



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **National Development Framework**

# **Engagement Events**

January / February 2017

# **Event Record**

**July 2017**

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# 1 Introduction

1.1 The Welsh Government is preparing a National Development Framework for Wales (NDF). The NDF will be a 20-year national development plan and will replace the current Wales Spatial Plan.

1.2 The role of the NDF will be to:

- set out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system - nationally, regionally and locally - can deliver it;
- provide direction for Strategic and Local Development Plans and support the determination of Developments of National Significance;
- sit alongside Planning Policy Wales to set out the Welsh Government's planning policies; and
- support national economic, transport, environmental, housing, energy and cultural strategies and ensure they can be delivered through the planning system.

1.3 During the early stages of the development of the NDF, the Welsh Government was keen to hear from a wide range of stakeholders on the issues the NDF should address. Five engagement events were held:

**31 Jan 2017 Parc Y Scarlets, Llanelli**

**2 Feb 2017 City Hall, Cardiff (am)**

**2 Feb 2017 City Hall, Cardiff (pm)**

**7 Feb 2017 Conway Business Centre, Llandudno Junction**

**9 Feb 2017 The Royal Oak Hotel, Welshpool**

1.4 This document is a record of these events and the issues that were raised across Wales.

## 2 Purpose of Engagement Events

2.1 The events were organised in order to:

- raise the awareness of the NDF
- gather views on the issues the NDF should address
- highlight the Call for Evidence and Projects
- provide an opportunity for people to ask Welsh Government officials' questions

2.2 The Statement of Public Participation embeds the principle of engagement into the development of the NDF. It is important there are opportunities for people to shape the development of the NDF before the formal consultation stages commence.

2.3 The events supported the Call for Evidence and Projects that was held from 7 December 2016 to 7 March 2017, and provided the opportunity for discussion and collaborative working to identify issues. The Call for Evidence and Projects was the opportunity for more formal submissions supported by evidence.

2.4 The issues identified across the five events will inform the development of the Issues, Options and Preferred Option paper that will be consulted on in the next stage of the NDF process. This event report will form part of the NDF evidence base.



### 3 Record of Issues Raised

- 3.1 This section is a record of the issues raised across the five events.
- 3.2 The issues raised have been grouped into common themes. This helps provide an overview and identify key issues. As can be seen below, there are clear connections between different issues and it is important that they are considered as a collective whole as well as individual groups of issues.
- 3.3 The purpose at this stage is to summarise the issues as they were raised. There is no assessment or prioritisation. As can be seen there were issues where there was no common consensus and different positions are set out here. The introduction to the events highlighted there are no wrong answers and it is important at this stage that everyone was free to identify what they felt was a key issue for the NDF.

#### Digital Connectivity

- 3.4 This issue of digital connectivity was raised in all events and represents an all Wales issue. The key issues recognise the importance of mobile and digital connectivity in their own right and also the wider role they play in modern society. Resilient communities, pollution, congestion and tourism were all identified as having a relationship with digital connectivity.



- 3.5 A key point was that a NDF prepared 20 years ago, would have struggled to predict the digital connections we require and rely on today. It will be similarly difficult to predict where digital technology will be in 20 years' time. The NDF should provide a framework to support the delivery of new technology and ensure the planning system can be responsive to changing demands, technologies and infrastructure requirements.

#### Key issues

- the NDF should address poor mobile and broadband connection in rural areas
- the NDF should facilitate fast, reliable modern digital infrastructure which is essential to support a dynamic economy

- the NDF should recognise broadband technology can reduce the need to travel; increase productivity; support more flexible working arrangements; reduce isolation for those less able to travel; and reduce congestion and pollution
- the NDF should recognise broadband technology can support communities less well connected to physical services, cultural resources and entertainment. Communities less connected to modern media and IT resources are less attractive places to live
- it is important the NDF recognises tourists visiting Wales expect to be able to access mobile and broadband services
- the NDF should ensure the planning system is responsive to new technology and communications. The positive benefits of new technologies must be able to be provided quickly across the whole of Wales

## Decarbonisation and Energy

3.6 Decarbonisation and energy were issues raised across the whole of Wales. There is a strong awareness about the challenges and opportunities ahead and projects such as Swansea Tidal Lagoon and Wylfa have high profiles, helping generate debate.



3.7 There is recognition that the issues of energy generation and decarbonisation are inter-related and complex. There were informed discussions on the challenge of meeting our energy needs whilst recognising that different options may have social, economic and/or environmental consequences.

3.8 It was noted that the issue of decarbonisation is wider than energy generation. Transport, settlement patterns, housing and economic factors were all discussed as being important issues for the NDF and the planning system when considering decarbonisation objectives.

### Key Issues

- the NDF should provide a national framework to support the delivery of renewable energy
- the NDF should set national renewable energy targets

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- the NDF should give certainty to renewable energy proposals. It should identify individual sites and the required grid connections to support them
- the NDF should support the electrification of transport networks including enabling the provision of charging points for electric vehicles
- the NDF should include strategic sites (similar to TAN 8). Spatial elements from existing planning policy, like the SSAs, could be included directly in the NDF
- TAN 8 has run its course and the NDF provides an opportunity to re-think how we meet our energy needs. Strategic Search Areas should be reviewed. New policy should be subject to full SA/SEA to ensure all impacts are properly understood and assessed
- SSA Areas in TAN 8 are a complete failure. They did not recognise local issues of biodiversity, water retention in upland areas, historic landscapes and the unspoilt landscapes that draw tourists to Wales and are essential to well-being. The NDF should not take them forward
- the NDF should identify where we will produce our energy
- the NDF should align energy generation with growth
- the NDF should support the potential of tidal energy
- the NDF should support hydrogen fuel and consider the establishment of a hydrogen fuel network across Wales
- the NDF should support the potential of solar energy. This could include a national directive on the requirement for solar tiles on new development
- the NDF should establish the 'need' case for new infrastructure as in England
- the NDF should support the Swansea tidal lagoon. It should also consider this project in its widest possible context and as a potential catalyst for other types of development
- energy storage is an increasingly important issue and the NDF should provide a framework for storage solutions as well as generation and grid connections
- the NDF should recognise that the energy sector can support economic growth. It is a sector with the potential to create careers and not just 'jobs'

## National Development Framework

- the NDF should consider both large scale and smaller scale energy generation and provide a framework able to support different solutions for different areas
- the NDF should consider how energy policy can be localised and benefits from local generation can be passed to local communities. Energy is more expensive in rural areas
- the NDF should support the development of tidal lagoons
- Wylfa Newydd Nuclear Power Station doesn't go far enough in terms of its wider benefits. NDF should ensure the positive benefits for the wider region are maximised. It is a project of national significance



- the NDF should consider identifying Anglesey as an energy island
- the NDF should consider Wales' position on fracking
- it's important to understand the unintended consequences that could arise from decarbonisation policies and plan accordingly
- the NDF should ensure the planning system is aligned to respond to the requirements of COP21
- work undertaken by Local Planning Authorities on renewable energy assessments which identify the potential for solar energy, wind energy and district heating networks should inform the NDF

## Economy (including Tourism, Rural Economy and Agriculture)

3.9 The importance of a strong economy was identified across all the events in Wales. Whilst concerns were raised regarding the strength of the economy, particularly in comparison to other nations, there was a general feeling that there are many opportunities available for the Welsh economy. Rather than focus on 'winners', the NDF should seek to provide the environment for different solutions to be found and for new opportunities to be supported.



3.10 One of the most frequently raised issues was the importance of tourism to Wales. There was a strong feeling that tourism is one of few all-Wales sectors of the economy; that it is important to rural and urban areas alike; that it has the opportunity to expand; and that it (in comparison with other large sectors of the economy) retains the revenues it raises in Wales. It was also considered that tourism is strongly related to many other outcomes of the planning system. Landscapes, transport connections, built heritage, culture, language, interesting places, events and so forth are all influenced by the planning system and in turn impact upon tourism. A healthy tourism industry can be seen as the product of lots of successful activities and interventions elsewhere.

3.11 It was expressed across the events that the NDF should not adopt a 'one size fits all' approach to supporting economic growth. The NDF should not be afraid of advocating different approaches to rural and urban areas if this is appropriate.

3.12 It was considered that the emerging city regions offer the potential for a major re-think on how we consider regional issues; and we should think much wider in decision making than local authority boundaries. It was considered crucial that the NDF supports the city region approach and ensures the planning system is central to the decision-making process.

### Key Issues

- a long term industrial strategy is required for Wales and the NDF's role should be to support its implementation
- the NDF must consider where we will trade in the future and how our

goods will get there. The planning system must support the delivery of this economic/transport infrastructure

- the NDF should focus on tourism as one of the key economic opportunities for the whole of Wales
- when considering proposals for the NDF, their impact upon tourism must be fully understood and assessed. It is important that the pursuit of one objective does not unintentionally damage the tourism sector
- it is vital the Welsh Government Tourism Strategy informs the NDF
- the NDF should improve transport connections along the West Coast. This will support both tourism and promote economic opportunities
- education and skills are fundamentally linked to economic performance. NDF should support all actions that seek to improve these
- the NDF should ensure the planning system prioritises jobs as well as housing
- there is an economic divide between North and South Wales. NDF should seek to tackle this and ensure the North receives investment and new infrastructure to close the divide
- the NDF should explore the Scottish approach of having a clearly defined economic strategy, focussing on smart specialisation and supporting agriculture and forestry
- the NDF should recognise strong transport links are vital to a strong economy
- the NDF should set an overall economic (GVA growth target) and housing growth (household growth level) target for Wales
- east-west links in North and South Wales are fundamental to the Welsh economy. The NDF should ensure investment is focussed on maintaining and upgrading these
- north-south links are poor. The NDF must consider how these can be improved if economic links are to be strengthened
- the NDF should recognise that the energy sector can support economic growth. It is a sector with the potential to create careers and not just 'jobs'
- the NDF must provide a vision and strategy for the rural economy. The planning system must recognise that different solutions will be required for some issues. Rural resilience should be a key theme for the NDF
- the NDF should support growth that creates careers and not just numbers

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of jobs. This is particularly important in rural Wales where young people have to leave to further their careers

- the NDF must support growing the economy from within Wales rather than relying on inward investment which ultimately has no roots in Wales
- the legacy of heavy industry is often considered a local issue. The NDF should look at areas affected by these issues collectively rather than individually and adopt a national approach to addressing this issue



- the NDF should both support and be informed by Economic Local Strategies and the work of Economic Regional Boards
- the NDF must support strong town centres and ensure new development supports them
- the NDF should tackle the economic imbalance across North Wales
- the NDF should identify all Enterprise Zones and give them status in the development plan system in Wales
- to support Welsh language objectives, the NDF should support economic opportunities in Welsh speaking areas. People leaving to find work is one of the biggest issues impacting upon the language
- the M4 and A55 are key growth corridors. The NDF should improve and maximise the opportunities for these corridors

- the NDF should support the agricultural sector and ensure it can respond to the challenges of Brexit. Rural diversification will be a major issue in future years and we must prepare for it now
- the NDF must help create an economic base for Mid Wales
- the NDF must ensure that the planning system supports the extraction and supply of minerals necessary to deliver physical growth and new infrastructure
- the NDF should consider the role of universities. They are significant business in their own right; they are responsible for much new building and development; and they have an important role in the knowledge economy
- the NDF must support self-employment opportunities. Strong resilience can be built on economies with high levels of economic activity
- the NDF should consider the restoration of the Montgomery Canal. It would involve amendments to national trunk roads. The benefits of restoration would be wide-ranging and could deliver significant economic benefits

## Successful Places

3.13 An important theme that emerged from the events was the role of the planning system in creating successful places. In addition to the need to focus on housing, transport, economy, language and so forth in their own right, it was felt equally important to understand the relationship between these different aspects and the places they create.



3.14 It was advocated that the planning system should task itself with shaping places and ensuring that new development creates places that work and which people want to live in. There was criticism that the planning system had focussed too much in the past on issues such as the delivery of housing numbers and it had lost sight of the role new development has in creating communities.

## Key Issues

- the NDF should focus on 'places' and ensure that the concept of creating liveable, connected, attractive, resilient, healthy communities is at the

heart of the planning system

- the NDF should recognise that the communities in which we live are integral to our well-being
- the NDF should ensure that the impact upon communities of new development is fully understood
- isolation is an issue the planning system can help tackle. In both urban and rural areas there are isolated communities and the NDF should set out how the planning system must address this
- the NDF should set out clearly the principles that are important to creating good places and ensure the planning system delivers these at all levels
- the NDF should define principles not projects
- the NDF should create places that support positive healthy lifestyles and improve people's well-being

## Housing and Societal Change

3.15 The role of the planning system in facilitating the delivery of new housing is well recognised. For certain types of issue, like economic growth, the planning system is one of a number of levers which can influence outcomes and it is unlikely to be the most significant lever. For house building, the role of the planning system is more direct and easily understood.

Development plans are one of the main tools influencing the location and scale of housing development.



3.16 With this in mind, housing was one of the main issues raised across the 5 events. There was no consensus on the role of the NDF. Some considered the NDF should be prescriptive, providing both housing targets and identifying locations for development. Others considered that the local level was the most appropriate platform for assessing housing need and identifying locations.

3.17 The changing nature of society was an issue raised across Wales. An aging population combined with younger people leaving rural parts of Wales, could combine to create communities with significant levels of older populations and it was uncertain what this could mean. It was also discussed whether the family type housing favoured by the large house builders, would provide the housing stock we need to house an older population.

3.18 An important point was made in relation to housing numbers. There was a clear recognition (a) there is a need for new housing in parts of Wales and (b) for those in housing need in particular, the lack of available housing is a crisis situation. Alongside these views, there were interesting discussions about the negative outcomes that can arise from focussing too heavily on housing numbers.

### **Key Issues**

- the NDF must set out where new houses are required across Wales and the scale of growth
- the NDF should identify national housing targets
- the NDF and national targets can help de-politicise the delivery of housing at local and regional levels. Decisions locally may be reflective of local political issues rather than a response to local needs
- if the objective of the Welsh Government is to increase house building, it should task the NDF with delivering this
- the NDF must ensure local democratic accountability is retained. Local housing issues and need are best addressed at the local level and through local development plans
- the NDF should ensure housing is understood in full context and should not focus on the pursuit of numbers for numbers sake. It is important to create communities and not just estates. The impact of new housing on schools, shops and services is often not considered
- the NDF could identify primary, secondary and tertiary housing areas across Wales. This would provide a focus for growth
- failure of the local planning system to address Gypsy/Traveller issues should mean that this issue is elevated to the national level and addressed by the NDF
- the NDF should set an overall economic (GVA growth target) and housing growth (household growth level) target for Wales
- the NDF should be informed by the areas where house builders and investors wish to build in. Failure to do so will result in a spatial strategy that will not be delivered
- it is a significant concern that the provision of new housing is not aligned with the future needs of society. The NDF must address this
- different parts of Wales are facing different demographic challenges. The NDF must ensure different solutions are available to tackle depopulation

in rural Wales and a lack of housing in the bigger, urban areas

- house builders do not have the capacity to build significant volumes of new housing simultaneously in both North and South Wales. The NDF should not expect that by identifying numbers or areas for new housing, they will automatically be built
- in considering the location of new housing growth, the NDF must ensure transport and connectivity are fully considered
- the planning system is encouraging land banking. Housing sites are allocated for valuation purposes rather than the building of new houses. The NDF should address this
- the NDF should recognise that the social fabric is important. Wales should be a nice place to live rather than simply somewhere to make money
- the NDF should consider the relationships with adjoining English areas. There are opportunities in Monmouthshire for example to accommodate growth to meet the Bristol market

## Transport and Connectivity

3.19 In terms of the number of times it was raised and discussed, transport was the biggest issue across the 5 events. In comparison with other issues, transport is the issue which is best understood in an all-Wales context. Whereas housing issues, for example, are often discussed at a regional or local level, the issues relating to transport are frequently expressed in terms of national north-south links, regional connectivity, routes to England or international connections.



3.20 Transport is experienced everyday - both good and bad - and where there are problems, these are very evident and directly felt. It is also the case that everyone in Wales shares the same transport infrastructure.

3.21 Transport issues were often raised in relation to other key objectives. There is a close relationship between economic growth and transport for example. It was considered important that transport is not considered in isolation or the NDF seek to address 'transport issues'. Rather, the NDF should continually

ask “how would this transport investment directly support the delivery of other aims?”

- 3.22 The importance of the proximity to strong English regions was a common theme. It was considered this was a positive advantage to be exploited and improved transport connections were the opportunity to achieve this. The NDF should not be afraid to positively think wider than Wales if this is to our advantage and politics should not prevent this.
- 3.23 The metro proposal in South Wales was recognised as being a significant opportunity to address long-standing regional issues and the NDF should support its delivery. Again, similar to the themes above, it was discussed how transport investment in a metro should be used to tackle regeneration, social, housing, climate change and economic issues and we must ensure we do not look at these schemes as ‘transport’ schemes only. In North Wales, proposals are less advanced but there is clear interest in understanding how a metro could help achieve their objectives.
- 3.24 The final point that emerged strongly was the transport issues affecting rural Wales. It was felt that discussion of new motorways, metros and airports could cause rural issues to be overlooked. A point made repeatedly was that different parts of Wales will require different solutions. In some parts of Wales new road investment is required and it is important this does not get lost in the wider discussion of the different transport solutions required elsewhere.

### **Key Issues**

- the NDF, as a national plan, must support improved links with England for all modes of transport
- the NDF must ensure links between major cities across the UK are improved
- Wales has good proximity to major English regions. Birmingham, Manchester/Liverpool and Bristol are all close and the NDF should consider how it can maximise our connections to these areas
- Cardiff airport is underperforming. The NDF must provide a framework for the opportunities this offers to be maximised, including improving transport connections to the airport
- the NDF should consider the need for a new, better located national airport
- Wales’ topography and the distance between the main urban areas in the North and South are significant barriers. The NDF should focus on east-

## National Development Framework

west connections in North and South Wales and recognise the importance of connections with England

- consideration of east-west links in north and south Wales should focus on rail as well as road
- the main road network through Wales is a 'Y' shape with the A470 splitting into the A470/A483. The NDF should support developing this into an 'X' with a road to Swansea to improve connections
- east-west links are well established in Wales. The NDF shouldn't focus on improving these further at the expense of north-south links
- public transport should be the focus for major national investment
- the NDF should establish a national public transport network



- the NDF should support a North Wales metro
- the NDF should maximise the benefits of HS2. HS2 reaching Crewe represents a significant opportunity
- the NDF should support improvements to the rail links from Chester to Cardiff including double-track in places and electrified signalling
- links between north and south Wales are poor and the NDF should provide a framework for their improvement
- Wales' ports and harbours are key national infrastructure. The NDF must ensure they are supported. They represent our key gateways with the

wider world and will be increasingly important as international relations change in the future

- active travel solutions must be considered when the NDF considers transport issues. The NDF should ensure cycling and walking informs how Wales grows and changes
- the rail network is essential national infrastructure and has a key role in supporting growth, addressing the challenge of climate change, air quality, inaccessibility, tourism and changing the way we move goods and people across Wales. The NDF must prioritise investment in rail
- the NDF should identify rail links between Aberystwyth and Carmarthen and more direct routes from Holyhead to Cardiff
- the NDF should improve transport connections between Aberystwyth and Carmarthen
- the NDF should improve transport connections along the West Coast. This will support both tourism and promote economic opportunities
- the NDF should support and facilitate the electrification of the railway lines across Wales
- major projects outside of Wales like HS2 should inform the NDF
- the NDF should improve connectivity between nation walking and cycling routes and the Wales Coastal Path
- the M4 and A55 are key growth corridors. The NDF should improve and maximise the opportunities for these corridors
- decisions made on transport infrastructure cannot be separated from environmental impacts and climate change. The NDF process must
- recognise this and ensure decisions are informed by their full context
- the A470 is a key national route and should be invested in to open up economic opportunities in Mid Wales
- the A55 is a key national route and should be invested in to open up economic opportunities in North Wales
- rural transport is a major issue across Wales and the NDF should ensure this is addressed
- the NDF should provide a framework for supporting and enhancing transport links with Ireland and Europe
- South Wales Metro is a significant investment opportunity with the potential to affect change across a wide regional area. The NDF should ensure the planning system supports its delivery and maximises the

benefits arising from it

- opportunities for Mid Wales arising from their proximity to the English midlands are not fully realised. The NDF should consider how these links can be improved and Mid Wales can benefit from economic opportunities across the border
- the NDF should support the M4 relief road and ensure the opportunities it offers are maximised to support the delivery of other objectives
- the proposed route of the M4 does not open up the opportunity for new, complimentary development alongside it and this is a significant failing
- the NDF process should examine whether we have enough container port capacity in Wales and if not, make provision for expansion
- as well as providing infrastructure, the NDF should consider how the interface between different transport modes can be improved and how existing transport infrastructure operates. Inefficient use of existing transport infrastructure and poor connectivity between different modes influence people's choices. New investment only should not be the sole focus of the NDF
- transport is often considered on a large scale. For example north-south links or connections with Ireland. The NDF should consider how we will travel from place to place. Major investment that improves connectivity with Europe for example is welcome but may not address people's everyday transport problems
- the NDF should consider the restoration of the Montgomery Canal. It would involve amendments to national trunk roads. The benefits of restoration would be wide-ranging and could deliver significant economic benefits

## Natural Environment

3.25 Wales has extensive areas of natural landscapes of the highest quality and in land take terms is largely rural. How we use the natural environment underpins much of Welsh life. Food, water, energy, tourism, flood catchments, forestry, minerals, agriculture and so on were all identified as being dependent on our natural environment and essential to our well-being.



- 3.26 Discussions in the events acknowledged there are parts of Wales which warrant the highest levels of protection from the negative consequences of new development. Alongside this view however, there was a clear sense that when considering the NDF and the natural environment, it is important to think beyond protection for its own sake. Appropriately controlled development, in the right location can help meet a wide range of the Government's objectives. It is important different solutions can be found to meeting different challenges.
- 3.27 There were strong views expressed that policies in the past had not fully considered their wider implications. Energy infrastructure and in particular wind turbines were cited as an example.
- 3.28 A common issue was tourism and the importance of understanding how actions in the natural environment can impact on the tourism sector.

### **Key Issues**

- the NDF should recognise the importance of green infrastructure and support the development of green networks
- the NDF provides a key opportunity to support the development of green infrastructure; understand the connections between green features from the local to national level; and how impacts at one level can impact on another
- the NDF provides an important opportunity to think strategically about Wales' natural and green infrastructure and ensure this is considered equally alongside issues such as transport and the economy
- the rural natural environment should be recognised as an important resource. It should not be protected simply for its own sake and subject to restrictive planning policies. Rather the NDF should recognise its value as an asset and provide a framework for it to contribute to our social, economic and environmental objectives
- the NDF could identify areas where there will be a focus on new green infrastructure, river catchment areas and agri-environment schemes rather than traditional, physical development
- the NDF should provide strong support for recognised special areas including the national parks and AONBs
- landscape and the natural environment are fundamentally important to the Welsh tourism economy. The NDF should ensure that changes to the landscape are carefully assessed and managed and negative impacts prevented. The impacts can be economic as well as environmental

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- management of the natural environment and landscapes are intrinsically linked to farming. The NDF must ensure that the objectives seeking to protect, manage and utilise the natural environment are aligned with objectives for agriculture
- food, energy and water come from our natural environment. The NDF must recognise this and ensure decisions taken support the role of the natural environment in meeting our basic needs. The planning system must be open to new ideas and ways of working to support these sectors
- access to the natural environment and facilities to support its use are important. The NDF should ensure that as well as protecting and managing natural environments, they are accessible and useable
- the NDF must ensure that the planning system supports the extraction and supply of minerals necessary to deliver physical growth and new infrastructure



- the NDF should provide a context for the protection of peat land
- the NDF should set out a national tree planting programme
- the NDF should consider the need for more reservoirs
- the NDF should consider at the national level a strategy for addressing air quality issues
- flood risk and coastal retreat are important national issues and should be considered at a national level to inform through the NDF
- the NDF should be informed by shoreline management plans
- the relationship between the NDF and the NRP and Area Statements is important and they must work together

## Spatial Strategy

3.29 In addition to the discussions on specific topics and issues, the events gave rise to discussions on the nature of a spatial strategy for Wales. Having spent time identifying the issues, there were discussions around how a national development plan might begin to address them.



3.30 There were many references to the development of a spatial strategy that included new settlements, although others suggested that issues of depopulation and regeneration would be harder to tackle in existing settlements if this were the case.

3.31 A strong theme was the need to ensure that different solutions are applied to different areas. It was considered that the planning system had not sufficiently done this in the past. Retail, housing, energy and transport were identified as examples of where urban focussed solutions had been applied to rural areas where the nature of these issues is different.

3.32 When looking at Wales spatially, there was a lot of focus on regions. In discussing national strategic issues, this was often done at the regional level and based on an understanding of how different regions within Wales relate to each other. The consideration of regions and the NDF's role in providing a context for them will be important when developing the spatial strategy for the NDF.

3.33 The importance of a flexible strategy was expressed across the events. It was felt the word 'framework' was an important one in the name 'National Development Framework'. Given the impossibility of seeking to plan for every eventuality, the NDF strategy should instead provide a direction of travel, an overview of key aims, objectives and principles and allow space for different solutions to be applied. This was considered even more important in light of issues such as Brexit, where full impacts are yet to be understood and the need for new solutions will be critical.

### Key Issues

- the NDF should cherish Wales as an idea
- the NDF should consider new settlements
- the NDF should consider new settlements along both existing and

proposed key transport corridors

- the NDF should define principles not projects
- the NDF strategy must understand Wales in the context of English regions. It should even be prepared to show Welsh regions as part of larger English regions if that is what the evidence shows and not be constrained by the border
- the NDF strategy must be informed by the topographical constraints Wales' has. Advocating north-south investment is unrealistic. We will never be able to replicate between North Wales and Cardiff, the links that exist now between North Wales and Manchester/Liverpool
- the NDF strategy should focus on tackling the north-south divide
- the NDF strategy should focus on the gateways to Wales
- the NDF strategy should focus on Cities and Enterprise Zones



- the NDF strategy should move away from the centralised pattern of growth and support an approach based on dispersed 'service-hub' settlements, based on small-medium sized towns better able to serve a dispersed population
- the NDF strategy should consider Swansea and Cardiff as economic hubs supported by improved transport links
- the NDF strategy should include the current, existing spatial policies in PPW and the TANs
- the NDF should set an overall economic (GVA growth target) and housing growth (household growth level) target for Wales. This would inform the

NDF strategy

- the NDF strategy should be based on an understanding of the hierarchy of development plans and how they will work together
- the NDF should provide a clear context for the regions of Wales including setting targets for SDPs
- the NDF should identify 4 regions – North Wales, Mid Wales, Swansea Region and Cardiff Region
- the NDF strategy must determine whether we are planning for what we want Wales to be in 20 years' time or what it will be like
- the NDF strategy should be based on an understanding of the hierarchy of settlements
- as well as where, the NDF strategy should set out how development should take place. This will help address the well-being objectives and other issues
- the NDF strategy must determine whether the approach to planning in Wales is to be top-down or bottom-up. Each approach would result in a different spatial strategy
- the NDF strategy must determine whether it is a driver of change or an enabler of change
- the NDF strategy will be informed by the scale of projects it includes
- the NDF strategy should move beyond land use and consider other sectors that the planning system can support
- the NDF strategy must acknowledge non-devolved developments and provide a context for them
- the NDF strategy must not adopt a one-size fits all approach. Different solutions are required for different areas. Urban responses to issues should not uncritically be applied to rural areas
- the NDF strategy must recognise parts of Wales are very different from each other. It is recognised urban and rural areas are different. It must also be recognised there are often very significant differences between different rural parts of Wales. Likewise, the issues and opportunities facing urban areas in Wales can vary significantly
- Wales is different to the rest of the UK. This is often presented negatively (i.e. economic indicators). It is also a strength. The NDF strategy should embrace this and not be afraid to develop a distinctly Welsh approach

- the NDF strategy should be flexible. A rigid approach, unable to respond to changing circumstances will constrain the planning system and fail to deliver the NDF's objectives
- the NDF strategy should consider all the Well Being Goals and not focus on selected ones

## Deliverability

3.34 A key, reoccurring theme that emerged from the events was deliverability. There was strong feeling that policies and projects in the NDF must be deliverable and the success of the NDF would be measured against this.



3.35 The need for infrastructure to be delivered first was stressed across Wales. It was considered infrastructure delivery provides great certainty and de-risks investment decisions. It provides a very explicit direction for where new development should go. A criticism of the planning system is it appropriately determines how places should change, informed by existing and proposed infrastructure but has no control over infrastructure delivery. Problems arise when growth predicated on infrastructure improvements goes ahead but the infrastructure it will rely on does not.

3.36 Some expressed the view that Government strategies had been too ambitious in the past and had sought to do too many things. There is a balance to be struck between setting a vision for the future which is ambitious but also realistic. Whilst ambition and a positive desire for change is a good thing, it can also avoid the need for difficult choices. A reference was made for the need to avoid a 'shopping list' approach.

3.37 A point was made about the need for alignment between Government and non-government plans and strategies. The planning process was considered a well-established mechanism for bringing together a range of different plans, strategies and evidence bases and the NDF was recognised as having a key role in rationalising and expressing the Government's spatial policies. Strong concerns were expressed that already there was the potential for confusion between the NDF, the National Infrastructure Commission and the National Resource Plan. Likewise Strategic Development Plans and Area Statements were identified as having the potential for confusion. Successful delivery of

the Government's objectives will rely on a clearly stated objective and a co-ordinated approach to achieve it.

### Key Issues

- deliverability must be a key priority for the NDF. Ambition is important but unhelpful if it can never be achieved
- the NDF must be based on the provision of infrastructure up front and before the development which will rely on it commences. Funding solutions must be explored and solutions found
- Welsh Government should forward fund the infrastructure in the NDF. Certainty of delivery will directly support investment
- the NDF should be used to make decisions and prioritise where investment will be made



- the NDF should demonstrate leadership and this includes delivering on projects
- the NDF must ensure there are incentives to build in areas currently not viable if the strategy is to rely on development in these areas
- the NDF should provide a platform for the private sector to invest. It does not have to focus only on public sector investment. It can create the conditions and certainty to allow private investment to be made in Wales
- the NDF must provide a clear, focussed vision. This will allow decisions on investment by both the public and private sectors to be assessed against the contribution they make towards delivering this vision

- the NDF should be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The NDF must be supported by funding
- the NDF must be aligned with other key plans and strategies. The National Infrastructure Commission, City Deals, Strategic Development Plans, the Government's emerging cross-cutting National Strategies, the National Resource Plan and Area Statements, health board plans, transport and economic plans are all being prepared at the moment. Strong alignment can deliver results. A non-aligned approach reduces effectiveness and can even undermine the delivery of stated objectives
- the NDF process should be used to help reduce the conflict between different Welsh Government policy and requirements
- the NDF can have a role providing a new regulatory framework to respond to changes arising from Brexit

## Welsh Language & Culture

3.38 The discussions around Welsh language considered the reasons why Welsh speakers often leave the areas they are originally from. Economic opportunity was cited as a key reason and it was the case that some people who wished to stay, couldn't because there was no suitable employment available. A point that was made several times across the events was the need for improved economic opportunities to focus on careers and not just 'jobs'.



### Key Issues

- the NDF must include Welsh language and cultural heritage
- the NDF should recognise that broadband technology can support communities less well connected to physical services, cultural resources and entertainment. Communities less connected to modern media and IT resources are less attractive places to live and this can contribute to depopulation. This can adversely impact upon Welsh speaking areas
- the NDF should support growth that creates careers and not just numbers of jobs. This is particularly important in rural Wales where young people have to leave to further their careers. This can adversely impact upon Welsh speaking areas

## National Development Framework

- to support Welsh language objectives, the NDF should support economic opportunities in Welsh speaking areas. People leaving to find work is one of the biggest issues impacting upon the language
- the NDF strategy should recognise that Welsh culture is wider than language and the historic environment. The Welsh valleys for example have a unique cultural heritage
- to support the Welsh language, the NDF must support growing the economy from within Wales rather than relying on inward investment which ultimately has no roots in Wales
- it is unclear what the NDF can do spatially to support the Welsh language



graphic denotes key issues arising from the events

## **Appendices**

### **A. Structure of Engagement Events**

### **B. Attendees**

## **Appendix A**

### **Structure of Engagement Events**

- **Engagement Event Pack**
- **Presentation Slides**

# **National Development Framework**

## **Engagement Event Pack**

January / February 2017

## 1 Introduction

This pack supports the National Development Framework (NDF) Engagement Events being held by the Welsh Government in January and February 2017. These events are the first engagement activities that have been undertaken in the development of the NDF and we welcome contributions from all.

This pack contains information on the NDF and work done to date. We ask that you consider the information here in advance of the event.

## 2 What is the NDF?

The NDF will be a 20 year national development plan. It will replace the current Wales Spatial Plan on publication in March 2020. The role of the NDF is to:

- set out where nationally important growth and infrastructure is needed and how the planning system - nationally, regionally and locally - can deliver it;
- provide direction for Strategic and Local Development Plans and support the determination of Developments of National Significance;
- sit alongside Planning Policy Wales, which sets out the Welsh Government's planning policies and provides the context for land use planning; and
- support national economic, transport, environmental, housing, energy and cultural strategies and ensure they can be delivered through the planning system.

## 3 What is the timetable for preparing the NDF?

The timetable and process for the preparation of the NDF is set out in the Statement of Public Participation. This also contains information on how we will engage with people. It can be viewed here:-

<http://gov.wales/topics/planning/national-development-framework-for-wales/statement-of-public-participation/?lang=en>

## 4 Why are we holding this event?

There are three main reasons:

1. To give us the opportunity to explain what the NDF is and answer any questions you have;

2. To give you the opportunity to tell us what you think are the main issues for the NDF and how they should be addressed;
3. To explain how you can get involved as the process moves forward, particularly in the current Call for Evidence and Projects.

## **5 What would we like you to contribute at the event?**

We are at an early stage in the preparation of the NDF. Before we reach the stage of formalising the NDF, we would like to hear what you think are the key national issues for the planning system in Wales. This informal engagement will help us identify what people think the NDF should do and what the priorities are for the planning system. There are no wrong answers and we are keen to hear a range of different perspectives.

We will ask people at the events to identify on maps of Wales what they think are the key issues and to consider spatially how they could be addressed; and for information on projects which could potentially be included in the NDF.

## **6 How will the contributions made at the event be used?**

A record of the Engagement Events will be prepared summarising the events across Wales and the issues raised. We will also publish the maps collected through the events to illustrate the views expressed across Wales.

The Event Record will form part of the NDF evidence base and will inform the preparation of the NDF Issues, Options and Preferred Option Paper that will be prepared and consulted on later this year.

## **7 How does this engagement work relate to previous Welsh Government engagement?**

In preparing the NDF, we will draw on other Government policy and strategy work that has already been undertaken. The NDF will build on contributions already made by stakeholders across Wales on, for example, work such as Well Being of Future Generations Act. We do not intend to re-visit this work or start a new conversation. Rather we wish to continue the conversation and consider with you, the role the planning system can play in meeting established goals.

## **8 Will there be further opportunities to be involved?**

Yes. There will be future engagement events and formal consultations.

We recognise that the Engagement Events will focus on a broad overview of issues. The Call for Evidence and Projects provides the opportunity to submit to us a fuller, evidenced response.

Further information on the Call for Evidence and Projects is available on the Welsh Government website:

<http://gov.wales/topics/planning/national-development-framework-for-wales/call-for-evidence-and-projects/?lang=en>

## **9 Will the NDF be subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment?**

Yes. We intend to undertake an integrated approach to these assessments (and other assessments including health and inequalities for example) to ensure that a wide range of social, environmental, economic and cultural considerations inform the development of the NDF. This process will help us understand the interrelationships between these different areas, identify risks that action in one area could have in another and maximise the opportunities to deliver benefits across a range of policy areas. The NDF will also be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

## **10 Where can I get more information on the NDF?**

The Welsh Government website is the best source of information <http://gov.wales>.

The NDF team can be contacted at:

Telephone: 0300 025 3744 or 0300 025 6657

Email: [ndf@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ndf@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

## 11 Agenda

The email sent to you will confirm whether you are attending a morning or afternoon event.

### National Development Framework Stakeholder Event

<b>10:00</b>	Registration, tea and coffee
<b>10:30</b>	Housekeeping & Purpose of Today
<b>10:35</b>	WG presentation: Introduction to the NDF
<b>10:45</b>	Introduction to Workshop
<b>10:50</b>	Workshop: What are the key issues for the National Development Framework?
<b>11:40</b>	Feedback from Workshops
<b>12:05</b>	Short Break & Wall Panels
<b>12:15</b>	WG speaker: Call for Evidence and Projects & Next Steps
<b>12:20</b>	Questions
<b>12:30</b>	Event close

WG officials and speakers will be available for informal discussions / questions at the close of the event.

## Presentation Slides



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

[www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)

# National Development Framework

## Part 1

### Housekeeping & Purpose of Today

## **Housekeeping**

- Toilets
- Fire Exit
- Photos
- Welsh Government Staff

## **Purpose of Today**

1. Inform you about the NDF
2. Listen to your views on key issues for the NDF
3. Explain how you can submit evidence and details of potential projects to us
4. Answer your questions

## Part 2

### Introduction to the NDF

## Context

*"The issues we face can only be tackled through **new ways of working**, including joined up programmes which reinforce and build on what people and communities are doing for themselves..... we will work across traditional boundaries to deliver our priorities.*

*Our work must be guided by financial responsibility and realism. Austerity imposed by the UK Government continues, and every objective analysis of the potential impact of Brexit says we should be prepared for a shrinking economy. So now, more than ever being in Government means **choices** and we will face tough ones."*

**Carwyn Jones**  
First Minister of Wales

## **What is the NDF?**

- A 20 year national land use development plan setting out the policies of the Welsh Ministers for the development and use of land
- Can identify new Developments of National Significance
- Provide direction for strategic and local development plans

## **Why is it important?**

- Weight in future decision making
- Major national developments
- Strategic and local development plans must conform
- A key tool in supporting and coordinating Government policy
- Well Being goals

## **Where are we now?**

- Start of the process
- Gathering evidence that identifies issues
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Identifying potential projects
- Redraft of PPW to reflect WBFGA and NDF
- Consultation in autumn 2017 on the Issues and Options

**Part 3**  
**Workshops**

## What are the key issues for the NDF?

- New ways of working
- Difficult choices
- For example:
  - Demographic change
  - Decarbonisation
  - Connectivity
  - Brexit?

## Workshop

### **What are the key issues for the National Development Framework?**

### **Which key projects can help address these issues?**

- No wrong answers
- Think about both the issues and the spatial dimension at a national scale
- For example, if you believe the NDF should promote national-scale renewable energy generation, where should this be?



**Part 4**  
**Short Break & Wall Panels**

**Part 5**  
**Call for Evidence and Projects & Next Steps**

## Call for Evidence & Projects for the NDF

- The Call runs until **7<sup>th</sup> March 2017**
- Details on the Welsh Government website
- National projects
- 7 Well-Being Goals

## Timetable

Date	Stage
7 March 2017	Call for Evidence & Projects ends
March/April 2017	Consultation on the NDF SA/SEA Scoping Report
September 2017	Consultation on the Issues, Options & Preferred Options for the NDF and Sustainability Appraisal
January 2019	Consultation on Draft NDF and Sustainability Appraisal
October 2019	National Assembly consideration of NDF
March 2020	Publication of NDF

**Part 6**  
**Questions**

## **Appendix B**

### **Attendees**

## Llanelli

Aberystwyth University	One Voice Wales
Abergwili and Llanllawddog Community Councils	Natural Resources Wales
Anderson Planning and Development Ltd	Llandyfaelog Community Council
Asbri Planning	Pelenna Community Council
Brecon Beacons National Park Authority	Pembrokeshire CC
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales	Persimmon Homes
Carmarthenshire CC	RKS West Wales
Coleg Sir Gar	Swansea County Council
Cymdeithas yr Iaith	Taylor Wimpey
Federation of Master Builders	Wales Environment Link
GVA	Wales TUC
Home Builders Federation	
Innogy Renewables UK Ltd	

## Cardiff (am)

Asbri Planning	Planning and Environment Bar Association
Barratt Homes	One Voice Wales
Barry Town Council	Natural Resources Wales
Barton Willmore	Newport County Council
Blaenau Gwent CBC	Redrow
Bridgend County Borough Council	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Canal and River Trust	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Caerphilly County Borough Council	School of Law and Politics, Cardiff University
City of Cardiff Council	South Wales Landscape Liaison Group
Federation of Small Businesses	St Fagans Community Council
Llandough Community Council	Taylor Wimpey
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	Tidal Lagoon Power
Monmouthshire County Council	Torfaen County Borough Council
Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners	Women Connect First
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	WYG

## Cardiff (pm)

Age Cymru

Arcadis

Arup

Barratt Homes

Boyer Planning

Cardiff and Vale College

City of Cardiff Council

Cardiff Metropolitan University

Chepstow Town Council

Civil Engineering Contractors Association

Coleg y Cymoedd

Geldards

GVA

Herefordshire Council

Langstone Community Council

Chepstow Town Council

NHS Wales

Planning Aid Wales

Planning Inspectorate Wales

Vattenfall UK

Victorian Society

Welsh Water

## Llanduno Junction

Abergele Town Council	Gwynedd CC
Anwyl Housing	Gwynedd County Council
Bay of Colwyn Town Council	Health and Safety Executive
Beech Developments	Jan Tyrer Planning
Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales	Llandudno Town Council
Cheshire West and Chester	Natural Resources Wales
Coedpoeth Community Council	Redrow
Coleg Cambria	Rhuddlan Town Council
Conwy County Borough Council	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Cyngor Sir Ynys Mon	Scripture Union (Cynllun EFE)
Denbighshire County Council	Snowdonia National Park Authority
Engie	The Coal Authority
Flintshire County Council	Unique, TransForum and The Sibyls
Grwp Llandrillo-Menai	Welsh Water
Gwynedd Archaeological Planning Service	Wrexham County Borough Council

## Welshpool

Abermule with Llandyssil Community Council

Banwy Community Council

Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales

Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust

Growing Mid Wales Partnership

Herefordshire Council

Mineral Products Association

Montgomery Town Council

Natural Resources Wales

Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Town Council

Powys County Council

Public Health Wales

Royal Town Planning Institute Wales

Wales Environment Link

