

The Highland Council

Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee
25 January 2017

Agenda Item	11
Report No	PDI/ 08/17

2017 Development Plan Newsletter

Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure

Summary

This report presents the 2017 Development Plans Newsletter for approval. This annual publication keeps communities and other stakeholders up to date with how and when they can get involved in preparing and updating Development Plan documents across Highland.

Members are asked to approve the 2017 Development Plans Newsletter at **Appendix 1** for publication, and submission to Scottish Ministers as the Council's 2017 Development Plan Scheme. Members are also asked to note the timescales for member and community input to documents that may be relevant or of interest to the communities and areas that they cover.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning legislation requires that all local authorities to publish a Development Plan Scheme (DPS) outlining the timescales for preparing and consulting upon development plan documents. Since 2015 the DPS in Highland has been presented in a user-friendly Newsletter format to make it more engaging to our communities and stakeholders.
- 1.2 In 2016, we carried out a review of the work programme and published a mid-year update of the DPS. This 2017 version continues to reflect the outcome of that review and recommends that the priority for the year ahead is to focus on planning ahead for the areas of greatest anticipated change across Highland, and on enabling the delivery of development and associated infrastructure. The priorities for the year ahead are summarised in section 2 below.

2. Updates to the 2016 Development Plans Newsletter

- 2.1 The updated priorities for the year ahead are as follows:
 - in early 2017 we will continue to prepare the Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan) towards Examination and adoption and the West Highland & Islands Local Development Plan (West Plan) to Proposed Plan stage;
 - the Action Programmes that accompany our adopted and emerging Local Development Plans will be combined into a single document that aims to provide a manual for the delivery of development and associated infrastructure;
 - we will continue to work with communities and partners in planning for a

new neighbourhood at East Inverness with a Draft Development Brief being published later in 2017;

- we will consult upon a Draft Inverness City Centre Development Brief and then finalise the document for adoption;
- following adoption of the Onshore Wind Supplementary Guidance we will prepare more detailed landscape studies to inform decision making on wind energy developments; and
- we will consider taking the review of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan to the next Proposed Plan stage once these projects have been taken to an advanced stage.

2.2 Full details of these plans are set out in the enclosed Newsletter and the final published version will include a chart reflecting the timescales outlined in the Newsletter. The content of the DPS has been updated to track performance against timescales set out in the February 2016 DPS, and to provide an indicative 5 year programme, setting milestones to be reached in order to realise the Scottish Government's challenging Development Plan preparation timescales.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

The implications of staff changes in the team are reflected in the project timescales set out in the enclosed Newsletter. Progress towards meeting these project timescales are monitored as part of the existing work programme of the Development Plans team.

3.2 Equality and Climate Change/Carbon Clever

It is not anticipated that there will be any equality or climate change/carbon clever implications for the Council.

3.3 Legal and Risk

It is not anticipated that there will be any legal or risk implications for the Council.

3.4 Rural

There are no known direct rural implications arising from this report. All communities, including rural, will be consulted with, and given the chance to influence development within their area through making representations to emerging Local Development Plans. All consultation documents are made available on our website with alerts placed on social media to raise awareness and reach out to all communities.

3.5 Gaelic

There are no Gaelic implications arising from this paper.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- approve the 2017 Development Plans Newsletter at **Appendix 1** for publication, and submission to Scottish Ministers as the Council's 2017 Development Plan Scheme; and
- note the timescales for member and community input to documents that may be relevant or of interest to the communities and areas that they cover.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 5 January 2017

Author: Scott Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager

Background Papers: Appendix 1 – 2017 Development Plans Newsletter

Development Plans Newsletter

Cuairt-litir Phlanaichean Leasachaidh

January 2017

This is the annual update of the Highland Council's Development Plans Newsletter which provides an overview of the timetable for preparing land use planning documents for the Highland Council area (except the part in the Cairngorms National Park*). It lets you know how and when you can get involved in preparing these plans. This Newsletter also acts as the Council's **Development Plan Scheme** that we submit to Scottish Government.

*Note that the Development Plan for Cairngorms National Park is prepared by the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) – see www.cairngorms.co.uk for further information. However, planning applications are still submitted to the Council in whose area it is, with the CNPA then calling in certain applications for its decision, although most applications are decided by the relevant Council.



The Development Plan is a set of documents that guide where and how new building and development can take place across Highland. These documents include Local Development Plans (LDPs) that set out policies and site allocations, and Supplementary Guidance (SG) which contain more detailed guidance on specific issues or places. Planning applications for all types of development are assessed against these documents so it's important that people know when and how they can input to them. The best place to view and comment on Development Plans in Highland is the Council's website or the online Development Plans portal:

www.highland.gov.uk/developmentplans

<http://consult.highland.gov.uk/>

What's happening now and looking ahead

Our recent work and priority for the year ahead is to focus on planning for the areas of greatest anticipated change in Highland, including the following:

- We have started to work with communities and partners to plan for a major new neighbourhood at East Inverness with new homes, infrastructure and community facilities. This will lead to a **Draft Inverness East Development Brief** being published later in 2017.
- In early 2017, a new **Draft City Centre Development Brief** will be published for consultation outlining the priorities for enhancing and developing the City Centre.
- We will continue to progress the **Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan)** to the next Examination stage, taking account of comments submitted during a **Modified Plan** consultation held in late 2016.
- Meanwhile we will soon seek approval to consult on the **West Highland and Islands Proposed Local Development Plan (West Plan)** following the Main Issues Report and Additional Sites consultations held in 2016.
- With a renewed focus on enabling development we are considering a new approach to the Action Programmes that we publish alongside our Local Development Plans. This will involve merging our existing and emerging Action Programmes into a single document that better supports the delivery of development and associated infrastructure.
- Once the above projects have been taken to an advanced stage we will decide when to continue with the review of the **Highland-wide Local Development Plan** following the **Main Issues Report** consultation which concluded in early 2016.

Full details of these plans are set out in this Newsletter and the back page shows the timetable for preparing them.

Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan)

The CaSPlan is the second Area LDP under preparation in Highland. The **Proposed Plan** was subject to public consultation from January to March 2016 and attracted over 600 comments from 200 individuals, groups or organisations. These were carefully considered by the Local Committees in August 2016 and it was decided that whilst most of the Proposed Plan should remain the same, two site allocations were proposed to be removed from the Plan.



This decision triggered the publication of a **Modified Proposed Plan** which was subject to public consultation over a 6 week period from September to November 2016. It sets out the Council's settled view on the vision, strategy and allocations that should guide future development. The consultation attracted over 250 comments from around 180 individuals, groups or organisations. The results of consultation are due to be considered by the Local Committees in February 2017, in order to agree the Council's position on certain outstanding issues and approve the submission of the Modified Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers for the Examination of all outstanding issues (including those carried forward from the earlier Proposed Plan stage) and for eventual Adoption.

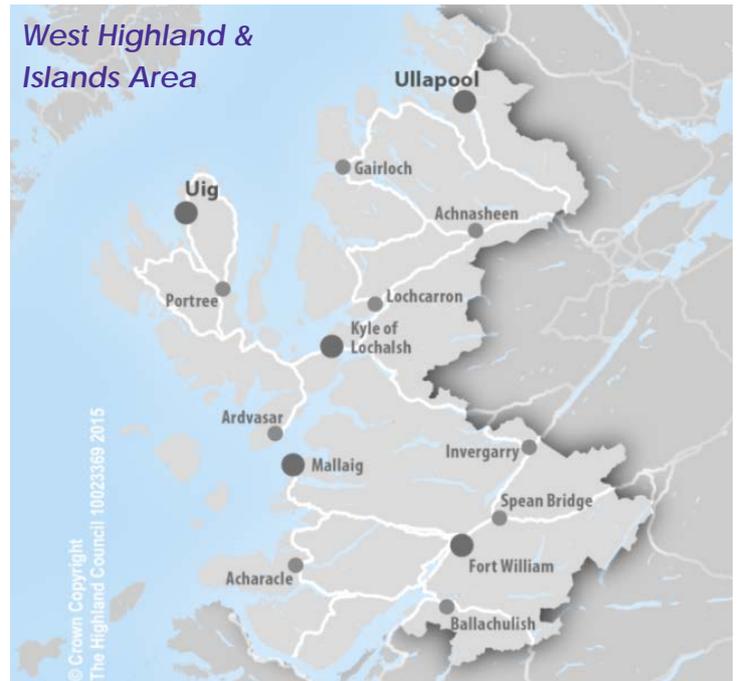
Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan			
Where we Expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	G R E E N
Proposed Plan consultation from January to March 2016. Following subsequent decision to modify plan significantly, Modified Proposed Plan consultation in Oct/Nov 2016.	Proposed Plan consultation went ahead as planned. Following subsequent decision to modify plan significantly, Modified Proposed Plan consultation went ahead as planned. Preparing report on results of consultation for consideration by Local Committees in February 2017.	Consideration of results of consultation by Local Committees in February 2017. Submitting to Scottish Ministers for Examination of outstanding issues from spring 2017 to autumn 2017. Adoption early 2018.	
CaSPlan Area Based Supplementary Guidance			
Where we Expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	
Dounreay Planning Framework 2			
To carry forward this SG as part of CaSPlan.	Relevant reference continued to be included in the Modified Proposed Plan for DPF2 to be carried forward under CaSPlan.	Completion of carry forward to CaSPlan.	
Thurso West Development Brief			
Continue to identify intention to prepare a brief within the Modified Proposed Plan.	We intend to prepare a brief which we have continued to identify in the Modified Proposed Plan.	Preparation of this brief will commence after CaSPlan has been adopted in 2017/2018.	

West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (West Plan)

The West Highland and Islands will be the third Area Local Development Plan to be prepared for Highland. As with other plan consultations we will continue to encourage interest and participation in the plan making process through a range of community groups. High Schools in the area were closely involved in the early stages of preparing the plan.

We carried out a consultation on the [Main Issues Report \(MIR\)](#) between April and June 2016 and on Additional Sites between September and October 2016. Comments received during the consultations will now be considered in preparing the [Proposed Plan](#) which is scheduled to be published for consultation in late spring 2017.

We have assisted in preparation of development briefs for Aonach Mor, the Isle of Rum and Mallaig Harbour that will eventually form Supplementary Guidance to this Plan. We will progress other masterplans / briefs as resources allow including for land at Blar Mor, Fort William.



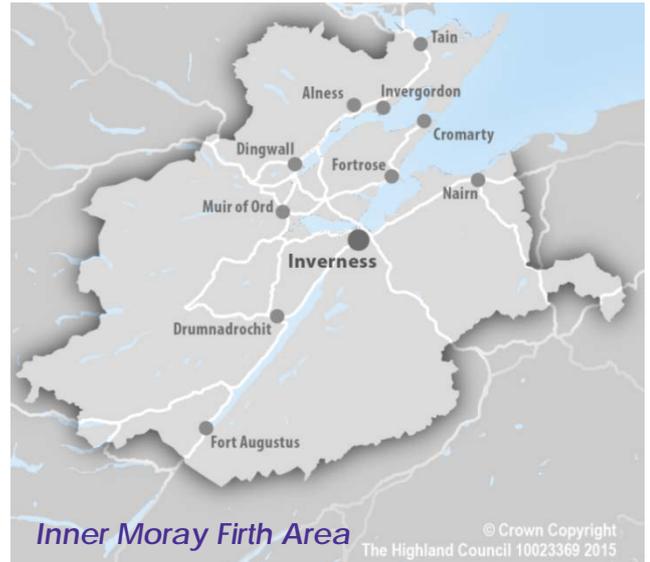
<i>West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan</i>			GREEN
Where we Expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	
MIR to Area Committees in February 2016 and published for consultation in Spring 2016. Proposed Plan to be published 2016/2017.	MIR was subject to consultation April to June 2016. Proposed Plan to be published spring 2017.	Submission to Scottish Ministers early 2018 and adoption in late 2018.	
<i>West Highland and Islands Area Based Supplementary Guidance</i>			
Where we expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	
Mallaig Harbour Masterplan Development principles, priorities for investment and regeneration in the harbour area.			
n/a	WHILDP MIR published April 2016 incorporating site for harbour expansion	Adoption of masterplan following adoption of WHILDP late 2018	
Nevis Forest & Mountain Resort Masterplan Development principles, priorities for investment and regeneration on land at Aonach Mor access road.			
n/a	WHILDP MIR published April 2016 incorporating masterplan principles	Adoption of masterplan following adoption of WHILDP late 2018	
Isle of Rum Community Land use Plan Development principles and priorities for growth and development on the Isle of Rum.			
Principles of community plan embodied within WHILDP MIR	WHILDP MIR published April 2016 incorporating community plan principles	Adoption of community plan following adoption of WHILDP late 2018	

Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP)

The IMFLDP was adopted by The Highland Council on 31 July 2015 and an accompanying Action Programme was published in October 2015, setting out the actions for delivering the plan. The Action Programme, which needs to be reviewed at least every two years, is likely to be combined with other emerging Action Programmes this year.

In November 2016 we started the process of preparing a Development Brief for East Inverness with workshops allowing communities and partners to help draw up the initial masterplan for growth in this part of the City. We aim to reflect the outcome of Transport Scotland's A9/A96 Connections Study in the draft Development Brief before referring it to the City Committee.

In late 2016 the draft City Centre Development Brief was approved by the City Committee and is due to be published for consultation in late January or early February 2017.



Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan			
Where we Expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	G R E E N
The IMFLDP was adopted on 31 July 2015 with the accompanying Action Programme published in October 2015.		Action Programme to be published at least every two years.	
IMFLDP Area Based Supplementary Guidance			
Where we Expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	
Inverness City Centre Development Brief			
Development principles, priorities for investment and regeneration in Inverness City Centre.			
To have the draft Development Brief considered by the City Committee in September 2016.	The City Committee considered the draft Development Brief in December 2016 and approved it for consultation. The consultation is scheduled to commence late January or early February 2017.	Feedback from the initial consultation to be considered by Area Committee in spring 2017 along with a final Development Brief for adoption will be considered by.	
Inverness East Development Brief			
Development principles and requirements for the delivery of development in the area.			
To have taken a draft Development Brief to the City Committee in late 2016 or early 2017.	The workshops held in October 2016 are helping us to begin preparing a draft Development Brief. We aim to reflect the outcome of Transport Scotland's A9/A96 Connections Study in the draft Development Brief prior to consideration by Committee.	We now propose to take a draft Development Brief to the City Committee in September 2017.	

Community Plans

The Community Empowerment Bill is introducing new opportunities for local people to play a greater role in shaping their community. In Highland, we see this is a natural extension to the role that local communities play in contributing to the preparation of Development Plans. As new Area LDPs are prepared there will be an opportunity for smaller communities to prepare their own Community Plan to promote sustainable growth in conformity with the Area LDP. The community land use for Rum mentioned above is an example of a document that will eventually be Supplementary Guidance to the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan.



The Highland-wide Local Development Plan

The **Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP)**, was adopted in April 2012, and contains a 20 year vision and spatial strategy for the Highlands, with planning policies and some strategic site allocations to help make decisions on planning applications. We started the process of reviewing the HwLDP with a **Main Issues Report (MIR)** consultation that ran until January 2016. The MIR outlines the proposal to make the HwLDP a policy only document, with all place-based issues covered in the three current and emerging Area Local Development Plans. Over 120 responses were received to the MIR with almost 90% of those being made through the new [online development plans portal](#).

In August 2016 the PDI Committee agreed an interim position on the issues raised in the MIR consultation. We propose to continue with the next stage of the HwLDP in late 2017, only after the two remaining Area Local Development Plans have been taken to an advanced stage. This next stage of work will take full consideration of the feedback received during the MIR consultation, and we will also look into options for moving towards a single Local Development Plan.

The adopted HwLDP is accompanied by Supplementary Guidance (SG) which provides further detail on various topics. The list below outlines priorities for Supplementary Guidance for the year. In addition, in light of the proposal to amend the timescales for the HwLDP review we may consider reviewing certain items of Supplementary Guidance such as Developer Contributions.

Highland-wide Local Development Plan			
Where we expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	G R E E N
Work on Proposed Plan scheduled for late 2017 after the Area Local Development Plans for Caithness & Sutherland and West Highland & Islands have been taken to an advanced stage.	See previous column	Submission to Scottish Government in summer 2018. Replacement plan to be adopted by spring 2019.	
Topic Based Supplementary Guidance			
Where we expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages	
Onshore Wind Energy Guidance on managing onshore wind energy.			
Submission to Scottish Ministers for approval to adopt by autumn 2016. Landscape studies to be progressed alongside SG.	The guidance was adopted on 24 Nov 2016 following Committee approval in August 2016. Latest batch of Landscape studies subject to consultation until 20 January 2017.	Final Landscape studies to be subject to consultation and adoption throughout 2017.	
Design and Layout Guidance on layout and design of new development.			
Preparation of guidance delayed to align this work with the review of the HwLDP and the Local Transport Strategy.	As proposed – see future stages.	Draft SG to be prepared alongside the HwLDP and the Local Transport Strategy.	

Monitoring and Research

Auditing and monitoring work provides useful evidence for preparing Development Plans. We prepare a range of documents on a variety of topics to help ensure that our Development Plan is based on the most up to date information. The use of online mapping is helping to improve access to and sharing of information.

Our programme of monitoring and research work has also been subject to review and timescales for this work is set out below. This has led to a much stronger focus on the monitoring framework which supports the Development Plans we prepare. The updated timetable is set out below.

<i>Audits and Monitoring</i>			
Theme	Baseline	Update Schedule	Target Publication month
House Completions	NA	Monthly	NA
Planning Approvals	NA	Weekly	NA
Housing Land Audit	Jan 2016	Annual	August
Employment Land	April 2012	TBA	Dec
Vacant and Derelict Land	Sept 2015	Annual	Sept
Renewables Wind	April 2016	Annual	April
Renewables Hydro	Feb 2017	Annual	Feb
Minerals	Late 2015	Annual	November

The latest [Housing Land Audit 2016](#) was published in August 2016 with a baseline of January 2016, and is available through our [online mapping](#). This provides an update on available housing land supply. The next audit will have a baseline of June 2017.

Monitoring of **weekly planning approvals** continues. **Monthly housing completions** continue to be reported on the Council's website with data aggregated by different geographies by month, year and financial year.

Renewables information has been enhanced in the online [Wind Farm Mapping](#), which was expanded in February 2016 to include two new categories of applications, "In Planning" and "Removed". A further update is ongoing to include "Withdrawn" applications and we hope to publish these in February 2017. An audit of **Hydro schemes** is underway to create a similar data set for publication in February 2017. Our work on a **Minerals Audit** is ongoing and aims to improve the monitoring process for active and dormant mineral assets across Highland.

Later in 2017 we will begin an employment Land audit providing information on **Business and Industrial, Retail and Tourism** related development. This work will inform the review of related policies in the Highland-wide Local Development Plan.

How to get involved in preparing Development Plans

Involving people who live, work and invest in the Highlands is an essential part when preparing a Development Plan. We encourage people to get involved from the start of the process and aim to make this as simple as possible.

The 5 key stages of preparing a Local Development Plan are shown in the diagram above. This begins with the Call for Sites and Main Issues Report (MIR) stages (**shown in green**), followed by the Proposed Plan (**amber**). At the final stage an Examination (**red**) is carried out by independent Reporters who may invite further comments from those who commented on the Proposed Plan. When preparing Supplementary Guidance we will always invite comments on a draft and consider these in preparing and adopting a final version.

This Newsletter tells you how and when you can get involved at each stage. Our **Participation Statement** below outlines our commitment to involving you. We will:

- Produce interactive online documents that are easy to read and comment upon
- Include clear maps and graphics in our documents
- Use a range of media to keep you up to date and let you know how and when you can get involved
- Provide copies of consultation documents in Libraries in the relevant plan area
- Work with community groups and stakeholders to encourage them to participate
- Notify the immediate neighbours of potential development sites at both the Main Issues Report and Proposed Plan stages of our Area Local Development Plans
- Use public meetings and committees to provide regular progress updates
- Maintain our availability so you can speak with the people preparing the plans

The five key stages for preparing a Local Development Plan



Development Plans Programme



TO BE UPDATED PRIOR TO PUBLICATION

Contacts and Updates

If you wish to be kept informed of progress with the preparation of the Development Plan please register online at: www.highland.gov.uk

Contact the Development Plans Team: devplans@highland.gov.uk T: 01349 886 608

Follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/highlanddevplan>

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/highlandLDPs

Key Stages

- OS Call for Sites
- MIR Main Issues Report
- PP Proposed Plan (MP = Modified Plan)
- EX Examination
- AD Adoption

+ Targeted Planning Development Infrastructure Committee Date
● Targeted Highland Council Date
▲ Targeted Local Area Committee Dates
→ Preparation Stages