



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE**            **Planning For Sustainable Economic Renewal**

**DATE**            **07 June 2011**

**BY**                **John Griffiths, Minister for Environment and Sustainable  
Development**

Last year the Welsh Government began an important review of national planning policy and guidance for economic development to ensure that it supports the delivery of sustainable economic renewal. This commitment responds to the publication of the Study to Examine the Planning Application Process in Wales (June 2010) and Economic Renewal: a new direction (July 2010).

To inform this review, a research report on 'Planning for Sustainable Economic Renewal' was commissioned to evaluate the effectiveness of existing planning policy for economic development, and to scope future planning policy and guidance requirements. Roger Tym & Partners in association with Asbri Planning were appointed to deliver the research project.

Today I am pleased to announce the publication of this important research report, which can be accessed on the Welsh Government's website through the following web-link  
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/planningresearch/publishedresearch/suseconrenewal/?skip=1&lang=en>

A research steering group made up of representatives from the business sector, environment sector, planning profession and local authorities, have overseen the project and endorsed its findings and recommendations.

The research was informed by a comprehensive evidence base including a detailed review of national policy, case studies from local authorities; lessons learnt from other UK administrations; and discussions with various stakeholders during workshop sessions held across Wales earlier this year.

A number of recommendations are made:

- the need to refresh economic development national planning policy supported by a new technical advice note;
- the provision of a central economic information resource to inform the evidence base for Local Development Plans (LDPs) and development management decisions;
- closer working between planning and economic development functions at the local level, with economic development teams playing a greater role in LDP preparation and providing advice on planning applications for economic uses;
- the need for businesses to do more to identify and promote the economic value of development through both LDP and development management processes;
- the requirement for a new strategic planning arrangement at above local planning authority level, more closely aligned to economic areas such as city regions.

The research also includes an ancillary recommendation that further consideration should be given to the impact of regulation and policy on the financial viability of development.

The recommendations of the research report have been considered and are accepted in full by the Welsh Government. In taking forward the recommendations, I will be consulting on revised economic development planning policies and a framework economic development Technical Advice Note later this year.

Together with the Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science, I wish to discuss with the Welsh Local Government Association how we can promote closer working between local authority planning and economic development teams. I will also be discussing with the Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science and other Cabinet colleagues about how we take forward the work to understand the impact of regulation and policy on development viability, the work to develop a central economic information resource to support the new technical guidance, as well as how we undertake planning at above local authority level. I will consider the latter within the context of the Simpson Review, commissioned by the Local Government and Communities Minister.

The research report clearly shows that there is more that all participants in the planning system can do to improve planning for economic development. In implementing the recommendations, planning will do more to support economic growth and jobs by making Wales a better place to do business.