



DESIGN
COMMISSION
FOR WALES
COMISIWN
DYLUNIO
CYMRU

4th April 2025

Stuart Davies

South West Wales Corporate Joint Committee

regional.transport@swansea.gov.uk

Dear Stuart,

RE: South West Wales Regional Transport Plan

We write to provide our initial comments on the emerging South West Wales Regional Transport Plan and to introduce how the Design Commission can support regional planning.

The draft Regional Transport Plan (RTP) seeks to establish a strategy that aligns with the national transport strategy, Llwybr Newydd, and has positive messages around promoting sustainable transport and aligning this with growth and development. The plan currently lacks a clear vision and we encourage further work on this and ensuring that the objectives are clear and specific to the region.

There is scope for the RTP to be developed further and deliver the best outputs and value from the regional planning process. Building on the analysis, further spatial interpretation of the opportunities and issues would help inform the plan. Consideration should be given to a place-based approach that addresses the spatial issues and opportunities as a package of measures, rather than being presented in topic-based categories. Geographically specific policies and interventions could be more closely linked to the analysis and feed into the delivery

plan identifying specific interventions in specific locations. The RTP should seek to move the general objectives of the national transport strategy on to specific application for the region. This might mean that the plan is shorter and more concise, potentially with fewer more regionally significant projects.

The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy should have a strong thread throughout the RTP and the projects should be clearly aligned with the hierarchy and the goal of creating sustainable places. It is positive to see active travel and public transport initiatives prioritised in the plan.

We appreciate that the RTP is progressing ahead of the Strategic Development Plan (SDP) and that the intention is for the two to align in the future. However, iterative spatial planning, bringing together transport, economic development and land use planning, should be the aim. Ways of working and policies that promote this should feature strongly in the RTP. We would like to see a move away from the traditional transport modelling and assessment approach (Policy 4.2) to a vision-led transport planning approach.

We would encourage the use of the Placemaking Wales Charter as a tool for place-based analysis and strategy in the RTP and SDP.

We are holding a short introductory meeting with all the Corporate Joint Committees and Welsh Government on Monday 7th April to discuss the RTPs in more detail and highlight how the Design Commission can support regional planning. We look forward to meeting you then.

Yours sincerely,



Carole-Anne Davies

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Ar gyfer ac ar ran y Bwrdd Cyfarwyddwyr - For and on behalf of the Board of Directors