



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

National Development Framework 2020-2040

Explanatory Paper – Future progression of the National Development Framework

December 2019

Why have we published these explanatory papers?

During the consultation on the Draft National Development Framework (NDF) some stakeholders suggested further details should be made available setting out how the NDF has been prepared. To assist stakeholders we have produced a collection of explanatory papers to set out the evidence that supports the draft NDF. These papers include:

- The Spatial Strategy
- The Assessments of the NDF
- Future progression of the NDF
- The Regions
- Rural Areas
- Housing need
- Welsh National Marine Plan and Ports
- Evidence compendium

What is this document?

This explanatory paper has been prepared to assist readers of the draft NDF in understanding the expected future progression of the NDF. It highlights the key factors which will inform the review of the NDF.

1. The first National Development Framework (NDF1) will be published in autumn 2020 and will cover the period 2020-2040. The Welsh Ministers are required to keep the NDF under review and they should publish an updated NDF no later than 5 years after it is first published. This process will continue, with ongoing updates no later than 5 years after the previous update.
2. The NDF needs to allow flexibility and be capable of accommodating the policies of successive governments. The NDF will evolve as a document over time. The NDF Outcomes and spatial strategy, which are rooted in wider societal challenges are expected to remain steady but it is anticipated that policies will change, so that it reflects evolving Government priorities and the changing needs of the planning system. The links between the NDF and other documents, and to delivery mechanisms such as the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan, should strengthen as timescales become aligned.
3. The first draft NDF, subject to consultation from 7 August to 15 November 2019, brings together the current Government's published strategies and spatial priorities. It also reflects evidence available at the time of preparation. The NDF has generally avoided setting policies or ambitions on matters where there is no current overarching strategy or confirmed Government support.
4. *(For example, the NDF does not explicitly support projects that would improve connectivity between the north and south of the country, as there is no published strategy or confirmed spending commitment to improve the A470/A483 or to establish a direct rail network within Wales. Any such commitment by the Welsh Government would be reflected in future revisions of the NDF as the Transport Plan and the NDF evolve).*
5. In the time since the draft NDF was issued for consultation the following significant announcements or releases have taken place, on matters which are within the scope of, or related to, the NDF:
 - *A railway for Wales: the case for devolution* (gov.wales/railway-wales-case-devolution) (24 September 2019)
 - *Establishment of a Land Division within Welsh Government* (gov.wales/written-statement-establishment-land-division-within-welsh-government) (24 September 2019)
 - *South East Wales Transport Commission: our approach* (gov.wales/south-east-wales-transport-commission-our-approach) (16 October 2019).
6. We expect that further announcements will be made, and further documents published, on matters linked to the NDF between now and the publication of the first NDF in autumn 2020. However, any changes to the draft version will primarily derive from the public consultation on the draft NDF and from the scrutiny of the NDF by the National Assembly for Wales. The scope to change the NDF to reflect new Welsh Government publications is likely to be limited, as the principle of allowing proposals to be considered and scrutinised (either through public consultation or the Assembly scrutiny process) should be respected.
7. The requirement to review and update the NDF is a crucial mechanism in ensuring the NDF reflects the latest strategies and priorities of the Welsh Government. The second version of the NDF (NDF2) will be published by 2025. The NDF will be shaped by the policies of the next Welsh Government (to be established following the next National Assembly for Wales election, due to be held on Thursday 6 May 2021). Other factors in the review of the NDF are likely to include:

- A new Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan
 - Regional Economic Frameworks
 - the first report of the National Infrastructure Committee for Wales
 - the reports of the South East Wales Transport Commission
 - a new National Transport Strategy
 - the new National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy
 - a new National Tourism Strategy
 - the establishment of a Mid Wales Growth Deal
 - Area Statements
 - the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.
8. This non-exhaustive list of events, strategies and policies is likely to influence the content and scope of the NDF, and the ambition it sets for development in Wales. New NDF policies may be needed to help deliver the aspirations of new Government strategies and to respond to events such as the UK leaving the European Union. As such, NDF2 could be longer and more ambitious than NDF1. NDF3, to be published by 2030, would similarly be influenced by events, strategies and policies that emerge following the publication of NDF2.
9. As well as the impact of newly emerging strategies on the NDF, there must be a reciprocal effect where the NDF will influence the strategies. By establishing the NDF, the Welsh Government has created a spatial strategy and a platform for delivering on different priorities in an integrated way through the planning system.
10. *(For example, the emerging National Transport Strategy will need to recognise the ambition for higher density development in accessible, sustainable urban locations, set out in NDF policy 1. The strategy should promote schemes or investments in infrastructure which support the aspirations of the policy).*
11. The influence of the NDF will extend beyond Welsh Government strategies; it will impact on the plans and programmes of the private and third sectors. For example, the spatial strategy will influence water and sewerage providers' Asset Management Programmes and National Grid's plans for the transmission network.
12. The overall impact of keeping the NDF under review is that it will over time become more aligned with the priorities of the Welsh Government and shape wider development investments across Wales.