



DESIGN
COMMISSION
FOR WALES
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CYMRU

13th May 2025

Clare Cameron
Programme Lead
Cardiff Capital Region
info@regionaltransportplanccr.wales

Dear Clare,

RE: South East Wales Regional Transport Plan

We write to provide our initial comments on the emerging South East Wales Regional Transport Plan and advise how the Design Commission can provide further support following our recent introductory meeting with all the Corporate Joint Committees and Welsh Government.

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.

There is scope for the RTP to be developed further and deliver the best outputs and value from the regional planning process. The plan would benefit from further analysis that explores the key issues in more detail. Further spatial interpretation of the opportunities and issues would also 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. As presented, the regionally strategic projects would benefit from being highlighted rather than being in addition to projects across the region.

The draft plan emphasises taking a flexible approach and there is the danger of it being a summary of what is happening rather than a strategy that sets direction, drives change and provides the clarity that the region needs.

The Sustainable Transport Hierarchy should have a strong thread throughout the RTP and all the policies and projects should be clearly aligned with the hierarchy and the goal of creating sustainable places.

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. The South East Wales Metro presents a fantastic opportunity to link growth and new development with high-quality public transport.

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

The Design Commission can provide support for regional planning with in-person workshops. We encourage early engagement to maximise the potential benefits. Please contact my colleague, Max Hampton, to discuss further – max.hampton@dcfw.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carole-Anne Davies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carole-Anne Davies

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