submitted to the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside for approval. An external stakeholder also suggested that the WPRP did not operate properly as a 'programme', and this was partly attributable to the relatively small budget available under the two strands i.e. land use planning and mineral and waste.

A WPRP User Panel³⁸ was established incorporating members from other Assembly Departments and external stakeholders. The Scoping Study's suggested role for this Panel was *"to monitor priorities and progress of research and co-ordinate the dissemination and evaluation of research."* The Panel was also intended to be responsible for approving the planning policy research objectives. The Panel was established in 2000 and met on an annual basis until 2004. It was considered to be a useful mechanism for engaging with stakeholders and provided an ideal opportunity to keep the Programme on the agenda with a wider audience. In practice, there was a feeling from external members that internal requirements led the research priorities, although it was recognised that this was not necessarily a negative position from the point of view of research priorities.

³⁸ The external organisations represented on the User Panel were: Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA); and, Cardiff University School of Planning (CPLAN).

In reference to the minerals aspect of the Programme, the two Welsh Regional Aggregates Working Parties for North and South Wales (RAWP)³⁹ are used for developing the research plan; members of the RAWP are invited to put forward ideas for research. The Planning Officer's Society for Wales Minerals and Waste Topic Group is also consulted on the research programme. This method of taking forward the minerals research is felt to be positive, principally as it provides the opportunity to engage with users directly.

3.4 Project Management

3.4.1 Commissioning Research Contracts

As with all Assembly contracts, the contracts let under the WPRP have to follow the corporate procurement procedures of the Assembly. Any contracts over the value of £20,000 must be formally tendered, with at least three quotes sought.⁴⁰ The majority of the contracts let under the WPRP are required to be let through the formal tendering process. The Scoping Study recognised that *"the current procurement procedures operated by the Assembly may not be particularly well matched to the circumstances of research contracts."* The Study recommended that a tailored approach to the procurement of all research contracts be investigated. It also recommended considering the use of call-off contracts with a number of organisations identified to deal with small, fast track research requirements. We understand that this approach has not been adopted because the procurement requirements to establish this appeared to outweigh the benefits in the early stages of the Programme.

The internal procurement procedures appear to be time consuming and take a considerable amount of officer time, which could otherwise be spent on directly managing research or policy development. We were advised that amendments frequently have to be made paperwork to support the procurement process. The timescale for commissioning research can normally take two to three months from the development of the brief and appointment of the contractor. This has an impact on the lead time required for research and is further restricted by the need to spend during any given financial year. Whilst there is limited scope to amend the procurement requirements, this situation could be improved through improving the consistency of WPRP's staff knowledge of the procurement

³⁹ There are two Regional Aggregate Working Parties (RAWPs) in Wales – one covering the north and one for the south. Each provides information and advice on the supply of and the demand for, aggregate minerals. They are technical working groups with a membership drawn from officers of the Mineral Planning Authorities, trade representatives, the DCLG and WAG, and other public agencies such as the Crown Estate, Environment Agency, CCW and the British Geological Survey.

⁴⁰ Any contracts worth over £100,000 are required to be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Commission. However, no WPRP contract has been at this level to date.

process. In practical terms this could be achieved by inviting the central procurement department to provide staff briefings.

3.4.2 Management of Research Projects

In terms of the management of the research, the involvement of external parties by the Planning Division was considered to be a strong aspect and that partnership working in the main is good between agencies.

In many cases, contracts were found to run over time. However in the majority of cases it was felt that this was for valid reasons (e.g. research raises additional issues which need to be addressed). However, as this is a regular experience of projects, this should be recognised internally and contingency built in to the project's timetable in advance.

Each contract has a project steering group, including external parties where appropriate. The steering groups are considered to be important and can often lead to improvements in the brief's parameters and the quality of the research undertaken, through the involvement of relevant individuals. However, there has been experience of steering groups being too large, which can lead to loss of focus in the remit of the group and impose considerable management burdens on the project manager and contractor which can deviate from the intended research brief. Instead they need to be manageable in size and with a focused remit.

In the few cases where the research projects were not felt to have met expectations, this was felt to be attributed to a number of management issues. These are:

- The brief was not focused enough;
- The steering group deviated away from the original brief;
- Expectations from what the research could actually achieve was too high; and,
- A need to be clear on the research questions.

'Blue sky' thinking was highlighted as an area which could provide benefit to the WPRP and contribute towards policy development. However, this type of research carries a lower priority when management resources and budgets are limited. Where it could be of benefit, flexibility in projects should be built in to encourage 'blue sky' research. However, a careful balance needs to be made to ensure that the original research questions are addressed. This can be a difficult, but not insurmountable, process to manage.

3.4.3 Dissemination of Results

Whilst the Assembly's web site is potentially an important dissemination tool, it does not provide a good service. The layout of the web site and the lack of an effective search mechanism detracts from its usefulness. However, the majority of research can be located on the web site, although this is not straightforward and there are few opportunities to provide direct links with other research, both internal to the Assembly and that commissioned by external stakeholders.

All contracts for research commissioned under the WPRP hold a dissemination event for promoting the research findings. These are normally held once by the contractors who were commissioned to carry out the research. These were considered to be useful events for reaching stakeholders. However, by holding a single event means that not all stakeholders are able to attend and therefore other methods of dissemination should also be considered.

3.5 Strategic Conclusions

In this section we have reviewed how the WPRP has been managed at both the Programme level and in terms of the management of the individual research contracts. From this review we come to the following strategic conclusions:

- The model used to have the same official managing the research contracts and subsequently developing the related policy is positive. It provides the opportunity to ensure the research is relevant to the policy development needs.
- There are presently limited overall programme and financial management procedures, which can reduce the ability to strategically use and manage the Programme. This is exacerbated by the split between land use planning and minerals and waste aspects of the WPRP. This has contributed towards the annual underspends identified. There needs to be joint development of the Programme and progress reporting, to ensure that the maximum benefit is derived from the Programme each year.
- The use of the User Panel and the RAWPs are positive mechanisms for developing the WPRP and involving external stakeholders. However, to ensure a more coordinated approach to the WPRP we recommend a single user group, with a representative from the RAWP. This could play a greater role in the selection of projects and the monitoring and review of the Programme.

- The use of all alternative means of commissioning contracts available under the procurement processes could be applied by increasing staff awareness of the requirements. This would assist in reducing officials' time taken in administering the procurement requirements and also increase the opportunity to commission additional projects towards the end of a year, to maximise the use of the budget.
- The project steering groups are a positive way of overseeing a research project, and provide the opportunity to involve relevant external organisations with specialist knowledge to inform the research.
- There is dissemination of the Programme's activities; however there is room for improvement. The former Assembly web site lacked structure and a good search function to support the WPRP, although this is being addressed. However, the WPRP annual newsletter was a positive method of keeping organisations up to date of the WPRP's activities.

4.0 Meeting of Original Objectives and Themes

4.1 Introduction

In this section we consider whether the objectives and research themes proposed by the Scoping Study have been met by the research projects. In order to inform this assessment each of the projects funded under the Programme were compared against each of the Scoping Study's three objectives. Many projects were found to meet more than one of the objectives. For example projects which have been focused on developing the information base, have also provided evidence to support the development of policy.

4.2 Programme Objectives

Table 4.1 illustrates that 59% of contracts can be directly aligned with the original Scoping Study, and these account for 76% of expenditure. The miscellaneous contracts include a range of items which are generally supportive of the Programme, but which do not directly link with the objectives, for example case study research for a specific site in relation to a called-in planning application.

Table 4.1 Number of Contracts and Expenditure by Scoping Study Objective

Scoping Study Objectives	% of total projects	% of Expenditure
Policy Development	23%	30%
Functioning of the Planning System	15%	20%
Information Base	21%	26%
Best Practice and Guidance		
Miscellaneous	40%	24%
Total:	100%	100%

Source: Welsh Assembly Government

In most cases the research projects have been able to contribute to the development of policy, either in the form of TANs, MPPW, etc. In some cases – principally the minerals research - the research has provided information to be used in decision making (e.g. geological mapping). Figure 4.1 provides an illustration of the identification of the need for research and how this has fed into policy development.

Figure 4.1 Example of the Need for Research and its Translation into Policy – Renewable Energy

Issue – Identification of need for research	Research	Recommendations	Policy	Policy Change
<p>In response to climate change the Kyoto Protocol (1997) recognised the need to reduce the six main greenhouse gases. The UK agreed to a 12.5% cut of the EU share and a further 20% in CO₂ emissions below 1990 levels by 2010. Following consideration of energy policy options, the National Assembly for Wales has committed to contributing towards the UK target and has recommended 10% of electricity produced in Wales should be from renewable sources (Economic Development Committee January 2003, Review of Energy Policy in Wales – Renewable Energy).</p> <p>TAN 8 – Planning for Renewable Energy, was out of date with respect to many renewable energy technologies and needed revision to enable planning policy to respond to the Assembly's commitment.</p>	<p>Arup was commissioned to produce research in 2004. The research was to assist with the re-drafting and implementation of the revised TAN 8.</p> <p>"The brief was to provide a map for Wales identifying 'strategic search areas' capable of delivering the Welsh Assembly Government's Renewable Energy target of 4 Terrawatthour (TWh) by 2010. The fundamental objective was to ascertain the most appropriate areas of Wales in which to locate the 800 Megawatts (MW) of onshore wind turbines minimising direct land take."</p>	<p>The recommendations of the research were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The draft strategic areas be published for consultation; 2. Draft TAN 8 give considerable weight to delivery of capacities indicated for each area in the planning process to meet target; 3. Extensive consultation process be consulted with those likely to be affected by strategic areas; 4. Assembly to encourage local distribution network operators to develop appropriate grid infrastructure; 5. Assembly further develops the draft strategic areas; and 6. Thought to be given on how to treat wind energy developments which come forward outside the strategic areas. 	<p>The revised TAN8 – Planning for Renewable Energy was published in 2005.</p> <p>The MIPP – Planning for Renewable Energy was published in 2005, revising this part of PPW.</p>	<p>The policy is intended to provide guidance on national planning policy in support of PPW, primarily aimed at local planning authorities.</p> <p>Seven Strategic Search Areas (SSA) were included in the revised policies.</p> <p>Account needs to be taken of in development plans produced by local planning authorities.</p> <p>The revised planning policies now take a much more proactive approach to renewable energy projects.</p>

A number of policy development projects also collected data, for example the Facilitating Planning for Renewable Energy in Wales report identified strategic search areas for large-scale onshore energy development. There were a high number of miscellaneous projects (40%) supported, and although expenditure (24%) is relatively high, it is not disproportionate. The majority of these projects are directly relevant to the Programme, but are not research schemes in themselves. For example they include the Scoping Study itself, and editing of key policy documents, such as PPW.

The information base collected has also been extensively used to inform policy, links have been clearly referenced in the subsequent policy documents, for example MTAN 1⁴¹ clearly identifies the research findings from a number of studies including: Crushed Rock Sand in South Wales, 2000, and North Wales Slate Tips – A Sustainable Source of Secondary Aggregates, 2001.

Whilst waste minimisation and recycling are key policy areas for the Planning Division and the Assembly, no projects have been funded under the Programme. This is because a separate Assembly budget focused on developing and implementing the Assembly's waste strategy has sufficient resources to fund this work. As one external stakeholder said: *"It is not important which Assembly budget funds the research; it is the research itself which is important."*

4.3 Programme Themes

The Scoping Study identified three long term research themes for the WPRP to address: spatial planning; sustainable development; and, rural planning. The Study proposed that these three themes *"encompass the issues which have emerged from our consultation as being of particular importance to planning in Wales."*

4.3.1 Spatial Planning

Since the publication of the Scoping Study, spatial planning has become a strategic policy of the Assembly. As a result the Wales Spatial Plan is now a central Assembly function and falls outside the remit of the WPRP. However, there remain synergies between the Spatial Plan and land use planning, although it was suggested by stakeholders during this review that links between the Planning Division and the Spatial Plan team were not as strong as they could be.

⁴¹ Minerals Technical Advice Note (MTAN) 1: Aggregates, Welsh Assembly Government, 2004.

4.3.2 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is also a corporate Assembly policy and is also a key underpinning principle for land use planning and therefore forms an integral element of all of the research commissioned. It was highlighted during a number of the external stakeholder interviews that the research undertaken to support Welsh planning policy is developing a more 'sustainable' approach; it was even suggested that in some cases this is exemplar work compared to that taking place in England. One example cited suggested that Wales was willing to challenge the environmental capacity to meet the demand for aggregates, whereas England did not.

4.3.3 Rural Planning

Of the 47 research projects funded under the Programme, six (13%) were of a direct rural nature, excluding minerals research which by its nature is likely to have an impact on the countryside and the rural economy. These six contracts amounted to 17% of total expenditure.

4.4 Strategic Conclusions

This section has considered whether the research undertaken has actually met with the Scoping Study's original objectives and research themes. It is important to emphasise that the Scoping Study provided the parameters under which the WPRP could operate. However, the WPRP also needed to meet the research needs of emerging policy and Ministerial priorities and was therefore not constrained by the Scoping Study's recommendations. Here we draw together the main conclusions emerging from the review of the projects supported under the WPRP with regard to the Scoping Study's objectives and research themes.

- Almost 60% of the research projects supported are directly aligned with the Scoping Study, accounting for approximately 76% of expenditure. The remaining 40% of the projects were principally for supporting the RAWP Groups, editing and compiling policy documents or case specific research.
- Even though 60% of the projects can be allocated to an individual Scoping Study objective, in most cases they are able to support more than one of the objectives. For example they may be principally collecting information but this would also either contribute towards policy formulation or to informing systems needed to improve the functioning of the planning system

- In terms of the original research themes proposed by the Scoping Study they have all been supported as themes. However, since that time the strategic policy framework of the Assembly has changed and developed. This has led to the development of corporate sustainable development and spatial plan approaches. Therefore spatial planning activity has diminished under the WPRP. However, sustainable development remains a strong theme.
- Waste is included under the Programme. However, activity related to this has been carried out under the Assembly's Wise About Waste strategy, although the Planning Division is involved.

5.0 Informing Policy Development

5.1 Introduction

In this Section we consider whether the research projects have contributed towards the development of policy. This uses four broad criteria, namely:

- The timeliness and relevance of the research;
- Interaction with other internal and external research programmes;
- Whether results could have been obtained more effectively from other sources; and,
- Barriers to policy development.

Support for this analysis is based on the consultations which were undertaken with individual stakeholders, the workshop groups and the case study analysis.

5.2 The Relationship Between the Research and the Policy Cycle

The policy cycle relates to the lifetime of a policy. The cycle starts at the policy's formulation until its review. It consists of a number of elements including a needs assessment / evidence based research, formulation of the policy, implementation of the policy, its monitoring, followed by the policy's evaluation.

The focus of the WPRP to date has been to commission research which has provided an evidence base for policy development which has supported policy development.

5.3 The Timeliness and Relevance of the Research

Since the establishment of the Assembly, there has been a recognition of the need to adopt a corporate commitment to develop evidence based policy. A view expressed internally is that the Assembly has been developing an approach to produce evidenced based policy. However, the WPRP has been a research area which has developed an evidence base approach to support the development of planning policy from an early stage (2000). By conducting an evaluation prior to any corporate requirements or review this early evaluation of the WPRP is exemplar.

Overall, the research undertaken under the WPRP has been well received. In many cases, there has been a clear link between the research undertaken and resulting published

policy, for example in Minerals TAN 1 - Aggregates (MTAN1) and TAN 8 – Planning for Renewable Energy.

Initially the distinctive Welsh nature of the research was weak, however, the planning systems and policy base are different from the English case, and distinctive Welsh needs are emerging. The policy framework which is developing in Wales is now different from that in England. An external stakeholder interviewed during the review suggested that:

"Generally Welsh work is 'greener' than that commissioned by ODPM. There is a consistent message to always be sustainable – this is a noticeable difference in Welsh policy."

However, there was also caution raised about focusing solely on Welsh issues. An external stakeholder commented: *"There is a need to look wider and not to become overly insular."* There is also a need to be pragmatic about what can be achieved through the restricted available resources in Wales and thus a need to concentrate efforts where research will not be undertaken elsewhere.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 illustrate the relationship between the development and publication of policy (shaded area) and the publication date of the associated research (reference number). The timeline used starts from 1996, which captures the point when the first Welsh TANs were issued. It would be expected that the research – indicated by the reference number – should come before the publication of the policy – indicated by the shaded area – from 2000.⁴²

However, in reality this is not always feasible, principally because of the capacity and resource availability to commission sufficient research to support the needs of planning policy in Wales. The process for developing a TAN is a resource intensive activity and each can take a considerable amount of time to produce.



The Figures show that the policy cycle is starting to emerge, from collection of the evidence base through to the development of policy. What is missing in the process, because it is too early yet, is the review and revision of these policies. It is likely to be a long term process to reach the point where there is a complete and continuous cycle for each of the policy areas i.e. where the complete set of TANs and MTANs are based on evidence and reviewed and revised. This will take further investment in research and resources.

⁴² This is illustrated in Figure 5.2 with reference to TAN 8 and MTAN 1.

Figure 5.1 Policy / Research Timeline - Planning Policy and Strategy Documents

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Wales: A Better Country										
Sustainable Development Scheme										
The Wales Spatial Plan					2,3	4				
Wales - A Vibrant Economy (WAVE)										
Scoping Study WPRP				1						
Planning Policy Wales (PPW)							5,10	6		
Minerals Planning Policy Wales (MPPW)					11,12,13	14				

Source: Welsh Assembly Government

Publication:  Consultation Draft: 

Key: Research Projects

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Land Use Planning Research Scoping Study 2 Land Use Planning Spatial Implications Study 3 Regional Strategies Scoping Study 4 Comparative Spatial Planning Methodologies 5 Planning: Delivering for Wales 6 Review of Land Use Planning Indicators 7 The Application of Accessibility Methodologies to Land Use Planning 8 The Rural Economy and the Planning System 9 What Sort of Countryside do we want? 10 Sustainable Appraisal of Development Plans in Wales 11 Crushed Rock Sand in South Wales 12 Appraisal of Land-Based Sand & Gravel Resources in SE Wales | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 Bristol Channel Marine Aggregates: Resources & Constraints 14 North Wales Slate Tips - A Sustainable Source of Secondary Aggregates? 15 Farm Diversification and the Planning System 16 Flood Risk Assessment for Planning in Wales 17 Second & Holiday Homes & the Land Use Planning System 18 The Potential for Wind Power in Urban, Industrial & Commercial Sites in Wales 19 Facilitating Planning for Renewable Energy in Wales: Meeting the Target 20 Essential Dwellings in the Open Countryside 21 Mapping Areas of Sub-Regional Waste Sites 22 Low Impact Development |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Figure 5.2 TAN Research : Publication Timeline

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TAN 1 Joint Housing Land Availability Studies										
TAN 2 Planning and Affordable Housing							17		9	
TAN 3 Simplified Planning Zones										
TAN 4 Retailing and Town Centres										
TAN 5 Nature Conservation and Planning										
TAN 6 Agriculture and Rural Development									9	
TAN 7 Outdoor Advertisement Control										
TAN 8 Planning for Renewable Energy								18	19	
TAN 9 Enforcement of Planning Control										
TAN 10 Tree Preservation Orders										
TAN 11 Noise										
TAN 12 Design									9	
TAN 13 Tourism										
TAN 14 Coastal Planning										
TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk								16		
TAN 16 Sports and Recreation										
TAN 18 Transport										
TAN 19 Telecommunications										
TAN 20 Welsh Language UDPs & Planning Control										
TAN 21 Waste										21
Mineral Technical Advice Note (MTAN) 1 Aggregates					11,12,13	14				

Source: Welsh Assembly Government (for Key see Figure 5.1)

5.4 Interaction with Other Internal and External Research Programmes

The Scoping Study originally anticipated that the Programme should focus on in-house research needs. It was intended that the proportion of resources which were used to contribute towards collaborative research would increase over time. In 2002/03 expenditure on collaborative projects was 32%⁴³ of total expenditure; the Scoping Study had anticipated a spend of 20%. However, since this time expenditure on collaborative projects has reduced.

5.4.1 Internal Research Programmes

The experience from the WPRP indicates a difficulty in ensuring complementarity and linkages between policy areas. The majority of external stakeholders raised an issue with regard to Assembly Departments operating within "silos", with limited linkages between research areas. It was felt that the WPRP did attempt to overcome these barriers, but that this was not necessarily reciprocated by other Assembly departments.

An area which was particularly highlighted by external stakeholders was that of the Spatial Plan, which had in fact grown out of the WPRP. It was felt that the WPRP and the Spatial Plan *"should come together to ensure that research is useful."* Currently a general view with external stakeholders was that *"the interrelationship between the WPRP and the Spatial Plan is not as strong as it should be."* There remains a strong need to link the two areas of research and for the sub-regions identified through the Spatial Plan to be considered within the planning process.

It is paramount that there are policy linkages across the Assembly, so that policy for one service is not undermined by policy in another. An example of this cited during the stakeholder consultations was the lack of reference to planning policy issues in the Economic Development Strategy - WAVE.

The WPRP is intended to cover waste research related to planning policy. However, the Waste Strategy Unit, also within EP&C, has large budgets which are able to support this work. Therefore, whilst planning policy relating to waste falls under the remit of the WPRP, it is funded through a separate Assembly budget. The Planning Division retains control over its commission to ensure planning policy research needs are met.

⁴³ This includes collaborative research projects, as well as contributions to the running of the two Wales RAWP Groups.

5.4.2 External Research Programmes

There are a number of pockets of research activity carried out in Wales with relevance to the WPRP, including WLGA and the ASPBs such as the former WDA, Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the Environment Agency Wales (EAW). There have been a number of cases where the WPRP has worked with these external research programmes, either as the lead or providing contributions. For example the Low Impact Development Study was led by CCW and EAW contributed towards the Flood Risk Assessment for Planning in Wales project, which was commissioned and managed under the WPRP.

Effective interaction with the former WDA however has been cited as a particular problem area. The interface between the WPRP and the former WDA was limited, although attempts had been made to share research plans by the Planning Division. An example of where this is potentially a problem and cited by an external stakeholder, relates to the former WDA's Property Strategy, where no linkages were made with Wales' planning policy. Some sites included do not potentially fit within the planning policy framework. However, there is potential scope for consultation in the future on revisions to strategies, including WAVE and opportunities for joint research. The formation of the new Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks offers the opportunity to facilitate this.

The Scoping Study highlighted that due to the relatively small size of the Assembly budget compared to then Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions (DETR) research budget, *"strong linkages must still be maintained with other bodies in order to maximise the use of funding and add value to the Programme."* However, over time and particularly since devolution the links with DCLG / ODPM / DETR have weakened. A principal contributory factor is that the DCLG research function has been reorganised and there is now no individual planning research programme.⁴⁴ Links with the DCLG minerals research programme has continued. This is principally because DCLG have kept this separate as it tends to involve a different set of disciplines from those involved under its Sustainable Communities Programme, under which planning research is now mainly carried out.

⁴⁴ The DCLG research programme is now developed through the Analytical Coordination Team. Members of the DCLG's four analytical teams – land use change, housing, economics and research & evaluation – provide ideas for research and the programme is developed based on these. Planning research within the DCLG is no longer seen in isolation – instead it is considered under other programmes, such as the Sustainable Communities Programme, which is encouraging a move towards policy-focused mixed teams and integrating analytical functions. Consequently there is much less research focused specifically on the planning system – the Spatial Plans in Practice Project (formerly known as the Local Development Framework (LDF) Implementation Study) is considered an exception. The study provided the evidence and analysis to support the implementation of the new LDF system and to assess whether it is meeting wider policy objectives. The study can be found at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pub/240/SpatialPlansinPracticeBulletin1PDF127Kb_id1143240.pdf

There appears to be a general view that the devolved authorities will carry out their own research and DCLG will focus on England only studies. However, there have been cases where the Assembly has been invited to provide additional financial resources to include Welsh case studies within a DCLG commissioned research project. For example telecoms research and the Open Cast Coal Mining Survey⁴⁵ 2004 which the Planning Division contributed towards. A comment made during the stakeholder interviews is:

"Whilst it is useful to have a separate Welsh resource, if ODPM research can be used, resources shouldn't be wasted."

A number of initiatives, including research studies, have been funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Interreg Programmes, which have a particular focus on spatial planning issues. There appears to be no link, such as the sharing of findings, between the WPRP and the Assembly's European Affairs Division and the Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) who manage Welsh input into these Programmes. There are potential opportunities here for future collaboration. As an example the following project is funded under the current Atlantic Area Interreg IIIB Programme:

Integrated Coastal Zone Management: Towards an Atlantic Vision

"The project aims to stimulate the sustainable development of the coastal zones of the Atlantic Area from an environmental, social and economic point of view, by encouraging integrated regional development implementation and management. Given the fact that there is not a homogenous perception of this territory, the project intends to make recommendations to create a common vision: this is Integrated Coastal Zone Management – ICZM."

The project aims to:

- *"To identify the specific characteristics of the Atlantic Area;*
- *To facilitate the future measures of the States concerned within the framework of long-term regional development and the sustainable development of economic activities and natural resources;*
- *To provide a coherent working framework for initiatives in coastal zones enabling horizontal and vertical integration of idea and action; and,*
- *To contribute to better management and protection of the coast."*

⁴⁵ This collects statistics for reserves, production and planning consents in respect of open cast coal extraction.

A further example of an Interreg funded project with potential links with the WPRP is from the Interreg IIIA Ireland / Wales Programme is:

Irish Sea Marine Aggregates Initiative - IMAGIN

*"The overall aim of the IMAGIN project is to facilitate the evolution of a strategic framework within which development and exploitation of marine aggregate resources from the Irish Sea may be sustainably managed with minimum risk of impact on marine and coastal environments, ecosystems and other marine users. To achieve this, the project will bring together a trans-national partnership of industry and academic interests in order to deliver a set of detailed recommendations and accompanying notes that will provide a structured framework of strategic information and guidance for regulators and potential developers in all key aspects of future marine extractive activities in the Southern Irish Sea."*⁴⁶

5.5 Whether Results Could Have Been Obtained More Effectively From Other Sources

The main area which arises relating to whether research could have been secured more effectively from alternative sources relates to the relationship of the WPRP to the ODPM. There appears to be a lack of clarity regarding the linkages with ODPM and its research, from both sides and with external stakeholders, as already referred to in 5.4.2.

There were different views held by external stakeholders as to the need for separate Welsh research for the majority of issues. However, the majority felt that it was valid to have a separate Welsh research programme, as since devolution a distinctive Welsh policy context has emerged. This means that the Assembly approaches policy differently to England, a particular difference being its integrated approach to sustainable development. However, a particular issue for those involved in the development and implementation of planning policy in Wales is that it is often unclear if ODPM research is relevant to Wales i.e. has Welsh evidence been used in the research?

An issue related to this which arose during the stakeholder consultations is the lack of awareness of the research undertaken by various organisations. External and internal stakeholders raised the need to develop and share knowledge of research activities. Communication on the content of relevant related research programmes would help towards ensuring research is commissioned by the most effective organisation and that research is not duplicated. This also means communicating forthcoming research to be commissioned, research underway and when the research is completed. This will enable interested organisations to be involved and to dovetail research activities.

⁴⁶ <http://www.wefo.wales.gov.uk/default.asp?action=projectdetail&ID=86&ProjectID=56342>

5.6 Barriers to Policy Development

The review identified a number of barriers to the transfer of research into policy. The first was the level of resources available within the Planning Division. A relatively small number of officials are responsible for commissioning the research and taking forward the findings to support policy development. This can lead to a relatively slow process. However, the model of using the same official to manage the research and develop the policy is seen as positive, as this allows integration across the policy cycle.

A second issue identified regarding the development of policy relates to the resources required in its actual implementation, as opposed to its development. This situation arose with regard to the work undertaken on previously developed land, where the systems to implement the policy required significant investment. However, it was difficult for any Assembly division or external agency to take ownership of the project because of the level of resources required.

As discussed in section 2, the Assembly now has a comprehensive set of corporate and policy specific strategies covering its areas of responsibilities, underpinned by a series of core values. Any new or adaptations to policy therefore needs to fit within this corporate policy framework. Importantly there needs to be a political will to take forward policy. Whilst this is not necessarily a negative barrier, it does mean that policies need to fit within the framework and meet political priorities. An example of where political priorities have led policy development relates to the work undertaken on renewable energy research and policy development.

5.7 Strategic Conclusions

This section has considered whether the research commissioned has informed the development of planning policy. We have considered whether the research has been timely, how the WPRP interacts with other research programmes, including whether there are alternative sources to the WPRP to undertake the research. Our key conclusions are set out below.

- The Programme has been in operation since late 2000, and there is now a pattern of research informing the development of policy emerging. There are some specific cases where research has been undertaken and the related policy has either been issued or is under development. These include TAN2 Planning and Affordable Housing, TAN8 Planning for Renewable Energy, TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk and MTAN1 Aggregates.

- This pattern in the linkage between the development of the evidence base and policy also indicates the emergence of a policy cycle approach to planning policy development, although at this stage it is too early to illustrate the full cycle for any particular policy.
- There is some joint commissioning of research with other Assembly Departments and Divisions within EP&C, for example those related to waste. However, it is felt that links between policy areas could be strengthened to ensure complementarity.
- There are linkages with external organisations to carry out joint research projects, for example CCW and EAW. These are considered to be a positive method of commissioning research by pooling resources and ensuring different skills and knowledge are able to input into the research briefs and their management.
- There are joint working relationships with DCLG. However, since devolution and the reorganisation of the research function within DCLG, the joint working is not as extensive as previously. Leading on from this, there is also a degree of confusion as to whether research undertaken by DCLG is relevant to Wales.
- Given the weakening of the links with the DCLG and the emergence of a distinctive Welsh policy, there is support for the continuation of specific Welsh research, with joint working, particularly where there are resource benefits.
- In terms of barriers to research informing policy development, the principal issues relate to the capacity of the Planning Division to commission and manage research projects and to develop the policy, the resources to finance policy implementation and to ensure that proposals fit with the corporate policy framework and whether there is political support.

6.0 Future Programme

6.1 Introduction

This section of the report considers the future context in terms of the wider policy which is relevant to the WPRP. The aim of this is to ensure that a policy relevant research framework is pursued over the next five years. In doing so, we first set out some of the main areas of policy development. In particular we focus on the linkages and implications of other Assembly policy, most of which were discussed in section 2. The list is not exhaustive but does capture the main changes underway. It forms the basis for the subsequent section outlining whether any changes are required to the Programme's objectives or the themes pursued. What is immediately apparent is the wide-ranging and substantial policy changes that are underway in a whole swathe of areas with relevance to planning in Wales. Many of these areas are over-lapping and resist simple delineation.

6.2 Objectives

The Scoping Study proposed a number of key objectives for the WPRP to follow. These were:

- to support the development of Welsh planning policy which responds to the special needs and circumstances of Wales;
- to contribute to the improved functioning of the planning system in Wales; and,
- to enhance the information base for managing and delivering planning in Wales.

From the stakeholder interviews and an analysis of the research undertaken to date, these objectives remain valid. They succinctly capture the needs of the planning system in Wales which the WPRP is able to address. We therefore propose that there are also no further objectives which should be added to the remit of the WPRP. There is sufficient flexibility in the way the Programme operates to address particular issues which may arise on an ad hoc basis, which are not captured by these objectives.

6.3 Research Themes

The Scoping Study suggested three long term research themes for the WPRP to pursue. These are:

- Sustainable development;
- Spatial planning; and,
- Rural issues.

Since the publication of the Scoping Study the Assembly has published its corporate Sustainable Development Scheme and the Wales Spatial Plan, as discussed in section 2. Despite this, during our fieldwork, there remained strong support for the continuing inclusion of these themes within the WPRP. Both sustainable development and spatial planning issues remain central to the planning system.

Rural issues also retained support from both external and internal stakeholders. This is principally because of the rural nature of large parts of Wales. However, it was raised that the Programme's themes should be extended to include urban issues and those relating to how urban and rural areas interact. Arising this was support by stakeholders for the inclusion of regeneration as a theme. This was not restricted to urban regeneration, but also to that within rural areas.

6.4 Coordination of Assembly Policy

As discussed in section 2, the Assembly is responsible for a wide range of policy areas which directly or indirectly impact on each other. To overcome problems relating to a lack of coordination between policies and to enable the development and delivery of policies *"that not only meet the Assembly Government's strategic agenda but do it in a way that fulfils [our] commitments to sustainable development, equality of opportunity and social justice"*, a Policy Gateway Tool has been developed. The aim of the tool is *"to help stimulate dialogue, generate new ideas and encouraged 'joined-up' thinking."* A key emphasis of the tool is to ensure that the Assembly's corporate strategy – Wales: A Better Country – and its core values are addressed. A cross-divisional group is used to assess each draft strategy and policy before they are the subject of consultation. The Strategic Policy Unit of the Assembly is responsible for the development and use of the Tool. The Unit provides training to ensure Assembly staff are able to use the Tool effectively. They also work closely with users and the Policy Committee to revise the Tool to ensure it remains dynamic and relevant.

6.5 Policy Issues

6.5.1 Agriculture and Rural Development

A number of Assembly policies are relevant to this area including **Farming for the Future**, **Better Homes**, the **Environment Strategy** and the **Rural Development Plan**, as discussed in section 2. Given that much of Wales is rural, this is an important area to be taken account of in planning policies. There is a gradual shift occurring away from the traditional policy focus in Wales on direct support for the agricultural economy towards a stronger emphasis on wider rural development issues. This will be reinforced by the

changing EU and UK context that drives much of the Welsh policy environment in this area. In particular the introduction of a new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)⁴⁷ regime and a new Rural Development Programme⁴⁸ from 2007 will have a significant impact on potential non-farming developments in the countryside. Changes in European funding arrangements post-2006 will have wider impacts on activities in rural area of Wales as programmes such as LEADER + come to an end. This may affect the future of some complementary domestic actions. To consider how CAP reform may change farming practices relating to livestock production and land management a task and finish group has been established. The Agriculture 2020 task and finish group will advise the Assembly Government in 2007 on options for supporting the sustainability of farming and the countryside. The work of this group is likely to have implications for planning policy.

Coupled with the stronger emphasis on rural development are signs that the issue of affordable housing and the development of sustainable communities in the countryside are rising up the rural policy agenda. The planning system is already engaging with aspects of this debate through its consultation on planning and affordable housing. The system will need to consider the wider agenda of sustainable communities in considering appropriate responses, particularly in the context of sustaining the economy of rural areas.

The planning system may be faced with new challenges in rural development if moves towards organic and other more 'sustainable' agricultural production techniques continue. Although much of this activity may lie outside of the remit of the planning system many ancillary and commercially-connected activities do not.

6.5.2 Housing

The Assembly's first national Housing Strategy, **Better Homes**, seeks to address the regional disparity in the quality and affordability of homes across Wales. It is clear that Better Homes and relevant planning policy, including TAN 1 and 2, – and their implementation - will continue to be a matter of strong concern for the Assembly. This is true for all aspects of housing policy from establishing a suitable land supply through the release of land for housing to monitoring the supply of housing. The particular issue of affordable housing is well-known.

⁴⁷ The CAP was introduced in 1962. Its role today is to ensure the production of high quality food and to protect the rural economy, and to protect the environment, ensure the health and welfare of animals; preserve the social balance, conserve cultural heritage; establish a fair and market-oriented trading system in agricultural products; and, ensure a future for the agricultural industry.

⁴⁸ Rural Development Plan for Wales 2000-2006, The National Assembly for Wales, (undated). Further information regarding the Rural Development Programme for Wales can be found at: <http://www.countryside.wales.gov.uk/fe/master.asp?n1=928&n2=929>

Within Wales the renewal of sub-standard stock is likely to be a significant matter for local authorities, housing authorities and national policy-makers for some years to come. The implications of this for planning policy makers should be given consideration.

The impact of reviews undertaken in England, particularly the Barker Review on the housing supply⁴⁹ and the current Barker review of land use planning, focusing on the link between planning and economic growth, will require careful monitoring as there are likely to be spill over effects in Wales. Another area where there will be an impact in Wales from UK level activity is the review of Planning Gain Supplement being led by HM Treasury.

6.5.3 Environment

There are a number of policy areas which fall within the scope of the Assembly's **Environment Strategy** (as referenced in Section 2). This is due to the fact that the document addresses a wide-range of 'priority issues' such as climate change, landscape management, and biodiversity, meaning that it cuts across a number of other key policy documents produced by the Assembly. One such policy area that the strategy impacts upon is 'the coast' of Wales, particularly due to the fact that 70% of the Welsh coastline is subject to environmental designations. The Welsh coastline is also subject to pressure from developers in a wide range of different contexts, from tourism, and port developments to potentially contentious issues such as offshore wind farms (and other developments supplying renewable energy). Besides these issues related to coastal development there are other external pressures on the coastline in terms of the dredging of waterways and aggregates extraction which place further importance on the role of the planning system as a means of managing the coastal zones of Wales. This role may have increased importance in the future due to potential impacts of climate change on the coastal areas of Wales, although as yet these remain undetermined.

The Assembly government has recently published a consultation on its draft strategy for Wales relating to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)⁵⁰. Although this document is not yet finalised there is still potential for future impact on the land-use planning system in Wales. These implications will be familiar to those currently involved in the Welsh Maritime Coastal Partnership⁵¹, which acts as a reference point to the Assembly

⁴⁹ Review of Housing Supply – Delivering Stability: Securing our Future Housing Needs, Kate Barker on behalf of ODPM, 2004.

⁵⁰ Making the Most of Wales' Coast, Welsh Assembly Government, 2006.

⁵¹ The Welsh Maritime Coastal Partnership aims to: "provide advice to the Welsh Assembly Government on sustainable development issues affecting the coast and seas of Wales as well as facilitating the exchange of information and dissemination of good practice". The core membership of the Partnership is composed of public, private and voluntary bodies with interests in matters relating to the coast and / or the sea. <http://www.walescoastalpartnership.org.uk/>

Government for guidance on issues relating to the sustainable management of the Welsh coastline. Coastal areas are also impacted upon by flooding, with increasing instances of flood events in recent years along areas of the Welsh coastline. To cope with this pressure 'The Flood Management Committee' has been formed with the aim of overseeing the delivery of the Environment Agency's flood risk activities in Wales, particularly in relation to flood defences.

The Environment Strategy also impacts upon the policy field of flood management, a theme which impacts greatly on the land use planning system. Many of the key themes and 'priorities for the environment' are linked to flooding, particularly in relation to climate change and the effective management and conservation of the natural landscape.

Climate change is predicted to cause short durations of intense rainfall which may impact upon any strategies imposed and it may also impact upon land-use planning decisions. The changing pattern of land-use and development within river basins has also been shown to influence flood-risk, particularly in catchments such as the River Severn. River basin management is being introduced to minimise the potential impacts of increased fluvial flood incidence in a number of river catchments including; rivers in West Wales, the Dee Basin and the Severn Basin, which will have a significant impact on land-use policies within these particular areas. Future policy developments may also be forced to consider the possibility of future water shortages meaning that looking at topics such as flood prevention within wider water management policies.

6.5.4 Spatial Planning

The **Wales Spatial Plan** is one of the key documents produced by the Assembly Government in recent years. It marks the Assembly's first real steps into 'spatial planning' following on from the European Union's highly influential ESDP (European Spatial Development Perspective). The Wales Spatial Plan aims to link a range of different policy themes to map the future direction of Wales in terms of its economy, infrastructure, society and culture. It addresses priority issues for Wales, such as deprivation, the Welsh language, and attempts to address regional distinctiveness through locally relevant policy initiatives. This has meant that greater emphasis has been placed on determining the needs and priorities for the various regions of Wales, which has meant that more attention will be paid to spatial inequalities and differences within the country.

The land-use planning impacts of this strategy are therefore significant, as it attempts to stress the priorities for development in Wales, the future infrastructural needs and numerous other geographically specific policies. The Spatial Plan also presents challenges for the land-use planning system as it overlays existing political and administrative

boundaries, meaning that greater cooperation will be forged between authorities within Wales. How these spatial visions will be incorporated into the daily practices of planners in Wales is yet to be fully understood, however current trends seem to dictate that the proliferation of similar spatial visions and regionally based policies are increasing (for example the notion of City-Regions which is currently gaining strength throughout the UK). The concept of Spatial Planning is currently gaining momentum at a European and national level and has filtered down into a number of Welsh strategies. This is evidenced by the 'Rural Development Plan' (referenced in Section 2 of the report), 'Heads we Win'⁵², and the Chester-North East Wales spatial strategy,⁵³ and the various Structural Fund programmes which each present a series of spatially referenced policies.

6.5.5 Planning Processes

Ensuring that an effective system is in place for the implementation of planning policy is essential. It is therefore also important to include research that looks at how the system functions and the plan process. Improvements to the Welsh planning system are being taken forward through the **Planning: delivering for Wales Programme** which includes major changes to planning policy, the development plan system and development control processes. The new European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)⁵⁴ of plans and policies which has recently come into force provides an example of where further research or good practice guidance may be necessary. This opens up many questions as to the statutory requirements of the legislation and how such assessments will be undertaken. Assessments carried out by the Assembly have already ascertained that the requirements for SEA will impact significantly on the operation of the planning system in Wales, particularly in relation to Development Plans, Regional Waste Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance. Good practice guidance on undertaking SEAs is available from many sources including interim guidance from the Assembly,⁵⁵ Guidance for Planning Authorities⁵⁶ from the ODPM and good practice material from the Environment Agency (EA).⁵⁷

⁵² 'Heads – We Win...' - A Strategic Framework for the Heads of the Valleys, Welsh Assembly Government, 2005

⁵³ West Cheshire – North East Wales Sub Regional Study, North West Regional Assembly, 2004
http://www.wda.co.uk/resources/Chapter_1_-_W_Cheshire_NE_Wal.pdf

⁵⁴ Directive 2001/42/EC

⁵⁵ Strategic Environmental Assessment of Unitary Development Plans – Interim Good Practice Guide, Welsh Assembly Government, 2004

⁵⁶ The SEA Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities (Practical guidance on applying the European Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of plans and programmes on the environment to land use and spatial plans in England), ODPM, 2003

⁵⁷ Good Practice Guidelines For Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environment Agency, 2005
(http://www.environmentagency.gov.uk/aboutus/512398/830672/?version=1&lang=_e)

6.5.6 Economic Development

The development of the Welsh economy is central to the Assembly's policies and strategies. **Wales a Vibrant Economy (WAVE)** sets out the challenge for the future, as referenced previously in Section 2. The focus on economic development contains significant implications for the planning system in Wales. There are important questions around how to plan for economic development and growth in the first instance. There are both technical questions here – such as how to do this - and policy considerations – such as what to do.

In addition to the policy context set by WAVE the planning system must also interact with wider development strategies such as the future West Wales and the Valleys and the East Wales programmes of European Structural Funds activity, and the Welsh Rural Development Plan.⁵⁸ A further consideration for the planning system will be the outcome of the Assisted Areas review which is currently underway. The current proposals represent a strong change from existing arrangements in certain parts of Wales.

In planning for economic development planners may also want to take into consideration the nature of the economic development proposed. WAVE and the proposed Structural Fund programmes set great store by stimulating innovation and the knowledge-based economy. The planning requirements of a knowledge-based economy may differ from those of an economy based around more traditional economic activities. What this means in practice is less apparent.

The merger of the WDA with the Assembly may also bring changes in economic development practices and raise issues for the planning system to consider more widely. This will provide opportunities for coordination of policy with the Department for Enterprise Innovation and Networks (DEIN).

Finally, another area that is the focus of much policy attention concerns tackling high levels of economic inactivity, particularly where this is concentrated in small geographical areas. The contribution that the planning system can make to this emergent agenda may merit consideration.

6.5.7 Transport

The aim of the Wales Transport Act (2006) is to provide the Assembly with powers with which it is able to "plan a more coordinated and integrated transport system for Wales." The Act also requires the Assembly to prepare a **Wales Transport Strategy** for

implementing its policies and actions with regard to transport. This strategy is currently under preparation by the Assembly. The individual Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) are also under development by the regional transport alliances.

A review of Welsh transport throws up many land use planning issues ranging from the implications of new and upgraded roads through to the reopening and upgrading of passenger rail services and the proposed new inter-Wales air routes. There are also implications for transport infrastructure and services by a wide range of other developments such as housing, business and leisure uses. The requirement to ensure transport services are able to support new developments is essential, and in particular integrate with public transport to meet sustainable development objectives. The Assembly's plans for the infrastructure of Wales are also highlighted in the Wales Spatial Plan, which sets-out the Assembly's vision to improve links within the country, and also to the rest of the UK and Europe.

6.5.8 Waste

Waste has become a major issue for Wales and the specific objectives and targets set out in European Directives such as the Framework Directive on Waste and the Landfill Directive require radical changes in the way that waste is managed. To date Wales does not have a good record of meeting waste reduction and recycling targets. To address this the Welsh Assembly Government has published **Wise about Waste** : The National Waste Strategy for Wales and PPW and TAN 21 (Waste). The main emphasis is on promoting the reduction, re-use and recovery of waste and a move away from the disposal of waste through land filling. Wise about Waste sets out specific targets for Wales regarding the methods of waste management and TAN 21 is intended to facilitate the introduction of a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable land use planning framework for waste management in Wales through the introduction of three regional waste plans. The Assembly's Environment Protection and Quality Division has significant budgets for conducting research relating to waste and therefore this is the main source for planning waste research, as opposed to the WPRP.

6.5.9 Telecommunications

Wales has significant problems preventing access to advanced telecommunications services, including topographical and socio-economic barriers. Its sparse population distribution and relative levels of poverty in areas of Wales do not encourage telecoms suppliers. The Assembly recognises that to be competitive in local and global markets it is vital that businesses have access to the most effective telecommunications services available. To address broadband market failure within Wales the Assembly launched the

Broadband Wales Programme in 2002, with the aim of providing accessible and affordable broadband across Wales by March 2007. The roll out of advanced telecommunications across Wales will have obvious impact in terms of not just the infrastructure to provide the networks, but also a potential change in the pattern of locations of economic activity by improved communications, particularly in rural areas.

Many of the land use planning issues related to telecommunications are embedded in the development of technological capabilities. These are common to both Wales and England. To promote value for money, this is therefore a research area which would benefit from joint working with England.

6.5.10 Policy Review

In this discussion of policy areas we have highlighted emerging issues and developments which may influence the need for a review in aspects of planning policy, highlighting issues relating to Assembly policy. What is also of importance in determining the research to be undertaken by the WPRP over the next five years is the status of the planning policy and guidance currently in place and whether there is a need to update the policy in place. As an example, in some cases TANs have not been reviewed since 1996. Table 6.1 provides the latest position with regard to TANs. This provides a suggested foundation on which to prioritise future research to provide the evidence base to support future policy development needs.

Table 6.1 Current Position of Policy Framework

Policy Document	Latest Date of Policy	Research undertaken	Latest Position of Revisions
TAN 1 Joint Housing Land Availability Studies	1997	No	Consultation draft 2005
TAN 2 Planning and Affordable Housing	1996	2002 & 2004	Consultation draft 2005
TAN 3 Simplified Planning Zones	1996	No	
TAN 4 Retailing and Town Centres MIPP No. 2 Planning for Retail and Town Centres	1996 2005	No	
TAN 5 Nature Conservation and Planning	1996	No	
TAN 6 Agriculture and Rural Development	2000	2004	
TAN 7 Outdoor Advertisement Control	1996	No	
TAN 8 Renewable Energy MIPP No. 1 Planning for Renewable Energy	1996 2005	2003, 2004	
TAN 9 Enforcement of Planning Control	1997	No	
TAN 10 Tree Preservation Orders	1997	No	
TAN 11 Noise	1997	No	

Policy Document	Latest Date of Policy	Research undertaken	Latest Position of Revisions
TAN 12 Design	2002	2004	
TAN 13 Tourism	1997	No	
TAN 14 Coastal Planning	1998	No	
TAN 15 Development and Flood Risk	2004	2003	
TAN 16 Sports and Recreation	1998	No	
TAN 18 Transport	1998	No	2 nd consultation due 2006
TAN 19 Telecommunications	2002	No	
TAN 20 Welsh Language UDPs & Planning Control	2000	No	
TAN 21 Waste	2001	2005	
MTAN 1 Aggregates	2004	2000, 2001	
MTAN Coal			Draft out for consultation

Source: Welsh Assembly Government

6.6 Strategic Conclusions

In this section we have discussed the future content of the WPRP.

- The objectives proposed by the Scoping Study remain relevant and aptly cover the research needs of planning policy development.
- The research themes of sustainable development, spatial planning and rural issues should continue to be pursued by the Programme. New themes should also be added to cover urban issues, the urban: rural interface and regeneration.
- There are a number of key Assembly policy areas, related both directly and indirectly to planning policy, which are facing developments over the next five years. These developments will invariably impact on the need for changes in planning policy. The Assembly's Policy Gateway Tool provides an opportunity for consideration of the impact of Assembly planning policy and other Assembly linked policy on each other.
- In determining the future content of the research programme there is a need to prioritise the policy areas which are in need of review. This needs to be done by evaluating the latest version of the current policy and developments taking place which will have an affect on planning policy. It is likely that these priorities will change annually, principally depending on external factors.

- Ministerial and Assembly corporate priorities will also be of importance in determining activities under the WPRP. There is a need for the Programme to remain responsive to changes in Assembly policy, so that the planning system is able to respond.

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This final section of the report draws together and synthesises the key findings from the preceding sections, and responds to the review's objectives:

- *To review the research produced to date and consider how it meets the original objectives / themes of the WPRP.*
- *To consider how completed research has translated into policy and to identify any barriers.*
- *To consult with stakeholders about how the Programme has operated and to seek opinions about the future content of the Programme.*
- *To advise on the future administration of the Programme.*
- *To provide advice on future priorities of the Programme.*
- *To consider whether the Programme's initial objectives are still valid and if necessary to propose a new set of objectives / themes against which the Programme should be realigned in the future.*

It begins by discussing changes which are currently taking place with regard to the commissioning and management of research within the Assembly as a whole. It then addresses operational issues relating to the implementation of the Programme and providing recommendations for the future. The second part looks to the future priorities for the Programme and discusses the objectives and themes which could form the framework for the commissioning of research in the future.

7.2 Positioning of Programme in the Corporate Assembly Approach to Research

Since devolution the Assembly has been developing its approach to evidence based policy. This took a major step forward in 2005 when the Assembly appointed a Chief Researcher, who heads up a central research team (Office of the Chief Social Researcher Officer – OCSRO). This team has been pushing for high standards of research which is properly planned and managed, and where the emphasis is on evidence for the policy base which is also linked to financial priorities and decisions.

To take this forward, Departments across the Assembly are now required to develop a research and evaluation plan by April 2006. These plans deal with both the departmental strategy for handling research and an annual research programme. These will be linked to

operational plans and Spending Priority Areas (SPAs).⁵⁹ The WPRP falls under the Environment, Planning and Countryside Department. As part of this a Research and Evaluation Plan for EP&C has recently been produced.

However, this process for raising standards in research undertaken by Assembly Departments and coordinating action is at a relatively early stage. OCSRO is developing approaches which, as well as ensuring the quality of the research, are intended to encourage liaison between Assembly Departments.

The Government Social Research Unit⁶⁰ has developed a Competency Framework for Government Social Research (GSR).⁶¹ This Framework aims to "*clarify and define the range and standard of skills and behaviours required*" of those employed as social researchers. This framework is increasingly used in the recruitment of social researchers and this is potentially applicable to those managing research under the WPRP. However, the Planning Division presently uses a model where officials commission and manage the research project and develop the resulting policy. As already discussed this provides an integrated approach between research and policy development. Where the main role of a job is undertaking research then there is logic in the requirement of the application of the Framework. However, where research is only a proportion of a job combined with policy development, there should be some flexibility in its application. A principal reason for the Framework is to ensure professionalism in undertaking social research. Therefore caution should be taken on giving research management responsibility to individuals who have only a limited frequency of involvement. A further point to note here is that the majority of the staff involved in research in the Planning Division will have planning qualifications, which tend to include modules relating to social research methods and they will therefore have had the training and experience to enable them to manage the research.

7.3 Developing a Relevant Framework

In reviewing the framework under which the WPRP can operate we take into account the change in Assembly policy and institutional structures. At the start of the Programme in 2000, there was limited corporate Assembly policy in place. This situation has now changed and an interlocking matrix of policy to guide the work of the Assembly has been

⁵⁹ The Spending Priority Areas for 2005-06 to 2007-08 are: Education and Lifelong Learning; Economic Development and Transport; Culture, Welsh Language and Sport; Environment, Planning and Countryside; Social Justice and Regeneration; Health and Social Services; and, Local Government. (Source: A Budget for the Future of Wales, the Assembly's Draft Spending Plans).

⁶⁰ Based within the Cabinet Office.

⁶¹ Government Social Research Competency Framework, Government Social Research Unit, Cabinet Office, 2005.

put in place. We have used this policy structure to inform the development of a framework for the future activities of the WPRP.

The framework would act as a matrix against which each research project could be marked to measure its contribution to the core Assembly policy and land use planning needs. Importantly, planning research should reflect the political priorities of the Assembly and be able to respond to the needs of the land use planning system in the first case.

Recommendation 1: Using a matrix to guide the selection of research projects

The matrix illustrated in Figure 7.1 sets out the framework which we propose should be used in prioritising research in the future. This provides a framework which incorporates the Assembly's core values, its Spending Priority Areas and the proposed research themes and policy areas.

Figure 7.1 Matrix for the Selection of Research projects



7.3.1 Welsh Assembly Government Priorities

All research should take account of the three strategic Welsh Assembly Government priorities set out in Wales: A Better Country – sustainable development, equality of opportunity and social inclusion. Some projects may address one or more of the themes

directly as an integral part of the research topic. All projects should however seek to take account of all three as far as they are able.

7.3.2 Welsh Assembly Government Spending Priority Areas

The Assembly has seven Spending Priority Areas (SPAs), also referred to as the MEGs. We propose that the selection of research should complement these priority areas wherever possible, providing linkages between Assembly policy areas and priorities for spend by the Assembly.

7.3.3 Research Objectives

The Scoping Study recommended three objectives for the Programme. These are:

- to support the development of Welsh planning policy which responds to the special needs and circumstances of Wales;
- to contribute to the improved functioning of the planning system in Wales;
- to enhance the information base for managing and delivering planning in Wales; and,
- develop best practice and guidance.

We recommend that these objectives be retained as they capture the needs of the land use planning system, including policy development, information on which to base policy decisions, the operation of the planning system and the need to be focused on Welsh needs. These were all endorsed during the consultation process as relevant to the needs of the planning system in Wales.

7.3.4 Research Themes

The Scoping Study established the three long term research themes of sustainable development, spatial planning and rural issues. Our findings suggest that these are still valid research themes for the Programme to pursue. However, we would suggest the inclusion of a number of additional themes – urban issues, the rural : urban interface and regeneration. Each of the themes is discussed below.

7.3.4.1 *Sustainable Development*

Whilst sustainable development is already included within the matrix as an Assembly priority, it should also be included as a research theme as it is a core theme for land use planning, including minerals and waste. There is therefore merit in strengthening it within the framework for prioritising research.

7.3.4.2 *Spatial Planning*

Whilst the Spatial Plan is a corporate Assembly function which now falls outside the remit of the WPRP, there are still spatial planning issues which need to be considered in the development of land use planning policy. We therefore recommend that spatial planning should continue to be a research theme for the Programme. The development of closer links with the Spatial Plan team would encourage complementarity between the work areas.

7.3.4.3 *Rural Issues*

Wales is a predominately rural area and its rural areas are more isolated than many rural areas in the UK. Research into rural issues is therefore of relevance for Wales and we therefore recommend the retention of this research theme.

7.3.4.4 *Urban Issues*

Whilst Wales is predominately rural, it still has significant urban areas which are growing and where the majority of its population is concentrated. Wales' urban forms are unique resulting from its topography. Urban patterns are predominately north-south, as compared to traditional British concentric urban forms. We therefore propose the addition of urban issues as a research theme.

7.3.4.5 *Rural : Urban Interface*

Linked to the rural and urban issues themes, is the need to consider the interface between rural and urban areas and the dependency links between them. This is a further research theme which reflects the geography of Wales and which should be introduced.

7.3.4.6 *Regeneration*

Linked to Wales' socio economic record and its need to address the shifts in both rural and industrial industries, regeneration is an agenda which receives attention by the land use planning system and should therefore be included as a research theme.

7.3.5 Research Areas

In Section Six we discussed the potential forthcoming issues centred on Assembly policy, which land use planning policy is likely to need to respond to over the next five to six years, and for which research may be required. These research areas are repeated below:

- Agriculture and rural development;
- Housing;

- The Environment;
- Spatial planning;
- Economic Development;
- Transport;
- Waste;
- Telecommunications; and,
- Planning Processes

To inform the selection of the research topics, a review of the current policies needs to be undertaken and set against the Assembly's policy development and external developments taking place affecting planning policy. This will inform the priority selection of research projects. It is likely that this will need to be reviewed annually during the operation of the Programme and the User Panel could contribute to this.

7.4 Management and Administration of the Programme

7.4.1 Management of the Programme

Here we make a series of recommendations with regard to the Programme's management.

Recommendation 2: Introduce a structured process for the coordination and management of the Programme.

At present, whilst there is a nominated individual responsible for the coordination of the Programme, the processes to support this appear to be limited. Our findings suggest that a more formal and structured approach to the management of the Programme would assist with its effective financial management and maximise the resources used by the Programme. We would recommend retaining an individual responsible for overall management of the Programme. This should be accompanied by establishing regular reporting requirements to track the progress of individual projects and identify any over or under spends. This would also be made more effective if it is run as a single programme, rather than the current split between land use planning and minerals and waste research.

Recommendation 3: Reinvigorate the User Panel and provide it with a wider remit.

The User Panel was considered to be a useful mechanism for involving external stakeholders and other Departments of the Assembly in the Programme; we therefore recommend that the User Panel be reformed. There should be a single User Panel which includes a representative from the RAWPs. To successfully engage with the stakeholders through the Panel, it is essential that the Panel has a wider remit. There is the potential for the Panel to be involved more in the strategic management of the Programme and the selection of the research projects. The remit of the User Panel should therefore be

strengthened to include these aspects. This would be assisted by holding the meetings at points in the year which fit with the Programme's timetable for selecting projects (budget setting) and review. The Panel also provides the opportunity to share research amongst various organisations.

Recommendation 4: Review the Programme at the mid-point (three years).

A quinquennial review of the Programme is endorsed, it provides the opportunity to review its impact over a longer period of time, which is beneficial when considering the policy cycle. Since the start of the Programme the Assembly has been developing a set of corporate policies. The Assembly structures and institutional frameworks are now in place and it therefore makes sense to now review the Programme more frequently. We therefore recommend an interim review at the mid-point of the Programme, after three years. This would provide the opportunity to reflect on whether recommendations from the quinquennial review have been taken on board and their impact, without having to wait for a full five year period.

Recommendation 5: Raise research staff's awareness of the procurement process.

The procurement process takes up relatively large amounts of officials' time. This appears partly to be because of a lack of familiarity with the requirements of the procurement process, which for some individuals is only undertaken once or twice a year. To overcome this, we suggest that staff briefings are provided for staff by the Procurement Unit.

Recommendation 6: Investigate alternative procurement methods, including call off contracts.

The procurement process takes a considerable amount of time which leads to problems in commissioning research which can be completed by the end of the financial year. This has contributed to under spends by the Programme. There therefore needs to be flexibility built into the ways contracts are let. Call off and framework contracts provide the opportunity to reduce the procurement processes needed once the research has been identified. It is however essential that the selection of contractors uses a range of criteria including quality, track record etc.

7.4.2 Financial Management

This set of recommendations is inherently linked with the previous set on management of the Programme.

Recommendation 7: Budget to remain at least at its current level.

Whilst the Programme has under spent, this does not necessarily indicate a lack of need for a full research programme at the level of the current budget. Instead, our findings lead

us to conclude that this under spend is due to other factors including using the full range of procurement options (i.e. if there were ways for reducing the time spent for commissioning research, more could be done during the last quarter, when the performance of contracts was known). We therefore recommend retaining the budget at least at its current level.

Recommendation 8: A single budget.

Land use planning and minerals and waste planning each take a predetermined share of the WPRP's BEL. Whilst this does provide a way of carrying out research under both areas and avoids the need to prioritise between the two areas, it does not assist with the effective management of the Programme. In particular it reduces the opportunity to maximise the use of the available budget and run it as a 'programme' through the lack of an adequate single budget. We therefore propose that there should be a single programme. In agreeing the programme of research neither land use planning or minerals and waste research should be disadvantaged. A matrix is proposed in 7.3 to assist with the selection of research.

Recommendation 9: Continue collaborative financing of research projects.

The current practice of supporting other external agencies including CCW and EAW, should be continued, as this not only spreads the resources available, it also ensures that different issues are taken into account, increasing the benefit of the research.

Recommendation 10: Explore co-financing opportunities.

In addition to the collaborative research projects, there are other opportunities for securing additional funding to supplement the WPRP. This includes the provision of nominal sums⁶² to support PhD research students through a University to lever research council⁶³ funding. We understand that the Assembly already sponsors around three places centrally. This would be most suited to supporting 'blue sky' research, providing added value to the WPRP. However, the difficulties of this should also not be underestimated and issues such as recruiting the right research student and the length of time before findings become available. European funding available to support spatial planning⁶⁴ and the European Spatial Planning Perspective (ESPS) could also providing funding opportunities for comparative studies with other European Union (EU) Member States. The Structural Fund Programmes (including Interreg) are currently under review but should be monitored for future opportunities.

⁶² We are advised that the level required is approximately £2,500 for three to four years for one researcher.

⁶³ For planning research this could be the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

⁶⁴ The transnational INTERREG Programmes (2000-2007) provide funding to support research and projects in spatial planning and related issues.

Recommendation 11: Initiatives to support the Research Programme should be pursued, in particular where they are able to maximise the use of the budget

A need was highlighted both by internal staff and external stakeholders of the need to carry out non-research activities, such as funding best practice seminars. This is essential to ensure policy is understood and implemented correctly. A limited number of non-research actions is already carried out under the WPRP, for example funding for the secretariat support of the RAWPs. Opportunities for supporting the Programme, including its dissemination such as briefings for local authority officers and members, should be considered. These would be useful in ensuring the dissemination of best practice and research findings and also in providing practical mechanisms for ensuring the maximum but useful spend of the budget.

Recommendation 12: Rename the Programme to Expand its Scope.

The type of support activity described under Recommendation 11 is outside the remit of pure research. However, renaming the Programme would give it more flexibility for policy development activities. A suggested name is the Wales Planning Policy Development Programme.

Recommendation 13: Introduce a fund to support small scale research by external organisations, if the budget was to increase.

The Social Justice and Regeneration Department of the Assembly is running a New Ideas Fund⁶⁵ which provides up to £10,000 for outside organisations to submit and undertake research on issues related to a set of core objectives⁶⁶. This appears to be a positive way of encouraging new ideas and commissioning research with relatively limited management requirements. However, we would only recommend such a scheme if the Programme's budget were increased significantly. We would also recommend consideration of the outcomes of any review which may be undertaken by the Social Justice and Regeneration Department of the New Ideas Fund, before implementing such a scheme.

7.4.3 Communications

This set of recommendations deals with communications between other Assembly Departments and external organisations. There are some linkages with the recommendations included under financial management.

⁶⁵ This Fund is in its first year and no research project has been completed. A review of the Fund will be carried out to assess its performance.

⁶⁶ Up to ten projects are commissioned.

Recommendation 14: Embrace the work of OCSRO to improve joint working within the Assembly.

There currently appear to be weaknesses in cross-policy research within the Assembly. OCSRO activities are addressing this and we therefore recommend that the Planning Division works with OCSRO to ensure that joint working is improved for the benefit of the WPRP and any resulting policy development.

Recommendation 15: Work with the Strategic Policy Unit to ensure planning policy needs are taken account of in the application of the Policy Gateway Tool.

The Planning Division needs to ensure that it uses the Policy Gateway Tool in its development of policy, building it into the research phase to ensure corporate Assembly policy is built in at as early a stage as possible. It is also important that policy development outside the Planning Division considers their relationship and impact on planning policy and the Division should therefore work closely with the Strategic Policy Unit to ensure planning policy is considered by other policy areas.

Recommendation 16: Use the structural reorganisation (merger) to ensure improved joint working with economic development activities in particular, focusing on land and property functions.

Building on Recommendation 14, we recommend that there is a particular focus on developing linkages with the new Department for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks, where there are land use planning issues, for example implementation and review of the Property Strategy developed by the former WDA, WAVE and the development of the Wales Transport Strategy. These strategies have close links with land use planning and there needs to be linkages between the policies so that they complement and reinforce each other. To take this forward it will be important to identify the key Divisions and individuals who are responsible for relevant policy areas and to regularly meet with them to discuss mutual research programmes and involve key officials in the User Panel and relevant project steering groups.

Recommendation 17: Work with OCSRO to establish a Home Countries⁶⁷ land use planning research network.

There is a need to ensure that the WPRP's limited resources are used effectively and are particularly focused on the needs of Wales. By liaising across the Home Countries, the duplication of research can be minimised. It also provides the opportunity to build in a Welsh perspective into another Country's research projects, where appropriate.

⁶⁷ England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Recommendation 18: Exploit the enhanced Assembly website for establishment of a research library and updates on the progress of research and policy development.

Web sites are now a popular method for identifying and accessing research and keeping informed of forthcoming research. The new Assembly web site provides the opportunity to increase access to research and news in a more structured way. It provides the opportunity to develop a library of research commissioned under the WPRP and web links to other sources of relevant research undertaken by other agencies and Assembly Departments.

Recommendation 19: Reinvigorate the annual newsletter.

The annual newsletter provides a good mechanism for informing outside organisations of updates relating to the Programme. We recommend that this is re-launched and produced on an annual basis. This would complement the website by providing a prompt to individuals and device to raising awareness of the Programme, as opposed to the web site which relies on people visiting it. This could be circulated electronically.

Recommendation 20: Establish a Wales planning research community, using an e-mail alert service.

Building on the newsletter and web-site, developing a virtual Wales planning research community through e-mail, would provide a way of raising the profile of the Programme and keeping key individuals informed of research on an on-going basis. It would signpost to the web site for additional information. The new Assembly website now has the function to enable registration for automatic e-mails to alert registered addresses of updates.

Recommendation 21: Continue to hold dissemination events for research which is produced.

The current practice of holding a dissemination event following the completion of an individual research project should be continued. They provide a particular focus on the specific research and the opportunity to share this widely with interested parties.

7.4.4 Management of Research Projects

This set of recommendations address the management of individual research projects commissioned under the Programme.

Recommendation 22: Introduce an evaluation / review of each research project.

We recommend that a formal review of each research project be undertaken at the end of each contract to reflect on the process. This would focus on learning lessons on the contract process and not on longer term issues such as the contribution toward policy development. It would also help inform future evaluations of the Programme as a whole.

Recommendation 23: Maximise the linkages with the Assembly's central expert teams including economists and statisticians to advise on projects.

The Assembly has specialist central teams of economists and statisticians which are a corporate resource available to support research. OCSRO is encouraging the use of these specialist teams to enhance the value of research. We would recommend the development of closer links to provide an additional resource to support the research commissioned under the WPRP.

Recommendation 24: Continue to form project steering groups, but ensure they have a clear remit for managing whilst not influencing the research findings.

The project steering groups have provided a positive way of overseeing and adding value to each research contract. We therefore recommend that they continue to be used. However, they should be limited in size, and involve relevant individuals including those from external agencies or other Assembly Departments. They should also have a clear remit which is known to the group to ensure that they focus on the management of the research contract and do not perform to an advocacy role.

7.4.5 Overcoming the Barriers to Research Informing Policy

A barrier identified during the review relates to the capacity within the Planning Division to manage research and develop policy. The time difference between the research and the issuing of policy development is mainly due to the time intensive process for drawing up policies. We make one recommendation to address this issue. The other two barriers highlighted during the research concerning ministerial priorities and ownership by appropriate departments or agencies to take forward policy, both link to ensuring a fit with corporate Assembly policy, which are addressed by the recommendations under 7.3.

Recommendation 25: Optimise current resources to commission research and develop policy.

There are issues relating to the current staff capacity within the Planning Division for commissioning and managing research and developing policy. In an ideal situation, we would recommend recruiting at least one further full time member of staff to carry out this work. However, we appreciate that an increase in the staff budget is unlikely. We therefore recommend that current resources are optimised.

Annex One: Bibliography

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Annex Two

WPRP Funded Projects 2000 - 2005

Research Project	Programme / Originator	Publication Date	Assembly Budget H / M / L	Linkage to scoping study objectives	Policy Linkage	Published to Web
Feasibility Study of Crushed Rock Sand in South East Wales	Minerals / Assembly	Sept 2000	Low	- Improving knowledge base	MPPW	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/crushedrock_summ_e.htm
The Sand & Gravel Resources for North West Wales	Minerals / Assembly	2004	High	- Improving knowledge base	MPPW	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/minerals/nw-sand-gravel-sum-e.pdf
Appraisal of Land-Based Sand & Gravel Resources in South East Wales	Minerals / Assembly	Sept 2000	High	- Planning Policy - Improving knowledge base	Linked to MPPW and some evidence linking it with development of MTAN 1.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/sandgravel_exsumm_e.htm
Bristol Channel Marine Aggregates: Resources & Constraints	Minerals / Assembly & DETR	Dec 2000	Low	- Improving knowledge base	It meets conditions set out in MPPW for decision makers to make informed decisions through its 'methodological framework'. Provided data for the development of Marine Aggregates Dredging Policy (South Wales).	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/bristol/contents_e.htm
Comparative Impact Assessment of Land & Marine Sand & Gravel – Executive Summary	Minerals / Assembly	May 2002	High	- Planning Policy - Improving knowledge base	Provided advice in relation to future marine dredging in the Bristol Channel.	Summary: http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/guidance/sand-gravel-e.htm
Marine Aggregate Resource Management & Planning System	Minerals / Assembly	Feb 2002	High	- Improving knowledge base	Decision support system for marine aggregates. More work needed for it to work.	No
Applied Geological Mapping in Mid Wales	Minerals / Assembly	Ongoing (5 years to 2006)	High	- Planning Policy	Forward planning for aggregates and minerals.	Not possible to place these maps on the web.
Survey of Sea Cliffs at the Glamorgan Heritage Coast	Minerals / Assembly	2000	Low		Case specific research	Not published as case specific.
Farm Diversification & the Planning System	Planning / Assembly	Mar 2001	High	- Welsh issues - Planning Policy	The aim was it to inform PPW review.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/farmdiversification/fdps_exsu_e.htm

Research Project	Programme / Originator	Publication Date	Assembly Budget H / M / L	Linkage to scoping study objectives	Policy Linkage	Published to Web
Comparative Spatial Planning Methodologies Research Study	Spatial Plan / Assembly	Feb 2001	Medium	- Welsh issues	Development of the Wales Spatial Plan.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/spatial/spatialresearchstudy-e.pdf
The Application of Accessibility Methodologies to Land Use Planning	Planning / Assembly	May 2001	Medium	- Functioning of Planning System		http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/reports/method/index.htm
North Wales Slate Tips – A Sustainable Source of Secondary Aggregates?	Minerals / Assembly	Jun 2001	Medium	- Welsh issues - Improving knowledge base	Minerals Planning Policy Wales	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/minerals/secondary-aggregates-e.htm
Sustainability Appraisal of UDPs in Wales - Review of background material	Planning / Assembly	Apr 2002	Low	- Develop best practice & guidance	Provides guidance for carrying out sustainability appraisals in UDPs – to ensure sustainability is integral to UDP design.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/devplans/sa-udp-e.pdf
Sustainability Appraisal of UDPs in Wales		Sept 2002				http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/devplans/udp-sas-summary-e.htm
Review of Land Use Planning Indicators – Final Report	Planning / Assembly	Jun 2002	High	- Improving knowledge base	Designed to strengthen the basis of cross cutting approach (social, economic, environment & cultural) to policy development.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/landuse/review-land-use-indicators-e.pdf http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/planning-indicators-e.htm
The Rural Economy & the Planning System	Planning / Assembly	Nov 2002	High	- Welsh Issues (Rural Planning) - Planning Policy	Recommends that TANs should address integrated rural development, particularly TAN 6 – Agriculture & Rural Development.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/rural-econ-e.pdf
Second & Holiday Homes & Land Use Planning System Research Report	Planning / Assembly	Jun 2002	High	- Welsh Issues (Rural Planning) - Planning Policy	Implications for planning policy guidance – to be considered as part of review of TAN 2 (Planning & Affordable Housing).	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/2-homes/contents.htm
Establishing a Methodology for Assessing Aggregates Demand & Supply	Minerals / Assembly	2004	High	- Welsh issues (sustainable development) - Functioning of Planning System	Research commissioned to support the Draft Minerals TAN.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/minerals/exec-summary-e.pdf

Research Project	Programme / Originator	Publication Date	Assembly Budget H / M / L	Linkage to scoping study objectives	Policy Linkage	Published to Web
Flood Risk Assessment for Planning in Wales	Planning / Assembly	Jan 2003	High	- Planning Policy - Functioning of Planning System	Supports TAN 15 (Development & Flood Risk) by providing a methodology for assessing flood hazard & risk in relation to land use planning in Wales.	Executive Summary http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/floodrisk-assessment-e.htm
What sort of countryside do we want?	Planning / Assembly	Aug 2004	High	- Welsh Issues (Rural Planning) - Planning Policy	Potential links for future policy - recommendations for TAN 2, 6 & 12.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/countryside/sum-e.htm
The potential for wind power in urban, industrial & commercial sites in Wales	Planning / Assembly	May 2003	£	- Planning Policy - Improving knowledge base	Tan 8 (Renewable Energy)	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/powsenergy/cover-e.htm
Facilitating Planning for Renewable Energy in Wales: Meeting the Target	Planning / Assembly	Jul 2004	£	- Welsh Issues (Rural Planning) - Planning Policy	Tan 8 (Renewable Energy)	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/arp/index-e.htm
Essential Dwellings in the Open Countryside	Planning / Assembly	Jan 2005	Medium	- Welsh Issues (Rural Planning) - Planning Policy	Could be used for TAN 6 – but not yet updated.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/essential-dwellings-e.pdf
Health Issues & the Planning System	Planning / Assembly	Not completed	Medium	- Welsh Issues (Rural Planning) - Planning Policy	Planning Policy Wales	No
Evaluate Feasibility of Monitoring Previously Developed Land	Planning / Assembly	Apr 2004	Medium	- Welsh issues (Sustainable Development) - Improving knowledge base	Recommends advice on PDL in PPW to be reviewed. TANs which make reference to PDL are: 1, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15 & 16.	Too large for uplifting to web site.
Low Impact Development – Planning Policy & Practice	Planning / CCW	Dec 2002	Low	- Welsh Issues (Rural Policy) - Planning Policy	Could be used to revise TAN 6 - Agriculture & Rural Development.	
Implementing Methodology for Assessing the Environmental Capacity for Primary Aggregates	Minerals / Assembly	2005	High	- Improving knowledge base	Aim: to ensure future primary aggregate supply is obtained from most acceptable locations - types of geological resource environmental capacity of areas to supply aggregates.	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subiplanning/content/research/imaecca-exec-sum-e.pdf

Research Project	Programme / Originator	Publication Date	Assembly Budget H / M / L	Linkage to scoping study objectives	Policy Linkage	Published to Web
Kenfig Pool Quarries Project	Minerals / Assembly	N/A	Medium	-	Case specific	Not published as case specific.
Coastal Monitoring	Minerals / Assembly	N/A	Low	-		No
Transport Policy	Planning / Assembly	N/A	Low	- Planning Policy - Welsh Issues	TAN 18	TAN 18 under review
National Spatial Planning Framework	Spatial Plan / Assembly	2000	Low	- Welsh issues (spatial planning)	Wales Spatial Plan	http://www.wales.gov.uk/subi/planning/content/spatial/spf.rtf
Linguistic Impact Study	Denbighshire CBC	Not complete	Low	- Welsh issues		Ongoing
Flood Risk Pilot Study	Planning / EA	Ongoing	Medium	- Planning Policy		Ongoing
Miscellaneous Payments / Contributions	Planning / Assembly	-	Individual contracts all Low	-	-	-

Annex Three

Study Consultees

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