

Policies, plans and studies that have informed the MWRTP

1. Welsh Government plans and policies

The Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan (MWRTP) (Section 1.3) details the links to Welsh Government priorities as set out in:

- Llwybr Newydd – The Wales Transport Strategy;
- National Transport Delivery Plan 2022 to 2027; and
- Net Zero Wales – Carbon Budget 2 (2021-2025).

Other key Welsh Government policies, plans and strategies that have informed the development of the MWRTP are summarised below.

Sustainable Transport in Rural Areas – Guidance for Regional Transport Planning (2024)

Welsh Government guidance for local authorities, CJsCs and other organisations involved in improving rural transport. It provides guidance on improving access to sustainable and accessible modes of transport, which will help residents in rural areas access employment, education, leisure, and other key services. It provides case study examples from other countries and examples of projects that are being delivered and are planned in rural Wales. The guidance document has been used in the development of MWRTP policies.

Our Roadmap to Bus Reform (2024)

Produced by Welsh Government and Transport for Wales to outline the proposed approach to bus franchising. It sets out the case for bus reform and future plans for the bus network. The aim is for buses to be more reliable, affordable, flexible and easy to use. The document has been used in the development of the MWRTP's Case for Change and in developing MWRTP policies.

Welsh Government response to the Roads Review (2023)

The Welsh Government's response to the Roads Review recommendations sets out the circumstances in which future investment in roads will be considered by the Welsh Government, with a focus on minimising carbon emissions. The Welsh Government response has been considered in the overall development and direction of the MWRTP and will also be considered in the development of the RTDP.

Bws Cymru: Connecting People with Places (2022)

Bws Cymru sets out the Welsh Government's plans for improving bus services across Wales, including the actions that will the Welsh Government will deliver. It sets out a vision for *'a stable and coherent network of bus services that are fully integrated with other modes of public transport, that are reliable, affordable, flexible, easy to use, low-carbon and that encourage more people to use the bus, rather than their cars.'* The document has been used in the development of MWRTP policies aimed at improving bus services in Mid Wales.

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (2021)

Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 is the national development framework, setting the direction for development in Wales to 2040. It is a *‘development plan with a strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems and improving the health and well-being of our communities’*. There are close links between the MWRTP objectives and policies and those within future Wales, e.g. in terms of growing the Mid Wales Economy, improving accessibility across Mid Wales and strengthening cross-border transport links, improving regional connectivity, and supporting rural communities.

Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy – Project Pipeline (February 2024)

The Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy is the Welsh Government’s strategic framework for all infrastructure investment decisions. The annual project pipeline details the infrastructure investments the Welsh Government are planning over the next 3 years. The project pipeline has been reviewed to identify any projects within the Mid Wales region that should be captured with the MWRTP.

Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Wales and Action Plan (2021)

The Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy for Wales sets out the Welsh Government’s vision and plans for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in Wales. The Action Plan sets out the actions required to achieve the vision, such as actions to increase total charging provision. The strategy has informed the development of the MWRTP’s Case for Change, objectives and policies.

Planning Policy Wales

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the Welsh Government’s land use planning policies to ensure the planning system contributes to the overall well-being of Wales. PPW outlines how sustainable transport infrastructure should be supported in the planning system, such as through taking into account the sustainable transport hierarchy. The development of the RTDP and the consideration of Strategic Development Plans has been informed by PPW.

Town Centre First

Town Centre First is a policy and principle adopted by the Welsh Government which ensures that new significant facilities are prioritised to be located in town centres. The MWRTP RTDP makes sure to include interventions located in key towns such as Aberystwyth and Welshpool.

Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales

The Clean Air Plan sets out a 10-year pathway to achieving cleaner air for the benefit of people, the environment, prosperity and place. The Plan outlines actions that will be taken to improve air quality, including within planning and the transport sector. The MWRTP has considered air quality in the development of policies and schemes by prioritising the sustainable transport hierarchy.

Noise and Soundscape Action Plan

The Noise and Soundscape Action Plan outlines the need for the Welsh Government and other public bodies to work towards reducing noise and creating action plans for places near major roads and railways. The Plan sets out how public bodies can implement the principles of the Environmental Noise Regulations.

2. Regional policies, plans and studies

Plans, strategies, and studies that are in place at the regional level have informed the development of the MWRTP's Case for Change, vision and objectives, policies, and high-level interventions. These include the previous transport plans that have been developed for Mid Wales.

Mid Wales Joint Local Transport Plan (2015)

The Mid Wales Joint Local Transport Plan (LTP) remains as the current LTP for the Mid Wales region, until the new MWRTP is approved by the Welsh Government. The Mid Wales Joint LTP has been fully reviewed in developing the MWRTP, as many of the transport issues, opportunities and priorities for transport identified within the LTP continue to be relevant and are therefore reflected in the MWRTP. These include issues in terms of access to services, the need to improve public transport, walking and cycling, strategic connections and climate resilience. The Mid Wales Joint LTP includes a five-year programme of schemes and longer-term aspirations. Schemes within the programme that have not been delivered or progressed to date have been reviewed for inclusion in the MWRTP's forthcoming Regional Transport Delivery Plan.

Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan (2009)

The Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan was in place prior to the Mid Wales Joint LTP. The previous Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan required a more detailed assessment of regional issues than the Mid Wales Joint LTP, and was also required to include a wider range of policy interventions. A cross check has been undertaken of the issues and policies included in the previous Mid Wales Regional Transport Plan, and those that are proposed in the current MWRTP.

Other key regional plans and studies that have informed the development of the RTP are summarised below.

Mid Wales Corporate Joint Committee Corporate Plan 2023-2028

The Mid Wales CJC's Corporate Plan sets out the CJC's vision, priorities and well-being objectives for the region. It also outlines an action plan, which focuses on the development of the Regional Transport Plan, the Strategic Development Plan and delivery of the Growing Mid Wales Partnership – Strategic Economic Plan. This reflects the purpose of the CJCs to work collaboratively on strategic planning, economic well-being and transport functions. The MWRTP's vision has incorporated some key words from the CJC vision for Mid Wales (which is also the vision within the Regional Economic Framework for Mid Wales). The strategic fit of the MWRTP objectives have been assessed against the CJC's well-being objectives in the development of the MWRTP.

North Wales Transport Commission – Final Report (2023) and North Wales Transport Commission Progress Statement (2023)

The North Wales Transport Commission was established in 2022 to assess the problems, opportunities, challenges and objectives for realising a sustainable, integrated and multi-modal transport system in North Wales. The North Wales Transport Commission Progress Statement provides an overview of the transport system in North Wales, including problems, challenges and opportunities. The themes identified in the Progress Statement have informed the development of the MWRTP's Case for Change. The North Wales Transport Commission Final Report sets out the Case for Change and includes recommendations and actions to improve the public transport and active travel networks in order to facilitate a modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport. The recommendations in the report have been reviewed, and specific recommendations that are considered relevant to the Mid Wales region have been incorporated into MWRTP policies, e.g. relating to seasonal and tourist bus services, implementation of Quiet Lanes, car clubs etc. The recommendations have also been reviewed to identify any cross-border schemes that may be relevant to Mid Wales.

Mid Wales Regional Tourism Study and Action Plan – Stage 2 Report (October 2022)

The aim of this study and action plan is to guide and support sustainable development of tourism in the Mid Wales region. It provides evidence of the tourism market in Mid Wales and sets out an Investment Action Plan. This includes transport interventions such as improving walking and cycling paths and trails, increasing EV charging provision, and improving public transport. The study has informed the development of the MWRTP's Case for Change, objectives and policies. Linkages between priorities for tourism and transport in the region, such as those identified in the action plan, are highlighted in the MWRTP.

The Marches & Mid Wales Freight Strategy (2021)

This Marches & Mid Wales Freight Strategy was developed to build an evidence base for a bespoke strategy to support the economic growth in the Marches and Mid Wales, whilst also aiming to reduce the environmental impacts of freight and improving the quality of life of the residents. The strategy has five objectives which are based around improving freight reliability and cost, increasing safety and reducing the negative impacts from freight, and supporting economic growth within the Marches and Mid Wales Region. The strategy has been important in developing freight policies for the MWRTP. Two MWRTP policies have been included that specifically reference the Marches & Mid Wales Freight Strategy and the need to take forward its recommendations.

Regional Economic Framework for Mid Wales (2021)

The Regional Economic Framework for Mid Wales supports a more regionally-focused model of economic development and sets out the region's economic priorities, which includes prioritising sustainable transport and infrastructure. The MWRTP's vision has incorporated some key words from the vision of the Regional Economic Framework for Mid Wales.

A Vision for Growing Mid Wales – Strategic Economic Plan & Growth Deal Roadmap (May 2020)

This Strategic Economic Plan was developed by the Growing Mid Wales Partnership and sets out a vision for the development of the Mid Wales economy over the next 15 years. The document provides a detailed background the Mid Wales region, in terms of economy, people,

businesses and connections, which has informed the development of the MWRTP Case for Change. The plan emphasises the importance of having good transport connectivity within and outside Mid Wales for economic flows and future growth. It includes objectives and actions for transport, which have been incorporated into MWRTP policies where relevant, e.g. strategic corridor improvements, public transport improvements, decarbonisation, behaviour change, and integration.

Mid Wales and Shropshire Cross-Border Study – Final Strategy (February 2020)

The Cross-Border Strategy brings together the Welsh Government, Midlands Connect, Shropshire Council and partners to investigate the potential to improve connections between Wales and Shropshire. The Cross-Border Study aims to capture the existing transport barriers that limit connectivity and growth in the area, e.g. lengthy journey times and poor journey time reliability. The study includes 13 cross-border interventions that have been reviewed during the development of the MWRTP. Those interventions that are located within Mid Wales have been included within the MWRTP policies where relevant.

Strategic Economic Priorities for the Mid Wales Region (December 2018)

This document, developed on behalf of the Growing Mid Wales Partnership, sets out the Strategic Economic Priorities for the Mid Wales Region that aim to deliver growth across the region over the next 15 years. The objectives are to have: an innovative and skilled Mid Wales; a competitive and sustainable Mid Wales; and a well-connected and culturally distinct Mid Wales, which includes a programme for transport. The document provides background to the Mid Wales economy, which has informed the MWRTP's Case for Change. The document also identifies priority programmes, including interventions for transport that focus on strategic and cross-border connectivity, and these have been considered in the development of MWRTP objectives and policies.

3. Local policies, plans and studies

The development of the MWRTP has also involved a review of relevant policies, plans and studies that are in place at the local level. Plans and studies that have informed the development of the MWRTP are summarised below.

Powys and Ceredigion Local Area Energy Plans (2024)

The Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) for Ceredigion and Powys have been developed with the purpose of identifying the most cost-effective way for local areas to decarbonise their energy system to help meet the Net Zero target by 2050. A number of key issues and measures are included in the LAEPs for decarbonisation across all sectors. In terms of transport, the key issues to be addressed are high levels of car ownership, insufficient EV charging infrastructure, public transport provision, and improving active travel infrastructure. Data relating to transport is included in the LAEPs and has been used in the development of the MWRTP's Case for Change, particularly relating to EV charging infrastructure. The LAEPs include priority projects and those relating to public EV chargers have been incorporated within the MWRTP's policies.

Powys and Ceredigion Public Services Boards' Well-being Plans (2023) and Well-being Assessments (2022)

The Ceredigion and Powys Well-being Assessments provide a comprehensive review of the economic, social, environmental and cultural factors that impact on the well-being of local people. The Well-being Assessments have informed the Well-being Plans for the two Mid Wales local authorities, which set out the PSBs' well-being objectives and the actions that are planned to deliver the objectives and improve well-being. The Powys and Ceredigion Well-being Assessments have been important in the development of the MWRTP's Case for Change, which references many of the issues highlighted in the Well-being Assessments. For example, a lack of public transport options and difficulties in accessing services by public transport were key issues highlighted in the Well-being Assessments. The importance of having affordable and accessible public transport to the well-being of younger people was also highlighted. Use of the Well-being Assessments has enabled the MWRTP to be informed by the results of previous engagement exercises undertaken in the region.

Ceredigion County Council ULEV Strategy and Action Plan (2022)

The CCC ULEV Strategy and Action Plan is closely aligned with the Welsh Government EV Charging Strategy and considers the future of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs) in Ceredigion. Based on a background review of existing ULEV provision, trends and forecasting, the Strategy offered a number of recommendations which were incorporated into an Action Plan. The findings and recommendations of the Strategy and Plan have been considered where relevant when developing the MWRTP policies and RTDP.

Ceredigion Local Development Plan 2007-2022 and Powys Local Development Plan 2011-2026

The Powys and Ceredigion Adopted Local Development Plans (LDPs) set out the policies for the development and use of land in the respective local authority areas (except for the area of Powys within the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park). The policies within the local authorities' Adopted LDPs have been reviewed to identify whether any policies or projects should be

included within the MWRTP. It should be noted that both LDPs have been in place for some time, and most transport policies within the LDPs have either been delivered, or if still relevant, are also included in the Joint LTP programme.

Ceredigion Highway Asset Management Plan 2019 – 2024 and Powys Highway Asset Management Plan 2019

The Highway Asset Management Plans for Ceredigion and Powys set out how existing highway assets in each local authority area will be managed and maintained. The Plans have demonstrated the extent and availability of highways in each local authority which has been important in demonstrating the existing situation with the MWRTP Case for Change.

Ceredigion and Powys Active Travel Network Maps

The Active Travel Network Maps (ATNMs) for Ceredigion and Powys show the existing and proposed active travel routes within the respective local authority areas. The ATNMs have been reviewed in the development of the MWRTP's Case for Change and this has demonstrated the relatively low level of active travel provision across the region, which reflects the concentration of active travel infrastructure in built up areas. This is shown by Figure 1, which provides an overview of the Ceredigion ATNM and shows that the active travel routes are concentrated in and around the towns of Aberystwyth, Cardigan and Lampeter. Similarly Figure 2, which provides an overview of the Powys ATNM, shows that the active travel routes are again concentrated in and around the key towns, e.g. Welshpool, Newtown and Brecon.

Figure 1 – Ceredigion Active Travel Network Map

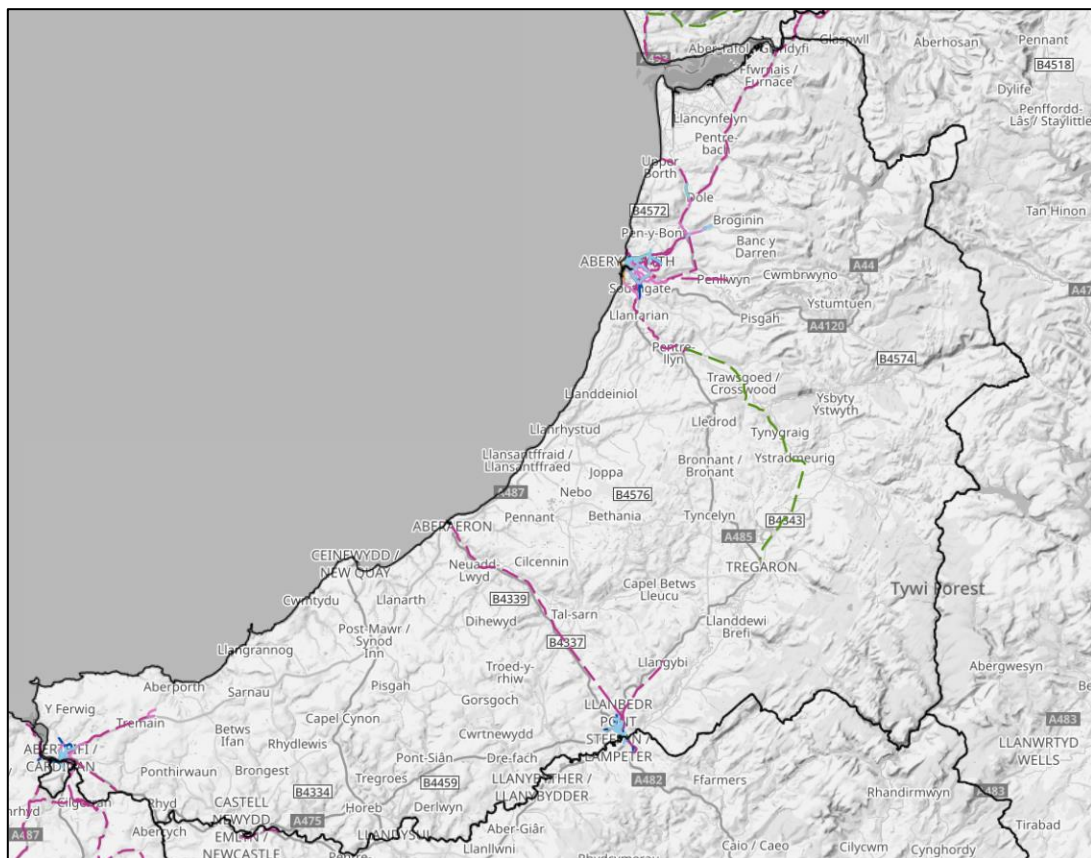


Figure 2 – Powys Active Travel Network Map

