

North Wales Corporate Joint Committee

North Wales Regional Transport Plan

Integrated Well-being Appraisal (Statutory Assessments) Scoping Report

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the North Wales Regional Transport Plan

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 includes provision for the creation of Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) which are formed to promote regional collaboration through a consistent and democratically controlled framework. CJCs are required to comply with all public body duties and are assigned statutory responsibility for the preparation of Regional Transport Plans (RTPs)¹ which must set out transport policies to implement the Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021², providing a long-term vision for the next 25 years. The CJC for North Wales includes representatives from six local authority areas of the Isle of Anglesey, Wrexham, Conwy, Flintshire, Denbighshire, and Gwynedd as shown in Figure 1-1, and the Eryri National Park Authority.



Figure 1-1 Local Authorities covered by the North Wales Regional Transport Plan (with Eryri National Park in Green)

Llwybr Newydd states that Wales must think differently about the way people travel. The vision for the North Wales Regional Transport Plan (NWRTP) is that North Wales will have a safe, sustainable, affordable, resilient, and effective integrated transport network that supports economic growth, prosperity and well-being.

¹ CJCs also have responsibility for the preparation of Strategic Development Plans

² Llwybr Newydd: the Wales transport strategy 2021 – Available online at: <https://www.gov.wales/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021> [Accessed 23/04/24]

1.2 What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development is defined by the United Nations³ as development that “*meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*” Underpinning sustainable development is the need to balance economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. The balancing of these three elements is required to support the long-term wellbeing of individuals and society. The Welsh Government’s Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015⁷ includes seven well-being goals to guide sustainable development, and which must be considered when developing new policy. These are:

- A prosperous Wales
- A Resilient Wales
- A More Equal Wales
- A Healthier Wales
- A Wales of Cohesive Communities
- A Wales of Vibrant Cultural and Thriving Welsh Language
- A Globally Responsible Wales

Sustainable development promotes the building of an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient future for both people and the planet. This includes creating inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, and promoting integrated and sustainable management of natural resource and ecosystems

1.3 What is an Integrated Well-being Appraisal?

The Guidance to Corporate Joint Committees on Regional Transport Plans⁴ sets out that an Integrated Well-being Appraisal (IWBA) is required for the RTP, and supporting information should include more detailed statutory impact assessments, technical studies, consultation and engagement summaries, or other information that have been used to inform the development of the RTP or IWBA. It explains how current guidance on IWBA is set out in the new draft WelTAG guidance⁵.

WelTAG sets out that integrated well-being appraisal is a rigorous, structured approach to understanding the impact of a programme or project on well-being, using quantitative and qualitative information. Every transport programme, policy or project funded by Welsh Government must include an integrated well-being appraisal that shows how it will contribute to well-being in Wales including our four well-being ambitions and our specific targets for transport. The IWBA should be tailored to the needs of the project, programme or policy. WelTAG explains the requirement for IWBA does not replace the need for statutory impact assessments and an IWBA may need to be supported by the relevant statutory and regulatory impact assessments.

An IWBA is a process for assessing the potential social, cultural, economic, and environmental impacts of a plan and aims to place sustainable development at the centre of decision making. IWBA is a valuable tool that can help influence plan development, aligning it with the Welsh Transport Strategy and demonstrating application of the principles of sustainable development whilst also meeting the following legislative requirements:

³ Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future. United Nations, 1987. Available online at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf> [Accessed 30 April 2024]

⁴ Regional transport plans: guidance for Corporate Joint Committee. Available online at <https://www.gov.wales/regional-transport-plans-guidance-corporate-joint-committees>

⁵ Welsh transport appraisal guidance (WelTAG). Available online at: <https://www.gov.wales/welsh-transport-appraisal-guidance-weltag>

- Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (SI 2004/1656) (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations)⁶
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015⁷
- Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Standards⁸
- Children’s Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA), as required by the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011⁹
- Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA), as required by the Equality Act (2010)¹⁰
- Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) and the Natural Resources Policy (NRP) as required by the Environment (Wales Act (2016)¹¹
- Habitat Regulations Assessment, as required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended (known as the Habitats Regulations 2017).

IWBA is also used to incorporate the non-legislative requirements of assessments relating to: Rural proofing, Health effects, and Climate change. More detail of the statutory and non-statutory assessments is provided in Section 1.3.2 and 1.3.3 below.

It is a legal requirement for responsible authorities to undertake SEA of plans and programmes that are subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at a local, regional or national level and which are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions. The North Wales Transport Plan is a plan that is required by legislative provisions (CJC Regulations¹² post the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021¹³) and the SEA process has been used as a basis for the IWBA because it is a recognised and systematic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of plans and programmes. By expanding the assessment to include the requirements of other assessments (as listed above), the IWBA delivers one cohesive assessment using a collaborative approach across the different facets of sustainability, facilitating shared knowledge and identifying the intersectionality between the topics considered. This approach removes unnecessary repetition whilst allowing for a robust and transparent assessment which identifies sustainable development issues and opportunities that can be iteratively fed back into the development of the NWRTP.

1.3.1 Stages of the IWBA process

Guidance produced by the UK Government¹⁴ sets out a relatively prescribed set of stages for SEA. These same stages have been adopted for the IWBA in order to meet the legal requirements of the SEA Regulations, but with inclusion of the wider assessments required. Figure 1-2 sets out the main stages of the IWBA as it aligns with the development of the NWRTP.

⁶ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations 2004. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2004/1656/contents/made> [Accessed 22/04/24]

⁷ Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015). Available online at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2015/2/contents/enacted> [Accessed on 11/04/24]

⁸ Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/1/contents> [Accessed 11/04/24]

⁹ Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/2/contents> [Accessed 11/04/24]

¹⁰ Equality Act 2010. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> [Accessed 11/04/24]

¹¹ Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Available online at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/pdfs/anaw_20160003_en.pdf

¹² Consultation on the Corporate joint committees: draft statutory guidance, 2021. Welsh Government. Available online at: <https://www.gov.wales/consultation-corporate-joint-committees-draft-statutory-guidance-html> [Accessed 14/05/24]

¹³ Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2021/1/contents> [Accessed 14/05/24].

¹⁴ Gov.uk, 2005. A Practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-directive-guidance> [Accessed 23/04/24]

IWBA Process

RTP

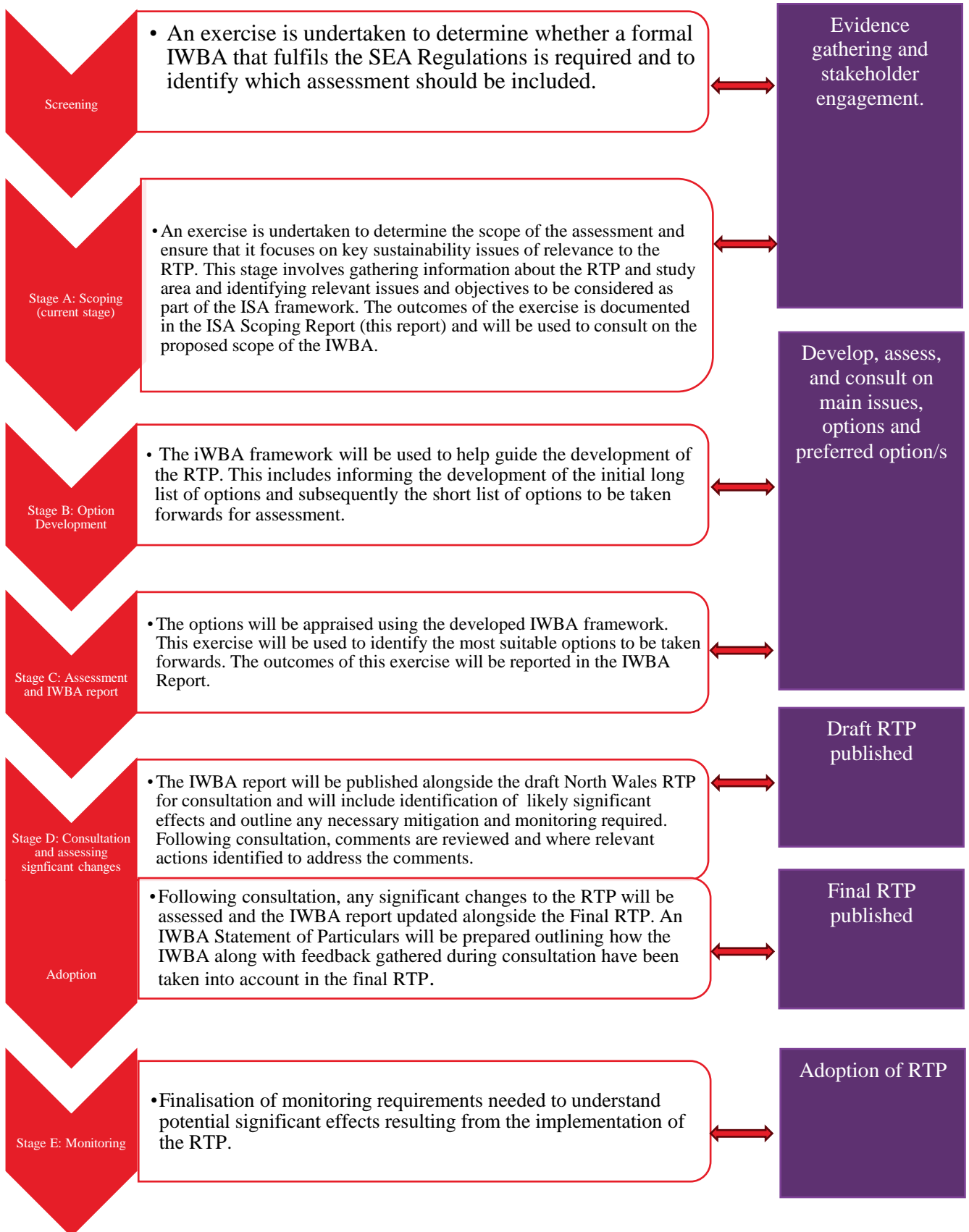


Figure 1-2 IWBA stages and alignment with RTP development

1.3.2 Statutory impact assessments

The following impact assessments are a statutory requirement and will be integrated into the IWBA:

Welsh Language Impact Assessment – The Welsh Language (Wales) measure 2011 and Standards require that consideration is given to whether the RTP would have an effect (positive or negative) on the opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, or on the requirement to treat the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Children’s Rights Impact Assessment – the Rights of Children and Young persons (Wales) Measure 2011 embeds consideration of the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)¹⁵ and the optional protocols into Welsh law. The main duty within the Measure, under Section 1, requires Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC when exercising any of their functions.

The process of having due regard can range from thinking about the impact of decisions on children in the course of day-to-day work, to a formal impact assessment with an accompanying record of the outcome.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) – the Equality Act (2010)¹⁶ places a general duty on public bodies to have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, as well as to advance the equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not. Protected characteristics (as defined by the Equality Act) are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. In Wales there is also a socio-economic duty on the public sector to consider how proposals are likely to affect levels of socioeconomic disadvantage of individuals and communities.

An EqIA is a systematic analysis of the potential effects of a project, plan or policy on groups of people who share protected characteristics. It considers whether protected characteristic groups could be affected disproportionately or differentially, and the assessment informs the identification of actions to address any adverse effects whilst also supporting the delivery of any beneficial effects. An EqIA helps to demonstrate that the duties under the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty) are being met and provides evidence that equality issues have been considered in decision making.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended (known as the Habitats Regulations 2017) sets out the stages of assessment which must be undertaken to determine if a development project or plan could significantly harm the designated features of a European site. As part of the Habitats Regulations 2019 amendment, a National Site Network (NSN) has been created (as UK sites no longer form part of the EU’s Natura 2000 ecological network) on land and sea and include inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK. The NSN includes existing Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and new SACs and SPAs designated following the creation of the NSN.

The Habitats Regulations 2017 states that any plan or project not directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of an internationally important site, but which would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, must be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the internationally important site in view of its conservation objectives.

1.3.3 Welsh Government required assessments

In addition to the statutory impact assessments Welsh Government also requires further impact assessments to ensure that policies and plans consider a wide range of potential impacts at the earliest stages of their development:

¹⁵ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Available online at <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> [Accessed 24/04/24].

¹⁶ Equality Act 2010. Available online at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> [Accessed 11/04/24]

Rural proofing impact assessment – rural proofing is a policy commitment by both the UK Government and the Welsh Government. A rural proofing assessment aims to consider how a policy or plan may positively or negatively affect rural areas which often have different needs and priorities to urban areas.

Health impact assessment (HIA) – The Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 (Part 6) places a duty on Welsh Ministers to make regulations which require public bodies to carry out HIA in specified circumstances. Whilst this duty has not yet been enacted, it is mandated within the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance Process (WelTAG). HIA considers factors which influence population health and well-being (health determinants) may be impacted by a proposed action, policy or plan, and how these changes may lead to changes in health and well-being outcomes. Consideration of how different groups of people within a population may be impacted differently (distributional impacts and health inequalities) are also considered.

Climate change assessment – a climate change assessment considers how the proposed NWRTP may potentially contribute to climate change, alongside how resilient proposals are considered to be to the known effects of existing and future climate change.

1.3.4 Screening of assessments for inclusion in IWBA

A brief screening exercise has been carried out to determine whether the NWRTP is likely to have any impacts relevant to each of the impact assessments listed above. The outcome of this exercise is summarised in Table 1-1 and confirms that all of the impact assessments have been screened in and therefore integrated into the ISA. The IWBA framework, and particularly the IWBA objectives, have been developed to capture requirements of all the assessments.

Table 1-1 ISA screening outcomes

Impact Assessment	Screening outcome
Welsh language	Transport can play an important part in connecting people and places, which includes opportunities for engaging with the Welsh language and Welsh culture. Conversely, poorly developed or implemented transport can place barriers to engagement with the language. Objectives covering Welsh language have been incorporated into the IWBA framework.
Children’s rights	Transport has the potential to affect children in several ways, e.g. through facilitating access to education, healthcare and other social infrastructure, creating healthy travel options (such as active travel), reducing air quality impacts from transport emissions, allowing safe spaces for play and recreation, and providing safe travel options to stay socially connected with friends and family. The Articles within the UNCRC have been reviewed and the following Articles are identified as being most relevant to the NWRTP: Article 12 (respect for the views of the child); Article 15 (freedom of association); Article 23 (children with a disability); Article 24 (health and health services); Article 27 (adequate standard of living); Article 28 (right to an education); Article 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups); Article 31 (leisure, play and culture). Objectives which are relevant to the rights of children have been incorporated into the IWBA framework.
Equalities	Transport and the NWRTP is likely to have potential disproportionate and/or differential impacts on protected characteristic groups. At this stage all protected characteristic groups, with the exception of marriage and civil partnership, have been screened into the assessment. Consideration of socioeconomic disadvantage is also screened into the assessment. The inclusion of these groups is based on the different needs and vulnerabilities that each protected characteristic group has in relation to transport, for example ease of access, actual and perceptions of safety, economic barriers, journey planning requirements, physical capability. Objectives covering equity have been incorporated into the IWBA framework.

Impact Assessment	Screening outcome
HRA	Transport can have impacts on land use which could lead to impacts on protected habitats. For this reason, consideration is given to how the RTP may impact on natural habitats and ecosystems. A separate HRA pre-screening has been undertaken for this stage of NWRTP development, with IWBA objectives incorporating consideration of biodiversity and the natural environment (Appendix D)
Rural proofing	There are large areas of North Wales that are rural and therefore the NWRTP is likely to have the potential to impact on rural communities. Access to services, education and employment, in addition to the economic development within and between rural and urban areas is likely to be impacted by the choices being put forward in the developing NWRTP. Objectives which are relevant and applicable to the rural context have been incorporated into the IWBA framework.
Health	Transport planning can have large scale implications for population health and well-being because the way in which people are able to move about influences many factors which contribute to maintaining good physical and mental health. Effectively planned active travel provision enables people to have realistic accessible choices for engaging in walking and cycling which therefore contribute to maintaining and improving physical and mental health. Accessibility to services, education, employment and social networks via transport provision is known to be a determinant of health and IWBA objectives which seek to draw out potential impacts on health outcomes and reflect the Public Health Wales indicators for health have been incorporated into the IWBA framework.
Climate change	Changes in the climate are likely to affect the way that people choose (or need to) travel and therefore the NWRTP will need to consider how it will be able to adapt to the changing climate, whilst also minimising the impact transport systems can have on the climate. Objectives which consider the impact of the NWRTP on climate and its resilience to climate change have been incorporated into the IWBA framework.

1.4 What is the Scoping stage of the IWBA?

This Scoping Report sets out the scope of the IWBA and provides information to allow consultation with defined statutory bodies on the scope and level of detail to be considered within the assessment. It sets the context, identifies relevant sustainability objectives for the assessment framework, and establishes the baseline. Table 1-2 below sets out what information is required for the scoping stage (to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations) and where this is including in this report.

Table 1-2 ISA scoping requirements

Scoping requirement	Where the information is provided
Identify other relevant plans, programmes and objectives	Section 3 and Appendix A
Collect baseline information	Section 4 and Appendix B
Identify environmental issues (and opportunities)	Section 4
Develop the SEA framework	Section 5
Consult the statutory (Cadw and Natural Resources Wales (NRW)) and non-statutory consultees on the scope of the SEA report	Section 6

1.4.1 Scoping Report structure

The remainder of this IWBA Scoping Report is set out as follows:

- **Section 2: North Wales Regional Transport Plan** – this section provides an overview of the NWRTP, its purpose and objectives.
- **Section 3: Relevant Plans, Programmes and Sustainability Objectives** – this section outlines the key plans, programmes and sustainability objectives that are of relevance to the NWRTP.
- **Section 4: Baseline Context and identification of key sustainability issues and opportunities** – this section provides an overview of the sustainability context of the NWRTP and outlines the themes and issues specific to the NWRTP.
- **Section 5: Appraisal process and ISA framework** – this section presents how the proposed options for the NWRTP will be assessed.
- **Section 6: Next Steps** – this section outlines what the next stages are of the IWBA process and how consultees can submit views and feedback on the scope of the IWBA.

2. North Wales Regional Transport Plan

2.1 How does the NWRTP fit with the Wales Transport Strategy?

The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) sets out the vision for Wales to provide an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system that is fit for future generations and which tackles climate change. The vision set out in the WTS is supported by four long-term ambitions with supporting objectives. The long-term ambitions are to deliver a transport system that is good for:

- People and communities (equality, health, safety and confidence)
- The environmental (transport emissions, biodiversity and waste)
- Places and the economy (place making and innovation, job creation, affordability and reducing socioeconomic disadvantage)
- Culture and the Welsh language (including arts, sport, and the historic environment).

The three short-term priorities include:

- bringing services to people in order to reduce the need to travel.
- allowing people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure.
- encouraging people to make the change to more sustainable forms of transport.

The NWRTP must include policies to support the vision and ambitions of the WTS with an emphasis on delivering on the three short-term priorities through a series of clearly articulated actions. The NWRTP must also deliver on the following:

- Include policies and actions to make best use of existing transport infrastructure.
- Where new infrastructure is needed the NWRTP must follow the sustainable transport hierarchy (i.e. in order of importance: walking and cycling, public transport, ultra-low emissions vehicles, other private motor vehicles).
- Identify barriers to sustainable travel for different groups of people using the COM-B model of behaviour change (this includes the premise that for change to happen there must be individual capability, motivation and opportunity).
- Include policies and actions for a range of behaviour change projects.
- Include policies to support cross-cutting pathways (this includes decarbonisation, equality, integrated journeys, and rural pathways).
- Include policies and actions which maximise contribution to the measures in the WTS Monitoring Framework.
- Be developed using the five ways of working of the Well-being Act (i.e. long term, prevention, integration, collaboration, and involvement).

2.2 How does it fit with other land use plans?

RTPs provide a good platform for better integration with land use planning. RTPs must take account of:

- Future Wales: the National Plan 2040¹⁷
- Planning Policy Wales¹⁸
- the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan¹⁹
- work undertaken to produce existing and new Local Development Plans (LDPs) and emerging work on their Strategic Development Plans (SDPs).

CJCs must also take account other policies and plans, including:

- Local Authority well-being assessments and well-being plans
- Town Centre First²⁰
- Regional Economic Frameworks (North Wales Regional Economic Framework)²¹
- Net Zero Wales²²
- A Healthier Wales²³
- Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales²⁴
- Noise and Soundscape Plan for Wales²⁵

Paragraph 1.4.6 of the RTP Guidance²⁶ sets out CJCs must comply with their statutory duties, listing some of the relevant legislative requirements and considerations. Whilst the RTP Guidance is not explicit, there are associated legislative and regulatory procedures and requirements, including but not limited to consultation, associated with those duties.

¹⁷ Future Wales – The National Plan 2040. Welsh Government. Available online at: www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/future-wales-the-national-plan-2040.pdf [Accessed 08/05/24].

¹⁸ Planning Policy Wales Edition 12, February 2024. Welsh Government. Available online at: www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-02/planning-policy-wales-edition-12_1.pdf [Accessed 08/05/24].

¹⁹ Wales infrastructure investment plan: project pipeline March 2021. Welsh Government. Available online at: <https://www.gov.wales/wales-infrastructure-investment-plan-project-pipeline-2021> [Accessed 08/05/24].

²⁰ Town Centres: position statement, 2 May 2023. Welsh Government. Available online at: www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2024/2/4/1708619381/town-centres-position-statement.pdf [Accessed 08/05/24].

²¹ North Wales Regional Economic Framework. Ambition North Wales. Welsh Government, 2022. Available online at: www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-02/north-wales-regional-economic-framework.pdf [Accessed 08/05/24].

²² Net Zero Wales, October 2021. Welsh Government. Available online at: <https://www.gov.wales/net-zero-wales> [Accessed 08/05/24].

²³ A healthier Wales: Our plan for health and social care. June 2018. Welsh Government. Available online at: www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-09/a-healthier-wales-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care.pdf [Accessed 08/05/24].

²⁴ Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales. August 2020. Welsh Government. Available online at: <https://www.gov.wales/clean-air-plan-wales-healthy-air-healthy-wales> [Accessed 08/05/24].

²⁵ Noise and Soundscape Plan for Wales 2023-2028 (consultation draft). June 2023. Welsh Government. Available online at: www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2023-06/draft-noise-and-soundscape-plan-for-wales.pdf [Accessed 08/05/24].

²⁶ Guidance to corporate Joint Committees on Regional Transport Plans, 2023. Welsh Government. Available online at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-07/guidance-to-corporate-joint-committees-on-regional-transport-plans-2023.docx> [Accessed 08/05/24].

2.3 Prioritised list of transport interventions

A prioritised list of transport interventions for the draft NWRTP has been developed which have been based on detailed analysis and review of RTP smart objectives, identification of cross cutting themes, identification of focus areas, and carbon assessment considerations. In summary, draft policies, programmes and projects will be identified for each of the focus areas, which seek to align to the Wales Transport Strategy mini-plans where appropriate, and include:

- Active travel
- Bus and coach
- Rail
- Behaviour change
- Community transport, on-demand taxis
- Integration
- Digital connectivity
- Land use and planning
- Freight and logistics
- Roads, streets and parking
- Surface access to aviation
- Ports and maritime

3. Relevant Plans, Programmes and Sustainability Objectives

3.1 Introduction

The NWRTP could be influenced in different ways by other existing plans, programmes and sustainability objectives set out in existing policy or laid down in legislation. It is important to understand the relationship between these policies and the NWRTP in order to maximise opportunities and address any conflicts or inconsistencies.

Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations require the following in relation to the relevant plans and programmes to be considered:

“1. An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes...”

5. The environmental protection objectives, established at international, community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”.

The review of existing plans, programmes and sustainability objectives to inform the IWBA process and subsequently influence the development of the NWRTP has included:

- Identifying any social, environmental, cultural or economic objectives that should be mirrored in the IWBA framework.
- Identifying any issues that might influence the preparation of the NWRTP.
- Identifying any objectives or aims that would contribute positively to the development of the NWRTP.
- Identifying any potential conflicts or challenges between other identified plans, programmes or sustainability objectives and the emerging NWRTP.

3.2 Scope of review

The NWRTP will set the policies for implementing the existing national-scale Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) within the North Wales Region. The North Wales RTP must therefore be consistent with the WTS and support its vision and ambitions. The WTS itself, and the national, UK or international-scale plans, programmes and sustainability objectives identified in relation to the WTS, have therefore been identified as the key top-level strategies which must be taken into account. It is considered that all the national, UK or international plans, programmes and sustainability objectives identified for the WTS are also applicable to the North Wales RTS. These have therefore been reviewed for this IWBA in relation to the NWTP and a gap analysis carried out to identify any changes, updates or additions that need to be included.

Table 3-1 summarises the document types reviewed. The full review of plans, programmes and sustainability objectives is included in Appendix A with the focus primarily being on the review of the relevant **regional and local level** plans, programmes and sustainability objectives. Identified key sustainability themes that need to be woven into the ISA framework are identified in Table 3-2.

Table 3-1 Summary of document types reviewed

Level	Summary
International and European	Key International Conventions and European Directives were previously reviewed for the national-level WTS and relevant interactions have been brought forward for to the North Wales RTP. European Directives are transposed into national legislation in each individual Member State and, therefore, there should be a trickle-down effect of the key principles and an application to the relevant national planning documents. Whilst the UK is no longer a Member State the legislative requirements from when it was, mostly remain in place.

Level	Summary
UK-wide	Key UK-wide plans and programmes were previously reviewed for the national-level WTS and relevant interactions have been brought forward for the North Wales RTP. The objectives of these plans, as well as some of the challenges they raise need to be taken into consideration.
Wales	Wales national level plans and programmes were previously reviewed for the national-level WTS and relevant interactions have been brought forward for the North Wales RTP. Many of these documents are produced by Welsh Government and specifically address strategic issues such as the economy; health; safety; sustainable communities; housing; employment; and environmental protection.
Regional	A review has been undertaken of plans produced at the regional level of North Wales. This includes regional plans related to the natural environment, economic development, transport planning, landscape management, energy plans, and tourism.
Local	A review was undertaken of plans produced at the local level. This includes plans within the following local authority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isle of Anglesey County • Conwy County Borough • Denbighshire County • Flintshire County • Eryri (Snowdonia) National Park Authority • Wrexham County Borough • Gwynedd County

3.3 Key themes

The key themes identified from the review previously undertaken for the national-level WTS²⁷, the review of international and national PPO identified since the national-level WTS, and the review of regional and local PPO within the North Wales Region are outlined in Table 3-2.

²⁷ Welsh Government (2020) Consultation Document Wales Transport Strategy: scoping report. Date of issue: 5 May 2020. Available online: <https://www.gov.wales/wales-transport-strategy-scoping-report>

Table 3-2 Key Themes applicable to the North Wales RTP

IWBA Topic	Key Themes from the review of the regional and local plans, programmes and sustainability objectives
Population (communities)	<p>Improvement of the connectivity between, and integration of, communities</p> <p>Better planning and design of communities</p> <p>Promotion of greater equality of opportunity for all citizens.</p> <p>Creation of safe, sustainable, balanced and cohesive communities, in both rural and urban areas.</p> <p>Provision of equitable access to high quality outside/green space.</p> <p>Reducing the isolation of rural communities</p> <p>Creating more inclusive public transport and access to it.</p> <p>Enabling flexible working so that people can work from home if desired.</p>
Human health	<p>Improvement of the physical and mental health and well-being of the population</p> <p>Reduction in health inequalities (across all health determinants) to create a healthier Wales</p>
Biodiversity	<p>Maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity, habitats and species with healthy functioning and resilient ecosystems, including connected networks of green infrastructure throughout rural and urban areas.</p> <p>Enhancement of ecosystem services provided by green infrastructure to take advantage of climate change resilience & mitigation, enhancements to biodiversity, geodiversity and soils and filtering air and water.</p>
Land use and landscape	<p>Establishment of a strong tourist economy, sensitively capitalising on environmental, heritage, and leisure assets.</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of the distinctiveness of landscapes and their settings.</p> <p>Protection of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs)</p> <p>Creation of a new National Park in North Wales.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>Protection and enhancement of the distinctiveness of the historic environment, historic assets and their settings.</p> <p>Protection, enhancement and promotion of the Welsh language, culture and heritage.</p>
Ground conditions (geology and soils)	<p>Conservation of soil resources to control soil erosion and maintain their quality.</p>
Water environment	<p>Reduction in the risk of flooding (river, surface water and coastal).</p> <p>Promotion of protection of floodplains or areas of managed realignment.</p> <p>Protection and improvement in the quality and quantity of water resources.</p>
Climatic factors	<p>Sustainable management of natural resources.</p> <p>Addressing the underlying transport factors contributing to climate change.</p> <p>Creation of a climate-resilient transport network, including both new and existing infrastructure. This includes resilience to weather events as well as the long-term impacts of future climate change.</p>
Air quality	<p>Reduction in air pollution.</p> <p>Improvements in air quality contributing to a healthier Wales.</p>

IWBA Topic	Key Themes from the review of the regional and local plans, programmes and sustainability objectives
Noise	<p>Reduction in transport related noise.</p> <p>Alignment with the Soundscape Plan for Wales.</p> <p>Maintenance of tranquillity where applicable and practicable.</p>
Infrastructure	<p>Improvement of the connectivity between, and integration of, communities to improve access to services and reduce isolation, particular in rural communities.</p> <p>Provisioning of inclusive and equitable public transport and access to it.</p>
Transport	<p>Promotion of sustainable patterns of mobility and enhancement of sustainable transport provision to improve air quality, physical health and support the economy.</p> <p>Future proofing planned transport infrastructure in terms of how its use may change over time and therefore affect demand. For example, changes in relation to the international connectivity of regional ports and airports that facilitate international connectivity (e.g. Holyhead Port).</p>
Resources and waste	<p>Management of mineral extraction and minimisation of waste generation</p> <p>Increasing levels of reuse and recycling to achieve more sustainable waste management and reduce landfill.</p> <p>Increasing energy efficiency, stimulating investment and innovation, and promoting the sustainable use of national renewable energy resources to relieve pressure on natural resources.</p> <p>Sustainably manage natural resources and tackle the causes of climate change</p>
Economy	<p>Promotion of quality employment opportunities and economic activity.</p> <p>Promotion of sustainable economic growth, diversity and business competitiveness.</p> <p>Establishment of a strong tourist economy, sensitively capitalising on environmental, heritage, and leisure assets.</p>

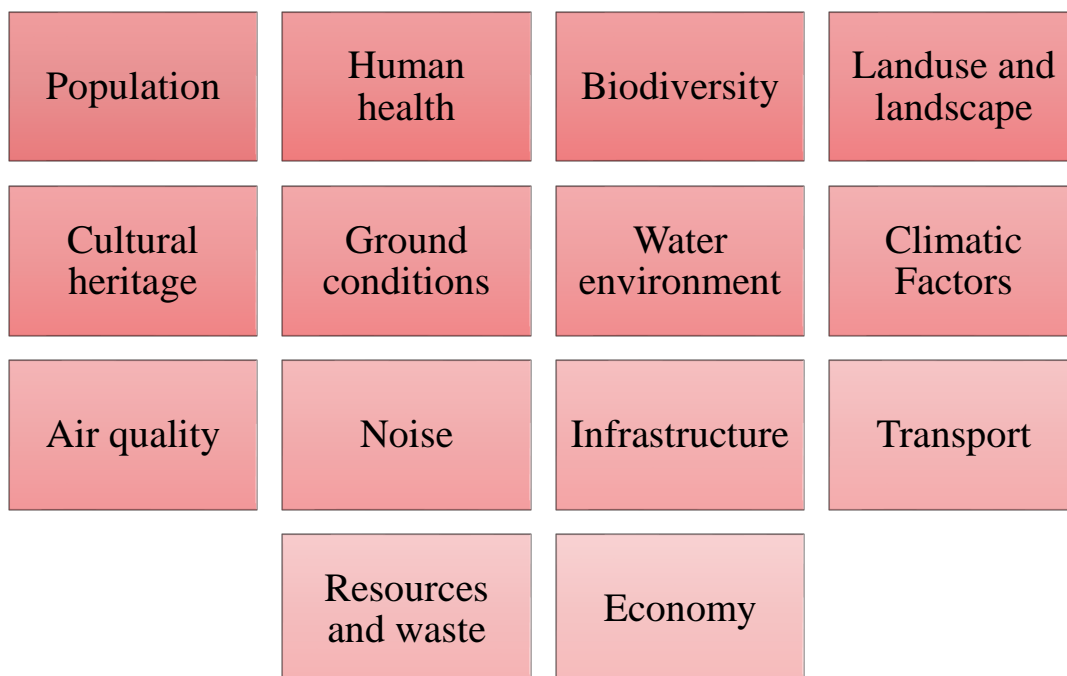
4. Baseline information and identification of key sustainability issues and opportunities

4.1 Introduction

The initial baseline data collected at this stage serves as the groundwork for identifying potential environmental, social, economic, and cultural issues and opportunities relevant to the study area. This information, combined with the themes extracted from the plans, program, and sustainability objectives review, is used to formulate the IWBA objectives within the assessment framework. These objectives guide the iterative assessment of the RTP options as they are developed, and, if necessary, provide recommendations for any required modifications or alternative approaches.

This IWBA is focused on the study area defined by the North Wales Transport Plan, i.e. the local authority areas of Isle of Anglesey, Wrexham, Conwy, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Gwynedd (Figure 1-1). Where data is not available at the regional level (e.g. climatic factors) national data is utilised.

The appraisal topics that are considered as part of baseline include:



Baseline information has been sourced from publicly available baseline datasets available from open data sources, in addition to information reported in published documents and reports. All data sources are referenced and primarily are sourced from Welsh Government, National Resources Wales, Stats Wales and Office of National Statistics. The baseline is presented in Appendix B, and it should be noted that information relevant to each of the integrated assessments has been collated and included within the topic headings listed above. Where mapping of data adds value to the presentation and understanding of the baseline, figures have been prepared and are included.

The SEA Regulations require that ‘material assets’ are included in the assessment. In this context, material assets refer to a range of assets within the study area that are valuable, for example cultural heritage, social services such as schools and hospitals, in addition to good quality agricultural land, cultural heritage assets and valued landscapes. This IWBA considers material assets across the topics identified above.

4.2 Scoping of key sustainability issues and opportunities

This main environmental, social and economic issues that are of relevance to the NWRTP have been identified using information gathered from the review of relevant plans, programmes and sustainability objectives (outlined in Section 1 above and Appendix A), the baseline review (Appendix B), and the current understanding of the overarching scope of the NWRTP.

The anticipated environmental, economic, and social trends (assuming the NWRTP is not implemented) have been determined by analysing existing plans, programs, and sustainability objectives, in conjunction with the current baseline data and historical patterns. These trends will serve as the ‘future baseline’ against which the NWRTP will be evaluated.

Additionally, opportunities for the NWRTP to positively contribute to sustainability have been identified. These issues and opportunities will serve as guidance for the development of the NWRTP, ensuring that negative effects are minimized and opportunities for maximizing benefits are integrated into the plan. Given the strategic nature of the NWRTP, the identified opportunities and issues are currently at a high level. As the Plan progresses and more details become available, they will be further developed and refined. However, they already reflect the broader benefits that can be achieved through collaboration across sectors and jurisdictions.

Sustainability issues and opportunities that require consideration during the development of the NWRTP are outlined in Table 4-1 below. None of the IWBA topics have been scoped out of the assessment. This is because transport planning has a wide range of likely significant effects, across all topics. Additionally, due to the integrated assessment approach, which includes certain statutory assessments, scoping out specific topics is not feasible.

Table 4-1 Proposed scope of IWBA

IWBA Topic	Issues relevant to the Regional Transport Plan	Regional Transport Plan Opportunities
<p>Population (communities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreasing regional population size could impact the effectiveness or financial viability of some of the NWRTP options. There is an aging population in North Wales which will impact transport needs, such as travel and commuting patterns. There is lower diversity of ethnicities, religions, languages and LBGTQ+ populations than average, the NWRTP will need to ensure that it makes provision for these groups. There is a high apprenticeship level and a relatively strong educational attainment across the region, therefore the NWRTP needs to ensure that the travel needs of young people are appropriately accommodated. There is an existing lack of rural connectivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help reduce isolation of rural communities through providing appropriate transport links to connect more remote communities, both to each other and to urban hubs and services. Develop an integrated and efficient transport system which meets needs of all citizens, promotes equal opportunity, and supports projected population changes. Develop transport initiatives which support the creation of safe, sustainable, balanced and cohesive communities. Provide transport services that support changes in lifestyles and travel patterns in a post-pandemic society. Creation of more inclusive transport options which also provide more equitable access to services and places.
<p>Human health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased need for development of transport services to support an aging population. The way in which transport availability impacts on mental health needs to be considered. Increases in traffic can have an adverse impact on the physical and mental health and wellbeing on residents. This can be through severance, air quality issues, reductions in tranquillity (noise). Health inequalities are prevalent throughout the region which can be exasperated as a result of poor transport options (especially for people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the connectivity of communities and key health services to reduce prevalence of isolation and loneliness; improving traffic safety. Creating more accessible public transport and providing public amenity (such as public benches and shelters). Include health promotion measures such as those that promote physical activity (e.g. active travel, walking and cycling infrastructure) and social cohesion (e.g. improved access to services and community facilities). Opportunities to enhance the transport network and infrastructure for the population with physical impairment / sensory loss, neurodiversity and disability needs (inclusive design).

IWBA Topic	Issues relevant to the Regional Transport Plan	Regional Transport Plan Opportunities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is the opportunity for the NWRTP to address socio-economic disadvantages (including issues of unemployment, lower educational attainment, housing insecurity and financial insecurity) through promoting the delivery of an inclusive, cost sensitive, sustainable transport network and infrastructure that connects employment opportunities to areas of higher deprivation to promote better mental and physical health.
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated sites present through the catchment that could be impacted by the placement of interventions, including through habitat loss and degradation. • Protected and priority habitats and species could be impacted by the placement of interventions, including through changes to habitat, disturbance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built interventions could incorporate measures to restore, recover, reconnect, and enhance existing habitats to help minimise further biodiversity loss and habitat fragmentation and deliver a Net Benefit for Biodiversity. • There is opportunity to use a natural capital approach to help inform the development of interventions. • Built interventions could contribute to creating habitats that are more resilient to climate change.
Land use and landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any intervention within the study area will need to be cognisant of landscape character and designations, such as Eryri National Park, Anglesey AONB, Llŷn AONB, and Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB to minimise any detrimental impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sympathetic and community-led design can offer the opportunity to further enhance the landscape and character of different areas and change the way communities interact with them. • Reduce the negative impact of traffic on the setting of landscape designations through including measures to improve public transport and active travel infrastructure to access key assets such as Eryri National Park. • Enhance access to rural landscape through active travel networks; cycle/PROW network and public transport. • Protect and conserve soil resources.

IWBA Topic	Issues relevant to the Regional Transport Plan	Regional Transport Plan Opportunities
Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for cultural heritage assets to be directly and indirectly impacted by physical changes to the built environment. This includes potential adverse impacts to the setting of heritage assets due to changes in the volumes and composition of traffic experienced in their locality. • High proportion of Welsh language speakers and a strong cultural identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance bi-lingual aspects of the NWRTP and its proposals. • Connect Welsh speaking communities, strengthening the cultural belonging and linguistic ties within the region. • Enhance and integrate the network across the region and improve its resilience for the future to enable better and more inclusive access to significant cultural sites. • Encourage the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment, including the setting of heritage assets. • Avoid works which would alter the character or physical survival of heritage assets (including archaeology).
Ground conditions (soils and geology)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geological hazards, such as coastal erosion, have the potential to disrupt and damage transport infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and improve the quality and quantity of groundwater resources.
Water environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions associated with the NWTP could contribute to the deterioration in WFD status of waterbodies (including groundwater), such as through changes to build infrastructure and drainage from the transport network. • Transport infrastructure could be adversely impacted from flooding (river, surface water and coastal) and coastal erosion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to meet the objectives for protected areas and achieving good overall Water framework Directive (WFD) status for surface and groundwaters should be explored, including mitigating adverse impacts of the transport sector. This should align with the local measures outlined in River Basin Management Plans and the catchment summaries of the opportunity catchments within the study area (i.e. Ynys Mon/Anglesey, Conwy, Clwyd and Dee). • Where possible the NWTP should seek to implement measures to restore and work with natural processes to maximise wider water environmental benefits and outcomes.

IWBA Topic	Issues relevant to the Regional Transport Plan	Regional Transport Plan Opportunities
Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future climate change is likely to increase the severity and frequency of extreme weather events including flooding and droughts and cause hotter summers and wetter winters. This has the potential to adversely impact transport infrastructure and cause travel disruption. • Changes in climate are likely to affect travel choices people make. For example, wetter winters may deter people from choosing public transport options if there is no shelter available for waiting or if the services are unreliable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to reduce emissions from transport by implementing low-carbon or zero-carbon solutions including reducing car trips, transition to zero-emission fleet and creating resilient and efficient transport networks. • Incorporate measures to ensure that the transport network is resilient to the impacts of future climate change.
Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality is generally good and not a major issue in the NWTP area given that it is predominantly rural in nature. • Promotion of a transition to electric vehicles can support reductions in air pollution associated with carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and nitrous oxides (such as NO₂). However electric vehicles still release particular matter pollution (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) associated with wear from tyres and breaks. • There is a risk that new development in the area (such as the Anglesey Freeport and Wrexham Investment Zone) could increase the volume of freight travelling in the locality, leading to increase air pollution and worsening of local air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to have the greatest impact on air quality, interventions should focus on reducing the number of vehicles on the road by supporting the transition to active travel and public transport wherever possible. • Creation of active travel links that are sufficiently separated from road traffic can help reduce the amount of pollution that walkers and cyclists are exposed to and increase uptake in active travel through creating safe active travel options. • The NWRTP should include relevant transport initiatives for businesses (e.g. promotion of transportation of goods by rail, and e-cargo bikes for small businesses in main towns) to ensure that the health of local communities and habitats are not detrimentally impacted.
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise pollution associated with roads is a key concern in the NWRTP area, particularly along major routes such as the A55. • There is a risk that new development in the area (such as the Anglesey Freeport and Wrexham Investment Zone) could increase the volume of freight travelling in the locality, leading to increase in noise pollution and impact on local residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NWRTP has an opportunity to help reduce noise pollution experienced by local communities by reducing the number of vehicles on the roads (through promoting a transition to use of public transport and active travel) and supporting the transition to electric vehicles.

IWBA Topic	Issues relevant to the Regional Transport Plan	Regional Transport Plan Opportunities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NWRTP should include relevant transport initiatives (e.g. promotion of transportation of goods by rail) to ensure that the health of local communities are not detrimentally impacted. • Reducing road traffic noise (and ensuring that this does not increase) around Eryri National Park can help maintain and improve the tranquillity of the area and support health and wellbeing of users. • The NWRTP should align with the Soundscape Plan for Wales where possible.
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 1,000 new dwellings may need to be provided in North Wales each year to meet housing demand. • House building rates vary across North Wales, with Denbighshire, Conwy and Isle of Anglesey having the highest completion rates and Gwynedd the lowest. • Future hydrogen infrastructure, including production centres and transmission networks, are planned for North Wales that will link to Northwest England. • Two locations within North Wales have been identified for large scale on-shore wind energy development. • North Wales offers a variety of higher and further education institutes, including Bangor University. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holyhead Port plays an essential role in the international movement of imports and exports and also as a cruise port and the NWRTP should include appropriate interventions to support this asset. • Enhancement of public transport connectivity of the higher and further educational establishments, health facilities, and other social infrastructure (e.g. libraries, social, religious, and leisure facilities) to local and regional communities.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are rural parts of North Wales that are more reliant on private car use and have less opportunity to benefit from other modes of public transport and active travel initiatives. • A very small proportion of people in North Wales live close to rail stations with frequent services. • There are limited freight services on the rail network. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance rail services, the key priorities for improvements are the Borderlands Line, increasing capacity at Chester Station, and increased service levels on the North Wales Main Line. Consideration should be given to the importance of connections to key centres such as London, Cardiff, Manchester (including the airport), Liverpool, Crewe, and Warrington (for Northern

IWBA Topic	Issues relevant to the Regional Transport Plan	Regional Transport Plan Opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents on the Menai Crossings to Anglesey have an adverse impact on connectivity, journey reliability and crossing times. • Long distances to key services, resulting in high rates of car ownership and low levels of walking and cycling. • There is currently little provision in North Wales for road freight operators seeking a switch to cleaner fuels. • Car parking is a contentious issue at key beauty spots including within Eryri National Park. 	<p>Powerhouse Rail). Consideration should also be given to sustainable travel links to interchange facilities at rail stations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence bus services to see that timetables, routes and fares better meet local needs and demand. • Support initiatives to decarbonise the freight and logistics networks in North Wales, e.g. through increasing the proportion of freight carried on the North Wales Main Line. • The NWTP can help implement measures to increase provision and use of public transport and active travel. • Future proofing planned transport infrastructure. • The NWTP should include interventions to support and improve public transport links with Chester as this is an important gateway for North Wales and key link for the north-east Wales economy. • Improvements to public transport and active travel access to tourist attractions.
Resources and waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are existing mineral reserves within Wales, however some areas will experience shortfalls in material available in the future unless new allocations are identified. Built infrastructure required as part of the NWTP should resource material as locally as possible to reduce emissions, freight and support the local economy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the transition of waste collection fleets to EV. • The NWRTP should incorporate circular economy principles. This includes reducing the need to build infrastructure in the first place, reusing recycled materials and reducing use of raw materials. • The NWRTP should support the creation of appropriate transport networks and facilities to enable recycling and waste to be collected, transport, sorted and managed to help meet Welsh targets to achieve zero waste by 2050. • Improve on energy efficiency across the transport network.

IWBA Topic	Issues relevant to the Regional Transport Plan	Regional Transport Plan Opportunities
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transport infrastructure and links between key destinations in North Wales impacts opportunities to attract tourists and inward economic investment. This includes links between east Wales and northwest England, as well as links between North and South Wales. • Many tourist locations including Eryri National Park are hard to reach without access to a car. • Gross Value Added (GVA) per head in North Wales is lower than the Welsh average, however this varies between local authorities. • High proportions of second homes and holiday lets within the housing stock are an issues in parts of North Wales, including Gwynedd and Anglesey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased public transport options would be beneficial to access key attractions and to reduce the volume of traffic and parking on rural roads and near beauty spots. • Ensure infrastructure is sufficient to support Freeport and investment zones, including for freight and workers. • Implement appropriate transport initiatives and infrastructure that promotes sustainable economic growth and access to quality employment opportunities for all.

5. Appraisal process and IWBA framework

5.1 Appraisal process

This section outlines the proposed IWBA framework, which will be used to identify, describe, analyse, and compare the impacts and effects of the NWRTP. Given the wide range of programmes and plans (options) likely to be proposed, the implementation of the NWRTP has the potential to significantly affect various environmental, social, economic, and cultural topic areas considered in the IWBA. To appropriately assess these effects, a set of IWBA objectives have been developed to guide the development and assessment of the NWRTP. Additionally, specific questions have been formulated to guide the assessment process.

The IWBA will predominantly be qualitative in nature and be undertaken alongside the development of the options for the NWRTP. This will ensure that negative effects are avoided and minimised, whilst also maximising opportunities for positive effects to be incorporated. Whilst the NWRTP is transport focused it has the potential to support wider targets and have far reaching benefits including increasing physical activity of the population, habitat creation, improving equity of access to education and employment, stimulation of economic activity and boosting tourism. One of the primary functions of the IWBA is therefore to capture these wider benefits and integrate them into the development of the NWRTP. The draft IWBA Report, which will be published alongside the draft NWRTP will be used to document the outcome of this process and to communicate how the IWBA supports sustainable development.

5.2 Geographical scope of the IWBA

The geographical scope of the IWBA is dictated by the geographical scope of the NWRTP, i.e. the local authority areas of Isle of Anglesey, Wrexham, Conwy, Flintshire, Denbighshire, and Gwynedd. The geographical scope of some baseline topics will be closely related to neighbouring areas of England, in particular Chester and Liverpool as there is significant migration both ways across the border in relation to employment, services (e.g. health) and education. The coastal areas of the study area also means that both terrestrial and marine effects (up to the mean low water mark) are possible and will need to be considered in the IWBA.

5.3 Temporal Scope of the IWBA

The NWRTP sets the 5-year plan for the region (2025-2030) and therefore the IWBA will reflect this timescale. In the circumstance that effects would last longer than this timescale, this will be noted in the assessment.

5.4 Assessment of alternatives

The identification, assessment, and comparison of 'reasonable alternatives' is a requirement of the SEA process and is therefore included within the IWBA framework. The IWBA will be used to help guide and influence the development of the NWRTP. This will help avoid potential adverse effects and facilitate integration of measures into the Plan that provide wider sustainability benefits to the environment, society, and economy.

In the context of the NWRTP alternatives will include different programmes and plans, developed under each policy focus area. The IWBA framework will be used to assess an initial 'long list' of options which will feed into a wider screening process that 'screens out' a number of options for reasons such as viability or having unacceptable sustainability impacts. This will leave a 'shortlist' of options that will be appraised as part of the IWBA. The outcomes of the IWBA will be used within the overall process of identifying the 'preferred option' that will form the basis of the NWRTP. The assessment of the alternatives will be reported in the IWBA Report (known as the Environmental report in the SEA process).

5.5 Secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects

It is a requirement of the SEA Regulations that secondary (indirect), cumulative, and synergistic effects are identified. Definitions of these terms are given below, and these will be considered in the IWBA:

- Secondary (indirect) effects: These are effects which are not a direct result of the Plan but occur as a result of a complex pathway.
- Cumulative effects: These are effects which arise because the impacts from more than one project or strategy combine to have an effect on a receptor that may be larger than their individual effects considered separately.
- Synergistic effects: This is when several individual effects of a project or strategy (e.g. air quality and noise) have a combined effect on a receptor (e.g. health of a population) that is greater than each individual effect.

5.6 IWBA objectives

The IWBA Framework encompasses a set of objectives that have been developed to assess to the sustainability of the options being proposed for the NWRTP. These objectives, listed in Table 5-1, align with both the well-being priorities and ambitions outlined in the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG)²⁸. Table 5-1 also lists the questions that will be asked of the NWRTP to assist in the assessment against each of the objectives, along with which IWBA topics the objectives relate to.

All these factors connect in the following ways:

- **Wales Transport Strategy**: The WTS sets out the vision and goals for transportation in Wales. It aims to enhance well-being, promote sustainable development, and improve the Welsh transport system.
- **Well-being Goals**: The WTS's well-being priorities and well-being ambitions are closely tied to the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. This legislation emphasizes long-term well-being, environmental protection, and social progress.
- **NWRTP Context**: The objectives within the IWBA Framework were developed based on key issues and opportunities identified as being of particular relevance to the NWRTP. This context has been identified through establishment of the baseline (Section 4 and Appendix B) and review of existing plans, programs, and sustainability objectives (as detailed in Section 3).
- **Statutory assessments** – the IWBA Framework must also encompass the requirements of the statutory assessments outlined in 1.3.2.

In summary, the IWBA Framework provides a structured approach to ensure that the NWRTP aligns with broader well-being goals and contributes to sustainable development in North Wales.

²⁸ Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG). Welsh Government, February 2024

The Welsh Transport Strategy Priorities and Ambitions are listed below and are also aligned to each of the objectives in Table 5-1:





Priorities

- 1** Bringing services to people in order to reduce the need to travel
- 2** Allow people and goods to move easily from door to door by accessible, sustainable and efficient transport services and infrastructure.
- 3** Encourage people to make the change to more sustainable transport.








Ambitions







- 1** Good for people and communities
- 2** Good for the environment.
- 3** Good for the economy and places in Wales
- 4** Good for culture and the Welsh language

Table 5-1 IWBA objectives and alignment with Well-being goals

IWBA Objective	How will we test if the objective has been met? Will the NWTP.....	Relevant IWBA Topic	Relevant Priorities of the Wales Transport Strategy	Relevant Ambitions of the Wales Transport Strategy
1. Support the delivery of housing and local services to meet the needs of local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the creation of communities which offer viable and sustainable transport options within and between locations? Improve access to local services? 	Population Human health Infrastructure Economy		
2. Reduce inequality and promote community cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve environmental conditions and quality of life for the most deprived communities? Support the needs of members of society who have protected characteristics? Improve the accessibility of public transport and active travel for all members of society? Engage with stakeholders, partners and local communities? Create opportunities for community participation? Support the transport needs of children? 	Population Human health Cultural heritage Transport Economy		

IWBA Objective	How will we test if the objective has been met? Will the NWTP.....	Relevant IWBA Topic	Relevant Priorities of the Wales Transport Strategy	Relevant Ambitions of the Wales Transport Strategy
<p>3. Improve the health and wellbeing of the local population, including with respect to physical and mental health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage uptake in active travel? • Improve connectivity between local communities, particularly within rural areas? • Reduce social isolation? • Reduce physical damage and improve the safety of transport services and infrastructure? • Improve access to key health services? • Improve access to recreation activities? • Improve public access to green spaces? 	<p>Population Human health Land use and landscape Air quality Noise Economy</p>	<p>1 2 3</p>	<p>1 2 3</p>
<p>4. Conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity interests, including through safeguarding important sites, species and habitats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause harm or any deterioration in the condition of any designated sites? • Result in the loss of valuable habitats? • Deliver opportunities to restore or create semi-natural habitats? • Deliver net benefit for biodiversity and contribute to ecosystem resilience? 	<p>Biodiversity Ground conditions Water environment</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>2</p>

IWBA Objective	How will we test if the objective has been met? Will the NWTP.....	Relevant IWBA Topic	Relevant Priorities of the Wales Transport Strategy	Relevant Ambitions of the Wales Transport Strategy
5. Protect and enhance local landscape character, designations and visual amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause harm to any designated or protected landscapes? • Result in the enhancement to the condition and character of any protected or designated landscapes? • Reduce the adverse impacts of road traffic and parking on landscapes and designations? • Result is loss of amount of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land? • Contribute to the efficient management of travel in tourist areas during peak periods? 	Land use and landscape Cultural heritage Economy	None	
6. Protect and enhance the local cultural heritage, including the Welsh language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause direct or indirect harm to designated heritage assets? • Enhance the condition or setting of designated heritage assets? • Provide measures to avoid and/or mitigate harm to non-designated heritage assets? • Support Welsh speaking communities? • Include initiatives to implement and encourage use of Welsh language? 	Population Cultural heritage	None	
7. Protect and enhance the health of groundwater, surface and coastal waterbodies, water quality and water resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a negative impact on water resources used for water abstraction? • Have a negative impact on the quality of water resources? • Have a negative impact on the general health of waterbodies? • Help to achieve the WFD water body measures and support WFD waterbodies achieve 'good' ecological status? 	Ground conditions Water environment	None	
8. Support a transition toward a transport sector with reduced (including zero) carbon emissions and enhance the resilience of transport infrastructure to withstand the effects of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help meet Wales targets to be 'net zero' by 2050? • Increase modal shift from private cars to public transport and active travel. • Include opportunities to support decarbonisation of the transport section? • Support an uptake in the use of cleaner fuels for transport, including electric vehicles? • Include measures to increase the resilience of existing and new infrastructure to the effects of climate change? • Reduce the impact of extreme weather events on the transport network? • Reduce the need to travel to access key amenities and services? 	Climatic factors Transport		
9. Protect and enhance local air quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve air quality for communities? • Cause any deterioration in air quality? • Include initiatives to encourage the uptake of active travel and public transport? 	Human health Air quality		

IWBA Objective	How will we test if the objective has been met? Will the NWTP.....	Relevant IWBA Topic	Relevant Priorities of the Wales Transport Strategy	Relevant Ambitions of the Wales Transport Strategy
10. Reduce disturbance from transport related noise and vibration to local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the local soundscapes? • Result in a reduction in noise pollution? • Include initiatives to encourage the uptake of active travel and public transport? 	Human health Noise		
11. Incorporate circular economy principles to reduce the use of raw materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use sustainably sourced materials and ensure materials and resources are used efficiently? • Include transport initiatives and infrastructure that enable recycling and waste to be collected, transported, sorted and managed effectively? • Support the transition of waste collection fleets to cleaner fuels, such as use of EV? • Encourage use of locally sourced material? 	Resources and waste Economy		
12. Create an integrated transport system that facilitates efficient and safe movement of both people and freight, contributing to increased economic prosperity in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the land available for employment development? • Support equitable access to employment, education and training opportunities? • Improve the reliance and resilience of the transport network to better support businesses and workers? • Encourage regeneration and investment, particularly in more deprived areas? • Improve access between England and North Wales and improve access between North and South Wales? • Encourage sustainable access to tourist facilities and attractions? • Support the rural economy? • Protect and enhance the natural beauty of the area? 	Population Economy Transport		

5.7 Assessing significance

The IWBA objectives will be used to help guide the development of the NWRTP and will also be used to understand how it is performing in terms of sustainability. The NWRTP options will be assessed against the IWBA objectives using the corresponding questions identified in Table 5-1. A score will be assigned to each objective using the criteria outlined in Table 5-3 depending on the type and level of effect that the NWRTP is likely to have on the objective. The scoring will be presented in a matrix in the IWBA Report alongside a commentary that will provide a justification and supporting evidence for the scoring. Where appropriate this will include quantitative information, such as percentage carbon sequestered, or area of habitat created.

Table 5-3 IWBA scoring criteria

IWBA Score	Definition
++	Likely significant positive effect
+	Likely minor positive effect
0	Likely negligible effect
-	Likely minor negative effect
--	Likely significant negative effect
?	Likely effect uncertain
+/-	Likely to be a mix of positive and negative effects

6. Next steps

6.1 Overview

The IWBA Scoping report is published for consultation, and feedback gathered will be taken forward to the assessment.- Statutory consultees include NRW, Cadw, and the North Wales CJC, Local and National Park Authorities.

The IWBA Framework will guide the development of the NWRTP and inform the process of developing and appraising options. Throughout this process, additional consultation and engagement will take place with partners and stakeholders to help inform the development of the NWRTP. The findings from the IWBA will be presented in an IWBA Report, which will accompany the draft NWRTP for consultation.

The IWBA Report will include the following information:

- Updated environmental, social, cultural, and economic baseline information of relevance to the NWRTP.
- An updated list of plans, programmes and sustainability objectives and description of how these have been considered within the appraisal.
- The methodology that has been following for the IWBA and how it has been used to inform the development of the NWRTP.
- Information on the proposed NWRTP, why the option or options have been selected and the alternative options that were been considered.
- The likely environmental, social, cultural and economic effects of the NWRTP (capturing all assessments required and/or screened into the IWBA).
- Proposed mitigation that will be undertaken to reduce any significant negative effects of the NWRTP and increase the benefits it provides.
- Proposed monitoring that will be undertaken to help manage and evaluate the impact of the NWRTP.

There will be opportunity to provide feedback on the IWBA Report and the draft NWRTP prior to the NWRTP being updated and finalised. When the final NWRTP is published, this will be accompanied by a Consultation Report and Post Adoption Statement, ensuring stakeholders and the public are informed as to how the consultation responses and IWBA assessment outcomes have been taken into account in the final NWRTP.

6.2 Providing your views

We are eager to hear your views on the emerging NWRTP and its IWBA. Our goal is to create a Transport Plan that fully embraces sustainable development, addresses local concerns, and takes advantages of opportunities generated by a new regional Transport Plan for North Wales. Below, we have included a set of questions to guide your feedback on the IWBA's scope and approach. Feel free to share additional comments or feedback alongside your responses.

Questions:

1. Relevant policies, plans and objectives

- (1a) Do you feel that we have we included all relevant plans, programmes and sustainability objectives and adequately taken account of those listed?
 - [Strongly agree/ Agree/ Neutral/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree]
- (1b) Are there other documents specifically relevant to the NWRTP that have not been listed and should be taken into account?

2. Baseline information and key sustainability issues and opportunities

- (2a) Are there any baseline information sources that are relevant to the NWRTP that have not been listed and should be taken into account?
- (2b) Do you feel the sustainability issues and opportunities identified accurately reflect those in the study area of the NWRTP?
 - [Strongly agree/ Agree/ Neutral/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree]
- (2c) Are there any other sustainability issues or opportunities that should be considered within the IWBA?

3. Sustainability objectives and questions

- (3a) Do you agree with the sustainability objectives and questions that we have identified?
 - [Strongly agree/ Agree/ Neutral/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree]
- (3b) Are there any other objectives or questions that you think should be included in the IWBA?

4. Sustainability appraisal framework

- (4a) Do you agree with the proposed appraisal framework and approach to undertaking the IWBA?
 - [Strongly agree/ Agree/ Neutral/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree]

5. Additional comments

- (5a) Do you have any other comments that you wish to make regarding the approach and scope proposed for the integrated sustainability appraisal?

Appendix A: Policy, Plan and Sustainability Objectives

Appendix B: Baseline

Appendix C: WFD Water Bodies

Appendix D: HRA Pre-Screening Report