

## Glossary

This section explains some of the terms we use in this document.

**Affordable housing:** Housing that people on low incomes can afford. It includes accommodation rented from housing associations, us and some private landlords, and low-cost housing to buy.

**Allocation:** Land identified in a local plan as appropriate for a specific use.

**Article 4 Direction:** Some types of development do not need planning permission. An Article 4 Direction is an order made by Scottish Ministers which suspends (for specified types of development) the general permission granted under the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (as amended).

**Article 10 Features:** Wildlife habitat features which provide 'corridors' or 'stepping stones' between habitat areas and that help plants and wildlife to move from one area to another. Examples include rivers and their banks, areas of woodland, and traditional field boundaries. Protecting and managing these areas through the land use planning system is promoted in Article 10 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994.

**Brownfield site:** A site which has previously been developed or used for some purpose which has ended. It may include:

- reusing existing buildings by converting them;
- demolishing buildings and building new ones;
- clearing empty land and building new buildings; and
- infill development.

**Developer contributions:** Payments made to us or another agency, or work in kind, to help improve the infrastructure (roads, open space, waste-water treatment, and restoring worked-out mineral sites) so that the development can go ahead.

**Development brief:** A detailed document for an area allocated for development in a local plan. The brief provides information to possible developers on issues such as the preferred siting, design and layout of buildings, and the need for associated infrastructure and services.

**Development factors:** The factors that we must take into account when deciding where development can take place and the nature of that development.

**Framework plan:** An outline plan (prepared by public agencies) that provides guidance on how a large site should be developed, including issues such as landscaping, access and internal layout.

**General strategic policies:** Policies set out in the Highland Structure Plan. We assess all development proposals against these policies so that development might be sustainable. They reflect the need to take account of:

- the community, the economy and environmental interests;
- the importance of development which benefits local communities; and
- the need to work with our partners to achieve the plan's aims and objectives.

**Housing requirement:** The number of housing units for which land must be identified to meet future demand. We work this out by considering market demand, changes in the number of people and households, the existing housing stock and the existing availability of land for housing.

**Ineffective housing stock:** Housing which is not lived in permanently because it is empty or a second or holiday home.

**Infrastructure:** The basic services needed to support development. These include roads access and water and sewage facilities.

**Infill development:** Building a limited number of buildings within a small gap in existing development.

**Local centre:** Part of the settlement hierarchy within Highland (see below). The local centres in Wester Ross are Ullapool, Gairloch and Lochcarron.

**Local Housing Development Fora:** A group of council services, public agencies, housing associations and other housing-related interests which regularly meet to consider the need for and opportunities for affordable housing. The Ross and Cromarty Local Housing Development Fora has extended its membership and activities to consider the preparation of the Wester Ross Local Plan.

**Material consideration:** Matters we must consider when making a decision on a planning application. Scottish Executive guidance states that there are two main tests in deciding whether a consideration is material and relevant.

- "It should serve or be related to the purpose of planning – it should therefore relate to the development and use of land.
- It should fairly and reasonably relate to the particular application."

Although the person making the decision needs to consider whether a matter is material, it is ultimately a matter for the courts to decide.

**Permitted development rights:** These relate to certain types of development (usually minor) which do not need planning permission but are classed as being granted planning permission through the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 (as amended).

**Precautionary principle:** The principle that authorities should act cautiously to avoid damaging the environment or wellbeing of communities (in a way that cannot be reversed) in situations where the scientific evidence is not proven but the possible damage could be significant.

**Section 75 Agreement:** A legal agreement made between the landowner and the planning authority (often with other people) which restricts or regulates the development or use of land. It is normally used to agree and to secure contributions from developers.

**Settlements:** Those communities identified through the Structure Plan settlement hierarchy. These are groups of house that do and don't have facilities. You can find a more detailed definition in the 'Development Plan Policy Guideline Housing in the Countryside'.

**Settlement hierarchy:** The definition of settlements within the Highland Structure Plan as 'regional', 'subregional' or 'local centres' depending on the size of their population and the services they contain (for example, education, health, transport and retail).

**Sustainable design:** Design which reduces the possible negative effects on the environment as far as possible and makes the most of social and economic benefits.

**Sustainable drainage systems:** Drainage techniques used with developments to help return excess surface water run-off to natural watercourses (rivers, streams, lakes and so on) without negatively affecting people and the environment. These might include ponds or reed beds to hold water before it runs into a watercourse. A Sustainable Urban Drainage System Design Manual was published by CIRIA in 2000 and is supported by Scottish Executive planning guidance.