

Briefing note – October 2025

Statutory Consultation on a Proposed Glyndŵr National Park

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is issuing this briefing note to provide further clarification on several points, following dialogue with statutory consultees and the Welsh Government. This briefing note is intended to support local authorities in preparing their formal responses to the statutory consultation on the proposed designation of a new Glyndŵr National Park in Wales.

Points of clarification.

1. Planning Arrangements:

The Welsh Government has issued a statement to clarify its position on planning arrangements under any future National Park Authority. These matters will be further addressed following the making of the Designation Order, but prior to confirmation of the Order by the Welsh Ministers.

‘Welsh Ministers recognise and understand the importance of planning arrangements under any new Planning authority.

While ultimately, as set out under legislation, this would be a decision for any new Authority, it is one in which Welsh Government would work actively with the new body during the transition period to ensure the issue is given careful consideration to maximise the effectiveness of the new arrangements. This would include actively seeking the input of all Local Authorities within the boundaries of a new Park to help inform the development of the form, function, and resourcing of planning arrangements, including the sharing or delegation of functions.

This partnership approach has already been adopted in the work that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has done in developing the evidence base for the new National Park proposals. This included commissioning the Arup consultancy to produce the report “Planning Services Review in the context of a proposed National Park in Wales” that sets out the baseline of existing planning service in the area across the 5 local authorities affected and considered alternative models for delivery.

We would also expect the development of any new planning service to take into consideration wider Welsh Government planning strategy that is encouraging and supporting the sharing of services and the development of joint plans. The extension of the current successful shared service approach to minerals, waste and infrastructure across North Wales would be explored with the objective to extend the approach to other specialist and technical planning functions.’

Note: Welsh Government has requested participation by all affected local authorities in an advisory group. It is intended that this group would steer developments post the potential making of a Designation Order by NRW.

2. Funding statement:

The Deputy First Minister has provided the following assurance regarding funding:

'Further to my letter of 16 April, I am writing to provide further information about the Welsh Government's commitment to provide future funding for the proposed new National Park and the financial implications to Flintshire County Council of any decision made by Welsh Ministers in relation to the designation. Because this potentially impacts several Local Authorities, I am also copying this letter to the CEOs of Denbighshire, Wrexham, Powys, and Gwynedd Local Authorities.'

As outlined in my previous reply, it is absolutely vital that a new National Park is properly funded without reducing the core funding for our existing National Park Authorities, or by reducing the funding available to Welsh Local Authorities. We are committed to this principle and will continue work to assess the costs related to the establishment of a new National Park and the funding required by the Welsh Government.

At this stage, ahead of any recommendation that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) might make about any new designation, it is not yet possible to accurately quantify the cost of a potential new National Park. However, I can confirm that I have now been able to consider in more detail the most significant costs that would arise out of creating a new National Park Authority and confirm that these will form part of the Welsh Government's future financial plans.

In particular, using approximate costs based on our existing National Parks, I have considered the likely core revenue costs arising from the Environment Act 1995 (EA 1995) that require funding from Welsh Government and a NPA's constituent Local Authorities. The Welsh Government is committed to providing additional funding to fully cover both of these requirements should a new National Park be designated. That is to say, there would be no financial burden placed on your Council to provide funding to a new National Park, as additional funding would be provided to your Authority to meet the costs outlined under EA 1995.

In addition, I would note that our existing NPAs have benefited in recent years from accessing additional Welsh Government capital funding through programmes such as Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places (SLSP), Ffermio Bro and Local Places for Nature (LPfN) to take forward important work in areas including nature recovery, climate change, access and sustainable tourism. I fully expect that any new NPA would be able to access and benefit from these schemes or their future equivalents.

There would be a period of transition required between any new designation being confirmed and a new National Park Authority being brought into being. While further work is required on the nature of such a transition arrangement, the Welsh Government also intends to provide funding towards this.

Finally, while the above has focussed on costs and funding, I would also highlight that National Parks have the potential to bring economic benefits to the areas they serve such as through boosting tourism and the visitor economy, as well as wider benefits. As part of its assessments, NRW has carried out an Economic Impact Review for the proposed National Park, which will be

made available to Local Authorities alongside other new evidence by NRW during a statutory consultation in the autumn (subject to approval by NRW's board).'

Note: The local authority levy element of funding is reflected in individual local authority settlements. This is standard practice for existing National Parks in Wales. It is not a temporary or unique arrangement for this designation. The above statement reiterates this and reinforces that it would apply to the proposed Glyndŵr National Park.

3. Local Development Plans:

A National Park strictly becomes a material consideration in respect of planning once a Designation Order is confirmed by Welsh Ministers. However, local planning authorities and developers alike will consider the materiality of the National Park over time, and the level of likelihood and risk will increase through the various stages of the designation process. Transitional arrangements will be put in place while the new National Park Authority is being established, and this will help avoid unintended impacts on Local Development Plans. Welsh Government is aware of the risks involved and intends to avoid duplication or unnecessary costs. A constructive dialogue between local planning authorities and the Welsh Government will be essential and the above-mentioned advisory group will help to steer discussion in this respect.

4. Timeline and Next Steps:

Consultation Deadline: Formal responses to the consultation on the draft Designation Order and proposed boundary are requested by 8 December 2025.

NRW Board Decision: On 12 January 2026, the NRW Board will consider the proposal alongside consultation responses and decide whether to make the Designation Order and submit it to the Welsh Ministers for confirmation.

Notice Period: If the Order is made, but before it is submitted to the Welsh Ministers for confirmation, NRW must publicise a Notice confirming that the Order has been made and is going to be submitted for confirmation. This triggers a 28-day period during which representations or objections can be given. During this time, NRW will contact all local authorities. Where an authority objected during the consultation period, or provided conditional support, and that authority remains dissatisfied, it must confirm its objection during this Notice period. Note that it is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure that any representations or objections are submitted to NRW in time and in accordance with the Notice.

5. Potential Inquiry:

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.

Local authorities that do not object are not required to participate, though they may choose to comment on particular matters.

Further support and information.

NRW remains available to advise local authorities throughout this process. Please contact us via your nominated officers or using the details below should you require further clarification or assistance.

We remind you that the following documents are currently available via the project webpage:

<https://ymgyngghori.cyfoethnaturiol.cymru/north-east-gogledd-ddwyrain/proposed-national-park-statutory-consultation-2025>

Previously Available	New analysis in 2025
Area or Search Report (and map) Engagement period (2023) Report Special Qualities Report Forces For Change Report Management Options Report Evaluation areas Report Candidate Area Report (and map) Public Consultation (2024) Report	Benefits for Nature Report Health Impact Assessment Welsh Language Impact Assessment Economic impact Report Equality Impact Assessment A Review of Planning Services Report The processes for identifying a name A Review of the boundary

Yours Faithfully

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