

CYNGOR GWYNEDD – Report to meeting of Cyngor Gwynedd Cabinet



Item Title:	Statutory Consultation on the Proposed Glyndŵr National Park
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Craig ab Iago, Aelod Cabinet Amgylchedd
Contact Officer:	Gareth Jones, Asst Head of Environment Dept
Date of Meeting:	11 November 2025

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1 To approve the response in Appendix 4 as Gwynedd Council's response to the statutory consultation on the proposed draft designation order and boundary for the proposed Glyndŵr National Park.
- 1.2 Delegate the right to the Head of the Department for the Environment to make any insignificant changes that may be required to the response before it is submitted to Natural Resources Wales.

2. REASON WHY THE CABINET NEED TO MAKE THE DECISION

- 2.1 As a statutory consultee, Gwynedd Council is required to provide a formal response to the statutory consultation on the proposed draft designation order and boundary of the proposed national park. The statutory consultation commenced on 15 September 2025 and closes on 8 December 2025.

3. INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 In its Programme for Government (2021-2026), Welsh Government set out its intention to designate a new National Park based on the existing Clwydian Range & Dee Valley National Landscape (formerly known as an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' or AONB). The Welsh Government commissioned Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to evaluate the case for a new National Park. The assessment will take place within the current term of the Senedd (2021-2016).

3.1.2 If NRW considers a national park designation to be appropriate and desirable, a 'designation order' will be served to the Welsh Government, which will then decide whether to confirm, refuse or vary the designation order. If confirmed, a fourth national park will be created in Wales. The first new park since 1957, and the first ever park to be created in and by Wales.

3.1.3 Only a small area of Gwynedd is included within the proposed park boundary (just over 11km² and less than 2% of the total area). Llandderfel is the only settlement within the boundary. According to information from the Council's Land and Property Gazetteer there are 220 addresses with 185 being residential and 15 commercial/business units. According to the 2021 Census the average household size in this area is 2.4 therefore it can be estimated that the population living in this area is 528. A map showing the boundary of the new park and which part of Gwynedd falls into the proposed boundary of the new national park can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 Previous Consultations

3.2.1 Between October and November 2023, NRW conducted a public engagement period on an initial map of the new national park, referred to as a 'Search Area Map'.

3.2.2 NRW undertook a non-statutory public consultation on a proposed draft boundary between October and December 2024, referred to as the 'Candidate Area Map'.

3.3 Gwynedd Council's response to the non-statutory Consultation between October and July 2024

3.3.1 Although the consultations related to the proposed boundary of the new park and although it only affects a small area of Gwynedd the Council raised a number of concerns/questions namely:

- The impact on house prices
- The rural economy
- The visitor and tourist economy
- The Welsh language
- Planning (Policy and Development Management)
- Governance and funding
- The candidate area and the need for a new national park

3.3.2 The table in appendix 2 summarises the concerns/questions raised by Gwynedd Council during the previous consultations, NRW's response to the issues raised and our comments on its responses.

3.3.3 The table shows that we are not satisfied with the response to five concerns raised which are:

- The Welsh language
- Planning
- Funding
- Governance
- The candidate area

3.4 Gwynedd Council's Response to the Current Consultation

3.4.1 NRW has created an online response form for the consultation which is available here: [Proposed Glyndŵr National Park \(Designation\) Order - Statutory Consultation 2025](#)

3.4.2 The Council's draft response to the consultation can be found in appendix 4 which elaborates on the concerns raised in 3.3.3.

3.5 Internal consultations and discussions

3.5.1 On 9 October, we met with NRW and Councillor Elwyn Edwards to discuss any concerns he may have as the local member who raised the following concerns:

- The impact on the Welsh language
- Funding / Waste of money
- Governance
- Over-tourism

3.6 Next steps

3.6.1 The Council will need to submit its comments by 8 December 2025.

3.6.2 Following a review of the responses to the statutory consultation, and if NRW's board agrees, then a designation order will be submitted to the Welsh Government in February 2026. The Welsh Government has the authority to designate a national park or not.

3.6.3 A briefing note sent by NRW on the 31 October which states:

“Any objection made by a local authority (and not withdrawn) will trigger a local inquiry to be held. Should a local public inquiry be held, an assessment

will be made of the financial and resource implications, the nature of the objections and how objecting local authorities may choose to participate."

A copy of this briefing note can be seen in Appendix 5.

The views of the statutory officers

Monitoring Officer

This is a significant consultation that justifies Cabinet attention. Although the area of Gwynedd falls within the boundaries of the proposed National Park is comparatively small in geographical terms, this may have material implications for Cyngor Gwynedd. It is appropriate that the draft response highlights this.

Head of Finance

I have no objections to the decision sought.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Map of the Proposed Glyndŵr National Park

Appendix 2: NRW's response to Gwynedd Council's comments on the previous consultation

Appendix 3: Letter from the Deputy First Minister

Appendix 4: Gwynedd Council's response to the Statutory Consultation

Appendix 5: NRW Briefing Note 31 October