

*Paper for decision*

**Summary**

<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	<b>Director of Rural Development &amp; Planning</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Local Development Plan: Visitor Experience Planning Guidance</b>
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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposed amendments to the Draft Planning Guidance on Visitor Experience, which was issued for consultation in 2015 with the Proposed Local Development Plan (the Plan). The comments received are appended for information.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That **Members:**
- a) **Approve** the amended Planning Guidance on Visitor Experience (Appendix 1).
  - b) **Agree** to delegate responsibility to the Director of Rural Development and Planning for approving any final design and minor editorial amendments to the Visitor Experience Planning Guidance.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 Planning Guidance, unlike supplementary guidance, is non-statutory. The main benefit of non-statutory guidance is that it can be updated quickly as required. Procedurally, following Member approval the guidance can be adopted immediately and does not have to be submitted to Scottish Ministers for scrutiny.
- 3.2 Similar to supplementary guidance it is used to provide detail on and guidance in relation to policies within the Local Development Plan. In this case guidance is provided in relation to the Visitor Experience Policies which cover tourism and recreation developments. Consultation on draft planning guidance took place alongside consultation on the Plan between 18 May and 29 June 2015. These comments (Appendix 2) have been reviewed and a summary of the main changes are provided below.

4. Details of Amendments to Visitor Experience Guidance

- 4.1 The guidance has been reviewed and amended to reflect comments received during consultation. The main changes are in response to comments from Scottish Natural Heritage, Ramblers Scotland and one individual. A copy of the verbatim comments received during consultation is provided in Appendix 2 alongside our response.
- 4.2 The consultation was undertaken at the same time as when new camping bylaws were being considered by the Park Authority – part of ‘Your Park’ – stimulating comments including those from Scottish Natural Heritage around aligning terminology between documents. Internal feedback on the use of the guidance has also been received and minor amendments have been incorporated to incorporate this.
- 4.3 The main changes include:
- **Small-Scale Definition** – This section has been amended based on consultation feedback and internal consideration to aid pre application enquiries and provision of planning advice. The examples of small scale development have been amended to better indicate the detailed policy considerations that would apply. For example, in relation to campsites, text has been amended to clarify specifically what would be relevant considerations for example the number of pitches, size/type of pitches and type of facilities in relation to the site location and fit within the landscape (see pages 10 and 13 of Appendix 1).
  - **Safe Walking Distance Definition** - Internal feedback has highlighted the need for a more pragmatic and considered approach to assessing what constitutes a safe walking distance. This has been edited to be clearer, with reference to an example of a ten minute walk being 1km. It also now refers to the research that this is based upon. See the revised wording for safe walking distance on page 9 of Appendix 1.
  - **Camping Terminology** - One of the main changes has been to the terminology relating to camping. The guidance has been amended to remove the definition of formal, semi-formal and informal and reflects the diversity of sites now available in the camping sector recognising that campsites are evolving and there is no longer a clear definition of types of sites (see page 13 of Appendix 1). These changes reflect the range of sites as shown on the diagram found on page 8 of [camping development strategy](#).
- 4.4 Other minor changes and clarifications proposed are listed below and these include:
- **Tourism Potential within the Countryside** - Incorporation of descriptions of the four green shaded areas and their associated recreational infrastructure has been included to better explain the

rationale for this strategic approach to small scale tourism development in certain areas of the Park, in accordance with the National Park Partnership Plan (2012-2017). This provides applicants using this policy with the background as to our intent and reasoning for the policy and the background as to why these areas were selected as opposed to other areas of the Park. See new wording on page nine of Appendix 1.

- **Policy Linkage** – Internal consideration has also resulted in changes to ensure a clearer linkage between the guidance and Visitor Experience Policy 1, to direct the reader clearly to the relevant sections of the guidance. Therefore Page 11 has been refined.
- **Existing sites including existing caravan sites** – The section has been amended to reflect the comments made during the consultation and also has clearer links to Visitor Experience Policy 1 and 3. It gives clarity on how expansion to existing tourism sites would be considered within the context of the existing business. If that business/tourism site is large scale then a small-scale expansion could be sizeable.
- **Conditions** – This appendix listing the conditions has been removed as it is now recognised that conditions are fluid and are often written on a case by case basis. The issue of whether a condition would be used to restrict a campsite on a seasonal basis or not would be assessed on a case by case basis. We recognise that some campsites may wish to be open all year round. There is still a reference to the occupancy restriction often used in relation to self-catering.

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The adoption of this planning guidance will aid delivery of the Local Development Plan. Members are asked to approve the Planning Guidance on Visitor Experience and delegate any final design and other minor editorial changes to the Director of Rural Development and Planning.

## 6. List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Visitor Experience Planning Guidance - revised  
Appendix 2: Consultation comments and responses on the Visitor Experience Planning Guidance

## 7. Background Documents

- 7.1 Draft Visitor Experience Guidance is available on our website - <http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/rr-content/uploads/2016/08/LDP-Visitor-Experience-Planning-Guidance-2.pdf>

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- 7.2 Camping Development Strategy is available on our website -  
<http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/rr-content/uploads/2016/07/Agenda-Item-8-Appendix-1-Camping-Development-Strategy.pdf>