

3.1 MONITORING AND REVIEW

3.1.1 The Structure Plan is not a blueprint and it must be able to respond to changing circumstances in order to remain relevant. These circumstances may include changes within the wider policy environment, development pressures or changing political priorities. It is important that a monitoring and review process is set up to analyse the progress of the Plan.

Monitoring

3.1.2 The Highland Council already undertakes monitoring on a wide range of indicators and this ongoing work will provide much of the information needed to assess the progress of the Structure Plan. A significant part of this is the production of the Highland Trends document, which provides statistical information on a range of social, economic and environmental indicators. This document is updated regularly, thereby taking account of current as well as emerging trends.

3.1.3 Other information currently monitored by The Highland Council Planning and Development Service, which will provide additional input to the process, includes:

- housing supply and demand;
- industrial developments and land take-up;
- forestry applications;
- European policy and funding; and
- planning applications.

3.1.4 Other Council Services also collect and analyse information to inform their own policy development and monitoring processes and this will be drawn upon in monitoring the progress of the Structure Plan policies.

3.1.5 The monitoring process will also take account of the priorities of the main partners in the Plan making process. As a result, recognition will be taken of the actions and decisions of other agencies and the impacts these may have on the assumptions and forecasts that underpin the Structure Plan.

3.1.6 It is also proposed that the Community Planning framework will play an important role in the monitoring process, and will allow the views, opinions and aspirations of local communities to be included within the Plan.

3.1.7 A major part of the monitoring of the Structure Plan, Community Plan and other Council plans and strategies will be the development of a range of sustainability indicators based on the Plan's sustainability objectives. Measurement of the Plan's impact against these will be critical in evaluating progress towards sustainability and thus towards The Council's vision for the future of Highland.

3.1.8 Another aspect of monitoring relates to making a regular assessment of the effectiveness of the Structure Plan and its implementation. A range of indicators will, therefore, also be developed against which such aspects can be measured.

3.1.9 It is expected that the Structure Plan will remain flexible, capable of change when necessary and responsive to new concerns as they emerge. An overall monitoring statement will be produced on a two yearly review cycle, utilising all the information detailed above.

Proposal MR1 Structure Plan monitoring

In addition to the regular production of Highland Trends, The Highland Council will produce a Structure Plan Monitoring Statement every two years, focusing on the assumptions and forecasts behind the Plan, policy performance, effectiveness and any other relevant issues.

Review

3.1.10 The Structure Plan may require to be altered in light of emerging trends or changing policy objectives. The monitoring process will allow an early identification of the degree to which Structure Plan policy should be changed, although, to ensure long term policy stability, it is considered unlikely that a review or update of the Highland Structure Plan will be required on anything less than a five-year cycle.

Proposal MR2 Structure Plan review

The Highland Council will review or update the Structure Plan as appropriate, usually on a five-year cycle.

APPENDIX 1 - SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

Regional centre functions

	Inverness
Catchment population*	203,800
Inter-regional airport with European connections	●
Central transport interchange (rail/bus) on inter-regional transport corridors	
Direct access to inter-regional transport corridors	●
Theatre/concert hall	●
Arts centre	
Main library/archive centre	●
Regional outdoor sports stadium	●
Regional indoor sports venue	●
Multi-screen cinema	●
University centre	
Specialist medical provision	●
City shopping centre (specialist comparison retailing)	●
Superstore (>2,500 square metres floorspace)	●
Large-scale retail warehousing	●
Specialist "front office" accommodation	●
Conference facilities	●
Regional tourist gateway centre	●

Sub-regional centre functions

	Inverness	Invergordon/ Dingwall GC#	Thurso/ Wick GC#	Portree	Fort William
Catchment population*	88,700	52,000	32,100	11,800	19,200
Air transport facilities	●		●		
Sub-regional transport interchange	●				
Direct access to key intra-regional transport corridor(s)	●	●	●	●	●
Cultural/community facility	●	●	●	●	●
Performance/arts centre	●			●	
Branch library	●	●	●	●	●
Cinema/swimming pool etc.	●	●	●	●	●
Main post office	●	●	●	●	●
Higher/further education centre	●		●		●
General hospital facilities	●	●	●		●
Supermarket (> 2,000 square metres floorspace)	●		●		●
Office accommodation	●	●	●	●	●
Sub-regional tourist centre	●		●	●	●
Large scale business/industrial estate	●	●	●		●
Retail warehousing	●				

* 1991 Census

Group Centres

Local centre functions

	Catchment population*	Bus/rail to regional centre	Petrol filling station	Bank	Sub/community post-office	Secondary school	Health centre	Super/mini market	Small-scale office accommod.	Local tourist information centre	Small-scale business/industrial estate
Grantown	5,500	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kingussie GC#	5,500	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Thurso	17,000	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Wick	17,000	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Inverness DC##	7,500-12,500	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Culloden GC#	9,000	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Beuly GC#	6,800	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Drumadrochit	1,300	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fort Augustus	1,000	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mallaig	1,700	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kinlochleven	1,400	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strontian	1,700	●	●	●	●	◆	●	●	●	●	●
Acharacle	560	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nairn	10,600	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fortrose GC#	4,900	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Dingwall	13,300	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Alness	8,000	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Invergordon	5,800	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Tain	7,100	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Ullapool	2,000	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Gairloch	1,500	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Lochcarron	870	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Plockton/Kyle	5,900	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Broadford	1,100	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Golspie GC#	7,500	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Bethyhill	700	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Kinlochbervie	1,100	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Lochinver	640	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

* 1991 Census
 # Group Centres
 ## District Centres
 ◆ New school due for completion mid 2002

GLOSSARY

The glossary defines some of the terms used in the text of the Written Statement.

Accessibility - The ability of people to have access to goods, services, employment and other facilities. This can be enhanced either by greater proximity of services to people, or by improved communications systems between the two. The latter can involve physical travel or IT related remote systems.

Affordable housing and housing for varying needs - A segment of the housing market where a proportion of the housing is targeted or reserved for those people who have special housing requirements and/or who are unable to compete in the existing local market for housing. It covers a spectrum of providers and tenures including housing associations, joint ventures, public sector and owner occupation.

Aquaculture Framework Plans - Non-statutory planning documents which provide site-specific locational guidance for specific lochs and coastal areas of Highland for the siting of marine fish farms.

Biodiversity - The total range of the variety of life forms on earth or any given part of it, the ecological roles they perform, and the genetic diversity they contain.

Brownfield site - A site which has previously been developed or used for some purpose which has ceased. It may encompass reuse of existing buildings by conversion; demolition and new build; clearance of vacant or derelict land and new build; infills and various other forms of intensification.

Circulars - Statements of Government policy containing guidance on policy implementation through legislative or procedural change.

Community planning - A process through which The Council comes together with other organisations to plan, provide for and promote the future wellbeing of the area. The Community Plan builds on a vision for the future of the area and how the public agencies will work in partnership to achieve the vision.

Comparison goods - Books, clothing and footwear, furniture, floor coverings and household textiles, radio, electrical and other durable goods, hardware, DIY supplies, chemist's goods, jewellery, silverware, watches and clocks, recreational and other miscellaneous goods.

Conservation Areas - Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Controlled waters - Territorial waters up to the three mile limit; coastal waters; inland waters and ground waters.

Development plan - The Highland Structure Plan along with any of the Local Plans prepared by The Highland Council. Section 37 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 sets out the status of the development plan in assessing planning applications. It provides that:- "in dealing with an application the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material considerations".

Environmental assessment - A process by which the environmental effects of a development proposal by virtue of such factors as nature, size and location are systematically assessed, also giving consideration to alternative solutions and mitigating measures.

European Spatial Development Perspective - A document which seeks to co-ordinate environment, transport, agriculture, social and regional policy at a European level to strengthen the spatial cohesion and integration of the European Union.

Fragile areas - Areas which are in decline or in danger of becoming so as a consequence of remoteness and socio-economic factors, such as population loss, erosion of services and facilities and lack of employment opportunities.

General Permitted Development Order - An Order, last consolidated in Scotland in 1992, under which the First Minister, in exercise of his powers conferred under planning legislation, grants planning permission for a number of classes of development subject to various stated qualifications.

Greenfield site - A site which has never been previously developed or used for an urban use, or is on land that has been brought into active or beneficial use for agriculture or forestry i.e. fully restored derelict land.

Indicative Forestry Strategy - A strategy prepared, and incorporated within a Structure Plan, which seeks to accommodate future commercial forest planting in an environmentally acceptable way, by identifying preferred, potential and sensitive areas for forestry.

Landfill/form - Landfill being an area of land identified for the deposit of waste. Landform being the deposit of waste on or above the existing contours of the ground.

Landscape Assessment - An analytical technique which identifies, describes and maps areas classified according to various landscape character types. The forces of change in each type are then assessed, together with an evaluation of the capacity to accommodate change without altering its intrinsic character.

Listed buildings - The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1997 requires the compilation of a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. The purpose of listing is to ensure that a building's special architectural and/or historic interest is fully recognised and that any demolition, alteration or repair that would affect its character is brought under statutory control.

Local Agenda 21 - An internationally recognised approach for developing a mechanism for the delivery of sustainable development. The Government has called on all local authorities to implement a Local Agenda 21 Strategy by December 2000.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan - A process rather than a plan which seeks to ensure that nationally and locally important species and habitats are conserved and enhanced in a given area through focused local action.

Local Plan - Prepared and adopted by planning authorities according to statute expressing specific planning policy guidance and advice for development in each locality, in conformity with the Structure Plan.

National Nature Reserve (NNR) - Site of national nature conservation importance, managed or owned by Scottish Natural Heritage and established under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

National Planning Policy Guideline (NPPG) - Statements of Government policy on nationally important land use and other planning matters, supported where appropriate by a locational framework.

National Scenic Area (NSA) - Areas of outstanding scenic value and beauty in a national context, designated by the Secretary of State through Circulars 20/1980 and 9/1987 as appropriate for additional protection.

Natura 2000 - Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas form a network of sites across the European Community known as Natura 2000. These marine and terrestrial areas of international importance are designed to conserve natural habitat and species of plants and animals that are rare, endangered or vulnerable in the context of the European Community.

Planning Advice Note (PAN) - PANs provide Government advice on good practice on planning matters as well as other relevant information.

Policy - A statement of The Council's attitudes or intentions, relating to a particular issue or site. Structure Plan policies must be reflected in Local Plans and development control decisions.

Prime agricultural land - Land defined by the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute as grades 1, 2 and 3.1.

Proposal - An intended action of significance to the Plan area, to be carried out by The Council itself or in partnership with other public agencies and private bodies.

Ramsar site - A wetland area of international importance for birds protected through the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1979).

Recommendation - A request by The Council to other bodies to take action on matters outwith The Council's control. A recommendation is an indication of The Highland Council's views on a specific subject and is not legally binding.

Regulating Orders - Granted under the Sea Fisheries (Shellfish) Act 1967 by the Secretary of State/First Minister in order to create or enhance a fishery. Orders grant the right to manage shellfisheries for specified species to a legally constituted body, the grantee, which may issue licenses to those wishing to prosecute the fishery.

Scheduled Ancient Monument - Designated by the Secretary of State/First Minister under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, being a monument of public interest by reason of the historic, architectural, traditional, artistic or archaeological interests attracting in it.

Scottish Renewables Obligations (SRO) - A mechanism to require the electricity suppliers to obtain more electricity from renewable sources than at present. This obligation is implemented through a series of Renewables Orders made under the Electricity Act 1989, of which three have so far been set.

Section 75 Agreement (Planning Agreement) - An agreement made between the landowner and the planning authority (often with other parties) which restricts or regulates the development or use of land. The Section 75 agreement was previously referred to as a Section 50 agreement.

Several Orders - Shellfish orders granted under the Sea Fisheries (Shellfish) Act 1967 by the Secretary of State/First Minister to create or enhance a fishery. The difference between Several Orders and Regulating Orders is that Several Orders grant exclusive rights over an area of seabed for a specified species.

Sequential test - A process for the assessment of development options whereby it must be demonstrated why a preferred option is being set aside for a less favourable option if permission is to be granted. This means that where there is a choice, there is a presumption in favour, for example, of the reuse of previously developed brownfield locations as opposed to greenfield locations, to a protection of the more valuable, natural environments and within the context of retail development, to the use of town centre and edge of centre sites before out of town sites are considered.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - SSSIs are designated by Scottish Natural Heritage under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and are representative or contain the best examples of particular species, habitats, geology or geomorphology. The special interest of the sites is the subject of specific guidelines to protect the interest of the site from damage or deterioration.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - Designated natural habitat areas to comply with the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora Directive (92/43/EEC). Member states are required to identify sites for designation and establish measures necessary for conservation. (Together with SPAs, SACs form a network of European sites known as Natura 2000.)

Special Protection Area (SPA) - Designated wild bird areas to comply with the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds - (79/409/EEC). (Together with SACs, SPAs form a network of European Sites known as Natura 2000.)

Sustainable development - Sustainable development has been defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". It has increased in importance in both national and European policy guidance and is a pivotal consideration in the planning process.

Telematics - The combination of computer and information technology, which has greatly freed the relationship between the employee and the workspace. For example, the use of computers, fax and telephone linkages has allowed people to work from home or another location remote from their employer.

Vitality and viability of town centres - Vitality is a reflection of how busy a town centre is in different parts and at different times. Viability is a measure of its capacity to attract ongoing investment, for maintenance, improvement and adaptation to changing needs.

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