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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref - MA - P/JJ/2755/19

Mike Hedges AM
Chair of Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee

7 August 2019

Dear Mike

Thank you for your letter dated 17 July regarding the timetable for publication of the National Development Framework (NDF). A consultation on the draft NDF will run from Wednesday 7 August to Friday 1 November.

An updated Statement of Public Participation has been published and is available [here](#). I have also enclosed a copy for information.

Yours sincerely



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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Development Framework

Statement of Public Participation

First published: November 2016

First revision: June 2017

Second revision: July 2019

Abbreviations

HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
ISA	Integrated Sustainability Appraisal
NDF	National Development Framework
SA/SEA	Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Welsh Government will prepare a National Development Framework for Wales (NDF).
- 1.2 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).
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.

Revisions

- 1.6 The SPP was first revised in June 2017 to update the NDF timetable. It was revised again in July 2019. [This report](#) explains the background to the second revision of the SPP. The date of the Stage 8 consultation on the draft NDF was changed from July 2019 to August 2019 to avoid commencing the consultation in the pre-election period to the Brecon and Radnorshire By-election held on 1 August 2019.

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	January 2016
Stage 2	Publish and consult on the Statement of Public Participation (12 weeks)	February – 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 – March 2018
Stage 5	Publish and consult on main issues, options and preferred option, supported by environmental reports and assessments (12 weeks)	April – July 2018
Stage 6	Consider responses to the main issues, options and preferred option consultation and prepare a consultation report	July – October 2018
Stage 7	Prepare draft NDF Undertake Engagement	October 2018 – June 2019
Stage 8	Consult on draft NDF (12 weeks)	August - November 2019
Stage 9	Consider responses to the draft NDF and prepare a consultation report	November 2019 – March 2020
Stage 10	Assembly consideration of the draft NDF (60 'sitting' days)	April – June 2020
Stage 11	Publish NDF	September 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.

2.3 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 version of this document if required.

2.4 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. It will do the following:-



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 In addition to the steps above to support people, the Welsh Government will at these key stages publicise the consultation widely and offer a variety of ways to make your views known on the NDF. We plan to directly canvass interest and demand from stakeholders and offer a variety of ways of contributing at consultation stages, including 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.
Provide accessible versions of key documents

Direct Meetings & Events

- One to one and/or group meetings to publicise public consultations and encourage engagement
- Attendance at public events such as Eisteddfod
- Offer informal opportunities across Wales for people to discuss the NDF with Welsh Government Officials

Awareness Raising

Press Adverts

Social Media

Web Adverts

Animations

Press stories in specialist media

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

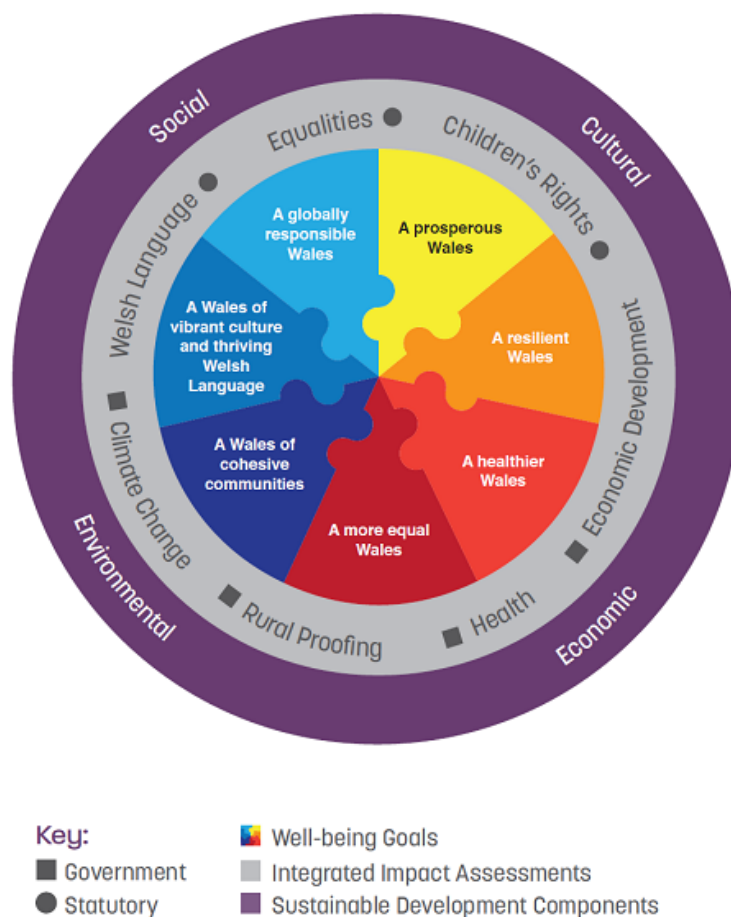
Engagement Plan

- 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. The Engagement Plan 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 Engagement Plan 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 Engagement Plan can be viewed [here](#) on the Welsh Government website and will provide a transparent record of engagement across the NDF process.

4. Integrated 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) and must incorporate the consideration of impacts on the Welsh language. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required to be undertaken to assess the effect of a plan on the contribution to the achievement of sustainable development and ensure it is fully integrated into a plan preparation process.
- 4.2 The Welsh Government has decided to integrate other assessments into the SA/SEA process and will be undertaking an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA). One of the key ways of working that forms part of the sustainable development principle, is the need to take an integrated approach to what we do. Given the nature and scope of the NDF we have sought to integrate our approach to the SA and SEA with other statutory and non-statutory assessments. This allows us to take a more rounded view of the sustainability implications and opportunities arising from the NDF. As this is an Integrated SA, the following additional impact assessments have been incorporated into the ISA process:

Integrated Impact Assessments



- 4.3 The integration of these other assessments ensures that a collaborative approach is undertaken on different issues, sharing knowledge and recognizing links between topics in a consistent and transparent manner. This provides a robust and thorough mechanism for identifying issues and opportunities, assessing impacts including cumulative and indirect effects and undertaking monitoring in a holistic manner.
- 4.4 The ISA 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.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 4.5 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 ISA of the NDF.

Timescale

- 4.6 The ISA and HRA will be undertaken alongside the development of the NDF. The table below shows the key 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 ISA 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	ISA and HRA Stages	Estimated timescale
2	Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding the scope	Dec 2016 – April 2017
3	Consultation on ISA Scoping Report	April 2017 – July 2017
4	Consider responses to consultation and prepare a consultation report	July 2017 – March 2018
	Publish ISA Scoping Report	
	Developing and refining alternatives and assessing effects Prepare Interim ISA Report and preliminary HRA report	
5	Publish and consult on interim ISA and preliminary HRA alongside NDF issues, options and preferred option report	April – July 2018
6	Consider responses to consultation and prepare a consultation report	July – August 2018
7	Prepare ISA Environmental Report and HRA Screening Report, & Appropriate Assessment if required.	Oct 2018 – June 2019
8	Consult on ISA Environment Report and HRA Screening Report & Appropriate Assessment if required	August - November 2019
9	Consider responses to consultation	November 2019 – March 2020
10	Assembly consideration of the draft NDF (60 'sitting' days)	April – June 2020
11	Publish NDF, Post Adoption Statement and Statement of Particulars	Sept 2020 onwards
	Implementation, monitoring and review	

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