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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 requires Councils to prepare a Local Development Plan (LDP), which forms the basis for decision making on planning applications. It is a legal requirement that the Development Plan is reviewed and replaced on a 5 year cycle. A key component of that process is the publication of a "Main Issues Report" (MIR) which must be accompanied by a "Monitoring Report".

The first stage in preparing the LDP is the MIR. The MIR is a tool for starting the debate and processes to structure change to the Local Authority area. The Act requires that a Monitoring Statement is prepared alongside publication of the MIR. Planning authorities must monitor:

1. Changes in the principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area and
2. The impact of the policies and the proposals of the existing Plan.

Monitoring is essential for determining what the issues are for the MIR and for justifying why some parts of the existing Plan needs to change. As such, the Monitoring Statement or Report forms an important part of the evidence base for the MIR and subsequent LDP, as well as providing a clearly stated and readily understood baseline for future monitoring in order to serve efficient and high quality plan-making.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Monitoring Report is to assess the effectiveness of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan's (ALDP's) policies in delivering the aims of the plan and to provide an information base for the MIR.

The Scottish Government recognises that a proportionate approach to monitoring is necessary and considers that it should be proportionate to what is required to inform the particular issues being addressed in the plan.

The Planning Authority is to publish the Monitoring Report to support the identification of issues to be included in the MIR which will be published in 2013. The reporting period is from 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013.

1.3 Structure and Content

The main content of the report is structured under 3 main sections:

Statistical Context - Components of Change

Physical

Economic

Social

Environment

Aim Monitoring - Delivering the Vision and Aims

Policy Monitoring - Performance of the Policies

Policies

Departures

Appeals

In each section significant implications for the Local Development Plan are specifically highlighted.

2. Statistical Context - Components of Change

2.1 Physical Characteristics

Land Use

Aberdeenshire covers 632,965 hectares; with just 35 hectares classified as derelict and 48 hectares classified as vacant land.¹

Aberdeenshire is one of the most mixed farming areas in the UK. It's agricultural land covers approximately 518,000 hectares, 9% of Scotland's total agricultural land. This is roughly divided into one third rough grazing, one third crops and one third grass.²

The importance of the agricultural land resource is noted in the development plan and the best quality land provided with protection.

Assets

Aberdeenshire's assets include a public sector housing stock of some 12,900 within it's total housing stock of some 110,000, some 3,500 listed structures, 27. Designed Landscapes, Battlefields and an Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record covering some 18,000 sites. Aberdeenshire has a well-developed asset base including social infrastructure (schools, housing, healthcare facilities); previously developed land; minerals and aggregates (quarries). There is other infrastructure for transport (road, rail, paths, pipelines and bridges) and facilities delivering clean water to homes and industry, and removing waste and sewerage. Aberdeenshire also benefits from other types of infrastructure for energy (power stations, pylons, power cables, wind turbines and pipelines); natural environment (woodland, arable land, forests and agricultural land); tourism and recreation (caravan parks and camping sites); telecommunication (telephone, masts, satellite television and broadband) and for waste management (waste collection, transfer stations and composting facilities). Aberdeenshire's share of the world renowned North-East of Scotland expertise in oil and gas as well as in renewable energy is an additional asset.

The development plan currently protects enhances and, where appropriate, exploits these assets. Policies are in place to augment infrastructure assets where this is necessary to support development.

2.2 Economic Characteristics

Economy

Aberdeenshire's economy largely depends on four sectors: agriculture and rural development, including forestry; energy, including oil and gas and renewable energy; fishing and food and drink. In addition, Aberdeenshire has an important construction industry and a substantial number of people employed in the public sector.

All the headline economic statistics show that overall Aberdeenshire enjoys considerable economic prosperity. To some degree this hides pockets of deprivation and poverty which are identified through the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)³ and some other small area statistics and these are commented on below. Generally Aberdeenshire shows low unemployment and above average incomes together with increasing numbers of employees and businesses, and new business survival rates comfortably above Scottish and UK rates.

Whilst Aberdeenshire has been affected by the recent economic recession its impact has been cushioned to some degree by the effect of the high oil price on the local economy.

¹ Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey

² Agriculture in Aberdeenshire, looking to the future. A study for Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Enterprise November 2008.

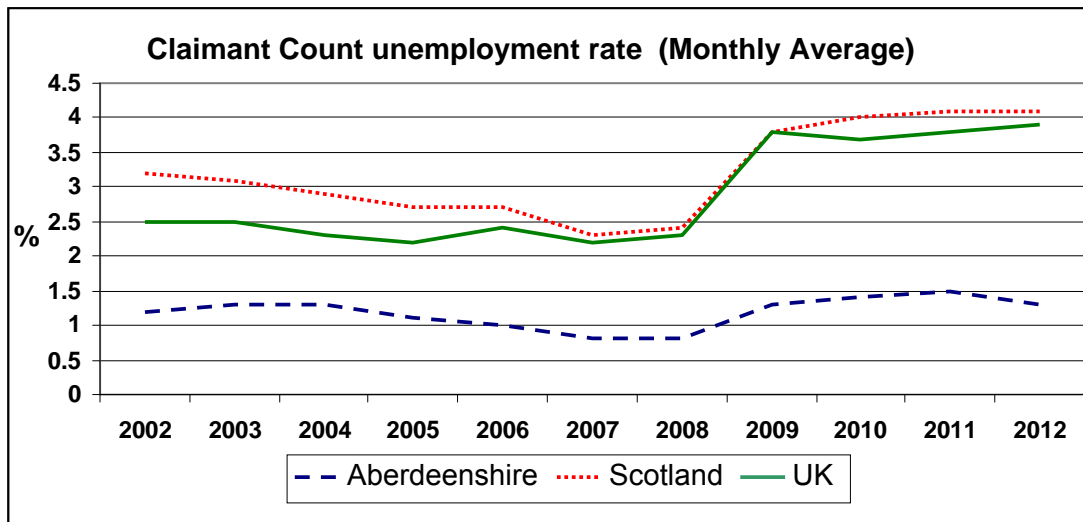
³ Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Local Development Plan supports economic development through both policy and land allocations.

Employment

Aberdeenshire's unemployment rate⁴ is currently the lowest in Scotland at 1.3%. During 2012 Aberdeenshire's unemployment rate, as measured by job seekers claimant count, averaged 1.3%. Whilst this did represent a noticeable increase from the 2007 and 2008 rates of 0.8%, it is considerably below the Scottish and UK rates of 4.1% and 3.9% respectively.

Figure 1 Unemployment Rate – Monthly Average



In tandem with this it has high economic activity and employment rates: 82.5% and 79.5% respectively. For Scotland these figures are, respectively, 77% and 70.8% and for the UK overall, 76.6% and 70.4%.⁵

Total employment for Aberdeenshire, excluding farm agriculture, is shown on Table 1 on page 7. The figures refer to the numbers employed in each sector and include those self-employed.⁶ The largest sector by employment is Manufacturing, followed by Health, Professional, Scientific and Technical and Retail.

⁴ Claimant count with rates and proportions, NOMIS

⁵ Annual Population Survey, Oct 2011 – Sep 2012, NOMIS

⁶ Business Register and Employment Survey, 2011, NOMIS

Table 1 Employment by VAT Based Enterprises - Aberdeenshire

Industry ⁷	Employment
1 : Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	2,200
2 : Mining, Quarrying and Utilities	4,800
3 : Manufacturing	11,700
4 : Construction	8,600
5 : Motor Trades	1,700
6 : Wholesale	3,500
7 : Retail	10,200
8 : Transport and Storage (inc Postal)	4,000
9 : Accommodation and Food Services	6,400
10 : Information and Communication	900
11 : Financial and Insurance	800
12 : Property	1,200
13 : Professional, Scientific and Technical	10,300
14 : Business Administration and Support Services	9,000
15 : Public Administration and Defence	3,900
16 : Education	7,500
17 : Health	10,500
18 : Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Other Services	4,500

No specific support is required for any of these sectors in the Local Development Plan.

Income Levels

The average gross annual income⁸ for full time workers in Aberdeenshire is £29,662, higher than the Scottish average of £25,960 and the second highest out of all Scottish Local Authorities.

Median gross weekly pay in Aberdeenshire underlines its comparative success; it is not the highest amongst local authorities but it is, at £545.40, nearly 10% above the Scottish figure.

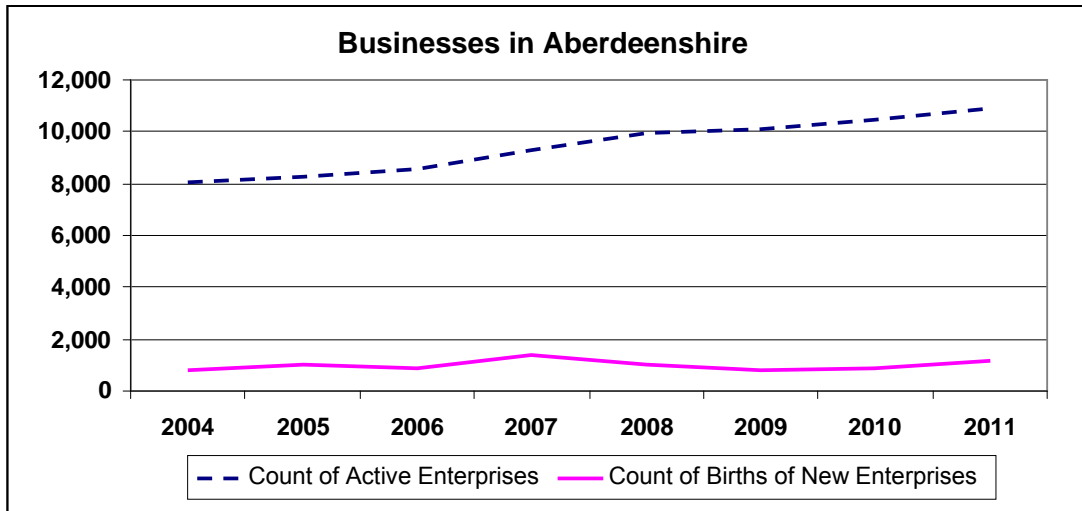
Business Environment

In 2011 Aberdeenshire had 10,890 active enterprises and had seen 1,175 business births. This was the highest number of business births since 2007 and an increase of 34% on the previous year. The number of active enterprises has increased each year since 2004 and seems set to continue growing. (See Figure 2 on page 8)

⁷ UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities 2007

⁸ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2012 Resident Analysis

Figure 2 Business Enterprises Aberdeenshire – Active and Births



In line with the growth in the number of businesses the number of jobs grew also, to 118,000 in 2011, and job density, the number of jobs per person aged 16 – 64, also rose to 0.74.

Employment Land

Average take-up of employment land is 13 hectares per annum, with the greatest activity in settlements close to Aberdeen City such as Westhill, Ellon, Kintore and Portlethen. The 2012 Employment Land Audit shows that there are currently 397 hectares of marketable employment land available in Aberdeenshire across a range of sites and locations⁹. This amount is well in excess of the Structure Plan target of 60 hectares and no further actions are required.

2.3 Social Characteristics

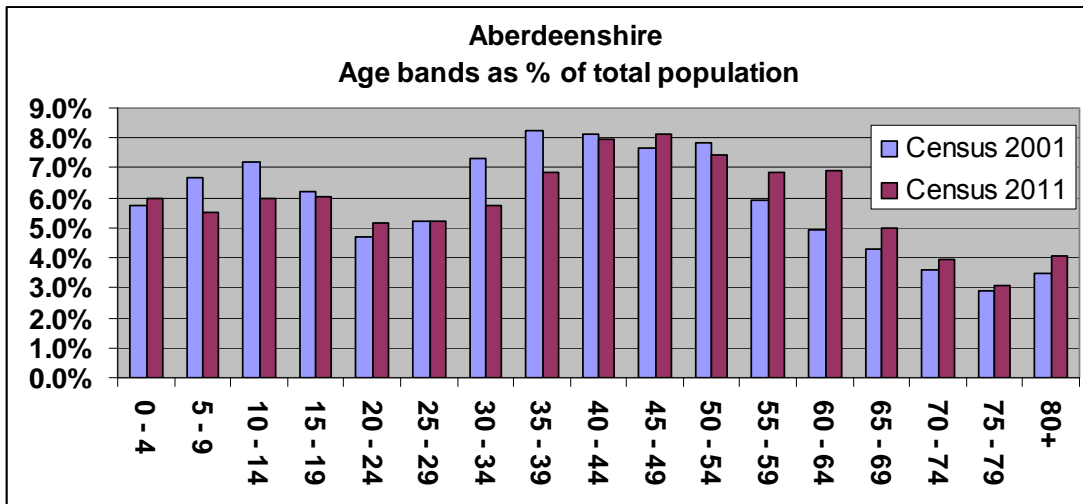
Population

The 2011 Census showed that Aberdeenshire's population had reached 253,000. This represented 11.5% growth in the population over 10 years and was the highest population growth experienced by any Scottish Local Authority over this period. Growth in the Scottish population over the same time was 4.6%.

During this time the age structure of the population started to change. Figure 3 on page 9 shows that the older population is now a greater proportion of the total population than it was in 2001.

⁹ Employment Land Audit 2012

Figure 3 Age Bands as a Percentage of Total Population - Aberdeenshire



The major demographic trend that Aberdeenshire, along with Scotland and the UK as a whole, will have to accommodate over the next decades is the ageing of its population. In Scotland as a whole, though not yet in Aberdeenshire, there are already more people aged over 65 than there are under 15. Population projections¹⁰ based on 2010 figures suggest that Aberdeenshire will reach that point by 2015. This is based on pre-census mid-year population estimates which are now known to have been underestimates and will have to be re-based. It is possible that this will change the date by which this switch is estimated to happen, but the underlying trend is unlikely to be affected. Using the same projections Aberdeenshire's over 65 population is expected to reach 78,500 (30% of total population) by 2035, an increase of 50% on the 2010 figure.

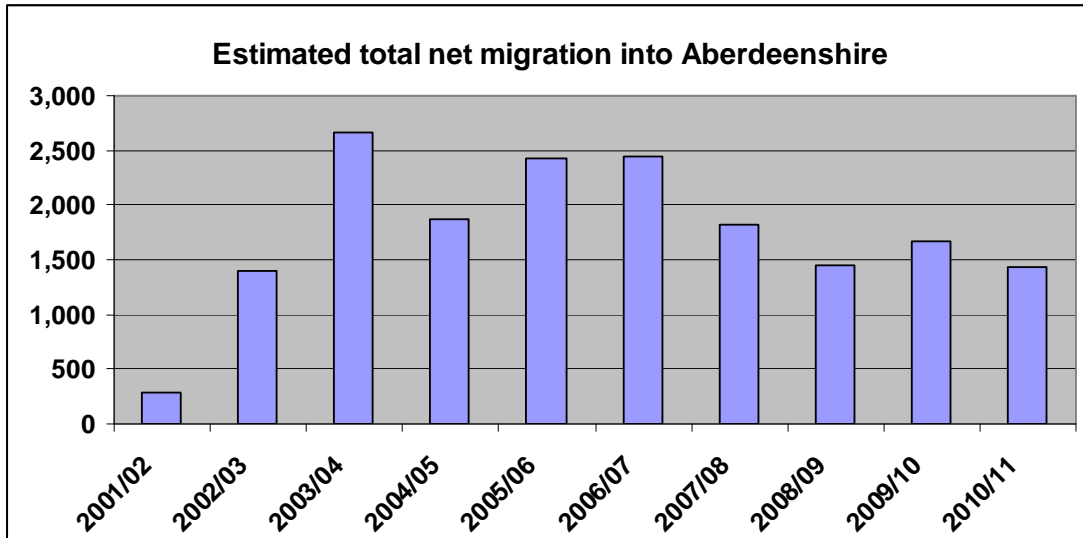
In the latest settlement population estimates produced by the Scottish Government, it was noted that Aberdeenshire has the highest number - some 60 - of settlements (defined as having a population of 500 or more) of all Local Authorities.

Migration

Much of the growth in Aberdeenshire's population is coming from inward migration. Although natural change (births minus deaths) has remained positive within the Council area, the main driver in population growth has been migration. (See Figure 4 on page 10).

¹⁰ Population Projections for Scottish Areas (2010-based), National Records of Scotland

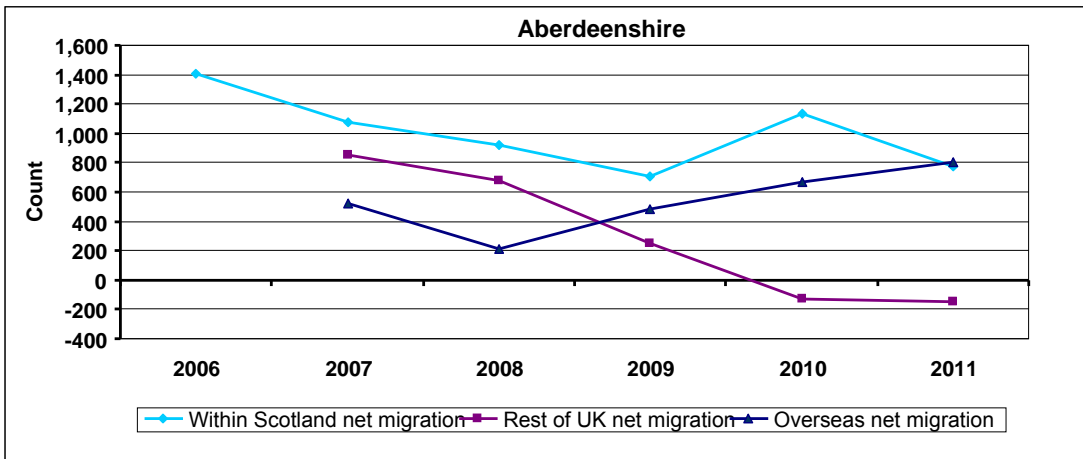
Figure 4 Estimated Total Net Migration into Aberdeenshire



National Records of Scotland divide migration into three types: migration from the rest of Scotland, migration from the rest of the UK and migration from overseas. The major influence on Aberdeenshire has been migration from the rest of Scotland. Since 2007 migration from the rest of the UK has been falling and for the last two years has in fact been negative. Migration from overseas has increased steadily since 2008, reflecting the strong rise in people arriving from the A8 countries, particularly, but not exclusively, Poland.

The chart shown in Figure 5 below shows how the three types of migration have fluctuated over the last five years.

Figure 5 Migration by Type – Aberdeenshire



It is assumed that migration will continue to have an important effect on Aberdeenshire's population. The extent of it may be linked to Aberdeenshire's overall economy and how it performs over the next few years.

Housing

Aberdeenshire has a housing stock of approximately 111,000 dwellings¹¹. In recent years an average of 1,250 new houses have been built annually in Aberdeenshire¹². Aberdeenshire has the second highest number of annual house completions in Scotland after Glasgow City¹³. The housing market remains buoyant here despite a significant slowdown in housebuilding across the rest of Scotland. A wide range of sites are available for future housing development across Aberdeenshire, capable of accommodating more than 15,000 houses. The average house price in Aberdeenshire is £205,500 compared with the Scottish average of £150,000¹⁴.

Table 2 Completions by Housing Market Area - Aberdeenshire

Area	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Aberdeen HMA (Aberdeenshire part)	672	731	583	509	575	766	909	1030	939	811
Rural HMA (excluding CNP)	671	739	624	570	511	398	560	702	660	666
Aberdeenshire (including CNP)	1373	1475	1217	1080	1097	1169	1482	1761	1628	1506

The Housing Land Audit (Final Draft) shows that over the last five years, there were an average of 1,248 housing completions per year, 614 in the Aberdeenshire part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (AHMA) and 623 in the Rural Housing Market Area (RHMA).

Completion rates have been decreasing in the last few years. This is largely due to the economic downturn which has affected speculative housebuilding rates although other parts of Scotland have seen a much sharper decrease in housebuilding than Aberdeenshire. With the adoption of the ALDP in 2012, the new ALDP sites are starting to come on stream boosting the supply of land and in the next five years completions are expected to increase, particularly in the AHMA.

Of all completions, 18% were on sites of less than 5 units in Aberdeenshire as a whole. In the AHMA the proportion was 12% and in the RHMA it was 25%.

Of the sites with 5 or more units, 77% of completions were on greenfield sites and 23% were on brownfield sites.

Source: Housing Land Audit 2013 (Final Draft)

These statistics are in line with expectations and do not impact on the housing land delivery targets in the draft Strategic Development Plan.

¹¹ GROS Estimates of Households and Dwellings in Scotland 2011

¹² Draft Housing Land Audit 2013

¹³ Scottish Government New Build Housing Statistics March 2013

¹⁴ Scottish Government Local Authority Housing Bulletin March 2013

Affordable Housing

In the year 2011/12, consent was granted for 172 affordable housing units across Aberdeenshire. This was a decrease on previous years (see table below). This total includes units contributed by developers as part of private developments as well as units which are wholly publicly funded.

Table 3 Affordable Housing Consents - Aberdeenshire

	2007/8	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Affordable Units Granted Consent	357	418	277	211	172

Source: Affordable Housing Securing Planning Consent Survey 2011/12, Scottish Government

Completions of affordable units by tenure are given below:

Table 4 Completions of Affordable Units by Tenure

Year	Low Cost Home Ownership	Social Rent	Shared Ownership	Mid Market Rent	Total
2010/11	54	197	0	0	251
2011/12	31	82	8	0	121
2012/13	62	96	14	8	180

Source: Aberdeenshire Council Housing Strategic Planning and Delivery Team

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2011 indicates that 415 new affordable units per annum will be required to meet identified need in Aberdeenshire. It is clear that at present there is a significant shortfall in the numbers of new affordable units being completed annually.

Affordable housing completions accounted for approximately 16% of all completions in Aberdeenshire in 2012. Around half of these were on 100% affordable sites developed by Aberdeenshire Council or housing associations. The remainder of affordable units were built as part of larger private developments. Comprehensive data is not yet available on a site by site basis to show what proportion of each development is affordable. For those sites where we do have this information, the proportion ranges from 9% to 49% although for the majority of sites the proportion was less than the 25% required by the ALDP. Work is ongoing to improve the monitoring of affordable housing in order to more accurately assess the impact of ALDP Policy 6.

The deficit between the level of need and the extent of new supply is a significant problem that may require revision of how the Local Development Plan can support provision of affordable housing.

Poverty

It is estimated that 9% of children are living in poverty¹⁵ in Aberdeenshire as a whole, with higher proportions of up to 17% in the north of the area, particularly in Fraserburgh and Peterhead; a figure which is closer to the Scottish average of 19%.

Fuel Poverty

Thirty five percent of households in Aberdeenshire are classified as being in fuel poverty¹⁶ compared with 28% in Scotland as a whole.

¹⁵ End Child Poverty Child Poverty Map of the UK February 2013

¹⁶ Scottish House Condition Survey 2009/2011

Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

Aberdeenshire is the sixth least deprived authority in Scotland according to the measure of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)¹⁷ 2012, having just a 0.4% share of the national deprivation in the 20% most deprived band. The overall pattern of deprivation in Aberdeenshire has not changed significantly since the previous SIMD 2009¹⁸ or, indeed, since the first SIMD in 2004 as illustrated in Fig 6 below. Deprivation in the income, employment, health, education, housing and crime domains continues to be concentrated in Banff & Buchan and Buchan, primarily in parts of Fraserburgh and Peterhead. With the exceptions of education and crime, deprivation levels have remained relatively unchanged since 2009 and the levels of deprivation in all of these domains remain well below the levels for Scotland as a whole.

There has been a relative worsening in educational deprivation since 2009. Crime deprivation also has worsened and there are six areas in Banff & Buchan and Buchan that fall within the top 5% most crime deprived in Scotland.

Aberdeenshire also has a high number of areas with access to services deprivation, reflecting the rurality of the Authority.

Aberdeenshire also has many areas with the least deprivation in Scotland. In fact, 35% of the data zone areas in Aberdeenshire fall within the 20% least deprived areas in Scotland.

Figure 6 Datzones in Most Deprived 5-20% by SIMD - Aberdeenshire



While the local pockets of deprivation are extremely concerning the land use planning system has limited opportunity to effect a resolution. The current Plan supports both higher levels of affordable housing and dedicated economic development measures in disadvantaged areas.

¹⁷ Scottish Government SIMD 2012

¹⁸ Scottish Government SIMD 2009

2.4 Environment Characteristics

Overview

Aberdeenshire's environment is diverse. There are extensive lengths of attractive coasts, moorland edges, upland and moorland plateaux, straths, rivers and valleys. The lowland landscape is rolling and undulating, with conifers, broadleaf woodland, beech woodlands and farmland. Dwellings include farmsteads, cottages, traditional and modern houses. Aberdeenshire contains 3 Ramsar sites, 8 Special Areas of Conservation, 7 Special Protection Areas, 69 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 2 National Nature Reserves, amongst other designations. Although traffic can affect the quality of air we breathe, air quality in Aberdeenshire has consistently been within the EU objective max. of 40 µg/m³ (annual mean limit value).

The changing climate is an important aspect of our environment. Between 2005 and 2008, the total CO₂ emissions of Aberdeenshire increased from 2,152.16 kilotons (kt) to a peak of 2518.62kt before falling to 2335.33kt in 2009. In 2010, total emissions had risen to 2344.17kt.¹⁹ There are implications of our changing climate for our society, environment and economy. We have already begun to experience extreme events, storms and flooding in some parts of Aberdeenshire, with significant effects on buildings and infrastructure and people's livelihoods. It was estimated that there were 18 Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVA) to flooding in Aberdeenshire in 2011. See Table 5 below. In 2011 these areas covered 529 km², 1820 residential properties and 272 non-residential properties.²⁰ It is estimated that the estimated potential damages of developments within PVA is likely to be £17.08 million. In addition, 2,219 properties are at risk within inland floodplains and 1,743 properties are at risk within coastal areas below 5m OD.

Table 5 Indicators of Potentially Vulnerable Areas

Indicator	2007	2010	2011
Total CO ₂ Emissions (kt)	2,391.21	2,344.17	No data
Per Capita CO ₂ Emissions (kt)	10.0	9.5	No data
Industry and Commercial CO ₂ Emissions (kt)	841.39	791.33	No data
Road Transport CO ₂ Emissions (kt)	674.39	622.62	No data
LULUCF* CO ₂ Emissions (kt)	85.19	285.38	No data
Properties at Risk Within Inland Floodplain	No data	No data	2,219
Properties at Risk Within Coastal Areas Below 5m OD	No data	No data	1,743
No. of Potential Vulnerable Area (PVA) to Flooding	No data	No data	18
Estimated Weighted Annual Average Damages Within PVA	No data	No data	£17.08m
Total Area (Km ²) in PVA	No data	No data	529
Residential Properties in PVA	No data	No data	1820
Non-Residential Properties in PVA	No data	No data	272

¹⁹ DECC (2012) Department of Environment and Climate Change

²⁰ SEPA (2011) Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009: Flooding in Scotland – A Consultation on Potentially Vulnerable Areas and Local Plan Districts- Appendix 6: Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City. Edinburgh: SEPA

DECC Data dated 23 Aug 2012 and SEPA (2011) A Consultation on Potentially Vulnerable Areas.

Issues of resilience of new development to the extremes caused by climate change and the need to assist in the transformation to a low carbon economy are significant issues that may result in greater prominence of this topic in the next Local Development Plan.

3. Aims Monitoring - Delivering the Vision and Aims

This section addresses the 6 aims of the ALDP and the various indicators identified to be used in assessing or measuring the progress of the plan in achieving these aims.

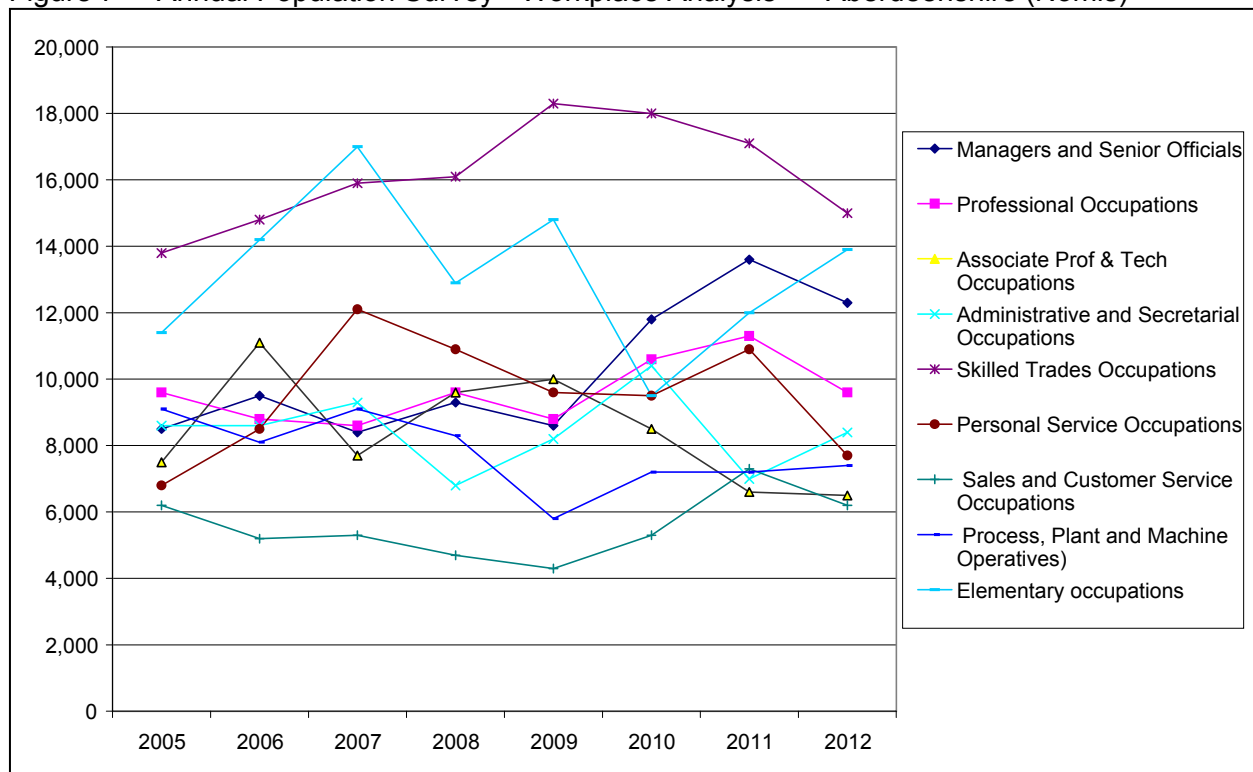
Grow and diversify the economy

Indicators: 1. Take-up of employment land – Historical development rates; 2. Changes in the sectoral composition of industry - moving away from mono culture; 3. Level of unemployment; 4. Levels of GDP and GVA; 5. No. of business start-ups.

Average annual take-up of employment land in the last 5 years has been 13.2 hectares across Aberdeenshire. Development has been concentrated mainly in Westhill, Ellon, Kintore and Portlethen; reflecting the fact that in the immediate vicinity of Aberdeen the commercial property sector has in recent years been outperforming the rest of the UK, with the exception of Central London.

The time series, over the period 2009-12, of UK business activity by size and location (Office of National Statistics) shows flat-lining for all sectors with the notable exception of the professional, scientific and technical sector, which has increased by 30% reflecting a consolidation of the monoculture in the area. At the same time, the time series of workplace analysis by occupation (Figure 7 below) shows a significant change occurring across industry in 2011-12; that is, a general decrease in skilled workplaces and a corresponding general increase in unskilled workplaces.

Figure 7 Annual Population Survey - Workplace Analysis²¹ - Aberdeenshire (Nomis)



²¹ By Standard Occupational Classification 2000

During 2012 Aberdeenshire's unemployment rate, as measured by the Job Seekers claimant count, averaged 1.3%. Whilst this did represent a noticeable increase from the 2007 and 2008 rates of 0.8%, it is considerably below the Scottish and UK rates of 4.1% and 3.9% respectively. (Refer Section 2.2 Economic Characteristics).

Economic output in Aberdeenshire, as measured by Gross Domestic Product was just over £3.5 billion in 2011, accounting for 3.6% of Scotland's GDP. Gross Value Added (GVA) per employee in Aberdeenshire was £74,606 in 2010. This is almost 25% higher than the Scottish average of £59,934. GVA per employee is a measure of an area's productivity. GVA per head for Aberdeen City and Shire in 2011 was £31,944, the second highest figure for regions in the UK after Inner London (£62,398).

In 2011 Aberdeenshire had 10,890 active enterprises and saw 1,175 business births. This was the highest number of business births since 2007 and an increase of 34% on the previous year. The number of active enterprises has increased each year since 2004 and seems set to continue growing. In line with the growth in the number of businesses the number of jobs grew also, to 118,000 in 2011, and job density, the number of jobs per person aged 16 – 64, also rose to 0.74. (Refer Section 2.2 Economic Characteristics).

No change is required in relation to this aim.

To take on the challenges of sustainable development and climate change

Indicators: 1. Number of renewable energy installations; 2. Energy production from renewables; 3. Development in flood protected areas; 4. Air quality; 5. Soil quality; 6. Public transport share; 7. Levels of commuting by car, walking, cycling and pedestrian amenity; 8. Town centre health checks indicators; 9. Rural facilities service provision.

During the reporting period out of 149 applications for wind farms and / or medium to large wind turbines, 85 were approved. Similarly, 93 out of 111 development proposals supporting Aberdeenshire Council's carbon neutrality policy were approved. These approvals will potentially increase the number of renewable energy installations, increase energy production from renewables and improve energy efficiency in new developments. The policies in the ALDP are likely therefore to have significant, positive effect on climate change by reducing Aberdeenshire's CO₂ emissions.

Although climate data for Aberdeenshire is not available for the reporting period, the trend from 2007 to 2010/11 indicates an improving picture in relation to total, per capita, industrial / commercial and road transport CO₂ emissions. There are however 18 Potentially Vulnerable Areas in Aberdeenshire presenting many challenges from the effects of climate change (Refer Section 2.4 Environment Characteristics). Where necessary, developments have been or will be subject to drainage impact assessment and or full Flood Risk Assessment (e.g. at Mintlaw, Stuartfield, Newburgh, Blackdog and Sauchen).

Current data on air quality is not available as it is produced two years in arrears. However, data is available for 2006 and 2011. During that period there has been improvement in most indicators: smoke-related complaints have fallen from 69 to 41; dust-related complaints have increased from 16 to 20; odour / fume-related complaints have fallen from 126 to 52 and the concentration of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) has decreased slightly. In Aberdeenshire there are no properties exposed to particulate matter (PM₁₀) concentrations above EU and Scottish objectives. However, it tends to approach the EU objective in certain Aberdeenshire towns. These towns include Inverurie, Mintlaw, Peterhead, Stonehaven and Westhill. Over the past 6 years, the emission of NO₂ has varied between 9 and 36 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³). The EU objective of 40 µg/m³ has never been exceeded. There is no evidence to suggest that the ALDP has had any significant adverse effect on air quality over the reporting period.

How waste is collected and managed affects the quality of the soil. The trend in data available from SEPA for waste for 2009/10 and 2010/11 indicates that while total municipal and industrial waste arisings are increasing, total commercial and construction / demolition waste

arising are falling. At the same time, both municipal and biodegradable municipal waste land filled is on the increase, yet municipal waste either recycled or composted is falling.

Aberdeenshire's prime agricultural land (Grade 1-3.1) is concentrated in central and southern Aberdeenshire, with Grade 2 mainly in the vicinity of Laurencekirk (approx 950 hectares). The Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey contains details of vacant and derelict sites which may be available for development. In 2012, there were 35 hectares of derelict land and 48 hectares of vacant land on a range of sites across Aberdeenshire. Records available from Aberdeenshire Council's Public Register of Contaminated Land indicate that over the monitoring period there was no evidence of land contamination necessitating summary entry, remediation statement, assessment action or special designation. The 2013 Housing Land Audit (Final Draft) shows there is capacity for 1,817 units on brownfield sites which is approximately 11% of the total land supply. 1,566 units or 86% of these brownfield sites are within the effective supply, the remainder have some form of constraint. The 2012 Employment Land Audit shows 105 hectares of land on brownfield sites which is approximately 17% of the total land supply. This is almost entirely because of the 100 hectare allocation at Edzell and this site is currently regarded as constrained.

Overall, the 2011 projection for Aberdeenshire shows that public transport share is 13.2%. Annual passenger figures, for supported services, indicate that passenger numbers peaked in 2009/10, and have decreased to the 2006/07 level of just over 1m, in the most recent data, for 2011/12. Overall, the 2011 projection for Aberdeenshire shows that the percentage of people in all age groups likely to walk is 24.49%. For cycling, the figure is 1.08%; for local bus, it is 10.03%; for train journeys, it is 2.05%; for taxis, it is 1.13% with the car leading with 64.7%.

Town Centre Health Checks are carried out every two years on the nine towns in Aberdeenshire which have a population over 3000. Over 30 indicators are assessed and these are grouped into seven broad categories: Retailer representation, Accessibility, Diversity of uses, Number and range of shops, Quality of town centre environment, Vacant properties, Safety and security and Pedestrian flows and Commercial performance. Each town is assessed against the indicator on a range of 1 – 5, where 1 indicates a poor performance and 5 is considered satisfactory. The most recent checks were carried out in 2011. In 2011 the only town to have no indicator assessed at 1 was Inverurie. Stonehaven, Banchory, Ellon and Turriff had one indicator assessed at 1. All towns had some indicators assessed at 2, suggesting that all towns had some areas of concern. There were three indicators assessed at 1 or 2 in five or more of the towns. These were the Provision of facilities for cyclists, the Amount of vacant floor space and the Availability of food shopping. It should be noted that no town was assessed at 1 using the indicators under Diversity of uses, Number and range of shops or Quality of town centre environment, although some towns were assessed at 2. The next round of Town Centre Health Checks will allow comparisons to be made over time, either by individual town results or by indicator.

The Rural Facilities Monitor shows a continuing downward trend in the number of facilities in rural areas such as shops, post offices, banks and petrol stations. Closures of key facilities can have a significant negative impact on the sustainability of rural communities and the quality of life for residents. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a decrease of 40% in the number of post offices, 46% in the number of banks and 42% in the number of petrol stations. In addition, many settlements have lost their only shop. All areas of Aberdeenshire have been affected by this trend, particularly Banff and Buchan and Kincardine and Mearns. The Rural Facilities Monitor is currently being updated and will provide data on the change between 2010 and 2013.

Change is required under this aim in terms of climate change.

To make sure the area has enough development land to provide for people, homes and jobs to support services and facilities

Indicator: 1. Availability of Housing and Employment Land.

The Housing Land Audit 2013 (Final Draft) shows that there is currently a 5.7 year supply of housing land in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (HMA) and a 6.2 year supply in the Rural HMA. This is a significant increase in the land supply since 2012 when the Aberdeen HMA had just 4.4 yrs and the Rural HMA had 4.9yrs. The increase is due to the inclusion of Phase 1 ALDP housing allocations this year. The 2012 Employment Land Audit shows that there are currently 397 hectares of marketable employment land in the Strategic Growth Areas of Aberdeenshire, well in excess of the Structure Plan target of 60 hectares. These figures indicate that the aim of providing enough development land is currently being achieved.

No change is required in relation to this aim.

To protect and improve assets and resources

Indicators: 1. Development in designated nature conservation sites; 2. Loss of prime agricultural land; 3. No. of Conservation Area reviews; 4. No. of Towns Historic Initiative Reviews. (Refer to Section 2.4 Environmental Characteristics).

During the reporting period planning applications to which the policy on Protection of nature conservation sites has been applied were 20 in number. Out of this number, 16 were approved and 4 were refused. In the same period there were 255 applications to which the policy on Protection of the wider biodiversity and geodiversity had been applied. Of these 218 applications were approved while 37 applications were refused. Similarly, out of 31 application to which the policy on Protection and Conservation of agricultural land had been applied 26, were approved and 5 were refused. The records show that unless the proposed applications are likely to have no detrimental effects on biodiversity, they were refused. The ALDP is therefore unlikely to have had negative effects on biodiversity.

3 No. new Conservation Areas have been scheduled in the reporting period (Auchenblae, Benholm and Tarland), representing a significant addition to the existing 37 (Refer to Section 2.4 Environmental Characteristics).

Records available from Historic Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council do not indicate that the ALDP has had any adverse effects on the historic environment whose assets remains as follows: listed buildings (3,715), buildings at risk (228), conservation areas (37 (plus 3)), scheduled ancient monuments (581), gardens and designed landscapes (27), archaeological sites and monuments record (17631) as well as battlefields in the past year. Banff and Peterhead have attracted funds from the Townscape Heritage Initiative Fund.

No change is required in relation to this aim.

To promote sustainable mixed communities with the highest standards of design

Indicators: 1. Number of Masterplans approved; 2. Number of affordable housing units within developments; 3. Number of submissions to the design awards; 4. Number of different types, sizes and tenures of housing constructed; 5. Level of new mixed development completed and levels of local service provision.

Over the reporting period, 12 Masterplans have been approved: Mintlaw (1), Newburgh (1), Newmachar (2), Edzell (1), Elsick (1), Sauchen (2) Blackdog (1) Peterhead (2) and Stuartfield (1)

In the year 2011/12, consent was granted for 172 affordable housing units across Aberdeenshire. Affordable housing completions accounted for approximately 16% of all completions in Aberdeenshire in 2012. Around half of these were on 100% affordable sites

developed by Aberdeenshire Council or Housing Associations. The remainder of affordable units were built as part of larger private developments.

Comprehensive data is not yet available on a site by site basis to show what proportion of each development is affordable. For those sites where we do have this information, the proportion ranges from 9% to 49% although for the majority of sites the proportion was less than the 25% required by the ALDP. Work is ongoing to improve the monitoring of affordable housing in order to more accurately assess the impact of ALDP Policy 6. We do not currently hold comprehensive information on house types and sizes. However, it will be available for affordable developments from 2013. See previous section for tenure (Refer to Section 2.3 Social Characteristics).

The number of submissions to the design awards in 2008 was 181, in 2010 there were 161 and in 2012 there were 106 entries.

In Buchan there are mixed developments in Mintlaw, Peterhead and Stuartfield over 6 sites covered by Masterplans / Development Frameworks, for 1500 houses, health care centres, care homes, community centres, schools, neighbourhood retail centres, household waste management and district heating facilities. They contribute to access, footpaths, cycling and allotments. 40% of the overall Masterplan area has been reserved for open space. Developments in Formartine accommodate over 40 units of residential developments in Newburgh and a business park, light industrial park, economic centre regional foodhall, hotel, retail, village centre and biomass boiler at Blackdog. In Garioch, there are similar mixed developments for nearly 400 houses in Sauchen, Newmachar and Broadshade (Westhill). Mixed developments in Kincardine and Mearns will add over 1744 to the stock, at Elsick and Edzell.

No change is required in relation to this aim.

To make efficient use of the transport network

Indicators: 1. Proportion of new developments with higher densities to support efficient transport network; 2. Distance for residents to reach a transport "hub" and number of residents served; 3. Deliver improved public transport services. Public transport share / level of passenger numbers on buses; 4. Levels of commuting by car, cycle use and pedestrian amenity.

Data extracted from the approved Masterplans / Development Frameworks indicate that although there are variations in densities, the developments aim to achieve an overall density of 30 dwellings per hectare or above. The developments are flatted and terraced properties, semi-detached and detached houses of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedrooms. Current data on the other three indicators is not available until the appropriate Census 2011 release.

No change is required in relation to this aim.

4. Policy Monitoring - Performance of the Policies

Method Statement: As part of the Monitoring Project process, Stage 1 required the identification of key policies to be monitored. The ALDP presents 14 policy topics with 53 Supplementary Policy Guidances. The Scottish Government recognises that a proportionate approach to monitoring is necessary and considers that the monitoring should be proportionate to what is required to inform the particular issues being addressed in the plan. Through a workshop engagement process with the Policy team, 19 key policies with corresponding Supplementary Guidances were identified to be the focus for monitoring.

This section will examine the performance of these 19 policies over the monitoring / reporting period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013. The analysis will look at the levels of use of the individual policies and at departures and appeals recorded against the particular policy.

4.1 Policies

Refer to Table 6 on page 28: Key policies used in determining planning applications (1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013)

Policy 1 Business development SG Bus3: Working from home - ALDP01BUS3

Existing Policy Use: There has been limited use of this policy. There were 4 decisions based on ALDP Policy 1 SG Bus3 in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013. The policy was not used to refuse an application. There were no applications approved as departures from this policy during the report period. A planning appeal (P/PPA/110/2109) against refusal of permission for a residential caravan on a farm was submitted and allowed. The application for the siting of a caravan to support a farm use was considered by the Council and refused on a number of policies including Policy 1 SG Bus 3. The Reporter, however, disagreed with the Council and decided the proposal complied with the Development Plan and noted that this policy was not directly relevant to the matter.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 1 Business development SG Bus4: Tourist facilities and accommodation - ALDP01BUS4

Existing Policy Use: Policy 1 SG Bus4 has been used in 32 planning decisions in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013. There were 29 approvals and 3 refusals.

There was one application approved as a departure from Policy 1 SG Bus4 during the report period. This application (KM/APP/2011/3869) was for 4 dwellinghouses and garages and the erection of a soft play barn at Story Book Glen. The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended the application for refusal. However, the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee (KMAC) at their meeting of 26/06/2012, were minded to agree that the application for departure be referred to the Infrastructure Services Committee, confirming their support for the proposal subject to a legal agreement and appropriate conditions. The KMAC stated that "whilst the application was contrary to Policy 4 Special Types of Rural Land (SG STRLtype2: Greenbelt) and Policy 10 Enabling development (SG Enabling Development 1: Enabling development), it was however felt to be in-line with Policy 1 Business development (SG Bus4: Tourist facilities and accommodation). In this respect, the terms of Policy 1, which seek to support economic growth and business development were considered significant material considerations in this instance, which provide a justification for departing from Policies 4 and 10. The ISC (on 23/08/2012) agreed to endorse the decision of the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee and grant Planning Permission in Principle and to delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Building Standards subject to a number of conditions.

There were 2 appeals lodged. The first appeal, P/PPA/110/2113, was on the application for a change of use of the Station Hotel, 18 Seaforth Street, Fraserburgh (BB/APP/2011/2869) to residential multiple occupancy which was refused by Banff and Buchan Area Committee (24/01/2012) against the planner recommendation. The appeal was sustained. The Reporter based his decision to allow the proposal on Policy 1 SG Bus4 and stated that the proposal did not conflict with Local Development Plan Supplementary Policy SG Bus4 in relation to tourist facilities and accommodation.

The second appeal, P/PPA/110/2114, was on the application for the formation of a caravan park and farm shop at Fortrie Turriff (F/APP/2010/4032) which was refused by the Formartine Area Committee (22/02/2012), on the grounds of Policy1 SG Bus4. The appeal was dismissed. The Reporter found that the proposed development would not be in accordance with SG Bus 4.

Given the specific circumstances of both departures and appeals, no change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 1 Business development SG Bus5: Development in the Energetica Framework Area - ALDP01BUS5

Existing Policy Use: There has been limited use of this policy as a policy to support or refuse applications specifically within the Energetica corridor. There were 2 decisions based on ALDP Policy 1 SG Bus5 in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013. The policy was referred to by the Reporter in his dismissal of the appeal P/PPA/110/2140 for 22 dwellinghouses and business premises (home/work units) at Rashiereive, Foveran (F/APP/2012/1743). There were no applications approved as departures from this policy during the Report period.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 2 Town centres and retailing SG Retail1: Town centres and retailing - ALDP02RTL1

Existing Policy Use: There were 41 decisions that made reference to Policy 2 SG Retail1 in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 37 approvals and 4 refusals. However, most of the applications were not for new retail space; there were 4 applications for new retail space. There were 2 appeals against applications that were refused on the basis of Policy 2 SG Retail1. The first appeal (P/PPA/110/2156) was on 1 The Square, Torphins (APP/2012/3455) for a change of use from a shop to a hot food take-away. The Reporter suggested that Policy 2 and its associated Supplementary Guidance have not been written with villages such as Torphins in mind, and therefore only offers 'the broadest of guidance'. The Reporter goes on to suggest that "as far as the general retail provisions of the plan are concerned, the proposal accords with the policy approach". The Reporter allowed the appeal, as he did not believe Policy 8 was relevant, and the applicant can comply with the requirements of the Environmental Health Service.

The second appeal (P/PPA/110/2112) was on the former Haldanes Store, Ellon (APP/2011/1638) for the demolition of a supermarket and the erection of 63 flats and 1000 sqm. of retail units. The Reporter commented that the consideration was whether the reduction in retail space (from 1500 sqm. to 1000 sqm.) would have a significant adverse effect on the vitality and viability of the town centre. The Reporter came to the conclusion that there was limited chance of a supermarket re-opening on the site, and that the loss of 500 sqm. of retail space represented a relatively small proportion of the total retail space available in Ellon. The Reporter concluded that "the reduction in retail floor space does not justify refusal of planning permission". The Reporter dismissed the appeal.

There were no applications approved as departures from this policy during the report period.

These decisions, taken in isolation, do not result in the need for any change to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 2 Town centres and retailing SG Retail2: Retail development in the countryside - ALDP02RTL2

Existing Policy Use: There has been limited use of Policy 2 SG Retail2, with just one application for an extension to the retail area and formation of a store at an existing garden centre in the countryside (588 sqm). There were no applications approved as departures or on appeal from Policy 2 SG Retail2 during the report period.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 3 Development in the countryside SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside - ALDP03RD1

Existing Policy Use: This policy was the second most regularly used policy in the ALDP (Policy 8 SG LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development was the most used policy in assessing planning applications) over the report period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013. There were 421 decisions based on Policy 3 SG Rural Development1. 86% of the policy use was in

approving applications. There was the same number of approvals in both the Aberdeen and Rural Housing Market Areas.

Sixty-two percent of the planning applications approved under this policy were for developments on previously developed / brownfield land (A2), particularly cumulative applications resulting in groups of more than 3.

Seventeen percent of the planning applications refused under this policy were for developments on previously developed / brownfield land (A2), particularly cumulative applications resulting in groups of more than 3.

The number of applications approved and refused under this policy relating to A4 – Farm succession were low representing just under 3% and 1% accordingly of the total approvals and refusals under Policy 3 SG Rural Development1.

Policy 3 SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside was the policy being departed from the most over the report period. Of the 44 departure decisions, 14 were recorded from Policy 3 SG Rural Development1, representing 32% of the departures. Of the 24 dismissed appeals, 9 were dismissed on the grounds of Policy 3 SG Rural Development1, representing almost 40% of the dismissed appeals.

Appeal P/PPA/110/2102 (F/APP/2011/1332) was for the erection of 24 dwellinghouses at site at south of Aberdeen / Tarves Road, Pitmedden. The application was for an increase in the number of dwellings from the ALP allocation (EH1 for 14 units) and the southern portion of the site was outwith the settlement boundary. The Reporter dismissed the appeal under ALDP Policy 3 SG Rural Development1 and stated: “As Pitmedden falls within the defined Aberdeen Housing Market Area and is not identified for small scale organic growth.” The Reporter also referred to ALDP Policy 8, in that development on allocated sites must conform to previously agreed Development Frameworks or Masterplans.

Appeal P/PPA/110/2108 (G/APP/2010/2075) was for the erection of 60 houses plus a bridge, business and tourism accommodation, visitors centre to Bishops Palace and renovation of cottage at land at Fetternear Estate near Kemnay. The Reporter referred to a number of ALDP policies and stated that the scale of the new build housing proposed was not supported by Policy 3 SG Rural Development1 and dismissed the appeal.

Appeal P/PPA/110/2139 (G/APP/2011/1927) was for the erection of 15 dwellinghouses at Whiteford. The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended approval to Garioch Area Committee (19/06/2012) as the principle of developing the site had been previously accepted but did not feature in the ALDP. The Garioch Area Committee refused the application as the site was not allocated in ALDP and was in the countryside. The Reporter dismissed the appeal.

Appeal P/PPA/110/2136 (M/APP/2012/1644) was for the erection of 2 dwellinghouses at Woodside Cottage, Ballogie. The report by the Head Planning and Building Standards to Marr Area Committee (11/09/2012) says that under Policy 3 SG Rural Development1 the proposal for 2 dwellings would constitute organic growth. However the Marr Area Committee refused the application for non-compliance with ALDP Policies 3, 8 and 9. The Reporter upheld this and did not consider the proposal to be organic growth and dismissed the application.

Appeal P/PPA/110/2152 (G/APP/2012/3688) was for the erection of 50 houses at Land to the east of Main Street, Sauchen. 23 of the proposed 50 houses would be located within the boundary of the H1 site but 27 houses would be located to the south of the boundary on unallocated land outwith the settlement boundary. The Reporter dismissed the appeal as the proposal conflicted with Policy 3 SG Rural Development1.

Appeal P/PPA/110/2151 (M/APP/2012/2367) was for the erection of a dwellinghouse at Cairnton, Inchmarlo. The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended refusal of the application as the site was situated in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area and part B of Policy 3 was therefore not applicable. This was upheld by the Reporter who dismissed the appeal.

Three further appeals; P/PPA/110/2128 (BB/APP/2012/1608) for the erection of 3 dwellinghouses at Upper Crook, Crudie, P/PPA/110/2150 (B/APP/2012/3322) for the erection of a dwellinghouse at Glendaveny and P/PPA/110/2158 (BB/2012/4140) for the erection of a dwellinghouse at King Edward, Banff were dismissed by the Reporter as the proposals were contrary to Policy 3: Development in the countryside as the proposal failed to meet the criteria set out in SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside.

Given the scale of departures against this policy this may merit review.

Policy 3 Development in the countryside SG Rural Development2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines – ALDP03RD2

Existing Policy Use: There were 149 decisions based on Policy 3 SG Rural Development2 in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 85 approved decisions (57%) and 64 refused decisions (43%). This policy was amongst the most regularly used policies in ALDP.

There have been 9 applications approved as departures from Policy 3 SG Rural Development2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines out of the total of 44 departures for the report period. This represents 20% of the granted departures.

Policy 3 SG Rural Development 2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines was the most used policy in dismissing and sustaining of appeals. This policy was in most cases used in conjunction with Policy 12 SG Landscape1: Landscape character. There were 9 appeals that were refused on the basis of this policy.

Given the scale of departures against this policy this may merit review.

Policy 5 Housing land supply SG Housing1: Housing land allocations 2007 – 2016 - ALDP05HSG1

Existing Policy Use: There were 5 decisions based on Policy 5 SG Housing1: Housing land allocations 2007 – 2016 in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 1 approval and 4 refusals. There have been 3 applications refused as departures from Policy 5 SG Housing1. Appeals were lodged for 2 of the applications, one allowed and one refused.

The first departure application was for 35 dwellinghouses and a district heating facility at Millbank, Sauchen (APP/2009/2205). The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended the application be refused and the Garioch Area Committee (23/04/2013) concurred with this recommendation and refused the application. 8 of the proposed houses lie outwith Site M1 (as identified in the Settlement Statement for Millbank in ALDP 2012) and outside the settlement boundary. Site M1 is allocated for houses, employment land and community facilities. The housing development on its own was considered unacceptable and contrary to the Development Plan. No appeal was lodged.

The second departure application (APP/2012/1874) was for the erection of residential units at Udney Green. The site lies within an area allocated in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan as EH1 suitable for 15 houses. The resultant number of houses on site EH1 would result in an extra 3 houses (increase to 18 houses). The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended the application be refused and the Garioch Area Committee (12/02/2013) concurred with this recommendation and refused the application. An appeal (P/PPA/110/2164) was lodged with Scottish Government (02/05/2013) and the Reporter allowed it. The Reporter felt (para 7 of his decision) that "it was not remotely unusual for a site's capacity to be expressed as an approximation at development plan stage. This is invariably well before detailed proposals are worked up, and a little latitude is not at all unusual by the time an application is determined. I agree that increases from 6 houses to 9, or from 15 houses to 18, probably lie at the limits of reasonable flexibility." The Reporter also stated that he was "not convinced that those limits would be crossed to a serious extent. This is partly because the additional houses are smaller than the original detached units. By the same token the additional volume of development would not be as large as an additional 3 detached units.

The upshot would be a better range of house types and improved availability to those at an early stage on the property ladder. Furthermore the planning authority retains full control of what might happen on the adjoining H1 allocation - whether or not its eventual yield is as low as 20 units.”

The third departure application (APP/2012/3688) from this Policy 5 SG Housing1: Housing land allocations 2007 – 2016 was for the erection of 50 houses at Land to the east of Main Street, Sauchen. 23 of the proposed 50 houses would be located within the boundary of the H1 site but 27 houses would be located to the south of the boundary on unallocated land outwith the settlement boundary. The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended the application be refused and the Garioch Area Committee (15/01/2013) concurred with this recommendation and refused the application. An appeal (P/PPA/110/2152) was lodged against the Council refusal. The appeal was dismissed by the Reporter. The Reporter (para 5 of his decision) stated “Approval of such a substantial number of houses outwith the approved village settlement boundary so soon after adoption of the plan would, in my view, bring the development plan process into disrepute”.

These decisions, taken in isolation, do not result in the need for any change to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 5 Housing land supply SG Housing2: Housing land allocations 2017 to 2023 and early draw down - ALDP05HSG2

Existing Policy Use: This policy has not been used during this report period 1 June 2012 and 1 June 2013. This is to be expected as this relates to Phase 2.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 6 Affordable housing SG Affordable Housing1: Affordable Housing - ALDP06AHSG1

There were 2 decisions based on Policy 6 SG Affordable Housing1 during this report period 1 June 2012 and 1 June 2013, 1 approval and 1 refusal. The approved application which refers to Policy 6 SG Affordable Housing 1 was an application for 41 dwellinghouses on the wider Broadshade site at Westhill. 6 affordable housing units are to be provided on the site and the Head of Planning and Building Standards, in his report to the Garioch Area Committee (14/05/2013) states “the Planning Service is satisfied that the proposal is in keeping with Policy 6 SG Affordable Housing 1.”

The refused application, APP/2012/3688, was for 50 houses at Land to the east of Main Street, Sauchen (referred to above under Policy 5 SG Housing1: Housing land allocations 2007 – 2016). The application, which was a departure, was refused by Council (Garioch Area Committee 15/01/2013) and the appeal (P/PPA/110/2152) was subsequently dismissed.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 7 Other special housing needs SG SNH3: Gypsies / travellers - ALDP07SNH3

Existing Policy Use: This policy has not been used during this report period 1 June 2012 and 1 June 2013.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 8 Layout, siting and design of new development SG LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development - ALDP08LSD2

Existing Policy Use: This policy was the most widely used policy from the 19 key policies currently being monitored. Over 50% of planning applications have been assessed using Policy 8 SG LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development in both approvals (90% of applications) and refusals (10% of applications).

The policy used the most times in the dismissal of appeals was Policy 3 SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside and the rural development policy was in most cases used in conjunction with Policy 8 SG LSD 2: Layout, siting and design of new development. Policy 8 SG LSD 2: Layout, siting and design of new development has also been cited in six instances by the Reporter in sustaining appeal applications.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 8 Layout, siting and design of new development SG LSD5: Public open space - ALDP08LSD5

Existing Policy Use: There were 32 decisions that made reference to Policy 8 SG LSD5: Public open space in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 29 approvals and 3 refusals. There were no appeal applications considered from Policy 8 SG LSD5: Public open space. There was one application approved as a departure from this policy during the report period. The planning application (APP/2012/2440) was recommended for approval by the Head of Planning and Building Standards for a COU of public open space to dwellinghouse curtilage. The Buchan Area Committee upheld the departure reason given as by the planning report: The proposed development by virtue of its location and small nature in relation to the larger areas of open space surrounding Dale View Drive would not have a significant adverse impact upon the wider character nor amenity value of the area.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 10 Enabling development SG Enabling Development1: Enabling development - ALDP10ED1

Existing Policy Use: There has been limited use of Policy 10 SG Enabling Development1: Enabling development. There were 5 decisions that made reference to the policy in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 1 approval and 4 refusals (which refer to a number of policies collectively).

There was 1 application approved as a departure from Policy 10 SG Enabling Development1: Enabling development during the report period. This application (KMAC/APP/2011/3869) was for 4 dwellinghouses and garages and the erection of a soft play barn at Story Book Glen. The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended the application for refusal. However, the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee at their meeting of 26/06/2012, were minded to agree that the application for departure be referred to the Infrastructure Services Committee, confirming their support for the proposal subject to a legal agreement and appropriate conditions. The KMAC stated that "whilst the application was contrary to Policy 4 Special Types of Rural Land (SG STRLtype2: Greenbelt) and Policy 10 Enabling development (SG Enabling Development 1: Enabling development), it was however felt to be in-line with Policy 1 Business development (SG Bus4: Tourist facilities and accommodation). In this respect, the terms of Policy 1, which seek to support economic growth and business development were considered significant material considerations in this instance to provide a justification for departing from Policies 4 and 10". The ISC (on 23/08/2012) agreed to endorse the decision of the Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee and grant Planning Permission in Principle and to delegate authority to the Head of Planning and Building Standards subject to a number of conditions.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 11 Natural heritage SG Natural Environment1: Protection of nature conservation sites - ALDP11NENV1

Existing Policy Use: There has been limited use of Policy 11 SG Natural Environment1: Protection of nature conservation sites. There were 20 decisions that made reference to the policy in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 16 approvals and 4 refusals. The 4 applications that were refused with reference to Policy 11 SG Natural Environment1 were wind turbine applications. This policy was used in conjunction with other policies.

There were no applications approved as departures or on appeal from Policy 11 SG Natural Environment1: Protection of nature conservation sites during the report period.

No change is required to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 11 Natural heritage SG Natural Environment2: Protection of the wider biodiversity and geodiversity - ALDP11NENV2

Existing Policy Use: There were 255 decisions that made reference to the Policy 11 SG Natural Environment2: Protection of the wider biodiversity and geodiversity in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 218 approvals and 37 refusals. Of the 19 key policies monitored this policy was the third most referred to but always in conjunction with other policies.

Twenty seven of the 37 applications that were refused (73%) and had made reference to Policy 11 SG Natural Environment2 were wind turbine applications. This policy was used in conjunction with other policies.

There were no applications approved as departures or on appeal from Policy 11 SG Natural Environment1: Protection of nature conservation sites during the report period.

These decisions, taken in isolation, do not result in the need for any change to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 12 Landscape conservation SG Landscape1: Landscape character - ALDP12LAND1

Existing Policy Use: There were 208 decisions that made reference to Policy 12 SG Landscape1: Landscape character in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 143 approvals and 65 refusals. Over the short life of the ALDP 2012, the number of applications to which landscape polices have been applied has increased. The applications likely to have significant effects on the landscape were refused.

There have been 7 applications approved in the period as departures from Policy 12 SG Landscape1: Landscape character. All of these applications were for wind turbines and this policy has been used in conjunction with the primary policy Policy 3 SG Rural Development 2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines.

There were 8 appeals against applications that were refused partly on the basis of Policy 12 SG Landscape1: Landscape character. Again, as with the departures, all of these applications were for wind turbines and this policy has been used in conjunction with the primary Policy 3 SG Rural Development 2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines. The Reporter, in considering the 8 appeal applications, upheld the Council's decision in 7 instances and dismissed the applications. One appeal (P/PPA/110/2110) for a wind turbine at Scotston, Methlick (APP/2011/2185) was allowed by the Reporter, who cited both Policy 3 and Policy 12 in support of sustaining the appeal. The Reporter felt that the turbine would not be intrusive and there would not be a loss of amenity and that the proposal did accord with the provisions of the Development Plan.

These decisions, taken in isolation, do not result in the need for any change to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 12 Landscape conservation SG Landscape2: Valued views - ALDP12LAND2

Existing Policy Use: There were 21 decisions that made reference to Policy 12 SG Landscape2: Valued views in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 18 approvals and 3 refusals.

There has been one application for departure in which Policy 12 SG Landscape2: Valued views was referred to. The departure application was for a wind turbine at Lonmay, Banff and Buchan (APP/2011/1266). The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended the application be refused (on the grounds of Policy 3 SG Rural Development2 and Policy 12 SG Landscape1 and SG Landscape2: Valued views). The Banff and Buchan Area Committee (18/12/2012) approved the departure application and stated the reason for this approval was that there would be no significant impact on viewpoints of valued view. There were no applications approved on appeal from Policy 12 SG Landscape2: Valued views during the report period).

These decisions, taken in isolation, do not result in the need for any change to the policy or supporting text.

Policy 14 Safeguarding of resources and areas of search SG Safeguarding2: Protection and conservation of agricultural land - ALDP14SAFE2

Existing Policy Use: There were 31 decisions that made reference to Policy 14 SG Safeguarding2: Protection and conservation of agricultural land in the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013, 26 approvals and 5 refusals.

There has been one application for departure during the report period, in which Policy 14 SG Safeguarding2: Protection and conservation of agricultural land was referred to. The departure application was for a dwellinghouse in New Byth, Banff and Buchan (APP/2009/2707). The Head of Planning and Building Standards recommended the application be refused and the Banff and Buchan Area Committee (06/11/2012) approved the application.

The policy was also referred to (along with a number of other policies) by the Reporter in his dismissal of the appeal P/PPA/110/2140 for 22 dwellinghouses and business premises (home / work units) at Rashiereive, Foveran (F/APP/2012/1743).

These decisions, taken in isolation, do not result in the need for any change to the policy or supporting text.

Table 6 Key policies used in determining planning applications (1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013)

ALDP 19 Policies to be monitored		1 Jun to 1 Oct '12 (Area Comm)	1 Oct to 31 Dec '13 (3 months)	1 Jan to 31 Mar '13 (3 months)	1 April to 31 May '13 (2 months)
1	Policy 1 SG Bus3: Working from home	0	0	3	1
	ALDP01BUS3				
2	Policy 1 SG Bus4: Tourist facilities and accommodation	8	4	9	11
	ALDP01BUS4				
3	Policy 1 SG Bus5: Development in the Energetica Framework Area	0	0	1	1
	ALDP01BUS5				
4	Policy 2 SG Retail1: Town centres and retailing	4	12	16	9
	ALDP02RTL1				
5	Policy 2 SG Retail2: Retail development in the countryside	0	1	0	0
	ALDP02RTL2				
6	Policy 3 SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside	12	130	181	98
	ALDP03RD1				
7	Policy 3 SG Rural Development2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines	14	59	41	35
	ALDP03RD2				
8	Policy 5 SG Housing1: Housing land allocations 2007 – 2016	0	0	4	1
	ALDP05HSG1				
9	Policy 5 SG Housing2: Housing land allocations 2017 to 2023 and early draw down	0	0	0	0
	ALDP05HSG2				
10	Policy 6 SG Affordable Housing1: Affordable housing	0	0	1	1
	ALDP06AHSG1				
11	Policy 7 SG SNH3: Gypsies / travellers	0	0	0	0
	ALDP07SNH3				
12	Policy 8 SG LSD2: Layout, siting and design of new development	53	434	490	372
	ALDP08LSD02				
13	Policy 8 SG LSD5: Public open space	9	8	7	8
	ALDP08LSD5				
14	Policy 10 SG Enabling Development1: Enabling development	0	2	0	3
	ALDP10ED1				
15	Policy 11 SG Natural Environment1: Protection of nature conservation sites	0	5	9	6
	ALDP11NENV1				
16	Policy 11 SG Natural Environment2: Protection of the wider biodiversity and geodiversity	13	73	96	73
	ALDP11NENV2				

ALDP 19 Policies to be monitored		1 Jun to 1 Oct '12 (Area Comm)	1 Oct to 31 Dec '13 (3 months)	1 Jan to 31 Mar '13 (3 months)	1 April to 31 May '13 (2 months)
17	Policy 12 SG Landscape1: Landscape character	21	56	76	55
	ALDP12LAND1				
18	Policy 12 SG Landscape2: Valued views	2	5	7	7
	ALDP12LAND2				
19	Policy 14 SG Safeguarding2: Protection and conservation of agricultural land	1	8	15	7
	ALDP14SAFE2				
Total		137	797	956	688

4.2 Departures

Sixty-one applications that constituted a departure from the Development Plan were granted during this report period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013. Seventeen of these 61 still referred to policies from the previous Development Plan ALP. Therefore in the report period 44 departures were recorded departing from policies in the current Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

These 44 departures can be broken down between the 6 Areas as such Banff and Buchan 22, Buchan 11, Formartine 3, Garioch 1 and Kincardine and Mearns 7. Fifty percent of the departures are in Banff and Buchan Area.

These applications included major and minor business proposals, local scale housing proposals, wind farm applications and other applications (eg. building extensions and changes in windows). Fifty one percent of the departures are dwellings / housing developments in the countryside and 20% are wind farm applications.

Policy 3 Development in the countryside SG Rural Development 1 Housing and business development in the countryside and Policy 3 Development in the countryside SG Rural Development 2 Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines of the ALDP were the most commonly used polices for supporting the departure applications. With the diversity of Aberdeenshire, differing policies have prominence of use in the different Areas, e.g. in Kincardine and Mearns Policy 4 Special types of rural land SG STRL2 Greenbelt is used more widely.

Table 7 Local Plan policies being departed from in granting departure applications

ALDP Policy	Number of Departures	% Share
Policy 3 SG Rural Development 1	14	32
Policy 3 SG Rural Development 2	9	20
Policy 4 Special Types of Rural Land SG STRL2	7	16
Policy 13 Protecting, Improving and Conserving the Historic Environment SG Historic Environment 1: Listed buildings and SG 2: Conservation areas	6	14
Policy 8 SG LSD2 Layout, Siting and Design	5	11
Other Various	3	7
Total	44	100

With most of the departure applications multiple policies were used in conjunction with each other in the assessment of the application. The policy being departed from the most was Policy 3 SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside. This policy was, in most cases, used in conjunction with Policy 8 SG LSD 2: Layout, siting and design of new development and often with Policy 13: Protecting, improving and conserving the

historic environment SG Historic Environment1: Listed buildings and SG Historic Environment2: Conservation areas. Policy 4 Special types of rural land SG STRL2: Greenbelt and Policy 3 SG Rural Development 2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines have also been departed from. These policies were in most cases used in conjunction with Policy 12 SG Landscape1: Landscape character.

4.3 Scottish Government Appeals

The appeals process can assist in identifying where policy change may be required, particularly where development was approved contrary to the Local Development Plan. The following table shows information on appeals during the period 1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013.

Table 8 Planning Appeals Summary between 1 June 2012 and 1 June 2013

1 June 2012 to 1 June 2013	Total Appeals Determined	Dismissed	Sustained
Total Appeals Determined	41	26	15
Appeals Determined with ALDP Policies	36	24	12

During the report period 1 June 2012 and 1 June 2013, 41 applications went to appeal with 26 dismissed and 15 allowed by the DPEA. Thirty-six of the appeal decisions were assessed in terms of the current Development Plan ALDP and 5 were assessed in terms of the previous Development Plan ALP. In order to analyse the information further, Table 9 below lists the ALDP policies used to dismiss and sustain the 36 appeals during the period June 2012 and June 2013.

Table 9 Local Plan policies used to dismiss / sustain appeals

ALDP Policy	Dismissed	Sustained / Allow
Policy 3 SG Rural Development2	9	3
Policy 3 SG Rural Development1	9	2
Policy 8 SG LSD2 Layout, siting and design	2	6
Policy 2 SG Retail 1	1	1
Policy 1 Business SG Bus4	1	0
Policy 12 Landscape SG Landscape1	1	0
Policy 1 Business SG Bus1	1	0
Total	24	12

With most of the appeals multiple policies were used in conjunction with each other in the assessment of the application. The policy used the most times in the dismissal of appeals was Policy 3 SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside. This policy was in most cases used in conjunction with Policy 8 SG LSD 2: Layout, siting and design of New Development. Policy 3 SG Rural Development 2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines was the second most used policy used in the dismissing of appeals. This policy was in most cases used in conjunction with Policy 12 SG Landscape1: Landscape character.

Since the introduction of the ALDP on 1 June 2012, there have been 4 applications that have been considered by the Local Review Board and decided on during the report period. All 4 applications were dismissed, 3 of the 4 were for wind turbine applications, and the fourth was for a single dwelling in the countryside. The policies used in refusing the wind turbine applications, in all 3 instances, were Policy 3 SG Rural Development 2: Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines, Policy 8 SG LSD 2: Layout, siting and design of new development and Policy 12 SG Landscape 1: Landscape character. Policy 3 SG Rural

Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside was used in refusing the appeal for the dwellinghouse.

It can also be seen from the table that Policy 8 SG LSD2 was the policy most used in sustaining appeals.

In conclusion the policies of the Plan have largely been supported by the Reporters at appeal and can therefore generally be considered to be effective and delivering their aims and objectives.

4.4 Additional Analysis of Key Policies Usage

Key policies used in determining planning applications by decision type

Table 10 lists the key policies used in determining applications and shows the overall usage against them, decision type, plus the proportion of total overall usage.

Table 10 Key policies used in determining planning applications by decision type

Policies	Overall usage	Approvals	Refusals	% of Total overall usage
Working from home	4	4	0	0.2
Tourist facilities and accommodation	32	29	3	1.2
Development in Energetica Framework Area	2	2	0	0.1
Town centres and retailing	41	37	4	1.6
Retail development in the countryside	1	1	0	0.0
Housing and business development in the countryside	421	362	59	16.3
Wind farms and medium to large wind turbines	149	85	64	5.8
Housing allocations 2007-2016	5	1	4	0.2
Housing allocations 2017-2023 early draw down	0	0	0	0.0
Affordable housing	2	1	1	0.1
Gypsies and travellers	0	0	0	0.0
Layout, siting and design of new developments	1349	1209	140	52.3
Public open space	32	29	3	1.2
Enabling development	5	1	4	0.2
Natural Env. 1: Protection of natural conservation sites	20	16	4	0.8
Natural Env 2: Protection of wider biodiversity and geodiversity	255	218	37	9.9
Landscape character	208	143	65	8.1
Valued views	21	18	3	0.8
Safeguarding 2: Protection and conservation of agricultural land	31	26	5	1.2
Totals	2578	2182	396	100.0

As a proportion of the total overall usage for the reporting period, the policy used the greatest number of times was the policy on layout, siting, and design of new developments (52.2%). This was followed by the policy on housing and business development in the countryside (16.3%). As a proportion of total overall usage, policies relating to wind farms (5.8%), landscape character (8.1%) and protection of wider biodiversity and geodiversity (9.9%) were reasonably used over the period. The rest of the key policies were negligibly used in comparison.