



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Development Framework

Statement of Public Participation

November 2016

Abbreviations

EP	Engagement Plan
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
NDF	National Development Framework
SPP	Statement of Public Participation
SA/SEA	Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment
WG	Welsh Government

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Welsh Government will prepare a National Development Framework for Wales (NDF). The NDF will be a development plan for the whole of Wales. It will set out national planning policies for the next 20 years and express spatially the Welsh Government's long term economic, social and environmental objectives. The NDF will form part of the statutory plan for determining planning applications and will assist the determination of Developments of National Significance (DNS).
- 1.2 The NDF will identify strategic locations for growth and infrastructure and by linking change and investment will make a positive difference to Wales. The NDF will set out an ambitious future for Wales and provide a framework around which decisions at all levels can help deliver a better future.
- 1.3 We are committed to ensuring wide public participation in the preparation of the NDF. This Statement of Public Participation sets out how the Welsh Government will involve people in the development of the NDF and ensure people are aware how and when to engage in its preparation.
- 1.4 Everyone is a stakeholder in the NDF, given its importance in providing a framework for new development across the whole of Wales. We welcome and encourage representations from everyone and all groups, institutions, businesses and individuals have a contribution to make in developing the national land use plan.

2 Preparation Process

2.1 The following timetable sets out the stages and timescales for the preparation of the NDF and shows when consultation on the NDF will take place:-

Stage 1	Prepare Statement of Public Participation	Jan 2016
Stage 2	Publish and consult on the Statement of Public Participation (12 weeks)	Feb – April 2016
Stage 3	Consider responses to the Statement of Public Participation consultation and prepare a consultation report	May – Sept 2016
Stage 4	Gather evidence, develop the vision, objectives and options Undertake Engagement Call for Evidence & Projects	Oct 2016 – Sept 2017
Stage 5	Publish and consult on main issues, options and preferred option, supported by environmental reports and assessments (12 weeks)	Sept – Dec 2017
Stage 6	Consider responses to the main issues, options and preferred option consultation and prepare a consultation report	Jan – April 2018
Stage 7	Prepare draft NDF Undertake Engagement	May – Dec 2018
Stage 8	Consult on draft NDF (12 weeks)	Jan – Apr 2019
Stage 9	Consider responses to the draft NDF and prepare a consultation report	Apr – Sept 2019
Stage 10	Assembly consideration of the draft NDF (60 'sitting' days)	Oct – Dec 2019
Stage 11	Publish NDF	March 2020

2.2 The preparation timetable sets out a process of approximately 4 years to adoption. It incorporates three specific 12 weeks stages of public consultation at stages 2, 5 and 8. The timeframe demonstrates the Government's commitment to preparing the NDF and will enable sufficient time for engagement and meaningful dialogue. It is not anticipated that the timetable will change or additional consultations will be required. The Welsh Government will keep this position under review and publish an updated SPP if required.

2.3 The Welsh Government will ensure that information about the development of the NDF is available during all stages of the process and officials will be available to provide advice and support.

3 Participation

3.1 In developing the Statement of Public Participation, the Welsh Government has considered how it can ensure:-

- people can inform the development of the participation programme;
- participation is inclusive, open and transparent and people have opportunities to be involved across the process;
- a collaborative approach is adopted;
- information is accessible; and
- that there is feedback on representations made across the process.

3.2 There are three key steps the Welsh Government will undertake to involve members of the public in the preparation of the NDF. These are:-

- **Information & Support** - ensure there is access to information about the NDF throughout the process and that there is support available to help people get involved.
- **Key Consultation Stages** - raise awareness of consultations and provide opportunities to submit comments.
- **Engagement Plan** - setting out a transparent record of events and planned events to ensure engagement in the preparation of the NDF.

Information & Support

3.3 During the preparation of the NDF, the Welsh Government is committed to ensuring everyone has the opportunity to access information on the emerging NDF; are kept informed of its progress; and can contact officials to learn more about the process.



Website

- Access to all key documents on Welsh Govt website
- Explanation of timescales and process



Articles & Press

Articles and press releases to raise profile and stimulate engagement and debate



Helpline & Email

The Planning Division will provide assistance with all aspects of NDF process including how to make representations and general queries



Newsletter

Publication of regular newsletter to record progress and give notice of forthcoming stages



Social Media

Using Ministerial twitter account and stakeholder channels to disseminate information, publicise key stages and send reminders



Consultation Database

Establishment of an NDF consultation database which will be open to all and will be used to keep parties informed of the preparation of the NDF

Key Consultation Stages

3.4 At stages 2, 5 and 8, twelve week consultation exercises will be held. These are key milestones in the NDF process, when documents are published and your views are sought on them. The key focus at these stages is to widely publicise the consultation, make the documents and the evidence on which they are based available and encourage people to review them and comment. These stages will be crucial in shaping the NDF and it is important people take the opportunity to consider what is proposed and comment.

3.5 The Welsh Government will at these key stages undertake the following:-

Publication of key documents and supporting evidence

All key documents will be made available on the Welsh Government website, including information on how to make a representation

Direct Meetings & Events

- One to one and/or group meetings will be used to publicise public consultations and encourage engagement
- Attendance at public events such as Eisteddfod & Royal Welsh Show

Drop In Events Across Wales

Drop in events will be held at:-

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| • Cardiff | • Carmarthen | • Wrexham |
| • Swansea | • Newtown | • Bangor |

Awareness Raising

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Press adverts | • Social Media | • Press stories in specialist media |
| • Web adverts | • Animations | |

3.6 Stage 3 will also include a 12 week public consultation. This initial consultation will focus on the process for preparing the NDF and the approach to public participation. It will not focus on planning issues and will not require the same level of consultation activities as stages 5 and 8. The focus at this stage will be electronic communication and the publication of documents on the website.

Engagement Plan

3.7 It is important that people have the opportunity to be involved in the preparation of the key NDF documents before they are published for consultation. Effective engagement means people will have had the opportunity to shape the emerging NDF before the consultation stages including providing evidence they feel should be considered through the process.

3.8 Stage 4 will include evidence gathering and engagement to ensure there is the opportunity to inform the preparation of the Main Issues, Options and Preferred Option document. Similarly, further engagement will be undertaken at stage 7 to inform the preparation of the draft NDF that will be consulted on at stage 8.

3.9 The Welsh Government will prepare an Engagement Plan (EP). The EP will take forward the principles set out here and provide a detailed programme of engagement. It will set out a record of meetings and events that have been held in the preparation of the NDF and it will include a future programme of activities. The EP will be a dynamic, living document changing as the process moves forward, showing what has happened and what will happen in the future. It will include a range of engagement activities including formal and informal meetings, workshops and events. The EP will be made available on the Welsh Government website and will provide a transparent record of engagement across the NDF process.

4 Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 4.1 Undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the NDF is mandatory under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015). SA incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a formal process for assessing the effect of a plan or programme on the contribution to the achievement of sustainable development and is fully integrated into a plan preparation process. The SA will consider the social, economic and environmental effects of the NDF. SEA will be undertaken alongside this to assess the NDFs impact on the environment.
- 4.2 The SA/SEA will ensure that policies and proposals are informed by relevant information and provide the opportunity for people to get involved. Public consultation is a key part of this process. The SA/SEA process will ensure there is an integrated approach to assessments and that other types of plan appraisal, such as for example equality, disability, language and health, are integrated into the assessment process.
- 4.3 The SA/SEA will be undertaken alongside the development of the NDF. The table below shows the key SEA stages alongside NDF stages 2 to 9 (see table at 2.1 for NDF stages). Whilst it is not expected that an update to the Environmental Report will be required in the latter stages, if significant changes are made to the NDF, a further consultation period will be held.

NDF Stage	SEA Stages	Estimated timescale
2	(A) Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding the scope	Oct – Nov 2016
3	Consultation on SEA Scoping Report	Dec 2016 – Feb 2017
4	Consider responses to SEA Scoping Report (B) Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects (C) Prepare Environmental Report	March – May 2017
5	(D) Publish and consult environmental reports and assessments alongside NDF main issues, options and preferred option report (12 weeks)	Sept – Dec 2017
6	Consider responses to the environmental reports and assessments and prepare a consultation report	Jan – April 2018
7	Update Environmental Report if required	Jan – June 2018
8	Consult on Environment Report if required	Jan – April 2019
9	Consider responses to consultation if required	April – Sept 2019
	(E) Implementation, monitoring and review	March 2020 onwards

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 4.4 Under an EU Directive, a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required to be undertaken for the NDF. The HRA will assess whether the plan is likely to have significant effects on a European site of nature conservation importance in Great Britain or on a European offshore marine site of nature conservation. The process requires the screening and appropriate assessment of options. The NDF will only be able to be adopted if it is found to have no adverse effects on the integrity of the designated sites. If such an effect cannot be ruled out, the NDF should be amended to avoid such effects occurring. It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that the plan may be adopted which is likely to have such an effect. The findings of this work will feed into the SA/SEA of the NDF.

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