

Wales Spatial Plan

Introduction

There is a statutory requirement under the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004* for the Assembly Government to produce a Spatial Plan for Wales. Such a plan should set out a strategic framework to guide future development and policy interventions, whether or not these relate to formal land use planning control.

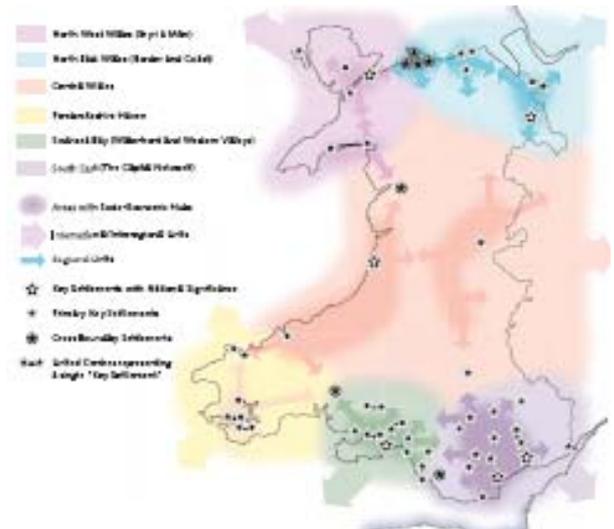
The Wales Spatial Planⁱ was adopted by the National Assembly for Wales on 17 November 2004. It covers a 20 year period, although it is subject to review. The Welsh Assembly Government sees the spatial plan as providing high level strategic guidance and a framework for collaborative action.

The plan identifies six distinctive areas within Wales:

- *North West Wales*
- *North East Wales – Border and Coast*
- *Central Wales*
- *South East – the Capital Network*
- *Swansea Bay – Waterfront & Western Valleys*
- *Pembrokeshire – The Haven*

For each of these, an area group has been established to develop projects and oversee implementation and an interim area statement has now been produced providing progress updates on what has been successfully agreed by partners to date.

An update of the Wales Spatial Plan was laid before the Assembly and formally approved on 8 July 2008ⁱⁱ. The update takes account of the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities set out in the *One Wales* agreement and incorporates the interim area statements. A full delivery programme for each area is also to be developed as part of a Delivery Plan.



Overview of current statutory powers of the Assembly

Under the *Government of Wales Act 2006*, the National Assembly for Wales can seek legislative competence through Acts of Parliament or Legislative Competence Orders (LCOs) to make a piece of law in the form of an 'Assembly Measure'. Measures can only be made in a specific policy area (or 'Matter') added to one of the 20 'Fields' (or broad subject areas) which are contained in Schedule 5 of the Act.

As "Town and Country Planning" is Field 18 of Schedule 5 to the Act, the National Assembly for Wales can seek Measure-making powers in this area. Currently there are no matters in this field. The Planning Bill currently before the UK Parliament includes the addition of a matter to give the Assembly the power to pass Measures in relation to the development and use of land in Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government has said that it may wish to pass Measures under this matter relating to the content, status, preparation and review of the Wales Spatial Plan.

The draft Marine Bill published in April 2008 advocates a strategic marine planning system.

EU Policy

In 1999, a document called the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP)ⁱⁱⁱ was signed by the Ministers responsible for regional planning in the EU Member States. Although the ESDP has no binding status, and the European Union has no formal authority for spatial planning, the ESDP has influenced spatial planning policy in European regions and Member States.

Key Welsh Government strategy documents and action plans:

The original Spatial Plan was published in 2004. Area interim statements have been produced and an update to the Spatial Plan was approved by the Assembly in July 2008.

Useful Links

The Welsh Assembly Government web pages for the Wales Spatial Plan:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/?lang=en>

Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/wsp2008update/?lang=en>

Update on 2004 Wales Spatial Plan Actions:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/news/update2004/?lang=en>

Central Wales interim statement:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/wspareas/centralwales/centralinterim/?lang=en>

South East Wales interim statement:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/wspareas/southeastwales/southeastinterim/?lang=en>

North East Wales interim statement:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/wspareas/northeastwales/northeastinterim/?lang=en>

North West Wales Interim statement:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/wspareas/northwestwales/northwestinterim/?lang=en>

Swansea Bay area interim statement:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/wspareas/swanseabay/swanseabayinterim/?lang=en>

Pembrokeshire area interim statement:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/strategy/spatial/wspareas/pembrokeshire/Pembsinterim/?lang=en>

Spatial Plan data project:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/spatial-plan/?lang=en>

Further information

For further information about the Wales spatial plan, please contact please contact Graham Winter, Members' Research Service (Graham.Winter@wales.gsi.gov.uk), 029 2089 8166

ⁱ Welsh Assembly Government, [People, Places, Futures - Wales Spatial Plan](#), November 2004

ⁱⁱ Welsh Assembly Government, [People, Places, Futures - The Wales Spatial Plan 2008 Update](#), July 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ European Commission, [The European Spatial Development Perspective \(ESDP\)](#), agreed at the Informal Council of Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning in Potsdam, May 1999