

We will approve new employment uses, subject to other policies, on land allocated or identified on the proposals maps, or most recently used for this purpose.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure allocated employment sites, shown on the settlement proposals maps, are developed for suitable employment purposes. A separate statement of supplementary guidance ("SG Safeguarding 5: Safeguarding employment land") protects these and existing sites from non-employment development. Removal of employment land allocations, or proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of land currently used for business to another use should only be undertaken following due process as part of a review of the Development Plan.

In accordance with the Structure Plan, the Local Plan maintains a supply of land for industrial, business, and other employment uses, normally Classes 4, 5 and 6 of the Use Classes Order, and other employment uses where appropriate. This is one of the key factors in sustaining a vibrant, effective and sustainable economy for Aberdeenshire. The Action Programme will identify the means by which this established land supply will be made effective so as to meet the Structure Plan targets for the marketable land supply.

For clarification this policy does not apply to farmland, shop, hotel or retail office developments, even though they may employ people. It applies to land that was last, or is currently, used for business purposes.

Integrating new employment generation with supporting infrastructure and housing development is an important means of achieving sustainable communities. For this reason provision of marketable employment land will be a requirement for any development that seeks to create a new neighbourhood. These sites are specifically identified within the proposals maps.

SGbus2: Office development

We will approve new office development, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it is located on land allocated in the plan for employment use; or uses existing derelict, despoiled, unused or underused land or buildings; AND**
- 2) the applicant demonstrates that the development will be adequately accessible by public transport where available, or by walking or other non-motorised means of travel, or would deliver improvements to public transport services in scale with the development; AND**
- 3) in the case of offices that fall within Class 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Use Classes Order 1997, the proposal meets the sequential approach to site selection under the terms of policy relating to retail uses, where they will be considered as though they were shops.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage office development to locate on sites appropriate to the scale of the proposal in terms of, for example, traffic impacts or neighbouring uses. This helps to maintain a diversity of use as well as maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of each settlement and its town centre.

Adequate accessibility is measured by comparing the number of households that will be within a 15 minute travel distance by walking or public transport with the predicted number of employees. Measures may be required to ensure that under no circumstances is the number of households within this travel distance less than the number of predicted employees.

Class 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Use Classes Order 1997 includes financial, professional and other services such as accountants, banks, estate agents, doctors' and dental surgeries and betting shops. These are services which should be located in town centres' main retail areas. The Council may waive the sequential approach requirement for community medical facilities, where appropriate.

SGbus3: Working from home

We will approve home based employment, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it does not cause significant loss of amenity to neighbouring properties through noise, traffic movements or other nuisance; AND**
- 2) it does not change the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling; AND**
- 3) any building extension proposed for home based employment purposes retains the appearance and perception of the property as a private dwelling house.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage small businesses at home, while maintaining control over their impact on the surrounding area.

A recent trend has been the growth of small businesses being carried out from home. This is likely to continue, particularly with advances in communications. As working from home reduces the need for travel it is a good example of *sustainable development*. It is therefore encouraged, although some control must be exercised to ensure that the operation of these businesses does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding area.

Not all instances of working from home require planning permission. Proposals that result in a substantial part of the house or of its curtilage being unavailable for domestic use are likely to require planning permission. In all cases the potential impacts from the business use on neighbouring properties, its scale, and the need to employ non-family members on site will be used in this judgement.

SGbus4: Tourist facilities and accommodation

A. We will approve new or improved tourist facilities or accommodation, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) they are well related to existing settlements and avoid dispersed patterns of development; OR**
- 2) the developer has demonstrated a locational requirement based on the need to be near to the specific tourist attraction being exploited, and that the facility will not damage those interests.**

In any of these cases, the applicant must also demonstrate that:

- a) the proposal would respect the character, amenity and scale of the built and natural environment in the surrounding area; AND**
- b) they have taken account of the potential cumulative impact of similar proposals in close proximity.**

B. We will refuse any proposal to convert existing tourist accommodation to other uses, unless satisfactory evidence is provided showing:

- 1) that it has been actively marketed for sale as a going concern at a reasonable market price and for a reasonable period with no formal interest having been shown in the property; AND**
- 2) that the current business is no longer viable**

Reasoned Justification

Part A

The aim of this policy is to promote tourism in locations where it would not damage one of the main resources on which it is based, i.e. the environment. The policy therefore ensures that development proposals do not have a significant impact upon the nature conservation, landscape character or amenity value of the area. [SG Rural Development 1: Housing and business development in the countryside provides opportunities for business development in the countryside which would include tourist accommodation and facilities.](#)

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Tourism is essentially a sustainable industry and is of considerable value to Aberdeenshire, as long as it is not overdeveloped. Tourism is one of the region's largest sectors, and it is an important economic driver. As such, tourism developments should be promoted. Facilities for sport and recreational activities requiring unimpeded access to remote open country will normally be accepted on appropriate sites in the countryside under the rural development policy. However, tourism must not destroy the qualities that bring tourists to the area in the first place. Tourist related development should be carefully located, sited and designed to provide high quality facilities which fit successfully into the environment.

“Tourist attractions” are taken to be specific places or points of visitor interest, including historic sites and monuments (castles, historic houses, concentrations of archaeological sites etc.), and specific natural heritage features (such as waterfalls or viewpoints).

Roadside facilities are also valuable tourist facilities and range from laybys through to comprehensive service areas.

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Where retail is proposed alongside or ancillary to tourism developments, it will be determined under Policy 2 Town Centres and Retailing. Where there is a proposal for retail tourism within a town, the impact on the town centre must be assessed under Policy 2 Town Centres and Retailing.

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Part B

It is important to have a range of tourist accommodation which attracts visitors, and has the potential to prolong tourists’ stay in Aberdeenshire.

The loss of hotels to residential accommodation is a particular problem faced by many communities in Aberdeenshire. A reasonable period for marketing is likely to be 12 months. Formal interest can be shown by the engagement of a property or legal professional in a potential sale or transfer.

SGRetail 1: Town centres and retailing

We will approve retail and commercial proposals within settlements, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) they are appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement; AND
- 2) they are within a town centre defined in the proposals map, OR they are elsewhere within a settlement where it can be demonstrated that a sequential approach to site selection has been followed (this approach is detailed in Appendix 1 to this statement); AND
- 3) they are in a location that either is, or at the developers' expense can be made, conveniently accessible by means other than the private car to the projected catchment of the facility; AND
- 4) in the case of any non-retail or non-commercial developments within town centres, OR of any retail or commercial developments outwith town centres, the developer can demonstrate that they will not affect maintenance of the vitality or viability of existing centres, as detailed in Planning Advice published separately.

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Shops designed primarily to serve the convenience of a local neighbourhood, and shops which will act as a new, or support an existing, tourist destination and make a contribution to the development of the Aberdeen Rural Housing Market area, are not subject to the sequential approach to site selection.

Reasoned justification

This supplementary guidance promotes a *sequential approach* to site selection. This is detailed in Appendix 1, but in general requires developers to demonstrate that there are no suitable town centre sites, before considering sites on the periphery of the town centre, and subsequently before considering sites, in other retail centres within the town. This recognises the commercial and transportation benefits to be achieved through the grouping of shops together.

The supplementary guidance also requires developers to demonstrate that their proposals have an acceptable impact on the *vitality and viability* of existing centres through consideration of a wide range of quantitative and qualitative indicators, including expenditure flows. A combined retail, economic and transport assessment is recommended. Details of how this should be undertaken are presented in Planning Advice appended to this policy statement.

A mix of uses is anticipated within town centres, including housing and business developments, but retailing and commercial services should always remain the principal land uses. Public open spaces in town centres are important to allow features such as farmers' markets to operate, making a significant contribution to the vitality of the centre. Town centre strategies are promoted as a means of analysing and identifying the capacity for change within town centres, and setting out a programme for delivery of environmental and amenity improvements. Objectives for such strategies should be to promote sustainable and competitive places with a distinct character and sense of place provided through well designed and appointed public spaces and buildings. Aberdeenshire Council will assist local traders in developing town centre strategies, and will use its planning powers to assist in their delivery.

Retail and commercial developments are often large and conspicuous elements of the townscape. In all cases the highest design standards are to be expected for retail, commercial and office developments. Large or otherwise significant proposals should be submitted for design review with Architecture&Design Scotland. Where supermarkets are proposed as part of a neighbourhood centre within masterplanned developments, we will require their construction early within the phasing of development.

Appendix 1

The sequential approach to site selection

1. The sequential approach requires that locations within settlements are considered in the following order:
 - i. principal and other town centre sites;
 - ii. edge of town centre sites;
 - iii. other commercial centres identified within the development plan;
 - iv. derelict or vacant land in out-of-centre sites in locations that are, or can be made, easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport;
 - v. other out-of-centre sites in locations that are, or can be made, easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport.

Proposals out with settlement boundaries will be considered through SG Retail 2: Retail development in the countryside.

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2. Table 1 provides guidance on the retail centres in towns across Aberdeenshire and on the nature of development that is supported. A sequential assessment report is not required for sites within defined town centres or that otherwise meet the principles within this table. Applicants for major retailing proposals are required to show that they have complied with the sequential approach for site selection for any site outwith centres or retail parks (where appropriate) identified in the development plan.

Table 1 “Retail Centres and roles”

Centre type (role)	Policy approach		Centre
	New development	Principle for sequential approach	
Principal Town Centre	Support all retail developments where the market area is not regional	Preferred location for large comparison shop types, and for local convenience shops which serve the town centre.	Banchory Banff Ellon Fraserburgh Huntly Inverurie Peterhead Stonehaven

			Turriff
Other town centres	Local retail provision only	Preferred location for convenience shops which serve the town centre.	Aberchirder Aboyne Alford Kintore Macduff Newmachar Oldmeldrum Portsoy Rosehearty Westhill
Neighbourhood centres	Local retail provision only (less than 500m ² gross floor area)		Other villages Neighbourhoods within principal towns
Other commercial centres and retail parks		Preferred location for bulky comparison outlets if town centre sites are not available	Balmacassie, Ellon Buchan Gateway, Peterhead Highclere Business Park, Inverurie Portlethen Retail Park South Harbour Road, Fraserburgh, Steven Road, Huntly Windmill Road Peterhead.

3. Applicants should be able to demonstrate that all potential town centre options have been thoroughly assessed before less central sites are considered for development. The onus of proof that more central sites have been assessed rests with the applicant.
4. Flexibility and realism are required from developers and the planning authority. An alternative site may still be acceptable for the purposes of the sequential approach, if it falls within the same format even if it cannot accommodate development on the same scale or form as originally proposed. For example food retail falls into 5 broad formats, main food shopping, mid range/top-up, discounters, frozen and convenience. Formats that in developers view does not fit into existing town centres, are not exempt from the sequential approach. Applicants should have regard to the format, design and scale of the proposed development in relation to the circumstances of the particular town centre.

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5. Aberdeenshire Council generally takes the stance that any assessment should be made on the basis of the class of goods to be sold, rather than solely on the “built form” of the development. Greater flexibility will be expected from the developer, if the class of goods which are proposed can be reasonably traded in the town centre. The test for reasonableness will be a comparison of retail activities on comparable sized sites and locations within other centres.
6. The expectation is that the applicants will have demonstrated rigour in their search of alternative sites for a retail proposal, by an early and systematic assessment of sites. In practice this will involve:
 - Identification of sites that are available or may become available in a reasonable time period (5 years) in or on the edge of the town centre, including other adjacent centres capable of serving broadly the same catchments.
 - Appraisal of all the alternative sites in terms of:-
 - their suitability of the site for the type of goods being sold;
 - the impacts of development on the site, particularly in terms of the design sensitivity of uses adjacent to the site and traffic generation;
 - the accessibility of the catchment to the proposal, particularly by non-motorised and public transport;
 - its suitability for the form of development proposed; and
 - the deliverability of the site.
 - Assessment of the alternative sites on their ability to accommodate broadly the same format proposed by the developer with a degree of flexibility appropriate to the nature of the retailing characteristics of the centre.

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This assessment requires to be submitted along with the planning application.

7. The sequential approach applies equally to proposals for extending existing edge of centre and out of centre development that creates additional floorspace. These will be treated as if they were new development and on the basis of the trade of the store extension.
8. Retail warehouse proposals, where goods are stored and sold from the same location, are not exempt from the sequential approach. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997 states that:

“Retail warehouses, where the main purpose is the sale of goods directly to visiting members of the public, will generally fall within the shops class irrespective of the proportion of floor space used for storage.”

Aberdeenshire Council will, however, demonstrate realism in the interpretation of the sequential approach to this kind of development, recognising that the format for such proposals and the need for vehicular access may not make them appropriate within the defined town centres of the Aberdeenshire towns. In order to meet objectives to reduce the need to travel, encouragement will be given to proposals which add to an existing group of such developments within a “retail park” site identified within the Development Plan.
9. Factory retail outlets and farm shops are restricted by their location to the factory or farm on which they are sited, and from which the majority of their produce is generated. These types of shop are exempt from the sequential approach.

10. Retail uses are not principally employment uses, and allocation of land for business use does not imply it will necessarily be acceptable as a retail development site.
- 11 Where possible, edge of centre stores should be designed with the store on the part of the site nearest to the centre. Preferably they will have a direct street frontage, so that the shop will be welcoming to those arriving on foot and will extend the town centre.

SGRetail 2: Retail development in the countryside

We will approve retail developments in the countryside, subject to other policies, where:

- 1) It is designed **it is designed alongside or ancillary to a new tourist attraction**; OR
- 2) It is ancillary to an existing tourist attraction or recreation facility; OR
- 3) It is the expansion or intensification of an existing retail use in the countryside, including an established farm shop, as long as the increased scale of development is appropriate to the rural character of the area.

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In any of the cases above, the applicant must also demonstrate that:

- a) reasonable account has been taken of the possibility either of using disused/derelict buildings or of locating a new building on brownfield land; AND
- b) there would be no detrimental impact on the vitality or viability of **the identified network of existing centres**, as demonstrated by a retail impact assessment.

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Reasoned justification

The aim of this policy is to promote the rural economy, and support existing businesses through diversification.

A key issue identified in the finalised Structure Plan is the importance of promoting retail services throughout the region to guarantee the vitality and viability of our town centres, while creating opportunities for growth in the economy. Aberdeenshire is largely a rural area, and there is opportunity to broaden the economy of rural Aberdeenshire by promoting small-scale retail developments in the countryside that will not have a significant impact on existing retail centres. Supporting proposals for larger “destination” retailing also has an important role to play in sustaining the rural economy of Aberdeenshire.

Appropriate rural character will be judged, amongst other things, in terms of transport, accessibility and landscape.

“Tourist attractions” are taken to be specific places or points of visitor interest, including historic sites and monuments (castles, historic houses, concentrations of archaeological sites etc.), and specific natural heritage features (such as waterfalls or viewpoints). For the purposes of this policy they also include businesses that provide a range of activities for visitors (such as “outward bound” centres).

A farm shop in the countryside **may** not require **a planning application** if:

- 1) **the majority of the produce is produced on site or with a provenance specific to the immediate area**; and
- 2) the retail unit is ancillary to the existing **farm** use **(i.e. the farming use remains the principal use.)**

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Once goods are imported to the location from outwith the local area a planning application will be required and the application would require to meet criteria 3) of the supplementary guidance.

Farm supply shops, where the substantive business is the sale of feedstock, will be treated as warehouse and distribution businesses, rather than retail businesses. It may be appropriate for these to sell other agriculture related goods in a “shop”, provided it remains a smaller part of the warehouse and distribution use.

“Farmers’ markets” are temporary in nature and would not usually require planning consent. Where a permanent “farmers’ market” is proposed, this policy would apply.

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SG Rural Development 1: Housing and business development in the countryside

A. In the **countryside** area we will approve new small scale development, subject to other policies, where:

- 1) it is for a development that would be permissible under the green belt supplementary guidance; OR
- 2) it is for the refurbishment or replacement of an existing or disused building, or it is on a site which has previously been developed and is now redundant; OR
- 3) it is for development that contributes to the organic growth of a settlement identified in appendix 1, of no more than 3 houses on a site within approximately 400m of the edge of the built up area; OR
- 4) it is for a single dwelling house associated with the retirement succession of a viable farm holding.

Deleted: Aberdeen Housing Market

B. In the Rural Housing Market Area **only** we will approve new small-scale development, subject to other policies, where:

- 1) it is an **employment** proposal; OR
- 2) it is an appropriate addition, in scale and character, to an existing cohesive group of at least five houses.

Within all cases above, the siting and design of the development will be a primary consideration. The retention and refurbishment of vernacular buildings and the re-use of brownfield sites will always be preferred, and the character of these buildings should be retained in all cases.

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Reasoned Justification

The aim of the policy is to support a long-term sustainable pattern of development that balances needs, aspirations and demands for development in rural areas outwith settlements. It also recognises that the greater demand for development that can be anticipated in certain parts of Aberdeenshire requires greater control of new development than in other areas.

Restrictions are placed on areas where there is likely to be the greatest demand for rural housing, and where there is a risk of sporadic and intrusive development to the detriment of the character of the landscape.

This supplementary guidance does not apply to development sites specifically allocated within the local development plan. It normally will only apply to small-scale development, as any other developments should come through the Local Development Plan process. Small scale development allows up to 3 residential units, or in relation to employment land up to 0.5 hectares or a business employing 5 or less people. In exceptional circumstances, larger developments will be considered.

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Need for development is accommodated by allowing retiring farmers to remain on the land where they can continue to make a valuable contribution to the farming enterprise, but only where there is a family successor to the farm. Only in exceptional circumstances will this clause be applicable if a farm is to be sold, as the sale could exclude sites acceptable under other terms of the policy. For the rare circumstances where there is evidence to demonstrate an on-site presence is required, development is also accommodated. To ensure housing for an essential worker is not sold on, in exceptional cases developers may be required to enter into a Section 75 Agreement with the Council.

For clarification, previously developed land must be disused and redundant for its designed purpose, and therefore a recently built agricultural building which is capable of being used for modern farming practices would not apply.

Economic development proposals will normally have no need for an associated on-site housing development. In certain circumstances, under the Enabling Development Policy, enabling development for businesses may be considered.

There is some common ground between this policy and development in the special rural types of green belt and coast. The special characteristics of coastal areas are managed by separate supplementary guidance which should be applied in addition to this policy. Regeneration areas are an economic policy tool and that provides additional advantage to these areas through greater land allocations and more “enabling development” opportunities. They have no need for a more relaxed rural development policy beyond this.

The policy applies to all forms of development outwith settlements, including the conversion of vernacular buildings and steadings, replacement buildings (including replacement houses) and new-build. No restriction is placed on the size of replacement of existing buildings, or of the footprint that such a building should occupy, provided the development is on the same site (but not necessarily the same footprint) and the design is appropriate for the location. If proposals for the replacement of buildings require any measure of undeveloped land outwith the curtilage, this may be considered on its merits.

Where this policy is to be used to enable redevelopment of a traditional vernacular building every effort should be made to retain the existing building, and to augment the traditional design features that it promotes. However, once a traditional vernacular building is converted it becomes a house, and therefore extensions to these buildings should be treated under the house extensions policy (SG LSD3).

Development granted as part of a cohesive group under this policy should not exceed 20% of the existing size of the cohesive group within the 5-year plan period. Units constructed under this policy will not count towards the size of the group until the following plan period.

Development granted as part of organic growth under this policy should not exceed 20% of the existing size of the settlement within the 5 year plan

period. Units constructed in the settlement will not count towards the size of the settlement until the next plan period.

Appendix 1: Identified Villages

These are the settlements that are referred to in [paragraph A.3](#) of the supplementary guidance.

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BANFF AND BUCHAN

Area	Settlement name
Banff & Buchan	Bogton / Forglen
	Cornhill
	Crudie
	Gordonstown
	Gardenstown
	Inverboyndie
	Kirkton of Alvah
	Ladysbridge
	Memsie
	Netherbrae
	New Aberdour
	New Byth
	Rathen
	Rosehearty
	Sandend
	Sandhaven/ Pittulie
	Tyrie
	Whitehills

BUCHAN

Area	Settlement name
Buchan	Crimond
	Cruden Bay
	Fetterangus
	Longhaven
	Longside
	Maud
	New Deer
	New Leeds
	New Pitsligo
	Old Deer
	St Combs
	St Fergus
	Strichen
	Stuartfield

FORMARTINE

Area	Settlement name
Formartine	Berefold
	Daviot
	Fintry
	Fisherford
	Fyvie
	Kirkton of Auchterless
	Rosehall
	Rothienorman
	Ythanbank

GARIOCH

Area	Settlement name
Garioch	Auchleven
	Chapel of Garioch
	Kirkton of Rayne
	Meikle Wartle
	Oyne

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KINCARDINE AND MEARNS

Area	Settlement name
Kincardine & Mearns	Arbutnott
	Benholm
	Fettercairn Park
	Woodlands of Durris
	Kirkton of Durris
	Roadside of Kinneff
	Kinneff

MARR

Area	Settlement name
Marr	Ballogie
	Blairdaff
	Bogniebrae
	Bridge of Alford
	Bridgend of Gartly
	Cairnie
	Clatt
	Finzean
	Forgue
	Gartly
	Glass
	Glenkindie
	Keig
	Kennethmont
	Kennethmont Distillery
	Kirkton of Tough
	Largue
	Logie Coldstone
	Lumphanan
	Lumsden
	Muir of Fowlis
	Montgarrie
	Rhynie
	Strachan
	Tarland
	Towie
	Whitehouse
Ythanwells	

SG Rural Development 2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines

We will approve wind energy development, subject to other policies, if it is located, sited, and designed in accordance with the following criteria. The applicant must demonstrate that:

- 1) the proposal will not compromise public health or safety; AND
- 2) the proposal will be set back from roads and railways to a distance greater than the height of the turbine(s) proposed; AND
- 3) i) the safety of UK aerodromes, aircraft and airspace is not adversely affected (including radar or air traffic control systems of National Air Traffic Services (NATS))
ii) it does not significantly impede or compromise the safe and effective use of any defence assets (including radar or air traffic control systems of the Ministry of Defence).
iii) it does not adversely affect the quality of radio or TV reception
iv) it does not have a detrimental impact on the safeguarding zones for airports, airfields or airstrips (either licensed or unlicensed), aircraft flight paths, or MoD low-flying areas; AND
- 4) the proposal will not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of dwelling houses; AND
- 5) the proposal will not have a significant adverse effect on tourism or recreation interests, including users of any Core Path or other established public access for walking, cycling or horse riding; AND
- 6) assessment of the proposal has taken into consideration the cumulative impacts of neighbouring wind turbines, wind farm development previously granted consent and valid applications which have not been determined. At least these cumulative impacts should include potential impacts on landscape, local amenity, and natural heritage

In all cases, if consent is granted, we will impose appropriate conditions (along with a legal agreement under Section 75, where necessary), relating to the removal of the turbine(s) and associated equipment, and to the restoration of the site, whenever the consent expires or the project ceases to operate for a specific period.

Deleted: no part of the development will give rise to electro-magnetic interference to communications installations (including radar or air traffic control systems of either the National Air Traffic Services (NATS) or the Ministry of Defence (MoD)); or will adversely affect the quality of radio or TV reception; or will have a detrimental impact on the safeguarding zones for airports, airfields or airstrips (either licensed or unlicensed), aircraft flight paths, or MoD low-flying areas; AND

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Reasoned Justification

The aim of this supplementary guidance is to encourage the sensitive development of wind energy facilities. Wind energy developments can contribute to renewable energy generation targets and provide economic and environmental benefits.

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Assessment of any application will also require to consider visual and landscape impacts, natural heritage and the historic environment, and the potential impact

on the local economy within the context of other policies and supplementary guidance in the plan. Impacts on sensitive species, including geese and birds of prey, are significant issues that regularly need to be addressed in relation to proposed wind energy developments. Also of particular relevance will be Policy 12 Landscape Conservation

As more landowners are expressing an interest in diversifying into wind energy, it is necessary to have a policy that facilitates development, while ensuring the protection of the local landscape and its character, of nature conservation interests and of general amenity. Wind energy development can range from a single “domestic” turbine to a commercial wind farm with many wind turbines. Individual domestic wind turbines (those designed to serve the needs of one household without significant energy export) are not subject to this policy.

Planning Advice defines turbine size classification. For the avoidance of doubt the policy SG Rural Development 3 “Other renewable energy developments” applies to small wind turbines, which are defined as being those designed for domestic use (i.e. to offset domestic energy use) and/ or are smaller than 10Kw in capacity.

Wind energy developments can interfere with broadcast communications and signals, depending on their location and design. Therefore, it is important that developers consult with the local emergency services, local authority, gas and electricity companies, the Office of Communications, airport authorities, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the MoD at the earliest possible stage. The Planning Authority will take into account the views of the relevant communications operators, CAA and the MoD, when determining a planning application for any wind energy development.

The proposal must be sited to minimise adverse impact on the safety and amenity of any regularly occupied buildings and the grounds that they occupy with regard to ice throw in winter conditions, shadow flicker, shadow throw, visual intrusion or the likely effect of noise generation. The desirable separation distance will be dependent on a range of factors, including topography, safety issues, noise, shadow-flicker, shadow-throw and the size of the turbines. A distance of at least 10 rotor diameters is a general rule beyond which shadow flicker should not be a problem.

In the case of noise, a reasonable standard to protect residential amenity should be applied: information about thresholds can be found in Planning Advice. However, thresholds could be varied, depending on the specific local circumstances. The onus will be placed on developers to show that the impacts of their development have been minimised and are also within the thresholds stated in Planning Advice.

Wind energy developers should demonstrate the capacity of the site for the proposed wind energy development through design and layout that is appropriate to the landscape character and scale of topography of the location. Wind energy proposals should not have the potential to be experienced as dominant or overbearing in relation to the site’s scale of topography or the intrinsic sensitivity

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of the location. With this caveat Aberdeenshire Council places no specific limit on the size of turbine that could be erected.

Associated infrastructure should also be taken into account when considering wind farm development: this may include grid connections, service buildings, borrow pits and access tracks. It may be possible to re-route paths in consultation with the community and at the developer's expense.

Wind energy proposals in urban areas are likely to raise similar issues, and this policy should be applied to any wind energy element of any application in urban areas.

Within the policy a "neighbouring" wind energy proposal is one that could be seen from any part of the site, at ground level or otherwise as advised by the Planning Authority.

We have been unable to identify any areas which could accommodate wind farms greater than 20Mw, but this does not mean to say that windfarms of this scale could not be considered. Proposals for large windfarms will also be considered within the context of this policy.

Further Planning Advice is provided on wind energy developments: *Use of wind energy in Aberdeenshire: Part 1 - Wind energy guidance for developers*; and *Part 2 - Wind energy guidance for assessing developments*.

SG Rural Development 3: Other renewable energy developments

We will approve renewable energy development, subject to other policies, if it is located, sited and designed in accordance with the following criteria. The applicant must demonstrate that:

- 1) any new facilities are well related to the source of the primary renewable resources that are needed for operation; AND**
- 2) the proposal will not compromise public health, safety or amenity; AND**
- 3) satisfactory steps will be taken to mitigate any negative development impacts on occupiers of nearby properties (in or outwith a settlement boundary).**

In all cases, if consent is granted, we will approve appropriate conditions (along with a legal agreement under Section 75, where necessary), relating to the removal of the development and associated equipment and to the restoration of the site, whenever the consent expires or the project ceases to operate for a specific period.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage the sensitive development of renewable energy resources. Particular attention will therefore be given to other policies that relate to ensuring protection of the landscape, nature conservation interests and amenity of the area, as well as transportation considerations.

Renewable energy development could potentially have an impact on occupiers of neighbouring properties, such as noise, visual intrusion, or traffic movement. The developer should demonstrate that satisfactory steps have been taken to mitigate negative development impacts. Likewise such developments may have a landscape impact and this will require to be assessed in the context of Policy 12: Landscape conservation.

SG Rural Development 4: Minerals

We will approve mineral development, subject to other policies, where:

- 1) sufficient information has been submitted with a planning application to enable a full assessment to be made of the likely effects of development, including impacts on human health, together with proposals for appropriate control, mitigation and monitoring; AND
- 2) a Transport Assessment has been submitted showing the development will not have significant negative transport impacts on local communities; AND
- 3) where necessary the Planning Authority and the developer have agreed a buffer distance, in consultation with local communities, that is reasonable, takes into account the specific circumstances of the proposal (the relevant circumstances will include the development's location, size, expected duration and method of working, along with the local topography, the characteristics of the various environmental effects likely to arise and the mitigation that can be achieved); AND
- 4) in the case of sand and gravel construction aggregates the market area's mineral landbank will not exceed 15 years as a result of the development; AND
- 5) where the development would result in three or more consented mineral or landfill developments within 5km of a settlement, adverse cumulative impacts can be adequately mitigated in terms of increases in road traffic and the length of time and degree of disturbance to communities and the landscape; AND
- 6) secondary material from mineral working deposits, including extraction and processing materials such as overburden, waste rock and fines, will be reused wherever possible, and responsibly; AND
- 7) details of phased working, land restoration, after care, after use, public road maintenance and restoration (including appropriate financial guarantees) have been submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority.

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Reasoned Justification

This policy aims to contribute to the objectives of the structure plan to use resources more efficiently and effectively, and to protect and improve our valued assets and resources. It reconciles the need for minerals with concern for the natural and historic environment and communities.

Mineral working can be disruptive, if not managed satisfactorily, leading to adverse community and environmental impacts. The identification of areas of search will steer mineral extraction as a priority to the least sensitive areas. Safeguarded areas protect rarer mineral deposits from sterilisation, but are also the "areas of search" for these minerals. Safeguarding is provided by a separate policy instrument. Sensitive working practices during mineral extraction should minimise operational impacts and a high standard of site reclamation should enhance the value of the environment once extraction has ceased.

There is also growing demand for certain non-aggregate construction and industrial minerals. Sites are safeguarded to allow for the reopening of historic and inactive sites and new active sites to ensure a future supply.

Quarry operators are encouraged to reduce the quantity of waste produced when extracting minerals. Applicants will be required to prepare a Waste Management Plan (WMP) to demonstrate how the proposed development meets criterion 7.

Planning Advice Note (PAN) 64, on Reclamation of Surface Mineral Workings, provides advice on how planning authorities and operators can improve the reclamation of surface mineral workings. Further advice on the management of soil resources (handling and storage), landform, drainage and aftercare is covered in the PAN. Planning advice will be prepared on the type of information required for reclaiming surface mineral workings (e.g. the information to be submitted with an application, preferred after uses and reclamation standards, financial guarantees, and monitoring requirements), and on abandoned or dormant sites that are considered unlikely to be reactivated during the plan period.

Continuity of supply of construction aggregates is ensured through requiring a landbank of permitted mineral reserves within market areas. To protect resources it is important to ensure this does not significantly exceed market requirements. Market areas are defined according to the viability of transporting minerals and this will change over time. At all times the landbank should be maintained to provide at least 10 years supply, but should not be allowed to exceed 15 years supply, to avoid any issues of unnecessary blight. The Market area is within a 50km travel distance of Aberdeen City and of the strategic growth areas defined in the Structure Plan. In essence this means that the market area is the whole of the Local Plan area and part of the Cairngorms National Park and Angus. Landbank targets and market areas may be updated if required during the plan period.

All conditions attached to mineral permissions will be reviewed every 15 years to ensure the development is not adversely affecting the natural or historic environment, transport network, landscape character or local amenity. Guidance on the procedures to be applied is given in SODD Circular 34/1996 and SEDD Circular 1/2003.

Bonds may be required to be lodged, to ensure that damage caused to roads by quarry traffic can be repaired.

Areas of search for minerals are shown in the appendices associated with SG Safeguarding 7 "Areas of Search for Minerals".

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Maps showing the location of the areas of search.

SG STRLtype1: Development in the coastal zone

We will approve development within the defined coastal area as shown on the Main Proposals Maps, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the site is within a settlement boundary identified in the plan; OR
- 2) outwith a settlement boundary the proposal requires a coastal location, and the social and economic benefits outweigh any adverse environmental impact; **OR**
- 3) it is demonstrated that there is no alternative site as it is the redevelopment of an existing building, or within the curtilage of an existing building.

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In either of these cases the applicant must also demonstrate that:

- a) it will not contribute to the coalescence of coastal developments; AND
- b) it will respect the character and amenity of the surrounding area; AND
- c) the site is not at risk from flooding, over-topping, landslip or erosion; AND
- d) there is no adverse impact on water quality and it will not result in the pollution of coastal waters; AND
- e) it will not unreasonably adversely impact on natural coastal processes or habitats.

We will approve proposals for coastal protection works, subject to other policies, if an assessment of the implications of the works shows that they work with natural processes and there will be no significant adverse impact on coastal processes or habitats, and that the development will not result in increased coastal erosion or flooding elsewhere on the coastline.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this supplementary guidance is to protect the special nature of the coastal area, and to direct development to the least environmentally sensitive areas. The majority of Aberdeenshire's coastline is covered by statutory nature conservation designations ranging from National Nature Reserves to Special Areas of Conservation.

The coast is a valuable social, economic and environmental asset. It provides opportunities for recreation, and sustains the quality of life for those living and working in Aberdeenshire. However, the coast is under pressure from tourism and economic activity.

The boundary of the Aberdeenshire coast has been identified on the Main Proposals Maps and is detailed in Appendix 1. By directing development to settlements any adverse impact on the undeveloped coast will be minimised,

although even in developed areas care must be taken to protect the environment.

Coastal protection works will not be permitted where there will be an adverse impact on other coastal processes or habitats, or where the erosion problem will be shifted elsewhere. The full range of management options should be considered over the lifetime of the development and against appropriate climate change projections.

For the avoidance of doubt, the development in the coastal zone supplementary guidance is an overlay of the development in the countryside supplementary guidance. In these areas both statements of policy apply.

Coastal development is at risk from rising sea levels and storm surge, so all development must conform to the relevant flooding policy.

Appendix 1: Coastal zone boundary

SG STRLtype2: Greenbelt

We will approve development in the Aberdeen greenbelt, as shown in the Main Proposals Map, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it is for the extension of an existing building or use that is ancillary to the main use; OR
- 2) it is for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, horticulture, nature conservation or essential public infrastructure; OR
- 3) it is for a recreational use that is compatible with its agricultural or natural setting; OR
- 4) it proposes the sensitive restoration, conversion or extension of a vernacular building or other building of architectural merit; OR
- 5) it is accommodation required for a worker in a primary industry which is appropriate to the countryside and where the presence of a worker is essential to the operation of the enterprise, there is no suitable alternative residential accommodation available, and it is located within the immediate vicinity of the place of employment; OR
- 6) it is identified as a national priority in the National Planning Framework and it is demonstrated that no other site is available; OR
- 7) it is identified under the policy for safeguarding of resources and areas of search as required to meet an established need, and it is demonstrated that no other suitable site is available.
- 8) it is for essential infrastructure required to serve a site allocated in the plan.**

Reasoned Justification

The aims of this supplementary guidance are to protect the Aberdeen greenbelt from new development that would be inconsistent with its functions, and to support proposals that would enhance it. The policy does not assess the individual merits of a planning application, but identifies when a proposed development may be supported within the greenbelt.

The extent of the greenbelt is shown on the proposals map and detailed in appendix 1.

New development, including those that are supported under other policies, must be compatible with the functions of the green belt. The green belt functions are to direct growth to appropriate locations (non-greenbelt locations), to ensure the green belt is maintained to protect and enhance the quality, character, landscape setting and the identity of settlements, and to enable access to open spaces and opportunities for physical recreation activities as part of the wider structure of green space in Aberdeenshire.

In addition to delivering its primary purposes, the greenbelt can contribute to the protection of the natural environment. Any development that may affect a nature conservation site, protected species, water body or area of geodiversity importance will have to conform to the relevant policies in the plan.

Enabling development for the restoration of a listed building will apply in the green belt, but must conform to the supplementary guidance for enabling development.

Uses appropriate within the greenbelt are agriculture, forestry and horticulture. Recreational uses associated with forestry, nature conservation and agriculture may be acceptable subject to the scale and impact on the landscape setting.

New development, including extensions and conversions to residential and non-residential buildings, must be appropriately sited and/or designed, and be of an appropriate scale and form for the green belt. To protect the landscape setting and character of settlements it is preferable to retain as many vernacular buildings as possible. The vernacular building should be largely intact, at least in respect of its external walls, and roof.

New development necessary for job-related accommodation should be for caretakers or operational staff.

Where a proposal would not normally be consistent with greenbelt policy, but has an identified need such as transportation, utilities, or waste management works, it can be considered if there are no other appropriate sites. These are generally developments which are strategic in nature or are of national importance.

[Appendix 1 Extent of the greenbelt.](#)

SG Housing 1: Housing land allocations 2007-2016

We will approve new housing, subject to other policies, on land allocated for immediate housing development (2007-2016). We will refuse permission for any other type of development on allocated housing land, unless it is ancillary to the housing development and still enables the site to be developed to approximately the housing numbers indicated in the settlement statements of the Local Development Plan.

Only in exceptional cases, such as where there is an overriding public benefit to be derived from additional development, will approval be given for a number of units more than the site allocation shown in the settlement proposals maps. All such applications (including “local developments”) will have to be justified by an approved masterplan or development brief (whichever is appropriate) which has been through a robust process of public consultation.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this guidance is to ensure that land, which is allocated for housing in the Local Development Plan to meet the Structure Plan’s housing requirement, is developed for housing and safeguarded from any other uses where possible. The land is shown in the settlement proposals maps. Only those sites designated in the settlement statements, along with an estimated allowance of up to 25% of all development in the Rural Housing Market Area, generated under the policy for development in the countryside, will contribute to meeting the Structure Plan Phase 1 requirement (2007-2016). This includes sites that have become effective since 1 January 2007.

Deleted: Housing sites that were effective on 1 January 2007 are set out in Schedule 2.1

Infrastructure planning becomes very difficult when housing numbers proposed for a site vary from what is in the plan. Important elements such as open space can be compromised by over-development. Above all, communities feel deceived when allocations in the plan are exceeded. Allocations in the local plan must therefore be adhered to, so as to avoid these issues. If a proposal involves a higher density than anticipated and meeting the allocation would be achieved by only using part of the site, the remaining part must remain undeveloped, but would be appropriate for review in the next plan. The detail of this should come through a masterplan or development brief (prepared under the terms of policy detailed elsewhere), which has been through a process of public consultation and has received the support of the community. This applies to all sites regardless of its size or the number of units to be developed. The intention of this is to avoid the cumulative impact of over-allocation on infrastructure provision and to re-assure all communities, including those affected by ‘Local Developments’ of less than 50 houses or 2ha in extent (as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Development) (Scotland) Regulations 2009).

While the density of any individual development will be a concern of marketing, site and design needs, we expect the overall density of residential development to be provided at approximately 30 houses to the hectare.

[For the avoidance of doubt, the site allocations attributed to EH \(existing housing sites\) are also covered by the requirements of this policy and supplementary guidance.](#)

SG Housing 2: Housing land allocations 2017 to 2023 and early draw down

Subject to review of the Local Development Plan by 2017, we expect to release land allocated for housing development for the period 2017 to 2023 during that period.

In the interim, if the Housing Land Audit shows less than 7 years land that is effective or capable of becoming effective according to the current Action Programme of the Plan, or if a 5 year effective housing land supply is unlikely to be maintained, this will trigger the early release of land allocated for delivery in the period 2017 to 2023, in locations in accordance with the Structure Plan spatial strategy and the settlement strategy.

Once land is released by this mechanism, we will approve new housing on these sites, subject to other policies, in accordance with the criteria set out in Supplementary Guidance: *Housing land allocations 2007 to 2016*.

Until land is released by this mechanism, we will refuse all applications for its development, other than on a temporary basis that will not interfere with the timely provision of housing when it is needed.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to safeguard housing land to meet the Structure Plan housing requirement, where consent would be anticipated during the period 2017 to 2023. The land is shown on the settlement proposals maps.

This approach provides the means for a long-term view of the future growth of settlements to be taken and helps with future planning by the Council, communities, developers, key agencies etc.

Release of housing land is designed to maintain the effective housing land supply and the spatial strategy of the plan, rather than to preserve any artificial timing or phasing of development. In the event of an emerging deficit in the land supply identified by the Action Programme and the Housing Land Audit, applications on allocated land that further the settlement strategy of the plan will be approved, subject to other policies.

Land will be released according to Housing Market Area and the allocated phase for release. The boundaries of the two Housing Market Areas are shown on the proposals maps. The scale and distribution of sites in the plan take account of the Structure Plan's aims and objectives. The land allocated for housing has been carefully selected to maintain a rolling 7 year housing supply which is likely to become 'effective'. In this way the 7 year land supply target builds in a 2 year allowance for the resolution of infrastructure and planning issues on sites. This requirement will act as a trigger to provide sufficient time for additional land releases to be made or brought forward from phase 2, to ensure maintenance of the 5 year supply at all times, which is sought by the policy. Outside the strategic growth areas additional land may be considered for release from phase 2 within the phase 1 period, where it is required to maintain critical levels of services.

All allocations carried forward from the Aberdeenshire Local Plan and Phase 2 allocations will be reviewed in 5 years time. If in that period it has become apparent that there is a constraint on a site whereby there is no prospect of it ever becoming effective for housing, it will be removed from the plan. Otherwise it is fully expected that these future allocations will be rolled forward into the next plan.

For the avoidance of doubt, on larger sites, which may span two periods of the Plan, planning permission can be granted for the entire allocation at once in order to avoid any ambiguity in the planning status of the site. However, development will have to be carried out according to the phasing of the Plan, unless otherwise specified. In order to ensure developer contributions associated with the permission are necessary and reasonable, planning conditions will be set prior to the commencement of each phase of development and so will be subject to review.

Planning advice will be prepared in consultation with the development industry to clarify the method used to identify a shortfall in the effective land supply.

SG Affordable Housing 1: Affordable housing

We will approve development, subject to other policies, if an appropriate contribution is made towards the provision of affordable housing, in proportion to the scale of the proposal and the level of need in the local area.

In order to assist in meeting the need for affordable housing in Aberdeenshire, new housing development must contain at least 25% affordable housing, unless otherwise indicated within the Schedule 4 and the settlement statements. The specific contribution required by development will be assessed at the time of the application or pre-application enquiry, having regard to housing information for the relevant settlement, as agreed by the housing authority, Aberdeenshire Council, and to market and site circumstances. In all but exceptional cases this contribution will be in the form of serviced land within the development site, to which public subsidy can be applied, or in the form of houses on the development site that are affordable without public subsidy.

Advice on the detailed methods of assessing the contribution required and for the delivery of affordable housing is provided in Appendix 1.

Deleted: Commercial development will be expected to contribute to affordable housing in proportion with the scale and type of development.¶

Reasoned Justification

Affordable housing is defined in SPP as “housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes.” The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009) indicated that the likely level of affordable housing would be in the range of 20-30% across the structure plan area. The Local Development Plan’s current Housing Need and Demand Assessment, the Local Housing Strategy and its Affordable Housing Strategic Outcome Statement inform and address the appropriate level and type of affordable housing required to help meet affordable housing need in Aberdeenshire.

The requirement set by this policy, the type of affordable housing and the form of the contribution will vary between locations and between sites. Housing need changes over time. Negotiation at the time of the application or pre-application discussion will determine the actual requirement and the form of provision. These negotiations will consider: the available information on the supply and demand for affordable housing within the settlement and housing market area which the application relates to; any exceptional servicing costs for the development; and the impact of the requirement on the viability of the development.

The requirement for a contribution towards meeting affordable housing needs can be provided by a variety of methods. Where a site falls within an area of strategic priority for development funding, preference will be given to the provision of affordable housing on the site, in association with a Registered Social Landlord or the Council. Where this is not the case, or it is agreed that this is impractical or that it conflicts with development plan policies for the site under consideration, alternative forms of provision such as Low Cost Home Ownership will be possible. There are different costs incurred by different forms of provision and the percentage of affordable housing delivered may differ in form, but in each case the developer will be expected to make the same effective level of contribution. The alternative forms

of provision and the conditions under which they will be sought are detailed within Appendix 1.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that development assists in the provision of affordable housing in perpetuity. ~~This approach is fair to all developers. By avoiding a minimum unit threshold it addresses the problems associated with the provision of affordable housing in smaller settlements, through the cumulative contributions from small-scale developments.~~

Deleted: For the avoidance of doubt, the policy will apply, where appropriate, for all development not just housing development.

This affordable housing policy focuses on the requirement of the development industry to assist in subsidising housing for those who are unable to afford home ownership and are unlikely to be able to do so without assistance. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the Council's Housing Service's evidence-base show that there is a significant need for lower cost home-ownership options across Aberdeenshire. A large proportion of this need could be met through adherence to this plan's layout, siting and design policy. That policy requires that consideration be given to providing a range of house types on all sites, amongst other things to respond to clear market signals and prevent the perpetuity of further housing need over the course of the plan. Masterplans will be expected to identify the scale and location of affordable housing proposed. Adherence to all relevant policies within the Plan will help ensure that development in Aberdeenshire meets the housing needs of the entire community.

Appendix 1: Delivery of affordable housing

Introduction

Affordable housing contributions may consist of development land contributions or financial contributions towards forms of affordable housing prioritised by the Council. These forms are:

- discounted low cost housing for sale, including plots for self-build;
- mid-market rented accommodation;
- shared equity;
- social rented accommodation; and
- housing without subsidy.

Developers should make provision for at least a 25% affordable housing requirement on housing sites, unless it is stated otherwise within Schedule 4 and the settlement statements. However, a flexible and innovative approach is required to secure access to unconstrained development land for the provision of affordable housing, and developers should discuss the application of the policy to the site in question during pre-application discussions with the Council.

In previous years the loss of affordable housing for rent through the “right to buy” has exacerbated Aberdeenshire’s housing need. Recently the ‘right to buy’ for many tenants in 88 settlements has been temporarily suspended, until 2013, through Aberdeenshire’s Pressured Area Designation. Over the life of the plan it is important that new affordable housing built in Aberdeenshire is “affordable” in perpetuity.

Delivery of affordable housing is the prime objective of the policy, and close liaison will continue between the private sector and the Council’s own Housing Service to ensure that land secured for affordable housing development is implemented timeously. In addition, the current Local Housing Strategy and its Affordable Housing Strategic Outcome Statement commit the Council to look at its own land holdings and to identify strategic sites within its own control, which could be brought forward for affordable housing developments. Other strategic partners are encouraged to act similarly, to help meet Aberdeenshire’s need for affordable housing.

Need for affordable housing at the site level

The contribution specific to a particular development will be dependent upon many fluctuating factors, such as an assessment of relevant housing information at settlement level, and of open market conditions and site circumstances including site development costs. Therefore, the exact contribution and its form can only be established at the time the planning application is lodged or the pre-application enquiry is made. Expert advice should be sought from the Local Housing Authority on local need at this stage, in addition to any additional information available at the time on the level and turnover of existing affordable housing stock, as well as waiting list information from both the Council and RSLs.

The development specific contribution

The Council is aware of the need to achieve a successful development. Development should not be rendered unviable by the request of too onerous a level of affordable housing. The applicant should consult with the Council’s Planning Gain Team prior to an application to discuss specific contribution requirements for

residential developments. Other extraordinary on or off-site costs incurred by the developer will be taken into account and any affordable housing requirement could be reduced, if this would result in the development becoming financially un-viable.

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In order for a fair and reasonable amount of affordable housing to be determined, the developer may be required to provide evidence of such costs, in confidence, to the Council. It must be stressed that in many instances costs, such as additional major infrastructure or other site works, will have been evident prior to the purchase of the site, and the developer will have been expected to have taken these into account. Should such additional works appear likely, the developer is urged to consult the Council prior to the submission of a formal planning application, so that guidance may be given where this is possible.

The detailed information gathered to determine the development specific contribution will also be used to confirm the tenure and type of affordable housing as well as the form of contribution. The end result is, therefore, not a blanket provision, but provision which will vary between locations.

Implementation

Where it has been established that a contribution of affordable housing units on-site is the preferred means of provision, it will normally be expected that serviced land be transferred either at a value relating to its end use, or by agreement between the developer and an RSL or the Council, at a lower value. However, as indicated before, RSL or Council social rented housing development may not always be possible or appropriate.

In design terms the agreed affordable housing element must be considered as an integral part of the development and have good linkages to surrounding services including public transport. The affordable housing should be, as far as possible, visually in character with the market housing and be physically integrated. However, in the case of rented social housing development, it may not always be practical to fully integrate affordable housing due to subsequent housing management issues. These issues should be considered in adherence to the plan's design policy and be addressed at the time of any pre-application consultation.

In exceptional circumstances, the developer may, with the agreement of Aberdeenshire Council, make allocated development land or suitable brownfield sites available off-site, or contribute a commuted sum towards affordable housing provision elsewhere in the local community, such as the catchment of the local academy.

The Council recognises that a requirement to make a contribution to affordable housing needs will result in a cost to the developer. Such a result follows inevitably from government policy. In order to offset this cost, developers will also be expected to take the requirement for affordable housing into account in negotiating a land value with site owners. Similarly, in order to offset the costs of any infrastructure or community facilities that are caused by the development as a whole, developers will be expected to take these into account in negotiating a land value with site owners. The Council's policy on developer contributions applies to all developments, irrespective of the provision of affordable housing.

SG SHN1: Development for particular needs

We will approve development for particular needs such as housing for the frail, elderly or special needs, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) there is an identified need; AND**
- 2) the site is:**
 - (i) within a settlement; OR**
 - (ii) in exceptional circumstances and if the developer demonstrates compliance with the sequential assessment of sites, on the edge of a settlement, or by redevelopment of a redundant building elsewhere outwith a settlement; OR**
 - (iii) in the case of a continuing care retirement community (CCRC), outwith a settlement.**

In any of these cases the applicant must also demonstrate that:

- a) it is compatible with neighbouring uses and respects the character and amenity of the surrounding area; AND**
- b) the site is readily accessible to public open space, local services and public transport, unless it is demonstrated by the applicant that access to public transport is not required, or in the case of a CCRC, that it provides sufficient services and facilities to allow it to function as a self-sufficient community; AND**
- c) the site's topography and access are appropriate for those with disabilities; AND**
- d) in the case of a new Continuing Care Retirement Community, it will be self-sufficient in the provision of facilities or would otherwise not have an adverse impact on the facilities enjoyed by local residents.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to support provision of housing for particular needs that are suitably located for both residents and visitors, to provide high quality residential care, and to have a minimal impact on the environment. It is important that the location of special needs housing and care homes are appropriate, to allow residents to participate actively in a community and to access services.

Through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the Local Housing Strategy, the Council will identify and consider the level and type of need which requires to be met in different parts of the Council area. Particular needs include: older people, physical disability and learning difficulties.

This type of housing is built with a particular land in mind, while at the same time contributing to the overall housing supply. Usually it involves either specially built or adapted properties, for example, housing for older people or disabled people.

Housing for particular needs groups should preferably be within settlements and form part of a mixed community. However, there will be occasions where this is not appropriate or where a site sufficient for the development is not available within a settlement. Where a suitable site is not available within a settlement, the developer should prove that an appropriate sequential assessment has been carried out, and only then will a site be considered on the edge of a settlement or elsewhere.

Continuing care communities are likely to be self-sufficient communities, and as such will not require the same level of access to existing services as traditional forms of particular needs housing. In the interests of mixed communities it is not desirable to have excessive concentrations of special needs housing, care homes or continuing care retirement communities in any one location, which could be detrimental to the character of the particular area.

As a housing authority, Aberdeenshire Council recognises the need to ensure the residential needs and desires of the special needs groups are met flexibly by a range of housing providers either singly or in partnership.

SG SHN2: Residential caravans

We will not approve the siting of a single residential caravan, unless:

- 1) the applicant demonstrates that there is an economic or social need for the temporary use of a caravan; AND**
- 2) the siting respects the character and amenity of the surrounding area; AND**
- 3) it can satisfactorily be serviced.**

We will not normally approve a residential caravan park or residential caravan park extension.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to protect the environment from the unnecessary and inappropriate siting of individual residential caravans and residential caravan sites, except in those circumstances where there may be an urgent need.

Caravans are temporary structures, and often do not provide satisfactory living environments. Static caravans or mobile homes are often visually intrusive. It is preferable to have people living in permanent structures.

There are certain situations where the siting of a residential caravan is acceptable to provide temporary accommodation. Examples include occupation during the construction of a house, and special urgent social circumstances (for instance, to house someone who needs to be close to a relative because of personal circumstances). The impact on the environment must be reduced to a minimum through careful placement on the site. Conditions will always be imposed to limit the period of permission and to ensure the caravan is removed and the site made good after the permission lapses.

In purely environmental terms there are modern caravans and mobile homes which offer standards of accommodation similar to conventional houses. However, in terms of the social and economic aspects of sustainability, it is generally not desirable for residential caravans to be used as permanent housing. Considering their unsustainable nature, (e.g. lack of infrastructure provision and access to public services), caravan park extensions do not make sustainable settlement extensions.

Holiday caravans, whether fixed or mobile are considered under tourist facilities and accommodation, where the policy is more welcoming. This type of accommodation is suitable for temporary accommodation such as holiday lets.

SG SHN3: Gypsies/Travellers

Deleted: Gypsy and traveller sites

We will approve a site to accommodate a permanent or temporary halting site for Gypsies/Travellers, subject to other policies, if:

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- 1) it meets an identified need and is located on a site that has been identified within the plan; OR
- 2) a newly arising need can be proven.

In either case the applicant must also demonstrate that:

- a) the site would not appreciably detract from the character or appearance of the area; AND
- b) the site would not significantly detract from the amenity currently enjoyed by residents in the area; AND
- c) the site can be sympathetically located in a secure environment and provided with essential services (in the case of halting sites: water connection, refuse facilities and portable toilet); AND
- d) the location allows reasonable access to employment, education, community facilities and the main road network; AND
- e) in the case of a site which is not a private site intended solely for private use, it has been demonstrated that the site will be properly managed.

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Reasoned Justification

The policy is to ensure development proposals for Gypsies/Travellers sites are located on land specifically for that purpose and are identified and allocated within the development plan. This ensures sites have been scrutinised within the development plan process and provides certainty to gypsies and travellers and settled communities. The policy will reduce the number of unauthorised encampments by meeting need identified and considered within the Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the Local Housing Strategy. It ensures that the policy can meet newly arising need as and when required, and also ensures demand for small privately owned sites can be considered against a relevant policy.

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Research by Craigforth (2008), established that there is a need for sites which requires to be addressed. If the halting site provision allocated through the LDP is found to be insufficient, then the need for further halting sites will be apparent and new halting sites will require to be found. They should be judged using the criteria identified in the supplementary guidance. For clarification, developers of private sites for their own use do not have to prove a need, in the same way as any other private housing applicant does not have to prove their need for housing. However, they will have to prove that the development of the site is appropriate meets the the policies of the development plan.

Given the particular housing need being addressed and the insignificant number of likely applications for sites, a reasonable approach should be taken when weighting the significance of other policies.

Travelling showpeople

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment and Local Housing Strategy confirm that travelling showpeople and **Gypsies/Travellers** have different housing needs, and specific approaches to their needs require to be taken. In Aberdeenshire there is a long history of travelling showpeople using sites for temporary accommodation needs, having approached the Council with proposals. These sites are known traditional fairground sites, familiar to the Council and communities, and are used regularly on a seasonal basis. Occupancy of these sites is usually very temporary, transient and incidental to their primary uses as public open spaces. Should a proposal arise to make such a use more permanent in nature, then the above criteria would be used to judge their appropriateness.

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SG LSD1: Masterplanning

We will approve new development on sites allocated in the Local Development Plan, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) in the case of very large-scale development areas including more than one site, the applicant(s) have submitted a development framework, and it has been agreed by the Local Area Committee; OR
- 2) in the case of individual large-scale development sites, or constituent parts of a development framework, the applicant has submitted a masterplan, and it has been agreed by the Local Area Committee; OR
- 3) in the case of individual medium-scale development sites, the applicant has submitted a **design** brief, and it has been agreed by the Local Area Committee.

In each of the above cases, the applicant must also have demonstrated in particular that:

- a) the design of the development accords with the agreed development framework, masterplan and/or **design** brief, as appropriate; AND
- b) within the process of generating the appropriate development framework, masterplan and/or **design** brief, adequate steps have been taken explicitly to consider the relationship with the existing village or town, and to engage the local community in a manner that is in proportion to the scale and type of development proposed.

Each of the locations for which a development framework, masterplan or **design** brief is required is identified within the settlement statements.

The preferred process by which each of these design statements will be generated will be set out in planning advice.

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Reasoned Justification

The standard of design of new developments, and in particular large developments, will be improved through the application of a masterplanning and design process that considers the whole development site and puts this in a context for subsequent planning applications. This policy sets out a framework for development, which identifies the need for this early thinking on design issues and requires appropriate engagement of the local community for all scales of development. Depending on the scale of the development a different design pathway is required.

Different scales of development

These scales are set out below. The thresholds suggested are indicative, based on:

- the approximate scale (>600 houses) that requires some new items of infrastructure to serve more than the neighbourhood it is within, e.g. a secondary school, civic park or new trunk road junction;

- the approximate scale (about 600 houses) served by a single primary/community school, which acts as the basis for most “neighbourhoods”;
- the scale (>50 houses) at which proposals become “major applications” under the current regulations; and
- the scale (<5 houses) at which it is reasonable to consider the layout siting and design of buildings on a “one-off” basis.

Decisions on precisely which developments need to be treated at which scale will be based on “fact and degree”. The need for a development framework, masterplan or design brief will be identified in the settlement statements of the plan.

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Scale 1 Very large

Significant growth of towns, involving development that spans more than one 5-year plan period and/or more than one site (usually 600+ houses, associated affordable housing, employment land and major provision for public services – schools, open space, road and drainage infrastructure etc). In these cases the process for development will include these stages:

- A Development framework
- B Masterplanning the individual sites
- D Detailed application(s)

Scale 2 Large

Major development of single sites (usually 50-600 houses, but still with associated affordable housing, employment land and extensive provision for public services – open space, road and drainage infrastructure etc). In these cases the process for development will include these stages:

- B Masterplanning the site
- D Detailed application(s)

Scale 3 Medium-size

Developments of a modest scale (usually 5-50 houses OR a significant industrial/commercial proposal, with associated affordable housing and proportionate provision for public services – open space, road and drainage infrastructure etc). In these cases the process for development will include these stages:

- C Design brief for the site
- D Detailed application(s)

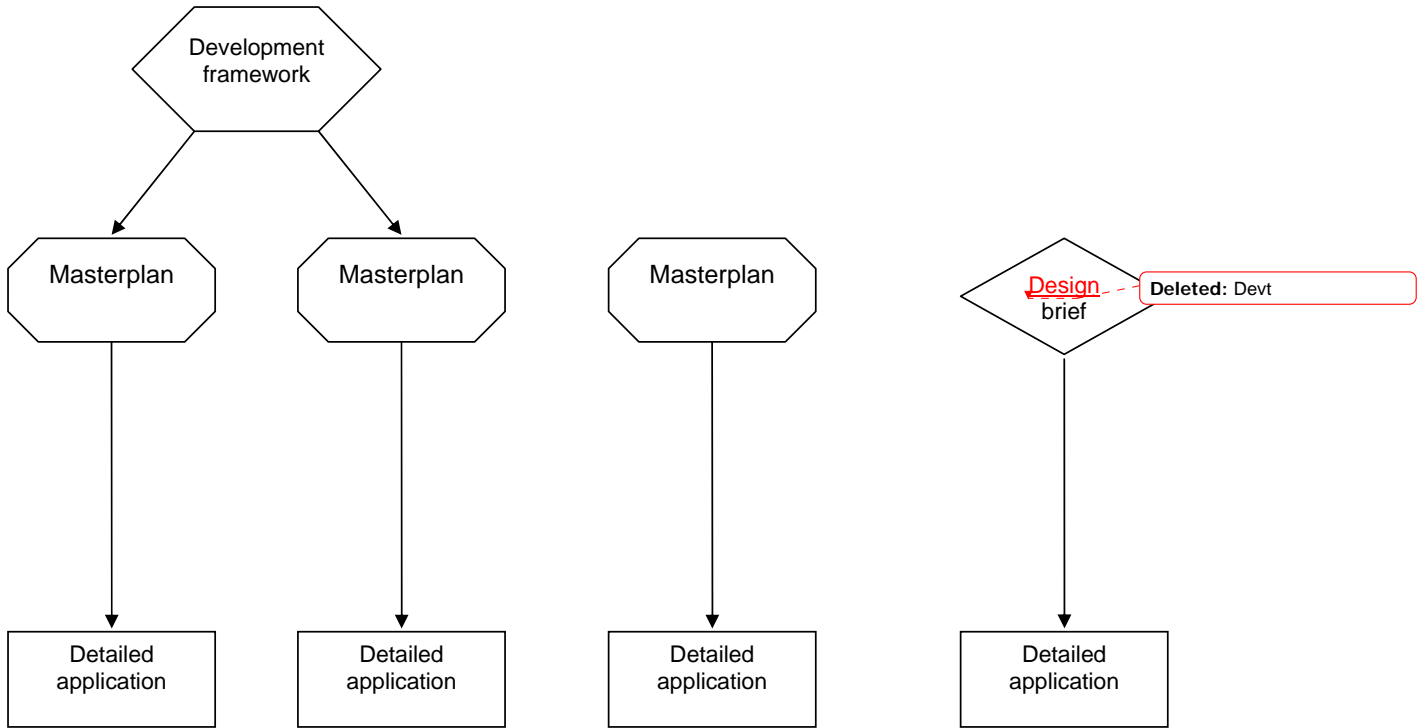
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For the avoidance of doubt, when a development framework, masterplan or design brief has been agreed in accordance with this guidance, we do not expect that any application for planning in principle will be required.

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Different Scales of Development – Flow Chart

Scale 1 Very large	Scale 2 Large	Scale 3 Medium-size
>600 houses, multi-use, more than one site, more than one 5 year development period, more than one developer	50-600 houses, multi-use, single neighbourhood, single site	5-49 houses, OR a significant industrial/commercial proposal, single site



SG LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development

We will approve the **layout, siting and** design of new development, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it conforms with the approved masterplan, development brief, design statement or design code prepared for the site in accord with the supplementary guidance on masterplanning; AND
- 2) it successfully combines responses to the following design issues:
 - a) optimising its response to the site's context, including consideration of:
 - (i) the local climate (its response to cold winds, rain, snow and solar gain); and
 - (ii) respect for its setting (its relationship to the existing landscape, townscape and neighbouring features); AND
 - b) optimising the resource-efficiency and appropriate use of materials, including consideration of embodied energy, reuse of construction materials, compactness of built form, and how well the materials relate to each other; AND
 - c) ensuring it performs the functions expected of it, including consideration of:
 - (i) its basic functions (provision of privacy, security, warmth, homeliness etc); and
 - (ii) support systems (sustainability of heating, lighting, water and waste systems over the design's lifetime, including the use of water-saving technology); and
 - (iii) connectivity (practicality and environment-friendliness of its access and servicing arrangements); and
 - (iv) flexibility to adapt to the changing circumstances of its occupants; AND
 - d) the creation of **local** identity, including consideration of:
 - (i) the balance of the development (mixture of house types **and other building types**, and land-uses); and
 - (ii) the creation of a sense of place (the quality of urban and landscape design, incorporation of public art or craftwork, biodiversity etc); and
 - (iii) aesthetics (the unity and rhythm of all the design elements and features); and
 - (iv) visual appeal (the design's "feel-good" quality, style etc).

We will publish further more detailed planning advice on how these issues should be interpreted and the process by which they will be assessed, as necessary.

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Reasoned justification

The purpose of this policy is to improve the standard of layout, siting and design of developments in Aberdeenshire, to achieve the highest standards of urban and rural

design. The most immediately obvious impact that development has on the environment is in the way it looks, but its permeability and connectivity – how easy it is to get around – and the other issues identified are just as important, along with the emergent requirements of sustainability.

Drawing these strands together the policy identifies the issues which require attention, if development is to receive planning permission. Their assessment will be carried out in the light of more detailed planning advice, which will be based on the Urban Design Tool Kit (as contained in Planning Advice Note 67), the Scottish Government's "Designing Streets: a policy statement for Scotland", and "Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative", and on other assessment tools as appropriate, for example, "Index21". Index 21 is an ongoing project between Aberdeenshire Council and the Scott Sutherland School of Architecture at The Robert Gordon University to promote environment-friendly housing layouts and designs.

The process by which these issues will be assessed will be set out separately in planning advice. However, the key to that advice is that it will be based on asking questions about the full range of design issues, rather than on determining a particular set of answers (as design guides have done in the past). In this way it is intended that the door is opened to innovative design answers, while ensuring a rigorous assessment is applied to every aspect of design, whether it is innovative or not.

However, the process of dealing with planning applications is just one end of the design process. For it to succeed, it is essential for the Council to generate development frameworks, masterplans and development briefs, as appropriate, for each development site, in accord with the supplementary guidance on masterplanning. We intend to do this in a collaborative process with the development industry. We will also expect developers to submit design statements and design codes applicable to each site for approval by the Council, in addition to incorporating art or craftwork projects in accordance with the Council's Adopted Public Art Strategy. In addition we will encourage developers to co-operate in generating agreed "pattern books", to ease the process of planning approval. Finally, in order to encourage the highest standard of design, we will continue to promote a biannual series of design awards, but will now also pursue the introduction of a Design Panel of distinguished practitioners to advise on the merits of particularly important design cases.

In some areas, such as the regeneration priority areas and the area covered by the "Energetica" framework, particular emphasis will be placed on achieving design solutions that reflect these areas' special needs and characteristics.

Finally, the importance of engagement between developers and the community must not be underestimated and we expect developers to involve communities from the outset. In this context The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment have carried out an award winning exercise at Ellon, which can be used as a model for other developers. The appropriateness of the engagement of developers and the communities will be an important factor in assessing development proposals.

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SG LSD3: House extensions

We will approve an extension to a house, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it reflects the character of the surrounding area and the design and scale of the existing house; AND**
- 2) it does not significantly reduce the amenity of neighbouring residents; AND**
- 3) it would not cause the loss of, or serious damage to, trees or woodland of significant value to the character of the surrounding area; AND**
- 4) it would not prejudice either storm water or waste water management systems of the original development, or of neighbouring properties.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to protect the *character* and *amenity* of existing houses and their surroundings from poorly sited and designed house extensions.

House extensions must respond to both the scale and design of the house to be extended. Thus the original house should remain visually dominant in the overall composition after extension. Extensions should also respect neighbouring properties, otherwise they can reduce the *amenity* of those houses and the surrounding area. This is particularly relevant to issues of overshadowing and of privacy from new overlooking windows. All house extensions must therefore be well designed not only to improve the quality of accommodation, but also positively to contribute to character of the area.

SG LSD4: Infill development

We will approve development on sites within a settlement boundary in the settlement maps which have no specific land use allocation, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the nature of the development will not erode the character or amenity of the surrounding area through over or under-development; AND**
- 2) the development will not interfere significantly with the existing or proposed use of neighbouring sites, or with the accessibility of future potential development areas; AND**
- 3) the development will not cause the loss of a significant area of open space, allotments or woodland important to the community.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that new development does not impact negatively on character, amenity, biodiversity or neighbouring land uses.

Land which has no specific land use designation on the proposals maps tends generally to offer small and medium-scale opportunities for new development. Such opportunities can usefully contribute to housing and employment land requirements within settlements and may also improve the character of an area. However, these developments must also respect existing developments and be prevented from having an individual or cumulative negative impact on local environmental assets or on the character and amenity of the surrounding area. We will produce detailed guidance in Planning Advice. On many infill sites, there is also the potential for significant damage to or loss of trees, resulting from insensitive development: this must be prevented.

Infill development will not be permitted, where it would result in the inability to access land that could otherwise be used for future development, and thus in foreclosure of that future opportunity.

SG LSD5: Public open space

A. We will approve new development, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the provision of open space reflects the hierarchy and standards set out in Appendices 1 and 2 in the Aberdeenshire Parks and Open Space Strategy; AND**
- 2) the area of public open space meets one of the following criteria:**
 - (i) In the case of major developments (of 50 or more dwellings, or of 2 hectares or more industrial, commercial or retail land), at least 40% of the site must be provided for open space; or the developer must demonstrate that the site is a constituent part of an approved development framework or master plan in which 40% of the overall land is provided for open space.**
 - (ii) In the case of new development of less than 50 dwellings, at least 120m² of open space must be provided per dwelling as open space. Alternatively, where a need has been identified in the Open Space Audit, this may take the form, in whole or in part, of an equivalent contribution to improving the quality of existing open space provision elsewhere in the settlement.**
 - (iii) In the case of new development on land previously allocated in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan for housing, no less than 40m² of open space per dwelling must be provided as open space. Alternatively, where a need has been identified in the Open Space Audit, this may take the form of an equivalent contribution, in whole or in part, to improving the quality of existing open space provision elsewhere in the settlement.**

In each of these cases, the developer must also have demonstrated that arrangements for the establishment and maintenance of the open space have already been agreed. In most cases these will be secured through a section 75 or other legal agreement with the Local Authority.

B. We will refuse development that would result in the loss of an area of open space within a settlement, unless:

- 1) the proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as open space, and the integrity of that use is maintained; OR**
- 2) it is for an essential community facility, where:**
 - (i) its public benefits clearly outweigh the value of the site to the settlement's character or amenity; AND**
 - (ii) evidence from the open space audit, or other audit, shows it will not result in a deficit of open space provision of that type within the settlement; AND**
 - (iii) it has been demonstrated that there are no alternative sites.**

In the exceptional cases where a development proposal otherwise satisfies criteria 1) or 2), but would result in or increase an open space

deficit, replacement open space of an appropriate type, quantity, accessibility and quality must be provided.

Areas of open space of particularly high community value are identified as “protected” on the proposals maps.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all new housing developments are accompanied by adequate public open space, as required in the Aberdeenshire Parks and Open Space Strategy.

The policy also aims to ensure that valuable areas of open space in settlements, as identified in the Open Space Audit are not lost to development. This includes a presumption against development of any playing fields or sports pitches. Major areas of open space are specifically identified as protected within each settlement statement in this plan. However, for the avoidance of doubt, this supplementary guidance applies to all areas of public open space, whether specifically identified or not.

Public open space includes spaces that serve a variety of functions, for instance, recreation (formal and informal), civic areas, local food production, amenity, wildspace including the creation of habitats and shelter, linkages, core paths, and sustainable drainage systems. Each of these functions constitutes an essential part of the environment for everyone, without which our quality of life would diminish. New development is required to provide for each of them in proportion to the scale of the proposal.

In order to deliver the range of functions, 40% of major development sites will be identified as open space. The requirement is reduced for smaller developments and on effective housing land previously identified in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan (2006), which is reallocated in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. This reflects the fact that this land is likely to have already been purchased with an expectation of a financial return based on the standards set out in the previous Local Plan.

The open space requirement for each development will be made up of a combination of compulsory and discretionary elements depending on the potential and needs of the site, and the most appropriate way of complementing and improving on what already exists. Areas identified as open space must be well located, properly maintained and designed for their purpose.

Phased developments that are part of a major proposal may not meet the 40% open space requirement in each individual phase. In these cases, it must be demonstrated that they will contribute towards the 40% requirement in an overall development plan framework or master plan.

In most cases delivery of open space in accordance with the standards and its long-term management is likely to be secured through a limitation on the planning application, together with the use of conditions. For this purpose Section 75 agreements, the requirement for bonds to be deposited, or arrangements under other statutes will be used.

Appendix 3 lists improvements identified as necessary through an audit of open space within settlements.

SG LSD6: Public access

- A. We will approve development, subject to other policies, if:**
- 1) it is accompanied by an access plan that shows the existing non-motorised public access footpaths, bridleways and cycleways on the site, and external links from the site, together with proposed public access provision both during construction and after completion of the development (such provision should include links to existing path networks and to the surrounding area, and access points to water); AND**
 - 2) in cases where the new development affects a route included in the Core Paths Plan or affects any other public footpath, bridleway, cycleway or access point to water, then EITHER:**
 - (i) it retains the existing path or water access point while maintaining or enhancing its amenity value; OR**
 - (ii) it makes alternative access provision that is no less attractive, and is safe and convenient for public use.**
- B. We will approve the construction of a new path or public access point to water, subject to other policies, if an adequate maintenance programme has been agreed with the Planning Authority, and where applicable, it addresses the requirements of disabled people.**

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Reasoned Justification

The aims of this supplementary guidance are to ensure that existing and potential public access routes (including core paths) are protected and that new developments incorporate appropriate opportunities for informal recreation, and promote walking or cycling as a means of transport. The policy also aims to ensure new development does not restrict future opportunities for the extension of the public access network.

The *Land Reform (Scotland) Act, 2003* includes rights for non-motorised public access to most land and inland water, covering such activities as walking, cycling, horse riding and canoeing/kayaking. Access provision should be designed to accommodate all appropriate users harmoniously. Since 2004, the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995* applies to path networks as well. Public access needs to make reasonable provision for the disabled, including the visually impaired, within the constraints of practicability and the need to maintain the character of the area.

Public access routes help to benefit health and well-being, promote enjoyment and awareness of the natural and historic environment, contribute to the local infrastructure and provide alternatives to the use of the private car. Safe routes to school and social equity concerns in linking settlements and local services to the needs of residents also need to be considered.

New development should conform to the *Aberdeenshire Outdoor Access Strategy* and the *Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan*, should enhance existing

paths and should deliver new paths which are identified in the Core Paths Plan and fall within the development proposal.

All new developments require an access plan to the satisfaction of the planning authority. Advice on preparing an access plan is given in Aberdeenshire Council's *Outdoor Access and Development: Guidance for Developers*. Existing routes, proposed routes and new routes should be shown on the development's site or layout plan as appropriate.

The construction of new paths should:

- conform to best practice e.g. *Lowland Path Construction Guide*, *Upland Pathwork*, *Countryside Access Design Guide*, and Aberdeenshire Council's *Outdoor Access Strategy*; and
- if appropriate, incorporate appropriate relevant infrastructure (e.g. cycle racks, seating, signposting, lighting).

A maintenance programme should be submitted to ensure that the track or path is safe and convenient for use, and will not have any adverse impact on the environment.

SG LSD7: Community facilities

We will approve new community facilities, comprising indoor or outdoor infrastructure, subject to other policies, where they are available to all community residents and in accessible locations within settlements. This may include, for example, halls, pavilions, playing fields, parks, public art and any other physical infrastructure to promote enjoyment and recreation within the community.

Where existing community facilities within settlements have become surplus to requirements, due to new or updated facilities being provided elsewhere, we will approve their re-use or redevelopment, subject to them being consistent with the terms of other policies contained within the Local Development Plan.

A legal agreement may be needed to ensure that new facilities are available to all members of the community for a reasonable amount of time on a regular basis.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage, where appropriate, the provision of new public and private services, facilities or infrastructure which help to support and enhance a community.

The social foundations of many communities rely on the facilities within them and they should be supported wherever possible. Otherwise, the role of some communities could be threatened, particularly in rural areas where meeting places are scarce. In recognition of this, contributions will be sought from developers for the provision of new facilities or the up-grading of existing facilities.

New private facilities will need to be made available to all of the community, at an affordable price, for a defined period of time and on a regular basis, to qualify as a community facility. Facilities that cannot meet this requirement are businesses and should be considered under the terms of that policy.

The provision of new community facilities, or the re-organisation of services, may result in existing community facilities becoming surplus to requirements. In these circumstances, where the facilities are located within settlements, the general policies in this plan provide the appropriate framework for considering specific proposals for their redevelopment or change of use. Where the facilities are outwith settlements, the particular circumstances both of the site, and of the proposed development, will be considered when assessing whether an exception to the normal presumption against development would be justified.

Consultation should take place with Aberdeenshire Council's Education, Leisure and Learning department and the Planning and Environment department regarding any community facilities development.

SG LSD 8: Flooding and erosion

We will refuse any new development on land at risk from flooding, including on any functional flood plain, or on land that may be required for long term managed retreat or that is at risk from erosion, unless:

- 1) a hydrological, drainage impact and/or flood risk assessment or geomorphology assessment, which includes an allowance for freeboard and climate change where appropriate, is provided at the applicant's expense, and demonstrates that the risk is neither medium nor high risk as defined by Appendix 2; OR**
- 2) it is for flood or erosion prevention measures; OR**
- 3) it is development that is consistent with the flood storage function of flood plains or would otherwise be unaffected by flooding; OR**
- 4) it would be for essential infrastructure or otherwise inappropriate to locate it elsewhere; OR**
- 5) it is within a built-up area and flood prevention or erosion measures to the appropriate standard will exist at the time the development is occupied.**

In these cases and if development is to be permitted on land at risk from flooding, then, subject to other policies, it must be designed:

- a) to incorporate flood resilient design measures, water resistant materials and construction methods to assist in the evacuation of people and to minimise damage from flooding; AND**
- b) not to impede the ability of any flood plain to store water or flood naturally, nor to reduce the capacity of flood defences or of any other arrangement for flood management; AND**
- c) not to result in a significant increase in the risk or severity of flooding elsewhere through altering flood storage capacity or the pattern of flow of flood waters; AND**
- d) to avoid any water courses being culverted, unless there is no practicable alternative and it will not impede the passage of amphibians or fish species; AND**
- e) to provide for maintenance buffer strips for any water body; AND**
- f) to include land-raising and/or excavations with the proposal, only if:**
 - (i) it is for a flood alleviation measure; and**
 - (ii) it is linked to the provision and maintenance of direct or indirect compensatory flood water storage to replace the lost capacity of the functional flood plain; and**
 - (iii) it will not create a need for flood prevention measures elsewhere; and**

- (iv) it will not create any island or islands of development within the functional flood plain that could become inaccessible during a flood.

Due to the continuing changes in climatic patterns, the precautionary principle will apply when reviewing any application for development in an area at risk from inundation by flood water or erosion.

Reasoned Justification

The aims of this supplementary guidance are to avoid developments likely to increase the risk of flooding or that would be at risk from inundation themselves from fluvial, pluvial or coastal flooding, and to maintain the Council's duty to promote sustainable flood management. It further aims to ensure development is not located on land at risk from landslips or erosion. The Council has responsibilities in relation to the likelihood of flooding, under the *Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009* and as a responsible authority under the *Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) 2003 Act*. A definition of the different types of flooding and glossary are provided in Appendix 1.

Coastal areas are at risk from rising sea level and storm surges. New development below the 5m contour above Ordnance Datum mark is considered at high risk from flooding. A flood risk assessment must also be provided for new development proposed on land between the 5m and 10m contours above Ordnance Datum mark. Extensions or alterations fall clearly in the category "inappropriately located elsewhere", but must incorporate flood resilience.

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Erosion risk includes both physical erosion and processes, such as landslip, that are a result of erosion processes. If an area of potential erosion is made safe, development is not prohibited.

Appendix 2 provides a basis for making planning decisions relating to flood risk. It sets out a risk framework, which divides flood risk into three categories – high, medium and low. Areas with an annual probability of fluvial, pluvial or coastal flooding greater than 0.5% (1:200 years) are considered to be at medium to high flood risk of flooding. These areas are generally not suitable for residential, institutional, commercial or industrial development, or essential civil infrastructure such as hospitals, fire stations, emergency depots etc. Where such infrastructure must be located in these areas or is being substantially extended, it must be capable of remaining operational and accessible during extreme flooding events. New caravanning and camping sites should not be located in high flood risk areas.

The uncertainty of flood prediction makes it essential that developers and planning authorities err on the side of caution in decision-making whenever flooding is an issue. When undertaking a flood risk assessment, freeboard allowance should be added to the design flood level to account for any uncertainty in estimating the probability of flooding. Freeboard allowance gives a margin for safety, which takes account of possible waves or turbulence and climate change.

To help assess development proposals the views of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), the Transport and Infrastructure Flood Prevention Unit and other relevant key agencies will be sought. Where it is believed there

is a significant risk of flooding, additional information such as a flood risk assessment will be sought from the developer. Flooding information provided by a developer (or a consultant employed by a developer) needs to meet standard requirements demonstrating the level of risk posed to life and property. SEPA provide technical guidance on their website to assist with the preparation and reporting of flood risk assessments, and this should be referred to by developers. Due to the potential damage to human life and property, developers must provide additional information as required in relation to flood risk calculations and models. The Council reserves the right to have flood risk information from developers independently assessed, to verify their flood risk conclusions and to seek additional information where clarification is needed.

Development should not take place on land that could otherwise contribute to managing flood risk, for instance through managed coastal realignment, washland creation or as part of a scheme to manage flood risk. Where a sustainable drainage system is proposed, it must be located outwith a functional flood plain.

Adequate provision must be provided for access to water bodies for inspection and maintenance wherever new development is proposed. Watercourses should be allowed to move and realign themselves and have minimal bank protection. Therefore, all new development must provide a buffer strip between a water body and the proposed development. New development should also not encroach onto a buffer strip. Buffer strips can help to reduce flooding, assist with fluvial processes, and become part of a habitat network. All buffer strips must be accessible to enable the inspection and maintenance of water bodies and their banks for pollution control and flood prevention purposes. Best practice advice is provided in *Buffer Strips adjacent to Water Courses and Water Bodies*.

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Watercourses should not be culverted, as they are frequently the cause of local flooding. Existing culverts should be opened where possible. A culvert may be acceptable as part of a scheme to manage flood risk or where it is used to carry water under a road, path or railway, providing it is designed correctly and is demonstrated to adequately carry the design flow at both its maximum and minimum predicted flow-levels.

Any necessary engineering, building or other works in, or in the vicinity of inland surface waters and wetlands including landraising, embankment works and culverting will require authorisation by SEPA under The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005.

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Appendix 1 – Types of Flooding and Glossary

Types of Flooding

The following provides a description of flooding types. Further information on flood risk assessments is provided in SEPA's *Technical Flood Risk Guidance for Stakeholders*.

Fluvial – flooding originating from a watercourse either natural or culverted. Normally caused when the river channel capacity (or culvert capacity) is

exceeded and water overtops its bank onto the floodplain, which could either be natural floodplain or developed land.

Coastal – flooding originating from the sea (open coast or estuary), where water levels exceed the normal tidal range and flood onto the low-lying areas that define the coast line. This coastal plain could be either natural or developed. Apart from as a result of general rise in sea level, coastal flooding can occur due to four physical elements (as below) either acting on their own or in combination with each other.

- **Predicted astronomical tide:** expected rise and fall of sea water level due to the gravitational effects of the sun and the moon.
- **Storm surge residual:** elevated sea level caused by the combined effect of low pressure and persistent, strong wind (for every millibar drop in pressure, a 10mm rise in the sea surface elevation occurs).
- **Wave effects:** a function of both wind strength and open water 'fetch' length. As a result of high winds, waves can also be associated with low pressure systems, which cause storm surge effects as described above.
- **Local bathymetric effects:** topographic funnelling due to the forcing of a large volume of open sea water into a restricted coastal embayment, e.g. estuary (Firth of Forth), tidal basin (Montrose Basin) or sea loch (Loch Fyne), which will elevate water levels locally. On a wider scale this effect is also seen in the North Sea as a result of channelling through the English Channel.

Pluvial – urban or rural flooding which results from rainfall-generated overland flow, before the run-off enters any watercourse, drainage system or sewer.

Groundwater – flooding due to a significant rise in the water table, normally as a result of prolonged and heavy rainfall over a sustained period of time (can affect cellars and drainage systems). Normally associated with catchments where porous substrate and/or aquifers exist. This type of flooding can last for a considerable period of time, i.e. weeks or months.

Drainage – flooding as a result of surcharging of man-made drainage systems, including combined sewers, where the capacity of the system to discharge run-off has been exceeded.

Infrastructure failure – flooding due to collapse/failure of man-made infrastructure, including hydro-dams, water supply reservoirs (private or public), canals, flood defence structures, underground conduits (e.g. sewers), and water treatment tanks.

Glossary

Drainage assessment – a statement of the drainage issues relevant to a proposal and the suitable means of providing drainage. The length and detail should be proportionate to the issues. As appropriate it may include existing drainage systems and problems, infiltration, groundwater, surface water flow, foul and storm water disposal, SuDS and drainage related flooding issues. It may also be called a Drainage Impact Assessment. See also PAN 61 paragraphs 23 – 24.

Flood plain – generally flat areas adjacent to a watercourse or the sea, where floodwaters naturally flow and/or are stored during times of flood. The limits of a flood plain are defined by the peak water level of an appropriate return period event.

Flood prevention measures – works including walls, new channels, embankments and flood water storage areas: usually components of a flood prevention scheme.

Flood risk assessment – an assessment carried out to predict and assess the probability of flooding for a particular site or area, and to recommend mitigation measures, including maintenance.

Freeboard allowance – a height added to the predicted level of a flood, to take account of the height of any waves or turbulence and the uncertainty in estimating the probability of flooding.

Functional flood plain – the areas of land where water flows in times of flood, which should be safeguarded from further development because of their function as flood water storage areas.

Sustainable Drainage Systems – also called Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems or SuDS, describes a range of techniques for managing the flow of water run-off from a site, by treating it on site and so reducing the loading on conventional piped drainage systems.

Washland – an alternative term for the functional flood plain, which carries the connotation that it floods very frequently.

Watercourse – all means of conveying water except a water main.

Water table – the level of ground-water, below which the ground is saturated.

Appendix 2: Flood Risk Framework

The prime consideration in any proposed development must be risk to the health and safety of the residents and the public. Where rivers are “flashy”, floodwaters can rise very quickly, without warning, leaving little time for evacuation. The velocity of the floodwater can wash away vehicles and buildings, and cause fatalities. Sometimes, however, there may be compelling commercial or practical reasons for siting certain types of development in a relatively hazardous area.

The following risk framework, which is taken from Part 3 of the *Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)*, is intended to provide guidance in proportion with the flood risk at each proposed site, and the nature of each proposed development. It should be read in conjunction with the whole policy and within the context of SPP Part 3. The annual probabilities of flooding referred to below relate to the land at the time a planning application is made.

Category One – Little or no risk areas

Annual probability of watercourse, tidal or coastal flooding is less than 0.1% (1:1000).

- No constraints due to watercourse, tidal or coastal flooding.

Category Two – Low to medium risk areas

Annual probability of watercourse, tidal or coastal flooding is in the range of 0.1% - 0.5% (1:1000 – 1:200).

- It will not usually be necessary to consider flood risk unless local conditions indicate otherwise. These areas will be suitable for most development. A flood risk assessment may be required at the upper end of the probability range (i.e. close to 0.5%) or where the nature of the development or local circumstances indicate heightened seriousness of the risk (as opposed to the probability of the risk).
- Water resistant materials and construction may be required depending on the flood risk assessment.
- Subject to operational requirements, including response times, these areas are generally not suitable for essential civil infrastructure such as hospitals, fire stations, emergency depots etc. Where such infrastructure must be located in these areas or is being substantially extended, it must be capable of remaining operational and accessible during extreme flooding events.

Category Three – Medium to high risk areas

Annual probability of watercourse, tidal or coastal flooding is greater than 0.5% (1:200).

- Generally not suitable for essential civil infrastructure such as hospitals, fire stations, emergency control centres, schools, electricity supplies, telephone exchanges, mobile telephone or broadcasting transmitters, where facilities must continue to function in times of flooding.
- The policy for development on functional flood plains applies.
- Land raising is only acceptable in exceptional circumstances.
- Within settlements:
 - i) Medium to high risk areas may be suitable for residential, institutional, commercial or industrial development, provided flood prevention measures to the appropriate standard already exist, are under construction or are planned as part of a long term development strategy.
 - ii) Water resistant materials and construction should be used where appropriate.
- Outwith settlements:
 - i) Medium to high risk areas are generally not suitable for additional development, including residential, institutional, commercial and industrial development.

- ii) Development may be allowed in exceptional circumstances, if a location is essential for operational reasons, e.g. for navigation and water based recreation uses, agriculture, transport or some utilities infrastructure, and an alternative lower risk location is not achievable. Such infrastructure should be designed and constructed to remain operational during floods.
- iii) It may be suitable for some recreation, sport, amenity and nature conservation uses, provided adequate evacuation procedures are in place.
- iv) In exceptional circumstances, job-related accommodation (e.g. for caretakers and operational staff) may be acceptable, if it is associated with development listed in ii) or iii) above.
- v) New caravan and camping sites should not be located in these areas.
- vi) If built development is permitted, measures to manage flood risk are likely to be required and the loss of flood storage capacity must be minimised. Water resistant materials and construction should be used where appropriate.

SG LSD9: Hazardous development

We will refuse development, if:

- 1) it would cause pollution, precipitate flooding, create a significant nuisance or present an unacceptable hazard to the public or the environment; OR**
- 2) the proposed site is in close proximity to existing hazardous development facilities or infrastructure that could cause significant pollution, precipitate flooding, create a nuisance or present a hazard to the public.**

In any circumstances where development of this kind is, on balance, considered acceptable by the appropriate authorities, satisfactory steps must be taken to mitigate any residual negative development impacts.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure the public and the environment are protected from both new and existing development which could cause pollution or is a nuisance or a hazard.

Pipelines, agricultural buildings, dams, waste water treatment plants, waste disposal/treatment facilities and heavy industrial uses are all examples of development which could cause a nuisance, hazard or pollution. It is vitally important that the quality of the environment and the health and safety of the public is not compromised by such development. Therefore, the Council will consult the *Health and Safety Executive*, facility owners and operators, and/or the *Scottish Environment Protection Agency*, as appropriate, on all development proposals which are within a consultation zone or could cause, or be affected by, a nuisance, hazard or pollution.

SG LSD10: Contaminated land

We will approve development on land that is contaminated, or suspected of contamination, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the necessary site investigations and assessments are undertaken to identify any actual or possible significant risk to public health or safety or to the environment, including possible pollution of the water environment, that arise from the proposals; AND
- 2) effective remedial action is taken to ensure the site is made suitable for the new use, in scale with the nature of the proposal.

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Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to bring contaminated land back into use, thereby effectively reducing the number of such sites within Aberdeenshire, whilst ensuring public health and safety is not compromised.

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Contamination of land is commonly caused by previous industrial or less frequently commercial use. Types of historic use associated with contamination include gasworks, landfills, engineering works, garages etc.

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Whatever the cause, these sites are effective barriers to new development as well as posing possible threats to health and safety, and the safe re-use and restoration of these sites is to be encouraged.

Local authorities are the lead authority under the contaminated land legislation and have a statutory duty to identify and inspect potentially contaminated sites within their area. In Aberdeenshire the responsibility for this work is delegated to the Environmental Health Service. The way in which this work is being undertaken is described in Aberdeenshire's Contaminated Land Strategy.

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The Council will liaise with the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and other relevant organisations, where appropriate.

SG LSD11: Carbon neutrality in new development

We will approve new development intended for human occupation, subject to other policies if it is demonstrated that it will achieve at least a Bronze Active rating under Section 7 of the building standards Technical Handbook.

The following exceptions are made to the need to meet this requirement:

- 1) the alteration or extension of an existing building; OR
- 2) the change of use or conversion of an existing building; OR
- 3) an ancillary building that is stand-alone having an area less than 50 square metres; OR
- 4) a building, which will not be heated or cooled, other than by heating provided solely for the purpose of frost protection; OR
- 5) a limited life building, which has an intended life of less than 2 years.

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Reasoned Justification

This guidance sets requirements for the minimum reduction of carbon dioxide emissions in new developments beyond the 2007 building regulations' carbon dioxide emissions standard. and requires new buildings to achieve a sustainability label (minimum Bronze Active) as set out in Section 7 of the building standards Technical Handbook.

Reducing emissions through the location, siting, design, orientation, materials and insulation to create an energy efficient building are important factors. However, new developments must also meet the requirements of Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, and install low and zero-carbon generating technologies from renewable resources (e.g. wind, solar or district heating scheme). To achieve a bronze active rating a new building must include some low or zero carbon generating technologies within the compliance calculation.

Following a report on climate change titled 'The Bigger Issue', produced by the Council's Scrutiny and Audit Committee, Aberdeenshire Council has committed itself to working towards being a carbon neutral organisation in the short to medium term.

As part of this and the Council's wider commitment to sustainable development throughout the community, the Council is committed to assessing the environmental impacts of building and construction projects and to taking appropriate action to reduce or minimise impacts. Reducing the carbon dioxide emissions of development will have a positive environmental impact and will contribute to the Council's commitments on climate change. All new buildings must reduce the predicted carbon dioxide emissions by at least 60 per cent beyond the 2007 Building Regulations carbon dioxide emissions standard. After 2014 the reduction must be at least 90 per cent, and after 2016 the reduction must be 100 per cent (no emissions), or otherwise meet current building regulation requirements.

The energy required for buildings and how it is provided play an important role in delivering a sustainable economy. Burning fossil fuels for either heat or electricity generation is an important consideration, because the products of combustion cause local and global air pollution and climate change. Renewable sources of energy such as sun, wind, waterpower and geothermal energy can offer diversity and

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security of supply and can reduce harmful emissions to the environment. Energy requirement is determined at the design stage and there is significant potential to minimise energy demand through adopting good practice in the design and construction phases.

Applicants should consider how to meet the requirements of this guidance at an early stage of planning. An *energy statement* should be submitted at the planning application stage to demonstrate how the proposed development will satisfy the requirements of this supplementary guidance. Appendix 1 provides details of what an energy statement should deliver.

Exceptionally, In order to avoid any unnecessary delays in processing planning applications a suspensive condition may be used to allow developers to submit a detailed energy saving or renewables scheme at the time of submission for Building Warrant. Such a condition may be specific to the individual development, but will generally comply with the following model condition.

No development shall take place, unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority:-

- details of the proposed energy efficiency measures and renewable technologies to be incorporated into the development;
- calculations using the SAP or SBEM methods, which demonstrate that the reduction in carbon dioxide emissions rates for the development enable it to comply with this guidance.

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The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Appendix 2 provides guidance on the information that must be submitted at the building warrant stage.

Appendix 1 Energy statements

An energy statement should:

- I. Demonstrate improved design through the promotion of environment-friendly layouts, energy-efficient design and thermally efficient buildings.
- II. Demonstrate how the use of non-renewable resources within the development has been minimised.
- III. Demonstrate how the developer intends to incorporate the use of renewable resources in the development.
- IV. Demonstrate how the development incorporates its requirement for renewable energy facilities, whether at a community or local scale, while providing protection for the built, natural and historic environment.

Table 1 – Measures which may be considered in energy statements

Passive energy efficiency measures	Operational energy efficiency measures	Renewable technologies	Emerging technological measures
Orientation Day lighting Natural ventilation Air tightness Avoidance of wind-chill	Heating system Insulation Lighting and appliances Glazing (Micro) Combined heat & power Heat recovery in mechanical ventilation systems	Photovoltaic Solar water heating Micro wind Biomass Micro-hydro Ground and air-source heat pumps	Hydrogen fuel cells Gas from anaerobic digestion Solar air collectors

Appendix 2 Demonstrating compliance with the supplementary guidance

In order to demonstrate that the requirements of the supplementary guidance are being met, and to discharge any suspensive planning conditions, the following information must be submitted at the building warrant stage.

For dwellings

The Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating (SAP 2009) should be undertaken. BRE approved SAP 2009 software is available to the public¹ and it incorporates a function which automatically generates the target carbon dioxide emissions level (TER), when the fuel type is selected and the 'notional dwelling' dimensions and living area fraction have been fed into the program. The information submitted should demonstrate that the Dwellings Emissions Rate (DER)

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¹ Information on software and guidance can be obtained from www.bre.co.uk/sap2005

is at least an extra 60%² reduction on the Target Emission Rating (TER), i.e. the developer has demonstrated that the dwelling has met the Building Standard and has improved on this by 60%.

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For all other developments

The Simplified Building Energy Model (SBEM) should be undertaken³. The Target Emissions Rate (TER) should be calculated by inputting a) the size and shape data into the calculation methodology; b) the Scottish standard package of construction and building services performance measures; and c) the formula that reflects the type of heating and cooling system for the building. The Building Emission Rate (BER) is calculated by inputting the data for the proposed building design. These calculations are required to be submitted and must show that the resulting BER indicates at least an extra 60%² reduction on the TER.

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Off-site contributions

It is understood that it may be difficult to achieve the required carbon dioxide reduction target when developing within natural and historic designations, for example within a Conservation Area. If there are technical constraints to achieving the emissions reduction imposed by any such constraint, the provision of carbon dioxide savings elsewhere in the area could be acceptable. However, all possible energy saving measures and low and zero carbon technologies must be considered on-site first and discounted before 'carbon dioxide savings elsewhere' are considered. These savings should be secured by a legal agreement and will involve the installation of equipment off-site. In such cases the amount of carbon dioxide emissions to be saved, combining both on-site and off-site contributions, will be 60%² reduction on the TER (the Target Emissions Rate) for the application site. The percentage of carbon dioxide savings should increase in line with the current building regulations

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References and further reading

Planning: Policy

- Scottish Planning Policy:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/300760/0093908.pdf>
- Planning Advice – 2/2010 Microgeneration:
http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/supplementary/MicrogenerationPlanningAdviceNo2_2010November2010.pdf

Deleted: <#>SPP6, Renewable Energy: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/22084213/0> PAN84, Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/214728/0057273.pdf>

Planning: Designing for reduced energy demand

- Designing Places: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/planning/dpps-00.asp>
- Web based renewables advice is available from the Scottish Government:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/pans>

Deleted: Supplementary Planning Guidance

Deleted: Use of Micro-renewable Energy in Aberdeenshire

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Deleted: PAN45, Renewable Energy Technologies:

Deleted: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/02/pa45/pan-45>

² Or x% depending on the year in which the application was submitted, according to the figures in Table2.

³ A version of SBEM is freely available at www.ncm.bre.co.uk/index.jsp

- PAN45 Annexe, Planning for Micro-Renewables: Guidance on the Siting and Design of Micro-Renewables:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/150324/0040009.pdf>

Deleted: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/10/03/093936/0>

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Building standards system

- SBSA: www.sbsa.gov.uk
- Domestic & Non-Domestic Technical Handbooks
<http://www.sbsa.gov.uk/sullivanreport.html>
- Technical Handbooks Guide for Practitioners 6: Conversion of Traditional Buildings: http://www.sbsa.gov.uk/tech_handbooks/traditional_Buildings.htm

SG Developer Contributions 1: Developer contributions

We will approve development, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the developer makes a fair and reasonable contribution, in cash or in kind, towards the cost of public services, facilities and infrastructure and the mitigation of adverse environmental impacts, which would not have been necessary but for the development (this will include cumulative impacts that can reasonably be predicted and are identified in the settlement statements); AND**
- 2) the developer agrees to retrospectively make a fair and reasonable contribution to the cost of infrastructure or of facilities that have already been delivered by Aberdeenshire Council, but which are directly related to the cumulative impact of their development; AND**
- 3) such contributions are consistent with the scale and nature of the development and are based on the requirements set out in the action programme.**

In all cases the need for and scale of any contribution will be reviewed in the light of circumstances at the time the planning application is made.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the cost of new or additional infrastructure required for new development will be met by the developer/s and not by the general public.

Schedule 3 identifies key facilities and infrastructure likely to be required, and the developments which will be expected to make a contribution to their provision. In addition, development occurring in each settlement will have to contribute to the associated infrastructure 'need' that has been identified within the settlement statement for that specific place. However, it is unrealistic to expect the Council to anticipate every situation where the need for a contribution will arise. Agreement on the timing of any contributions will be required prior to development commencing.

The settlement statements also state where a development framework and/or masterplan will need to be developed and subsequently adopted through supplementary guidance, requiring all developers within this area to work together to deliver the best outcome. In many cases the developers will be expected to fund the infrastructure as it is required. However, there may also be opportunities for up-front funding from Aberdeenshire Council, to deliver major infrastructure requirements and for it then to be recouped from developers as the development itself follows.

Section 75 agreements and other agreements will still need to be in place to address issues that are site specific, for example, relating to specific education or affordable housing requirements. It is important to note that each agreement will be negotiated on its own merits and the final level of contribution sought will be based on an assessment of the impacts on the recipient community.

SG Developer Contributions 2: Access to new development

A. We will approve development, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it is well related to existing settlements, and does not create an impermeable barrier to further development; AND
- 2) it is close to existing public transport services, where available, or delivers major improvements to public transport services in scale with the development; AND
- 3) where required, a Transport Assessment shows that the development and any mitigation measures proposed will not have significant transport impacts on existing transport infrastructure or services; AND
- 4) it can be safely and conveniently accessed by service, delivery and other goods vehicles, as appropriate to the development; AND
- 5) where it requires the formation of new accesses, these are designed to an **agreed** standard, and to be resource-efficient, safe, convenient for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, and to cause minimal impact on the character of the site and the surrounding area; AND
- 6) provision is included for access by wheelchair users, people with sensory disabilities, the elderly, those accompanied by small children and other less mobile groups; AND
- 7) satisfactory arrangements are made for subsequent maintenance of the access facilities constructed.

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B. We will approve development involving vehicle hill tracks, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the hill track can be integrated satisfactorily into the landscape; AND
- 2) engineering and road-related earthworks are minimised; AND
- 3) it minimises any detrimental impact, such as soil erosion, on the environment including habitats and water bodies; AND
- 4) it does not obliterate any part of an existing path or historic trackway; AND
- 5) a satisfactory maintenance programme has been agreed with the Planning Authority.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all new development can be satisfactorily accessed by a variety of modes of transport, in a safe, convenient, and resource efficient manner. Any new roads **and paths** have the potential to form part of a well connected network serving both existing and future developments within each settlement.

Access requirements should be determined through the hierarchy of travel options, walking, cycling, public transport and private car use. There is also a requirement for access by service, delivery and other goods vehicles, as appropriate to the development.

New accesses are an essential part of any new development. They must, however, respect the environment and be as safe as possible. Special attention must therefore be given to the design of the accesses in terms of how they fit into the environment, use as few resources as possible in their construction, meet an agreed standard and not have a negative impact on existing traffic patterns. Developers should be aware of the need for Roads Construction Consent in most instances, and the requirements of the Scottish Government's *Designing Streets: a Policy Statement for Scotland*.

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Additionally, the supplementary guidance aims to ensure that the construction of vehicle hill tracks minimises any effect on the environment. The creation of vehicle tracks for recreation, agriculture, forestry, telecommunication masts, wind farms and sporting purposes can lead to scars across the landscape, which are often visible across a wide area and can be prone to erosion.

Preferably, new vehicle tracks should follow the "tram track" form, two wheel tracks with central vegetated ridge, and not be a mechanically excavated track tray. Where a track tray has had to be mechanically excavated it should be reinstated in "tram track" form. Material from local borrow pits should be used where possible, but these must not adversely impact on the landscape character of the location. New vehicle tracks should be consistent with SNH's good practice guide entitled *Constructed tracks in the Scottish Uplands*.

To help with achieving the optimum access solutions, the road or access should be designed to the satisfaction of the Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service (and Scottish Government where applicable). Developers should also be aware of the need for Roads Construction Consent in most instances.

SG Developer Contributions 3: Water and waste water drainage infrastructure

We will approve development, subject to other policies, if it complies with the following criteria.

- 1. All new development must be serviced satisfactorily either by mains water supply or, if the developer is able to demonstrate an alternative private supply is adequate (including where necessary, potable water), then by that private water supply.**
- 2. For waste water disposal:**
 - (i) it is in an area served by existing or committed future public waste water drainage infrastructure and there is sufficient capacity to allow development to happen; OR**
 - (ii) where a connection to the public drainage infrastructure is demonstrated to be unfeasible, taking into account cost and/or practicability, it has been demonstrated that satisfactory disposal of sewage can be achieved through connection to private drainage infrastructure without negative impacts on amenity, public health or the environment.**
- 3. Surface water drainage must be dealt with in a sustainable manner and in ways that avoid flooding and pollution, through the application of an integrated Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS).**

For all non-domestic developments and residential developments over 10 houses, or if further investigation / modelling work is required to identify the impacts on the current infrastructure, a Development Impact Assessment, which will involve Scottish Water, will be required. This will be the responsibility of the developer.

Reasoned Justification

This policy puts responsibility on the developer to satisfy Aberdeenshire Council that they have met the required standards in terms of satisfactorily servicing the new development. Scottish Water and SEPA are key consultees and should be approached at an early stage, to establish what capacity may be available or if provision for new capacity can be made available.

Water Supply

Part of the aim of this policy is to ensure that all new developments are provided with an adequate and where necessary potable water supply. Where possible this should make use of existing mains water supply. Confirmation of the availability of this should be sought from Scottish Water, whose consent will also be required for any new connection. A Water Impact Assessment may be required should the impact of any new development need further investigation/modelling work.

Where mains water supply is not available, a new private supply may be sourced to service development. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate ~~that any new supply is adequate to serve the development~~

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proposed, and that in the instance of domestic use, it is of potable quality. Groundwater abstractions greater than 10m³/d are regulated under CAR in accordance with SEPA policies and guidelines.

Foul Drainage

Part of the aim of this policy is to achieve satisfactory disposal of sewage and thereby to maintain and improve standards of public health, amenity and the quality of the environment.

Indirect discharge to groundwater is regulated under The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 (CAR) in accordance with SEPA policies and guidelines.

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It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that a proposed development is effectively served by a satisfactory foul sewerage system. The first consideration must be to provide a system of foul drainage discharging into the public sewer. Only if it is demonstrated that this is not feasible should a private treatment system be considered and proposed, if appropriate.

An application for a private treatment system must be supported by a full assessment of the proposed system, including an assessment of the impact of disposal of final effluent, whether it is disposed of to ground or discharged to surface water.

For development in areas served by public drainage infrastructure which cannot connect to the public drainage infrastructure directly, planning permission may be granted on the condition that the development is served by a private treatment plant on a temporary basis, with a requirement to connect to public drainage infrastructure when this becomes available.

Surface Water

Part of the aim of this policy is to address pollution and flooding problems, which may result from directly discharging surface water into sewers and water courses. *Sustainable drainage systems* (SuDS) not only reduce the amount of flooding and diffuse pollution, but also improve the environmental quality of development to the benefit of the local community. All SuDS should conform to the standards set out in Sewers for Scotland 2nd Edition and the SuDS Manual (2007).

The SuDS Manual (2007) requires SuDS to be considered for development at an early stage in project design. This will allow considerations relating to land take and layout to be considered at a stage when proposals are most flexible and change is least costly to the development. SuDS are now a statutory requirement for most new development under CAR.

Developers should take into consideration the land requirement needed for SuDS when considering housing density, and the opportunity that certain SuDS may contribute to satisfying a development's open space requirement. Opportunities should be sought to enhance the biodiversity of a site through the design and planting of SuDS. A SuDS scheme should also be in place for the treatment of surface water during construction, to reduce the impact of contamination on the water environment.

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SG Developer Contributions 4: Waste management requirements for new development

We will approve new development, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the applicant has agreed a Site Waste Management Plan for the site with Aberdeenshire Council, which details how the waste that is generated by the development will be dealt with, including what steps will be taken to reduce, re-use and recycle wastes and how any remaining wastes will be disposed of; AND**
- 2) adequate space has been provided within the development to allow for the efficient and effective handling of waste arisings (information on what this should include is provided in Appendix 1).**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this supplementary guidance is to promote sustainable waste management and encourage responsibility for waste at producer level (householder, business or developer).

Source segregation is likely to feature in waste collection systems for the foreseeable future, and therefore details of storage facilities and means of collection must be included as part of any planning application for development that would generate waste. Applicants must also give consideration of LGV vehicle access for collection of waste. Information on what consideration has been given to reducing, re-using and recycling any waste arisings during the developmental phase should also be provided.

New developments may also be required, where adequate space is not already available, to provide space for communal waste recycling and collection facilities to be provided. This is particularly relevant for larger residential developments (e.g. developments of 50 units and above or flatted developments of 30 units and above).

For the avoidance of doubt, in cases where a subsequent application is made for development on or change of use of part of a site, it will not be acceptable for the external space provided for the storage and separation of wastes for the original use to be lost as a result.

Appendix 1 sets out in summary the relevant waste management requirements. Early discussion with the Local Authority waste management department is recommended on how this can be achieved.

Appendix 1: Waste management requirements for new developments

Table 1: Residential

Type of dwelling	No. of bedrooms	Minimum internal storage space required	Minimum external storage and space required	Access for refuse collection	Central recycling facility
Flatted	1	0.25m ³	2 x 240 litre wheeled bin for general waste and one x 55 litre recycling box and recycling bag.	External bin storage should be no more than 10 metres from the nearest public road from where the collection will take place. Turning diameter for refuse vehicles 18m. If this cannot be achieved throughout the development, a centralised, vehicle-accessible, external storage point must be provided.	Mini-recycling point required for developments of 30 units or more. Required for developments of 50 units or more, if there is no existing facility that can already accommodate this.
	2	0.3m ³			
	3	0.35m ³			
House	2	0.3m ³			
	3 or more	0.35m ³			

(Dimensions used for illustrative purposes only)

In commercial developments, adequate space must be provided for storage and separation of wastes from the commercial activity. This should include internal storage areas as well as external storage areas.

In licensed premises, consideration should be given to the separation of 3 colours of glass and cans within the bar area. The design should demonstrate that space for this has been allowed for.

In all cases, external storage areas should be secure to prevent waste escaping or causing nuisance to others. Suitable access should also be provided for LGV collection vehicles, including adequate turning space (if necessary) and road surfaces.

SG Enabling Development1: Enabling development

We will approve enabling development proposals which have not already been identified in the Local Development Plan, subject to other policies, in the following circumstances.

- A. Where it is the only means of securing the long term retention and re-use of a listed building, as long as:
- 1) the building is listed and on the Buildings at Risk Register; or, in exceptional circumstances, the building is non-listed but is agreed to be worthy of conservation and reuse and has been proved to be seriously at risk of imminent collapse or further decay to the satisfaction of the Council; AND
 - 2) In all cases, all other possibilities of development funding to secure the conservation and reuse of the building have been exhausted. This includes determining if any other group, such as the North East Building Preservation Trust, is willing to undertake the project; and includes putting the building on the open market for a period of time which the Council agree has been reasonable to achieve a sale in the context of prevailing market conditions); AND
 - 3) in all cases, it is demonstrated that the amount of enabling development is the minimum required to achieve conservation and reuse and, if required, this has been confirmed through an independent professional survey by an agency chosen from the Council's list of approved consultants; AND
 - 4) in all cases, the wider public benefits of securing the conservation and reuse of the building through enabling development significantly outweigh any disadvantages of the development.
- B. Where it is a means to enable the start up of an employment, leisure or tourism use within a Regeneration Priority Area or, in exceptional cases, within the Rural Housing Market Area (as defined on the proposals maps), as long as:
- 1) it is essential to enable a regeneration or rural economic diversification opportunity which could not otherwise be achieved; AND
 - 2) it is the minimum necessary to achieve the use (enabling development of no more than 5 houses in all but exceptional cases); and, if required, this has been demonstrated through an independent professional survey by an agency chosen from the Council's list of approved consultants; AND
 - 3) it is not a substitute for normal development funding, or intended to subsidise the profitability of the venture beyond start-up costs; AND
 - 4) the wider public benefits of securing enabling development significantly outweigh the disadvantages of the development.

If it is agreed that a proposal for enabling development meets all these criteria, under A. or B. above, the applicant must also demonstrate that:

- a) the funds raised by the enabling development will be channelled at the earliest possible opportunity into the historic building, or the regeneration or diversification opportunity; AND**
- b) the associated housing development:-**
- (i) will be developed at a suitable location which, although not allocated in the plan, satisfies all other relevant policies of the plan; AND**
 - (ii) preferably, will be developed in full by the developer, not in plots for resale.**

Reasoned justification

The aim of the policy is to allow appropriate enabling development for both restoration and rural and regeneration development purposes in limited circumstances. The policy provides measures for the planning authority to assess the merits, plausibility and detail of applications.

It is preferable for all development applications to come through land allocated in the development plan. However, it is accepted that due to the nature of this type of proposal such a scenario will not always be the case. Accordingly, the development plan should provide an opportunity to assess the merits of applications which arise over the course of the plan.

The policy will only be used where the public benefit of securing the future of a significant listed building or economic development opportunity through enabling development decisively outweighs the disadvantages of breaching normal policy presumptions. It allows for assessment of these proposals as a preliminary requirement, and is not to be implemented, if the planning authority is not convinced that the public benefit will be gained.

Associated housing development will, wherever possible, be built off-site at a suitable location which, although not allocated in the plan, satisfies all other relevant policies of the plan and respects the natural and cultural heritage of the site and its surroundings. Where off-site housing is not possible, the housing development must retain and enhance the special interest, character and setting of the listed building and any other adjacent historical environment asset. For proposals associated with listed building restoration and reuse, the physical separation of the restored or reused listed building from the enabling development is normally preferred.

All enabling development proposals should, if at all possible, take place on land identified in the Local Development Plan for the relevant purpose.

Affordable housing can be justified as another public benefit, even if this will increase the overall requirement for housing in terms of units. All applications will be subject to affordable housing requirements. Whether the affordable housing takes place on or off-site will be decided on a case by case basis.

The extent of the regeneration priority area is shown on the proposals map.

Measures such as a change of use, compatible with the character and appearance of an historic building, but otherwise contrary to policy could also be considered. Such cases would be examples of the "all other possibilities of development funding to secure the conservation and reuse of the building" (referred to in Part A 2) which must be exhausted prior to using the policy for the purposes of housing led enabling development which this policy deals with.

SG Natural Environment 1: Protection of nature conservation sites

We will not approve new development where it may have an adverse effect on a nature conservation site designated for its biodiversity or geodiversity importance, except in the following circumstances.

- A. In the case of an internationally important site, where a Habitat Regulations Assessment has concluded that:
- 1) the development will not adversely affect the integrity of the site;
OR
 - 2) it has been demonstrated that:-
 - (i) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for permitting the development, including reasons of a social, environmental or economic nature; AND
 - (ii) there is no satisfactory alternative site or solution; AND
 - (iii) suitable compensation measures will be implemented.
- B. In the case of a site of national importance, where a thorough assessment of the site has demonstrated that:-
- 1) any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance; AND
 - 2) the objectives of the designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; AND
 - 3) any impact will be suitably mitigated.
- C. In the case of any other recognised nature conservation site, wetlands or Ancient, Long Established or Semi-Natural Woodlands, where a thorough assessment of the site has demonstrated that:
- 1) the proposal's public benefits at a local level clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site; AND
 - 2) any impact will be suitably mitigated.

Where the impacts of a development on an international or national natural heritage resource are uncertain, but there are good scientific grounds that significant irreversible damage could occur, the precautionary principle will apply. The applicant should modify the development to eliminate the risk of irreversible damage.

Reasoned Justification

This supplementary guidance promotes the protection of nature conservation sites from new development that may affect the qualifying interests of these protected areas, as shown in Planning Advice Natural Heritage.

Biodiversity is short for 'biological diversity' and includes all habitats and species. It is not restricted to specially designated sites, threatened species or habitats, but involves the entire natural environment. Locally biodiversity is

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important, as it gives a distinctive character to an area, whether it is a river valley, woodland or an area of coastline. Within settlements, areas of wildlife habitat can make an important contribution to people's quality of life. However, the loss of semi-natural habitats also devalues the environment in general and increases pressure on designated sites.

Geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, landforms, sediments and soils, together with the natural processes which form and alter them. The diversity of rocks, landforms and soils, and the processes which shape our mountains, rivers and coasts, form the basis for most of Scotland's landscapes and the foundation upon which plants, animals and human beings live and interact. Scotland's geodiversity is a resource of national and international importance for interpreting past geological processes of global significance, such as volcanism, continental drift and ice ages, and for understanding contemporary global change. Some of Scotland's rocks contain a rich variety of internationally important fossils and our organic soils contain some of the largest soil carbon stocks in Europe. Geodiversity is an asset for economic development (including geotourism-based activities), recreation and leisure activities. It is also a source of inspiration for art, sculpture, music and literature. The protection, active management and interpretation of geodiversity is increasingly referred to as 'geoconservation'.

As part of our commitment to sustainability, it is vital that biodiversity is conserved. Species, habitats, geology and soils provide a valuable indicator of sustainability and it is very important that every opportunity is taken to protect, enhance and retain the quality of the wider environment.

Aberdeenshire is well known for the richness of its biodiversity and geodiversity. A network of the very best sites of international importance are selected and designated by the Government. These are Natura sites (Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA)) and Ramsar sites. Sites of national nature conservation importance are selected by Scottish Natural Heritage, and are called Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves. Local nature conservation designations, including Sites of Interest to Natural Science and Local Nature Reserves are identified by the council. They play a valuable role in the environment, providing vital links between different sites of nature conservation value, and contributing to the development of habitat networks. A list of all the nature conservation sites within the Plan area is provided in Planning Advice titled *Natural Heritage* in chapters 1 to 3. [More detailed site boundaries/information on international and national sites can be found at http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-areas/.](http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-areas/)

A [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#) is a legal requirement and is carried out by the Local Authority for all developments which may have an impact on a Natura site. Sufficient information must be provided by the developer to allow the Local Authority to undertake the [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#). Scottish Natural Heritage and other relevant stakeholders must be consulted where a [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#) is required. An [Habitats Regulations Assessment](#) will not be necessary where the development proposal is directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of that site.

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Where a proposed development may have a significant impact on internationally important sites or species, it will only be permitted where there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature. Such developments may include roads or electricity grid lines that are important for either national or location reasons. However, it must be demonstrated that the proposal is necessary in that location and there is no other alternative solution (e.g. location, design, scale or other type of development).

If the planning authority proposes to approve an application that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of an SAC, SPA or Ramsar site, or of a priority habitat or species (as defined in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive), it may first wish to first seek the opinion of the European Commission on whether the case for imperative reasons of overriding public interest can be accepted. In order to do this a request to the Scottish Ministers would be submitted along with any relevant supporting information. The Scottish Ministers may then seek the opinion of the Commission.

Where there is evidence to suggest that a habitat, geological feature or species of importance exists on the site, the applicant must undertake an assessment and/or survey at their expense of the site's natural environment. Where a development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, an *Environmental Impact Assessment* (EIA) will be required. [Further information on screening and scoping provisions is available in the EIA Regulations and Circular 8/2007 \(as amended\)](#).

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All assessments and/or surveys should be undertaken by an independent and competent consultant.

The precautionary approach will apply where the impact of a proposed development on internationally or nationally designated sites is uncertain, but there are good scientific grounds for believing that significant irreversible damage could occur. Where the precautionary principle is justified, modifications to the proposal that would eliminate the risk of irreversible damage should be considered. New development will not be supported unless research is commissioned to identify its effect(s) and to remove the uncertainty.

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a full assessment of the impact of the development on the biodiversity and/or geodiversity interest of the site;¶
proposals for appropriate mitigation;¶
identification of opportunities for enhancement;¶
an assessment of cumulative impact, where appropriate; and¶
a survey of soil types and their roles in supporting biodiversity and environmental services, when requested.

It is important that individual developments and the cumulative impact of proposals (e.g. new roads and houses) do not lead to a significant loss to Aberdeenshire's designated nature conservation sites. These sites play a valuable role in the environment including providing vital links between different sites of nature conservation value, thus contributing to the development of habitat networks. They should therefore be protected against damaging development.

SG Natural Environment 2: Protection of the wider biodiversity and geodiversity

- A. We will only approve development, subject to other policies, if the applicant has also:**
- a) identified measures that will be taken to enhance biodiversity and geodiversity in proportion to the potential opportunities available and the scale of the development in line with good practice (this should include habitat creation and management, and the restoration of habitats and wildlife networks, where possible, incorporating existing habitats);
 - b) included an ecological management plan, where required; AND
 - c) demonstrated that due regard has been given to the extent of organic and organic-rich soils on sites, to limit loss of soil carbon and the potential contribution of soil disturbance to greenhouse gas emissions.
- B. We will not approve development that would be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of a European Protected Species at a favourable conservation status in its natural range. In the case of development that is likely to have an adverse effect on a European Protected Species, we will only approve it, where a thorough assessment of the site has demonstrated that:**
- 1) the development is required for preserving public health or public safety or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature; AND
 - 2) there is no satisfactory alternative site or solution; AND
 - 3) any impact will be suitably mitigated.
- C. We will not approve development that would be likely to have an adverse effect on a species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 unless the development is required for preserving public health or public safety. For development affecting a species of bird protected under the 1981 Act there must also be no other satisfactory solution. In the case of development that is likely to have a significant adverse impact on habitats listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive, on semi-natural habitats or species of importance to biodiversity, or on areas of importance to geodiversity, we will only approve it, where a thorough assessment of the site has demonstrated that:**
- 1) its public benefits at a local level clearly outweigh the value of the habitat for biodiversity conservation or of the site for geodiversity; AND
 - 2) the development will be sited and designed to minimise adverse impacts on its environmental quality, ecological status or viability; AND

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Deleted: In the case of development that would have a significant adverse impact on the population or conservation status of any European Protected Species, we will not approve it, unless a thorough assessment of the site has demonstrated that:¶

- 1) no adverse impact will be made on the species; OR¶
- 2) i

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- 3) there will be no fragmentation of habitats as a result of the development; AND
 4) any impact will be suitably mitigated.

Where the impacts of a development on an international or national natural heritage resource are uncertain, but there are good scientific grounds that significant irreversible damage could occur, the precautionary principle will apply. The applicant should modify the development to eliminate the risk of irreversible damage.

Reasoned Justification

This supplementary guidance gives strong protection to habitats, species, and geological features even when they are not associated with specifically designated nature conservation sites, in order to fulfil the Council's biodiversity duty as required under the *Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004*. In addition, species, habitats, geology and soils provide a valuable indicator of sustainability, and it is very important that every opportunity is taken to protect, enhance and retain the quality of the wider environment.

A list of the protected species within the UK is provided in chapter 4 of the Planning Advice titled *Natural Heritage*. Although not formally designated, a number of semi-natural habitats and species of importance to biodiversity are identified as priority habitats and species in the North East Local and UK Biodiversity Action Plans (NE LBAP and UKBAP). The list of NE LBAP priority habitats and species is provided in the Planning Advice in chapter 5. Other habitats and species of importance are provided in the Scottish Biodiversity List. [The North East River Basin Management Plan also provides additional information on the overall ecological condition of water habitats and protected areas. Proposals affecting a water body are also required to conform to Supplementary Guidance, Safeguarding 1: Protection and conservation of water assets.](#)

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Biodiversity is short for 'biological diversity' and includes all habitats and species. It is not restricted to specially designated sites, threatened species or habitats, but involves the entire natural environment. Locally biodiversity is important as it gives a distinctive character to an area, whether it is a river valley, woodland or an area of coastline. Within settlements, areas of wildlife habitat can make an important contribution to people's quality of life. However, the loss of semi-natural habitats also devalues the environment in general and increases pressure on designated sites.

Geodiversity is the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, landforms, sediments and soils, together with the natural processes which form and alter them. The diversity of rocks, landforms and soils, and the processes which shape our mountains, rivers and coasts, form the basis for most of Scotland's landscapes and the foundation upon which plants, animals and human beings live and interact. Scotland's geodiversity is a resource of national and international importance for interpreting past geological processes of global significance, such as volcanism, continental drift and ice ages, and for understanding contemporary global change. Some of Scotland's rocks contain a rich variety of internationally important fossils and our organic soils contain some of the largest soil carbon stocks (e.g. peat) in Europe. Geodiversity is

an asset for economic development (including geotourism-based activities), recreation and leisure activities. It is also a source of inspiration for art, sculpture, music and literature. The protection, active management and interpretation of geodiversity is increasingly referred to as 'geoconservation'.

Geological sites of importance are identified in the Geological Conservation Review (GCR) and are listed in the Planning Advice in chapter 6. The majority of these sites are also designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Supplementary Guidance 11.1: *Protection of nature conservation sites* would also apply.

The relationships between soil functions and biodiversity, water and atmospheric quality are fundamental to making a thorough assessment of the potential impacts of the development. Soils provide the basis for food and biomass, controlling and regulating environment function (regulating water flow and quality), carbon storage, providing valued habitats and sustaining biodiversity, preserving cultural and archaeological heritage, providing raw materials and as a platform for building and roads. Soils with high organic content (peat and organo-mineral soils) act as carbon sinks and are potential contributors to greenhouse gas emissions when disturbed. As a result, development should not unnecessarily disturb carbon-rich soils.

The fragmentation or isolation of habitats should be avoided. There are opportunities to enhance biodiversity in every development. This should be proportionate to the scale and type of development and designed into the proposal at an early stage.

For all major developments an ecological management plan should be prepared setting out how these habitats/networks will be maintained. Where possible, opportunities to restore habitat networks should be sought.

The protection and enhancement of biodiversity should be considered for all types of development, from a housing scheme to altering or extending an existing building. Retaining trees, watercourses and 'wild' areas for mammals, birds and insects should be considered, along with contributing to LBAP habitat and species targets, or erecting bat, bird and/or bee boxes for smaller proposals. Further advice is available from SNH, Aberdeenshire Council and the NE LBAP Officer.

Where a development is likely to have an adverse effect on species protected under European or national legislation, the supplementary guidance requires applicants to submit supporting evidence to justify the proposal. This supporting evidence must demonstrate both the need for the development and that a full range of possible alternative courses of action has properly been examined and none found to be acceptable to meet the need identified. Where there is evidence to suggest that a habitat, geological feature or species of importance exists on the site, the applicant must undertake an assessment and/or survey at their expense of the site's natural environment. Where a development is likely to have significant effects on the environment, an *Environmental Impact Assessment* (EIA) will be required. [Further information on screening and scoping provisions is available in the EIA Regulations and Circular 8/2007 \(as amended\)](#).

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a full assessment of the habitats and species present together with the potential impact of the development on the biodiversity and/or geodiversity interest of the site;¶
proposals for appropriate mitigation;¶
identification of opportunities for enhancement;¶
an assessment of cumulative impact, where appropriate; and¶
a survey of soil types and their roles in supporting biodiversity and environmental services, when requested.

All assessments and/or surveys should be undertaken by an independent and competent consultant.

It is important that individual developments and the cumulative impact of proposals (e.g. new roads and houses) do not lead to a significant loss to Aberdeenshire's biodiversity and geodiversity. Nature conservation sites and non-designated areas are susceptible to development encroachment.

SG Landscape 1: Landscape character

We will approve development, subject to other policies, where:

- 1) its scale, location and design are appropriate to the landscape character of the area, as identified in Appendix 1; AND**
- 2) the proposal will not have an adverse impact on:-**
 - (i) the key natural or historic features of the landscape character; OR**
 - (ii) the overall composition or quality of the landscape character, particularly if the landscape is currently largely unspoiled by obtrusive or discordant features; OR**
 - (iii) any combination of the above, when considered with other recent developments, resulting in the possibility of an adverse cumulative impact on the local landscape character.**

Reasoned Justification

Landscapes can be vulnerable to the effects of new development, and the aim of this supplementary guidance is to provide all landscapes within Aberdeenshire with adequate protection against damaging development as Aberdeenshire boasts a highly dynamic landscape. This supports the approach set out in the European Landscape Convention (2000), which encourages sustainable management, protection and enhancement of all landscapes, and not just areas of exceptional quality.

Landscape impacts differ from visual impacts. Visual impacts relate to changes in specific views. Landscape impacts are usually considered in terms of disturbance, damage or loss of individual or multiple features of landscape character, such as streams, woodlands, sand dunes and stone walls. Landscape impacts are those that alter the overall character, or elements of the character of the landscape.

The sensitivity of a landscape is an indication of its capacity to absorb change. If a landscape character area is largely unspoiled by obtrusive or discordant man-made features (e.g. grain silos, shelter belts or forestry plantations), development of other man-made structures or features should generally be avoided. The distinctive characteristics of a landscape area should be protected from development that may impact on its composition (features visible within the landscape from a viewpoint) or quality (e.g. in a good state of condition or health, or undeveloped).

In the 1990s, SNH published three volumes of Landscape Character Assessments, which identified 42 landscape character areas in Aberdeenshire. They classified and highlighted the different landscapes of Landscape Character Areas in Aberdeenshire. The qualities of individual landscape character areas could easily be destroyed or damaged by even a relatively small, insensitive development or in some areas by any development at all. Therefore the impact a development may have on the key characteristics within any of these landscapes must be considered. Appendix 1 provides an amalgamated revision of these Landscape Character Assessments. Further Planning Advice will provide guidance for each landscape character area on the implications for development proposals. This guidance will include the need for a particularly high standard of design and

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mitigating measures within the character areas coincident with what have historically been identified as Areas of Landscape Significance.

The value of a landscape is identified by its key features or a combination of features that could be natural or historical. Rare or unique key features are identified in locally important landscapes, which are designated as Areas of Landscape Significance. Other important key features can be identified in the Historic Land use Assessment (HLA). The HLA data contributes to an understanding of the landscape and can influence the design of a

development. ~~The HLA identifies the historic dimension of landscape types.~~

~~The HLA highlights less common landscape types within Aberdeenshire~~

~~which can be calculated based on the area covered by them compared to the total rarity of the area surveyed under HLA. For example, relict crofting land would be a rarer landscape type surviving in Aberdeenshire compared to the commonly found 18th-19th century improved rectilinear fields used for agriculture.~~

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Where a rare landscape type is threatened by development, either:

- it should be preserved; or
- the core features of it should be retained; or
- the development should combine the landscape pattern etc into its layout design, thereby ensuring a continuity of landscape development.

When notified, the Council will require the formal approval of new agricultural buildings or the significant extension or alteration of existing buildings that raise an issue of impact on the quality or character of the landscape.

We will approve development, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the proposal will not, by virtue of its location, scale or design, have an adverse impact on the viewpoint for a “valued view”, as identified in Appendix 1; AND**
- 2) the proposal will not, by virtue of its scale or location, have an adverse impact on the characteristics for which the view itself is valued.**

Reasoned Justification

Everyone has a favourite view. The aim of this supplementary guidance is to provide those rural views which are valued by the community at large with a degree of protection from development which would “spoil the view”, whether this is something as innocuous as a garden shed adjacent to a popular viewpoint, or a major development such as a quarry in the far distance. It is not appropriate to use this policy to protect a “private” view, where there is no public interest, or as an ad hoc constraint. Valued views need to have been identified proactively to protect the development industry from uncertainty. Valued views have already been taken account of in the allocations made in the plan, and where an allocation has been made, the principle of development cannot subsequently be overturned by reference to impact on a view.

This policy will be used to complement SG Landscape1: Landscape character, but focuses more on the aesthetic aspects of landscape. Visual impact assessment is a tool which can be invoked principally for major developments, such as quarries or wind-farms, and which allows reactive consideration of the *impact* of a specific development on “the view”. We will promote its use to demonstrate the significance of any adverse impact.

The valued views identified in Appendix 1 have been identified by elected members, in consultation with their communities and with assistance from community councils. They all represent views from public vantage points, such as formal viewpoints and key views revealed by cresting a hill. Additional views may be identified, but will require review of this guidance, including public consultation, before they can be adopted.

Deleted: The valued views in Appendix 1 have been identified by Community Councils and from the local knowledge of elected members.

Appendix 1 Valued views

1. Countryside to east of Inverurie, above Oldmeldrum Road.
2. Designed landscape at Keithhall.
3. Views of Bennachie from the A96 (Tyrebagger and Insch area), B9170 Oldmeldrum – Inverurie, Cairnwilliam (to Millstone Hill), Horses Road, Keithhall, Belthenie, and New Deer on the Methlick road.
4. Views of Keithhall and Inverurie from Horses Road, Keithhall.
5. Views of Dunnydeer Hill Fort from the surrounding area.
6. The view across Peterhead Bay from South Road.
7. The view of River Ugie Estuary from North Road, Peterhead.
8. The view overlooking the sea from Harbour Street, Cruden Bay.
9. The views towards Mormond Hill.

10. The view overlooking the harbour from Cruden Bay Golf Course.
11. The view coastward from Clola to Hatton road.
12. The view of the St Fergus Gas Terminal, from the A90, particularly at night.
13. The view eastwards from Culsh Monument towards Peterhead.
14. The view of Slains Castle from Cruden Bay.
15. The Ythan Estuary from the A975 and associated stopping places.
16. Balmedie Beach.
17. The River Ythan at Ellon.
18. Prop of Ythsie at Tarves from the surrounding area.
19. Auchterless Kirk from the B992.
20. From the Learney Hill on the B993 as you descend towards Torphins, of Deeside - in particular, Mount Keen and Lochnagar.
21. The setting of Tarves Village on the brow of the hill.
22. From the top of Suie Hill on the Alford to Kennethmont road looking north-west.
23. The Ladder Hills from the top of the Glacks on the Muir of Fowlis/Glenkindie Road.
24. Over Alford from the junction of Greystone Road/Gallowhill towards Bennachie.
25. From top of Dess Road looking down to Lumphanan.
26. The Falls of Dess from the footpath.
27. Over the River Dee from Sunset Seat, Banchory.
28. To east of Kincardine O'Neil where the road from Torphins joins the Deeside Road.
29. The approach to Aboyne from the east (just past the caravan park).
30. The view from from the A920 Huntly-Dufftown Road looking south/south-west.
31. The view of Johnston Tower from the Cairn O'Mount Viewpoint.
32. The view of Strathfinella/Cairn O'Mount from Garvock Hill.
33. The view of the Black Hill from Stonehaven Golf Course.
34. The view of the mouth of the River Esk from the A92, and from the stretch of the B class road from Northwaterbridge to Marykirk.
35. The view of the river North Esk from the public road between Forebank and Morphie.
36. The view of Meikle Carewe/Curlethney Hill skyline from Black hill.
37. Parish Church from Newtonhill to Findon Ness.
38. The view of Cookney Church from the B979.
39. The view from the Slug Road, Stonehaven to Kerloch.
40. The view from the A92 to Inverbervie.
41. The view from Gobbs Farm, Arbuthnott to the sea.
42. The view looking to Muchalls from mid-way across the moor.

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SG Historic Environment 1: Listed buildings

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We will protect all “listed buildings” contained in the statutory list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest for Aberdeenshire, and we will encourage their protection, maintenance, enhancement, active use and conservation.

We will refuse planning permission and/or listed building consent for any works, including demolition, which would have a detrimental effect on their character, integrity or setting.

We will only approve alterations or extensions to listed buildings or new development within their curtilage, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) they are of the highest quality, and respect the original structure in terms of setting, scale, design and materials; AND
- 2) the proposed development is essential to securing the best viable use of the listed building without undermining its architectural or historic character, or its setting.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of the supplementary guidance is to protect listed buildings against detrimental works, in accordance with current guidance and legislation. Aberdeenshire’s built heritage is irreplaceable and must be preserved and conserved for present and future generations.

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Listed buildings make a significant contribution to the character and amenity of Aberdeenshire. The fact that a building is obsolete for a period of time is not in itself a justification for unsympathetic change.

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Listed buildings are at their most vulnerable when vacant, so encouragement is given to appropriate redevelopment that secures their best viable use. Changing the building’s use is often a successful way to bring a building out of disuse or disrepair.

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Listed buildings are a valuable resource that significantly contributes to the townscape of our communities, provides multi-functional buildings, can stimulate enjoyment of the wider environment, and can act as an important medium for education, recreation and tourism. As such, they must be protected.

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The prime responsibility to maintain listed buildings in good condition rests with the individual owner. However, there are some grants available (from a variety of bodies) to help with the repair and maintenance of listed buildings. The Council can also exercise its right to place a building repair notice on a derelict listed building, and in extreme cases can apply a compulsory purchase order to prevent a listed building falling into ruin.

More detailed guidance on the application of this supplementary guidance is provided in [Scottish Historic Environment Policy and Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes](#), which are available to download from [Historic Scotland’s website](#).

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In the event of the planning authority being minded to grant listed building consent for works affecting category A or B listed buildings or for demolition of category C(S) listed buildings, the planning authority must notify Historic Scotland. To help assess proposals affecting listed buildings, Historic Scotland will therefore be consulted at an earlier stage, where appropriate, on proposals affecting category A or B listed buildings or the demolition of category C(S) listed buildings. We will also seek the views of the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland, the Scottish Civic Trust, and

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Architecture and Design Scotland, as appropriate. The Council will continue to support the work of the North East Scotland Preservation Trust.

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SG Historic Environment 2: Conservation areas

We will refuse planning permission and/or conservation area consent for any development, including change of use or demolition, which would have a detrimental effect on the special character or setting of a conservation area.

We will only approve new development wholly or partly within a conservation area, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) all details are provided under cover of an application for full planning permission; AND**
- 2) the design is of the highest quality, and respects and enhances the architectural, historic and visual qualities that give rise to the designation; AND**
- 3) any trees in the vicinity considered by the Council to have amenity value are retained.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this supplementary guidance is to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas, in order to safeguard the long term management of these areas in accordance with current guidance and legislation. Their boundaries are shown on the settlement proposals maps.

Conservation areas form an important physical record of the architectural development and historical growth of an area. They are an irreplaceable cultural and economic resource that contributes to the distinctive character and unique quality of Aberdeenshire and therefore must be protected. For this reason greater weight will be given to the requirements of this supplementary guidance, when there is a conflict with the requirements of other supplementary guidance in this plan.

Trees in conservation areas are protected through the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Before carrying out any work on a tree in a conservation area, owners are required to notify the local authority giving details of intended works.

Article 4 Direction Orders restrict permitted development rights, and in certain cases have been put in place to prevent incremental change such as replacement doors and windows, which would otherwise cumulatively undermine the character of the conservation area over time.

The conservation area legislation provides for their regular appraisal, which may result in new Article 4 Directions and/or supplementary guidance in the form of conservation area policies or other design guidelines. Existing and proposed conservation areas in Aberdeenshire, together with relevant Article 4 Directions and further guidance will be provided in planning advice.

Any slate, stone, or other traditional building materials accruing from demolition should be retained and reused for new building in the vicinity, or by donating it to the Aberdeenshire Conservation Materials store.

In the event of the planning authority being minded to grant conservation area consent for demolition of an unlisted building, the planning authority must notify Historic Scotland. Historic Scotland will therefore be consulted at an earlier stage, where appropriate on such proposals. The agency's "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" is recommended in this regard. To help assess proposals we will also seek the views of the Architectural Heritage Society for Scotland, The Scottish Civic Trust, Architecture and Design Scotland and appropriate local bodies.

Appendix 1. Schedule of existing Conservation areas and related Article 4 Directions

Name of Conservation Area	Date Designated	Outstanding Status?	Article 4 Direction		Notes
			Date	Class(es)	
Banff and Buchan					
Aberchirder	1973	No	01/08/86	Class 11●	
Banff - including Scotstown	1973	Yes – 1976 (part outstanding: not Scotstown)	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2010
Cairnbulg/ Inverallochy	1973	No	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2014
Crimonmogate	1986	Yes - 1987	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2015
Crovie	1974	Yes - 1976	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2012
Fordyce	1972	Yes - 1974	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2015
Fraserburgh - Broadsea	1975	No	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2010
Gardenstown	1974	No	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2011
Pennan	1977	Yes - 1978	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2012
Portsoy	1972	Yes - 1989	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2011
Sandend	1972	No	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2013
Whitehills	1974	No	01/08/86	Class 11●	Review anticipated 2013

Name of Conservation Area	Date Designated	Outstanding Status?	Article 4 Direction		Notes
			Date	Class(es)	
Buchan					
Boddam	1970	No	01/08/86	Class 11•	Review anticipated 2010
Old Deer	1977	Yes - 1978	01/08/86	Class 11•	Review anticipated 2011
Peterhead - Buchanhaven	1975	No	01/08/86	Class 11•	Review anticipated 2013
Peterhead - Central	1975	Yes - 1979	07/04/09	Part 1 Class 1, 3, 6 Part 2 Class 7, 8, 9 Part 4 Class 14, 15 Part 8 Class 23, 24, 25 Part 9 Class 27 Part 10 Class 28 Part 12 Class 30, 31, 32, 33 Part 13 Class 38, 39, 40	Reviewed 2009
Peterhead - Roanheads	1975	No	01/08/86	Class 11•	Review anticipated 2013
Port Errol - Cruden Bay	1975	No	01/08/86	Class 11•	Review anticipated 2012
Strichen	1985	Yes - 1986	01/08/86	Class 11•	Reviewed 2009

- The corresponding Class under current legislation, The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(Scotland) Order 1992, is Part 12 Class 30 (b).

Name of Conservation Area	Date Designated	Outstanding Status?	Article 4 Direction		Notes
			Date	Class(es)	
Formartine					
Tarves	1976	No	05/1995	Part 1 Class 1, 3, 6 Part 2 Class 7,8,9 Part 4 Class 14, 15 Part 8 Class 23, 34, 25 Part 9 Class 27 Part 10 Class 28 Part 12 Class 30, 31, 32, 33 Part 13 Class 38, 40	Design Guidance Oct 1980 & June 1995* Review anticipated 2010
Oldmeldrum	1976	No		No	Design Guidance Feb 1978 Review anticipated 2010
Udny Green	1984	No		No	Design Guidance June 1984 Review anticipated 2014

* Pending amalgamation, precedence to be given to the 1980 Design Guide when dealing with planning applications.

Name of Conservation Area	Date Designated	Outstanding Status?	Article 4 Direction		Notes
			Date	Class(es)	
Garioch					
Kingseat	2000	No		No	Design Guidance Feb 2000 Review anticipated 2014
Gairlogie	2000	No		No	Design Guidance Sept 2000 Review anticipated 2016

Name of Conservation Area	Date Designated	Outstanding Status?	Article 4 Direction		Any Other Supplementary Guidance Prepared
			Date	Class(es)	
Kincardine & Mearns					
Muchalls	1983	No	22/12/95	Part 1 Class 1,3, 6 Part 2 Class 7	Review anticipated 2012
Catterline	1983	No	22/12/95	Part 1 Class 1,3, 6 Part 2 Class 7	Review anticipated 2011
Johnshaven	1997	No		No	Review anticipated 2010
Stonehaven	1997	No		No	Review anticipated 2011
Fettercairn	1997	Yes - 1997		No	Review anticipated 2014

Name of Conservation Area	Date Designated	Outstanding Status?	Article 4 Direction		Any Other Supplementary Guidance Prepared
			Date	Class(es)	
Marr					
Aboyne	1996	No	08/12/97	Part 1 Class 1, 3, 6 Part 2 Class 7, 8 Part 9 Class 27 Part 10 Class 28 Part 12 Class 30, 31, 32 Part 13 Class 38, 40, 41, 43 Part 20 Class 67	Review anticipated 2011
Huntly	1975	Yes - 1976	06/01/88	All Classes	Design Guidance July 1978 Review anticipated 2013
Kincardine O'Neil	1983	Yes - 1994	22/12/95	Part 1 Class 1, 3, 6 Part 2 Class 7, 8 Part 9 Class 27 Part 10 Class 28(1) Part 12 Class 30, 31, 32 Part 13 Class 38, 40, 41, 43 Part 20 Class 67	Review anticipated 2015
Monymusk	1982	No		No	Design Guidance Apr 1982 Review anticipated 2015

Proposed Conservation Areas

Settlement	Proposed date of assessment
Buchan	
Old Deer - Extension	2011
Formartine	
Turriff	2014
Garioch	
Echt	2014
Dunecht	2013
Inverurie	2011
Kintore	2010
Kincardine & Mearns	
Auchenblae	2013
Benholm	2011
Downies	2016
Gourdon	2010
Stonehaven - Kirktown of Fetteresso	2010

Settlement	Proposed date of review
Marr	
Clatt	2015
Kennethmont Distillery	2013
Tarland	2012

SG Historic Environment 3: Historic gardens and designed landscapes

We will only approve development that would have an adverse effect on the character, structure or setting of a designated historic garden or designed landscape, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) the objectives of designation and the overall integrity and character of the designated area will not be compromised; OR**
- 2) any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by long term strategic social or economic benefits of over-riding public importance, for which no other alternative site is available.**

In either case, mitigation and appropriate measures must be taken to conserve and enhance the essential characteristics, aesthetics, archaeological, historical value and setting of the garden or the designed landscape.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this supplementary guidance is to meet Aberdeenshire Council's national and international obligations to protect and enhance designated gardens and designed landscapes from development that would damage their special character.

Gardens and designed landscapes are identified as an important part of Aberdeenshire's culture and heritage, and are recorded in both the Historic Scotland Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes and the Gordon Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes. These gardens and landscapes are valuable assets at an international, national, regional and local level. They provide a landscape dating back to previous historical periods and landscape settings for important buildings, as well as having rare plant collections, and a rich biodiversity with fine specimen plants and trees. As such they must be protected from damaging development.

To help assess development proposals, we will seek the views of the Garden History Society, Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, The Architectural Heritage Society for Scotland and The Scottish Civic Trust, as appropriate.

SG Historic Environment 4: Archaeological sites and monuments

We will only approve development that would have an adverse effect on a scheduled ancient monument or on any other archaeological site, including battlefields, of either national or local importance, or on their setting, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature; AND**
- 2) there is no alternative site for the development; AND**
- 3) where there is doubt, the applicant has provided further information, at their expense, on the nature and location of the archaeological feature(s) involved, prior to determination of the planning application.**

In any such case, the applicant must at their own expense:

- a) take satisfactory steps to mitigate adverse development impacts; AND**
- b) when the preservation of the site in its original location is not possible, arrange for the full excavation and recording of the site in advance of development.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this supplementary guidance is to give archaeological sites and Scheduled Ancient Monuments strong protection from any development that could damage them.

Archaeological sites are an important part of our heritage, as they help us to understand the way our ancestors used to live. This makes them of great interest and value to us and gives them an important educational, social and economic role. As they are irreplaceable, it is vitally important that they are protected whenever possible.

Where the archaeological importance of a site is initially unclear, the advice of the Council's Archaeological Service will be taken. Where necessary, the applicant may be requested to provide additional information at their expense.

SG Safeguarding 1: Protection and conservation of the water environment

We will only approve new development, including aquatic engineering works, which will generate discharges or other impacts on existing water bodies, or which could affect the water quality, quantity, flow rate, ecological status, riparian habitat, protected species or flood plains of water bodies including their catchment area, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it has been demonstrated that it will not prejudice the ability of water bodies to maintain good status; or, for those water bodies not currently achieving good status, that it will not cause any further deterioration in status nor prevent them from being able to achieve good ecological status in the future; AND
- 2) it contributes to the objectives and targets within the Local Biodiversity Action Plan relating to the freshwater environment; AND
- 3) when required, it includes the creation, enhancement and management of new habitats; AND
- 4) it has been demonstrated that both during construction and after completion:-
 - (i) it would not adversely affect water quality or flows in adjacent watercourses or areas downstream; AND
 - (ii) adequate buffer strips have been provided adjacent to water bodies, so that they can be accessed and maintained all year round.

All aquatic engineering works must be accompanied by a technical report prepared by a suitably qualified **individual**. When required, the applicant must also produce a construction method statement to demonstrate compliance with criterion 4.

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Where development is allowed, the applicant is encouraged to improve the ecological status of water bodies whenever possible, particularly where a water body is currently at less than good ecological status. This could be achieved through criteria 2), 3) and/or 4)(ii).

Reasoned Justification

The aims of this policy are to support the implementation of the European Commission's Water Framework Directive; to contribute to the Scotland District River Basin Plan; to promote the enhancement of the water environment and the creation of good quality riparian habitat; and to provide protection to Aberdeenshire's aquatic environment from new development that could result in unacceptable ecological impacts. The Directive requires the sustainable management of Scotland's water, taking into account all the impacts that cause harm to the aquatic environment, including physical engineering projects, effluent discharge and abstraction of water. Water

bodies can include rivers, ponds, wetlands, standing, tidal or coastal waters, and ground water.

The River Basin Management Plan for the Scotland river basin district (RBMP) sets out objectives for water bodies and groundwater to maintain or achieve good ecological status. A key objective of the RBMP is that 98% of all of Scotland's water should be in good condition by 2027.

Deleted: Scotland District River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for the Scotland River District

Deleted: 7

The Local Development Plan (and the planning process in general) has to take account of the RBMP and ensure the protection and, where possible, improvement of water bodies to good ecological status. New developments or works, including ponds, drainage systems or reservoirs that would lead to deterioration of ecological status or prevent the water body from achieving good ecological status through river engineering pollution, or introduction of non-native species are not acceptable.

Applicants are encouraged to contribute to water body restoration, enhancing the water environment, including riparian habitats for mammals, birds, insects and other aquatic species. This is also likely to meet part of their open space obligations, as well as contributing to LBAP's rivers and burns habitat action plan objectives and targets, in accordance with Supplementary Guidance *Natural Environment 2: Protection of the wider biodiversity and geodiversity*. Further advice is available from SNH, Aberdeenshire Council and the NE LBAP Officer.

Where a water body is located within or borders a proposed development, a buffer strip must be provided on either side of the water body. Best practice advice is provided in *Buffer Strips adjacent to Water Courses and Water Bodies*. Buffer strips in proportion to the scale of the water body will be required and these must be protected during the construction period and thereafter. Clarification on the actual width of a buffer strip should be sought from the council, but it is likely to be at least 6m on either side of the water body. Buffer strip requirements are a separate matter from floodplain requirements.

New development should also not encroach onto a buffer strip. Buffer strips can help to reduce flooding, assist with fluvial processes (e.g. meandering of rivers), and become part of a habitat network. All buffer strips must be accessible to enable the inspection and maintenance of watercourses and their banks for pollution control, vegetation management and flood prevention purposes.

A construction method statement should be produced that sets out mitigation measures to prevent siltation and pollution of water bodies where they may be affected by surface water runoff.

The planning authority and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) should be contacted for advice on the necessary consultations and permissions required when any works are contemplated. Applicants should be aware that flood defences and other engineering works affecting the water environment require authorisation under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (CAR), and that this is independent of any requirement for planning permission.

SG Safeguarding 2: Protection and conservation of agricultural land

We will only approve development that would cause the permanent loss of prime agricultural land, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it has been allocated in the development plan; OR**
- 2) the applicant has demonstrated that:-**
 - a) the social or economic benefit clearly outweighs the agricultural value of the site; AND**
 - b) there is no suitable alternative site for the development.**

Reasoned Justification

Agricultural land in Scotland has been classified into 7 classes by the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute according to its potential productivity. Classes 1, 2, and 3.1 are defined as prime quality. Aberdeenshire has limited prime land, so it is particularly important to protect this. Where the agricultural classification of the land is in question, the developer must demonstrate its quality.

The aim of this policy is to protect the most productive agricultural land, and to steer development to areas of lesser quality. Aberdeenshire has approximately 518,000 ha of agricultural land. This is only 9% of Scotland's agricultural land, but it boasts a much higher proportion of crops, livestock and farm labour ('Agriculture in Aberdeenshire' 2008). It is important to retain existing prime land in Aberdeenshire in the interests of maintaining agriculturally productive potential, which will help towards achieving self-sufficiency in food and production and meeting Scottish Government climate change targets.

SG Safeguarding 3: Protection and conservation of trees and woodland

We will only approve development that would cause the loss of or serious damage to trees or woodlands, which are either covered by an existing or proposed Tree Preservation Order, or are of significant ecological, historical, recreational or shelter value, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it would achieve significant and clearly defined public benefits that outweigh any potential loss; AND**
- 2) when required, an evaluation of the biodiversity and amenity value of the woodland and habitat, including current and future benefits of the existing woodland, has been undertaken; AND**
- 3) the minimum damage occurs to existing trees and woodland as a result of the development, and there is no unnecessary fragmentation of existing or potential woodland networks; AND**
- 4) the impact of the removal of any trees and the effect on the character or amenity of the area is mitigated by appropriate compensatory planting to an agreed standard.**

The Council will support the creation and protection of sensitively designed and managed forests and woodlands, in line with the Forest & Woodland Strategy and in accordance with the landscape character supplementary guidance.

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this supplementary guidance is to secure protection of individual and groups of trees. The policy also applies to designated woodland, such as Ancient Woodland.

Trees contribute to the character and amenity of an area, are of important ecological value and provide recreational, air quality and rain water management functions. It is important to retain green networks of woodland, which support a variety of species, and to avoid the loss of connectivity between different woodland habitats. Even where compensatory planting can be provided, public benefit can be lost in the short term, as it takes some time to establish a full woodland ecosystem. The value of the network under threat must be carefully considered before development is permitted and mitigation measures accepted. Some woodlands, particularly when recently formed or comprising predominantly non-native species, may be of lesser value, but there needs to be a clear understanding of what may be lost before changes to the woodland can be accepted.

Established woodlands are important as stores of historic greenhouse gas emissions, and also as stores for newly produced greenhouse gas. Creation of new woodland is identified in the Scottish Government publication, 'Climate Change Delivery Plan', as assisting with carbon sequestration.

The mitigation of tree removal through compensatory planting will be to an agreed standard, which will be detailed in a planning condition or a planning agreement.

When protecting woodland, the Council will have regard to adopted standards, and tree surveys should be carried out in accordance with BS 5837. Where necessary, we may serve preservation orders on potentially vulnerable trees of environmental value, which could be damaged by development proposals.

The Forest & Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City provides a local focus for management, enhancement, and creation of woodlands. The encouragement of woodland creation is consistent with Scottish Government targets to increase woodland cover in Scotland from 17% to 25% by 2050.

SG Safeguarding 4: Safeguarding transportation facilities

We will not approve any development that would have a significant adverse effect on:

- 1) any safeguarded site that has been identified on a settlement statement for a transport infrastructure project or that has been identified in the local or regional transport strategy or in the Strategic Transport Projects Review; OR**
- 2) any routes that are recognised in the core paths plan network; OR**
- 3) any routes of closed railways, including their abutments, embankments and cuttings; OR**
- 4) the present or possible future operations or safety of existing airports or airfields.**

Reasoned Justification

This policy aims to ensure that development does not prejudice our ability to provide for the needs of the future, and that key sites and existing and potential transport routes, corridors and facilities are safeguarded from speculative development.

Safeguarded sites will include the full hierarchy of travel modes:

- paths and cycle ways;
- transport interchanges, e.g. park and ride facilities;
- closed railway lines, associated railway infrastructure, and potential new rail facilities;
- areas around ports and harbours;
- new roads or improvements to the existing road network.

The advice of the Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service, NESTRANS and Transport Scotland will be of paramount importance in determining acceptability. There will also be a need to consult with the Civil Aviation Authority on development in the safeguarded areas relating to Aberdeen Airport. This is to prevent unnecessary dangers to low-flying aircraft, but also to safeguard presently unused airfields from development which may prejudice their future re-use for air traffic.

SG Safeguarding 5: Safeguarding employment land

We will not approve development for non-employment uses on the sites identified in Schedule 2 New Employment Land Allocations within the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

We will only approve development for non-employment uses on existing employment sites, **usually identified as BUS within settlement statements,** and whether it is greenfield or brownfield land, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) there is a constraint on the site whereby there is no reasonable prospect of it ever becoming marketable for employment development; OR
- 2) the site is poorly located for employment uses and an alternative land use would benefit the surrounding area and community.

In either of these cases the applicant must also demonstrate that the non-employment use:

- a) will not prejudice the strategic employment land requirement; AND
- b) would be compatible with neighbouring employment uses; AND
- c) will respect the character and amenity of the surrounding area and is landscaped accordingly.

Deleted: whether they are allocated or unallocated,

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure allocated employment sites, shown on the proposal maps, are developed for suitable employment purposes and also to protect these sites from non-employment development. Where employment use already exists, we also intend to ensure that the employment use remains on these sites and that they too are protected from non-employment development. There may be instances where employment use is no longer suitable for the site, but in those cases the proposed use of the site must be compatible with neighbouring land uses, including business and industrial activity that remains in the vicinity.

Existing well-located and successful business sites have been identified in the settlement statements. Review of the use of these sites should only be undertaken as part of a local development plan review.

In accordance with the structure plan, the local development plan should maintain a marketable supply of land for employment uses. Maintaining a marketable supply of employment land in line with the strategic employment land requirement is one of the key factors in sustaining a vibrant, effective and sustainable economy for Aberdeenshire. There is also a requirement to maintain 20 hectares of land for high-quality businesses or company headquarters, and this is identified within the allocations in the settlement statements at Thainstone and Elsick.

Deleted: We will not approve development for non-employment uses on specific sites, which have been identified on the proposals map and in the supporting settlement statements.¶

In accordance with the Structure Plan, the Local Development Plan maintains a supply of land for industrial, business, and other employment uses, normally Classes 4, 5 and 6 of the Use Classes Order, and other employment uses where appropriate.

If a change is to be accepted, the land must have been marketed over an agreed and robust period with no interest received, e.g. at an open market valuation for a period of no less than 6 months; or it must be clearly demonstrated that the site is poorly located, and that its loss cannot prejudice the strategic employment land requirement, as required by the Structure Plan.

Aberdeenshire Council will adopt a proactive approach to encouraging the reuse of buildings and previously developed land, particularly in the regeneration areas, making use of land assembly and compulsory purchase powers to enable redevelopment opportunities.

Some employment uses will not be suitable on any allocated employment land. Attention must therefore be given to ensure that proposed employment uses are compatible with neighbouring land uses. Conversely, care must be taken that proposals for neighbouring uses are appropriate and unlikely to impose operational constraints on existing businesses, for example, through the need for noise abatement.

SG Safeguarding 6: Safeguarding oil and gas sites

**We will approve oil and gas related development, subject to other policies, within St. Fergus Gas Terminal or on land allocated for related development.
We will not approve any other development in or adjacent to this site.**

Reasoned Justification

The aim of this policy is to safeguard the major oil and gas sites at St Fergus North for oil and gas related *development*. ~~Their site boundaries are shown in the Settlement Statements for Buchan.~~

Deleted: Their site boundaries are shown in the Buchan section of Chapter 8, although they do not strictly meet the definition of a *rural service centre*

St Fergus North has previously been identified by the Scottish Ministers as requiring to be safeguarded for large-scale petrochemical development. Although this is no longer required at the national level, such safeguarding gives protection to these areas from development that could impact negatively on their current and potential operations. This remains in both the local and regional interest, given the important role of these sites.

SG Safeguarding 7: Areas of search for minerals

Within an area identified as a minerals “area of search” or as a safeguarded area for minerals, we will only approve new development for anything other than for mineral extraction, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it is a major development within an area of search, but the opportunity will be given for the extraction of any mineral resources before the development commences; OR**
- 2) it is a new housing, industrial, commercial or other development in a safeguarded area, which is:-**
 - (i) small-scale and ancillary to existing uses; OR**
 - (ii) of a short life.**

In either of these cases the applicant must also demonstrate that there is no alternative site for the development.

Details of the location of these areas of search and safeguarded areas are shown on the proposals maps.

Reasoned Justification

There is a recognised need for certain mineral resources in Aberdeenshire. These are important in terms of their end use and for the employment opportunities they create. Minerals are valuable finite resources that can only be worked where they are found. It is therefore important that their sterilisation by other development is avoided where possible, and that continuity of supply is ensured. Sterilisation of mineral resources will be avoided by their careful management through the designation of areas of search and of safeguarded areas, which offer different levels of policy protection.

Areas of search identify areas of extensive mineral deposits from which a choice of development sites might be acceptable, whereas the safeguarded areas identify specific mineral outcrops, such as slate, building stone or precious metals, that are very limited in occurrence and are likely to be economically exploitable. These sites are listed in tables 1 and 2 below.

Detailed guidance on the nature of the minerals safeguarded, and the justification for the areas identified as either areas of search or as safeguarded areas are contained within planning advice associated with this topic and appended to this supplementary guidance as Appendix 1. For the avoidance of doubt there is no safeguarding of mineral reserves just because they are within areas of search.

Table 1 Areas of search for minerals (sand and gravel reserves)
These sites are shown on the proposals maps and in appendix 1

	Map		Map
1 Cotton Hill, Fordyce	1	37 Old Crow Wood, Monymusk	32
2 Fordyce Hill, Fordyce	2	38 Denhead, Dyce	33
3 Canterbury, Cornhill	2	39 Fyvie North	34
4 Roughilly, Portsoy	3	40 Haddo, Ythanbank	35
5 Whitehills West	4	41 Craigie, Ythanbank	35
6 Banff West	5	42 Hatton West	36
7 Blackhills, Cornhill	6	43 Hatton South	36
8 Kirkton of Alvah, Alvah	7	44 Burnside, Sauchen	32
9 Castleton, Turriff	8	45 Tangland, Ythanbank	35
10 Auchlinn, Turriff	9	46 Hill of Logie, Ellon	37
11 Bo, Turriff	9	47 Mill Fam, Kemnay	38
12 New Aberdour West	10	48 South Orvock, Balmedie	39
13 New Aberdour North	10	49 Alford East	40
14 New Aberdour East	11	50 Balmedie North	39
15 Peathill	12	51 Woodhead, Alford	40
16 Auchlin	12	52 Lumsden South	42
17 Memsie West	13	53 Lumsden North	41
18 Tyrie	14	54 Cairnie Wood, Strachan	43
19 Auchenblae East	15	55 Cairnie Woods, Garlogie	44
20 Memsie West	13	56 Tough	45
21 Tarwathie, Strichen	16	57 Rhynie	46
22 Memsie North	17	58 Waulkmill, Strachan	47
23 Newmill West	18	59 Gallow Hill, Fettercairn	48
24 Newmill East	19	60 Auchenblae West	16
25 New Leeds	20	61 Tillydrine, Kincardine O' Neil	49
26 Brownhill, Fetterangus	21	62 Pitdrichie, Drumlithie	50
27 Gaval, Fetterangus	22	63 Catterline	51
28 Longside	23	64 Nether Craighill, Arbuthnott	52
29 Bracklamore, New Pitsligo	24	65 Blairydrine, Crathes	53
30 North Garmond	25	66 Barras Hill, Edzell	54
31 Idoch, Cuminstown	26	67 Criggie, Stonehaven	55
32 Turriff South	27	68 Inverury Wood, Edzell	56
33 Turriff West	28	69 Saltire Wood, Edzell	54
34 Aberchirder West	29	70 North Mains, Findon	57
35 Ruthven	30	71 Capo Plantation, Edzell	54
36 Hill of Kinnoir, Huntly	31		

Table 2 Safeguarded mineral resources

					Map
100	Aikey Brae, Old Deer	NJ 96244781	Disused. Pink and grey speckled granite	pink and grey speckled granite	1
101	Arthrath, Ellon	NJ39768372	Commercially viable precious metal deposits	Platinum and Nickel	2
102	Avochie, Milton of Rothiemay	NJ54194702	Active. Granite. Producing crushed rock aggregate and building stone	foliated biotite granite	3
103	Balmedie, Belhelvie	NJ 944 181	Active, Gabbro and norite. Belhelvie Basic Intrusion. Crushed rock aggregate and other products (coated roadstone, sub-base)	gabbro and norite of the Belhelvie Basic Intrusion	4
104	Blackhills, Longhaven, Peterhead	NK 1150 3920	Active, producing crushed rock aggregate and dimension stone. Peterhead Granite, reddish-brown colour, widely exported during 19th century, throughout UK and abroad (e.g. Calton Club, London)	red-brown 'Peterhead Granite'	5
105	Cairngall, Longside	NK 052 471	Disused. 'Blue Peterhead', muscovite-biotite granite, some of the rock foliated, was widely used for decorative work and large monoliths.	Blue Peterhead' muscovite-biotite granite	6
106	Corrennie, Tillyfourie	NJ 6415 1192	Active. Currently producing crushed rock aggregate, dimension stone, and armourstone. Distinctive red-pink colour with aligned fabric; stone was widely exported (e.g. Glasgow Municipal Buildings, 1887)	red-pink granite	7
107	Corskie, Gartly	NJ 533 328	Historic quarry in slate. Large deposits covering most of the Hill of Corskie. Resources within quarry area estimated as medium assuming no change in quality along strike. Further exploitation possible at greater depth. Medium access, forest roads. Low environ sensitivity as are remote from all habitation.	slate	8
108	Cottonhill, Macduff	NJ 724 639	Active. Macduff Formation. Crushed rock aggregate	Macduff Formation (metamorphic)	9
109	Craighash, Torphins	NO 621 987	Active. Queens Hill Formation. Crushed rock aggregate and other products (sub base, sea defences, coated roadstone)	Queens Hill Formation (metamorphic)	10
110	Forth Hill	NJ3771`7698	Sandstone, Scone Formation	Sandstone	11
111	Foudland & Skares, Foudland	NJ 590 327 to NJ 620 340	Large deposits available for further exploitation. Many quarries covered with large tips. Depths of workings greater than other quarries. Access is medium - good track to high level quarries, others distant. Low environ sensitivity as are	slate	12

remote from habitation. Quality varies (poorer between upper and lower level quarries)

112	Kirkney, Gartly	NJ 503 317 to NJ 510 320	Historic quarry in slate worked superficially. Very large deposits. Resources at least medium in size. Further extraction possible along strike ENE 075deg, assuming no change in quality. Further exploitation possible to greater depth. Second, less significant set of workings on south of hill at 350m. Main workings situated on north slopes. Poor access, no roads. Low environ sensitivity.	slate	13
113	Littlemill, Ruthven		Commercially viable precious metal deposits	Platinum and Nickel	14
114	Mains of Balfour	NO3622 7735	Sandstone, Teith Formation	Sandstone	15
115	North Mains, Findon	NO 9425 9862	Active	granite	16
116	Paradise, Kemnay	NJ 7377 1693	Disused. Light silver-grey colour, widely exported (e.g. Queen Victoria Memorial, London and Forth Railway Bridge 1885). Used as cladding for Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh (2004).	light silver-grey granite	17
117	Peathill, New Pitsligo	NJ 8872 5504	Historic quarries used for building. Light grey, porphyritic granite	light grey porphyritic granite	18
118	Pitcaple, Inverurie	NJ 729 268	Active. Norite and gabbronorite (Insch Mass). Crushed rock aggregate, coated roadstone, sub base.	Norite and Gabbronorite of the Insch Mass	19
119	Pitcarry	NJ38267739	Sandstone	Catterline formation	20
120	Quarry Hill, Rhynie	NJ 4913 2543		Quarry Hill Sandstone Formation (white, cemented freestone)	21
121	Quarryfield, Kildrummy	NJ 4543 1837	White, well-cemented freestone used extensively for building in the district	Quarry Hill Sandstone Formation (white, cemented freestone)	22
122	Savoch, Longside	NK 066 425	Active. Collieston Formation. Crushed rock aggregate, armourstone and other products (sub base).	Collieston Formation (metamorphic)	23
123	Smiddy Barn, Cross of Jackston	NJ 738 331	Active. Macduff Formation. Crushed rock aggregate	Macduff Formation (metamorphic)	24
124	Stirlinghill (Admiralty No	NK 1230 4150	Active. Peterhead Granite. Pink with grey granite. Historic	pink with grey 'Peterhead	25

	1), Peterhead		quarry, now producing aggregate and building stone.	Granite'	
125	Tillyfourie, Tillyfourie	NJ 6457 1285	Extensive disused workings in grey granite.	grey granite	26
126	Tom's Forest, Kintore	NJ 762 170	Foliated muscovite-biotite granite. Active, producing crushed rock aggregate	foliated muscovite- biotite granite	27
127	Wishach, Gartly	NJ 577 331 to NJ 579 334	Historic quarry in slate. Large (Plenty) of resources for future exploration within the confines of each quarry and continuing along strike. Poor access, no road, but close forestry road although dense vegetation. Low environ sensitivity as are remote.	slate	28
128	Woodlands, Old Meldrum	NJ 796 328	Active. Macduff Formation. Crushed rock aggregate, roadstone and other products.	Macduff Formation (metamorphic)	29

SG Safeguarding **8**: Areas of search for waste facilities

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A. We will approve a waste management facility, subject to other policies, if:

- 1) it conforms to the National Waste Management Plan; AND
- 2) it meets a clearly established need for the development to serve local and / or regional requirements for the management and disposal of waste; AND
- 3) it is located in an area of search identified for these purposes, or otherwise minimises transport of waste from its source; AND
- 4) it is the “best practicable environmental option” for the waste stream; AND
- 5) It will not compromise public health or safety; AND
- 6) it will not result in unacceptable adverse cumulative impacts, if the development would increase to three or more the number of landfill or mineral developments within 5km of a settlement; AND
- 7) the applicant has submitted:-
 - (i) sufficient information with the application to enable a full assessment to be made of the likely effects of the development, together with proposals for appropriate control, mitigation and monitoring; AND
 - (ii) a design statement in support of the application, where the development would have more than a local landscape or visual impact; AND
 - (iii) details of land restoration, after-care and after-use proposals (including the submission of bonds), where required.

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B. We will not approve any inappropriate neighbouring developments that may compromise waste-handling operations at an existing waste management site.

Reasoned Justification

The purpose of this supplementary guidance is to ensure that waste management facilities are directed to appropriate locations and governed by controls that protect public safety and amenity. Policy on waste is governed by European Directives and national targets and standards set out in the National Waste Management Plan. For planning purposes the Zero Waste Plan will constitute the National Waste Management Plan along with the following:

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- The National Planning Framework.
- Scottish Planning Policy.
- Planning Advice Note 63 (including revised versions).
- SEPA waste data sources: including Waste Data Digests and Waste Infrastructure Maps.
- SEPA Thermal Treatment of Waste Guidelines 2009.

Areas of search identified for these purposes include sites allocated in the Local Development Plan and the broad areas of search which will be identified in supplementary guidance, to be produced by the Strategic Development Planning Authority, on waste management facilities that are regionally significant.

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It is expected that new waste management facilities will normally be sited on an existing or planned supply of employment land. The most appropriate locations would be on Class 5 “general industrial” land, where additional protection can be provided by Pollution

Prevention and Control (PPC) and through more stringent controls over noise, vibration and hazardous substances. In the case of waste transfer stations and materials recycling facilities, the most appropriate locations would be on Class 6 "storage or distribution" land (where the distinction from Class 5 is on the basis of a higher level of lorry and van movements). Other types of site, such as brownfield land, would each be treated on their merits. [Further detailed guidance will be provided in *Planning Advice Note 63*.](#)