

Executive Board

21st October 2019

Welsh Government Consultation

Draft National Development Framework 2020 - 2040

Recommendations / key decisions required:

- To note the content of the consultation and approve the consultation responses set out within this report for submission to the Welsh Government.

Reasons:

- To outline the proposed content of the Draft National Development Framework 2020 – 2040.
- To ensure that the consultation is fully and appropriately informed.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted Community Scrutiny Committee: N/A

Exec Board Decision Required Yes (21st October)

Council Decision Required Yes

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Cllr Mair Stephens

Directorate : Environment

Designations :

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
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Draft National Development Framework 2020 - 2040

1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

1. What is the National Development Framework?

The National Development Framework (NDF) is a new development plan which will set the direction for development in Wales from 2020 to 2040. It sets a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, decarbonisation, developing resilient ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

The NDF is a spatial plan, which means it sets a direction for where we should be investing in infrastructure and development for the greater good of Wales and its people.

The NDF is the highest tier of development plan and is focused on issues and challenges at a national scale. Its strategic nature means it does not allocate development to all parts of Wales, nor does it include policies on all land uses.

2. How does the NDF fit with existing Planning Policy

The NDF should be read alongside Planning Policy Wales (PPW) which provides planning policy on an all-Wales basis. The NDF is intended to complement PPW, with a shared commitment to placemaking and by setting out the spatial priorities for planning and development where national-level consideration is required. In combination, and supplemented by Technical Advice Notes and procedural guidance, the NDF and PPW ensure that the planning system across Wales is fully aligned in working towards national ambitions and well-being goals.

3. How does the NDF fit with Strategic and Local Development Plans?

The role of development plans is to plan and manage land use at its spatial scale. The NDF consequently considers issues at the national scale whilst Strategic Development Plans (SDP's) cover regional or sub-regional scales and Local Development Plans (LDP's) consider issues at the local scale.

All three tiers are important and it is the collective effect of all tiers working together that is the strength of the planning system in Wales. Note that the emerging Revised LDP will be required to be in conformity with the content of the adopted NDF.

Whilst the future role of SDP's is clearly recognised, there are as yet none in place with their preparation, scope and spatial extent likely to be further considered as the NDF approaches adoption. Strategic and Local Development Plans must support the implementation of the NDF.

4. What does the draft NDF do?

The draft NDF sets out development policies for Wales as a whole and specifically for the North Wales, Mid and South West Wales and South East Wales regions. The regional approach is intended to align with other Welsh Government strategies and allows a consistent approach to policy implementation across Wales.

The NDF identifies 11 outcomes to be achieved through the planning system over the next 20 years:

1. Our cities, towns and villages will be physically and digitally well connected, offering good quality of life to their residents.
2. In rural areas, job opportunities and community services will be supported to help attract and retain people.
3. The regional approach will recognise that different parts of Wales work differently to each other, with distinct underlying characteristics and challenges.
4. We aim to have a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 – an increase of almost 80% on current levels.
5. Cities and large towns are magnets for jobs and investment, while people are drawn to live and work there for the economic and social opportunities they provide.
6. Development Plans will have a forward thinking, positive attitude towards enabling economic development, investment and innovation.
7. All methods of travel will need to have low environmental impact and low emissions, with ultra low emission vehicles and public transport replacing today's petrol and diesel vehicles.
8. Broadband provision will develop and evolve, beginning with comprehensive coverage of superfast and progressing to ultra-fast fibre, which will help businesses to be more productive, resilient and innovative.
9. Wales' natural resources, including its minerals, coast, water, forests and landscape, support a range of activities and sectors and are assets of great value in their own right.
10. The variety of flora and fauna found across Wales make Wales a special place.
11. The challenges of climate change demand urgent action on carbon emissions and the planning system must help Wales lead the way in promoting and delivering a competitive, sustainable decarbonised society.

5. NDF Spatial Strategy

The NDF identifies the following three main urban clusters of cities and towns where it proposes Wales will grow:

- Cardiff, Newport and the Valleys;
- Swansea Bay and Llanelli; and
- Wrexham and Deeside.

Its states that each of these urban areas is economically distinctive, supporting a range of businesses, enterprises and universities, and offering culturally rich lifestyles to residents and visitors. It identifies them as nationally significant places and the NDF strategy promotes their continued growth and regeneration. As a result, new largescale employment opportunities and housing growth will occur predominantly, though not exclusively, in these urban areas.

Development in towns and villages in rural areas will support local aspirations and need, complementing rather than competing with efforts to grow our cities and towns. The NDF identifies a range of important regional centres which, through specific policies in SDP's and LDP's, which should retain and enhance the commercial and public service base that make them focal points in their areas. This will apply in: Carmarthen, the Pembrokeshire Haven towns, Aberystwyth, Llandrindod Wells, Newtown, Caernarfon, Bangor and the coastal towns from Llandudno to Prestatyn.

By focussing large scale growth on the urban areas, the NDF seeks to channel development pressures away from the countryside and productive agricultural land can be protected. In delivering the strategy the NDF sets out 33 policies including: Policy 1 – Sustainable Urban Growth, Policy 4 – Supporting Rural Communities, Policy 5 – Delivering Affordable Homes, Policy 10 - Wind and Solar Energy Priority Areas, Priority Areas for District Heat Networks, Policies for the Mid and South West Wales Region etc.

6. Main Issues for Carmarthenshire

The consultation response as appended reflects a number of key themes specific to Carmarthenshire as a diverse County with clear ambitions in relation to regeneration and opportunities across all its communities. The main issues identified within the appended consultation response relate to the following:

Urban and Rural Development

The NDF seeks to focus development and growth on 3 main centres namely which, from a Carmarthenshire perspective, includes Swansea Bay and Llanelli. This would seek to focus growth away from rural communities with only Carmarthen specifically identified as an additional centre for regional growth. The NDF whilst referencing to sustaining rural communities does not identify or specifically recognise the critical role many settlements play.

Residential Growth

The NDF proposes a housing growth of 23,400 across the Mid and South West Wales Region through to 2038. This rate of growth is based on WG projections and has no reference to growth aspirations and ambitions within the Region or within individual authorities.

Agriculture

The Draft NDF does not comment in any detail on the role of the agricultural economy to Wales or the region. In this respect it seeks to recognise other contributors to the Welsh economy but is largely silent on agriculture.

Affordable Housing

The NDF seeks to provide a strong policy statement in relation to the delivery of affordable homes across Wales and within the Mid and South West Wales Region.

Infrastructure

The spatial strategy of the NDF seeks to focus growth focused urban centres with the homes, jobs and services available. This has impacts in relation to infrastructure capacity and implications on future investment and funding streams. The focus away from rural communities may have implications on access to services in such areas.

Renewables

The NDF identifies "Priority Areas" for large scale renewable energy developments. These include extensive areas for both wind and solar across Carmarthenshire. Large scale developments are those which are classed as Developments of National Significance and are determined by Welsh Ministers. Large scale energy developments are defined in the framework as:

- All on-shore wind generation over 10MW
- Other renewable energy generation sites with generating power between 10MW and 350MW

It proposes that large scale solar and wind generation will be favoured in the priority areas. Areas not within the Priority Areas will not carry explicit Welsh Government support for large scale developments and proposals will be determined on their individual merits.

Economic Activity

The attached response seeks to highlight potential concerns arising from the strategic approach on growth in the main centres. In seeking to direct growth and development (residential and commercial) to Swansea Bay and Llanelli the significance of other areas including Cross Hands will be affected. With concerns that future WG funding priorities will be aligned to the NDF. This will limit other key town's ability to attract funding support.

7. Next Steps

The consultation on the Draft NDF closes on the 1st November 2019 with the NDF scheduled for adoption in September 2020. It is proposed that the consultation response be submitted by the 1st November deadline with the proviso that Council endorsement of the response will be at Council meeting on the 13th November 2019.

The appended report sets out the proposed response of the Council to the consultation on the Draft NDF. It incorporates comments across a range of service areas reflecting the strategic importance and implications.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED ?

YES

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: L Quelch

Head of Planning

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	None	None	NONE	NONE	None

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

The NDF has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015 and embeds the 5 ways of working (long-term thinking, prevention, collaboration, integration and involvement), within the strategic thinking and policy development has informed, influenced and shaped the NDF. The implications in relation to Council policy are drawn out in the attached report.

2. Legal

The consultation document reflects the provisions of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and reflects the Positive Planning Agenda.

It also integrates requirements arising from the Environment (Wales) Act 2015 and the Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: L Quelch

Head of Planning

1. Scrutiny Committee

N/A

2. Local Member(s)

The report details the consultation undertaken by the Welsh Government which is open to full public consultation.

3. Community / Town Council

The report details the consultation undertaken by the Welsh Government which is open to full public consultation.

4. Relevant Partners

The report details the consultation undertaken by the Welsh Government which is open to full public consultation.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Internal contributions have been sought in formulating the response to the consultation set out in this report.

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Draft National Development Framework		https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-08/Draft%20National%20Development%20Framework.pdf
Consultation Document - Draft National Development Framework		https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-08/draft-national-development-framework-consultation-document.pdf
Supporting Documents - Draft National Development Framework		https://gov.wales/draft-national-development-framework