

Local Development Plan Main Issues Report

Paper for decision

1. Purpose

This Report presents the Main Issues Report for Members approval for public consultation. This is the first of two formal consultations in the process to prepare a Local Development Plan (LDP) which, once adopted, will replace the existing Local Plan and our inherited Approved Structure Plans.

2. Introduction

The Main Issues Report (MIR) is not a draft plan nor does it include draft policies. It is a discussion based document that outlines where the Authority considers the existing Local Plan may need changed, focusing on key topics or locations, as a basis for consultation with our communities and partners. It is the principal opportunity to consult with stakeholders on the Plan's proposed content and involve the wider public.

The purpose is to indicate the preferred policy approach and development sites, and reasonable alternatives to this, where they exist. The Authority can then consider the consultation responses before finalising the approach, including the proposed policies and sites. This will be outlined in the Proposed Plan – in effect the draft plan - which is expected to be consulted in the Spring of 2015. The exact timetable will depend on the level and nature of response to the Main Issues Report consultation.

This report provides a summary of relevant background information, process requirements, content and proposed community and partner engagement.

3. Background

The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced a new statutory basis for development planning in Scotland which requires each local planning authority to prepare a single Development Plan for its area. Prior to the 2006 Act, the National Park area was required to be covered by a Local Plan and the constituent Structure Plans. The current Local Plan was prepared before the 2006 Act came fully into force, hence why we currently have a Local Plan and not a new style Local Development Plan.

As was the case with Local Plans, the Plan must be kept up to date to ensure the strategy, policies and allocations remain sound and relevant set against emerging new information, policies or legislation.

Scottish Government's guidance on preparing the LDP is outlined in Planning Circular 6/2013: Development Planning.

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4. Content

Process

Members will be aware that extensive engagement with our communities, landowners and partner organisations has been undertaken in preparing the Main Issues Report. This was set out in the Development Plan Scheme published in December 2012 – attached as Appendix 3. The opportunities can be summarised as including:

- Inviting the submission of comments, issues and land suitable for development. 12 responses were received and over 80 potential development sites were submitted. Additional potential sites were reviewed through the Charrette process and by officers (the assessment of sites is included as Appendix 2),
- Listening to the views of the Park's communities, businesses, landowners, Councils and partner organisations through meetings, Charrettes, workshops and household/business questionnaires,
- Research has been undertaken into housing, retailing and economic development and the 2011 Census. Full details will be publically available through Technical Reports which will also be published, and,
- New legislation, emerging policies or strategies from local and national Government have been reviewed.

While it was anticipated that this Report would have been brought to Members in December, additional time was needed to conclude on key areas of research and review. In particular, to conclude discussions on the road and education provision capacities in Callander and to have a full review of the 2011 Census (final data was not available until December). The Development Plan Scheme anticipated public consultation in March and April.

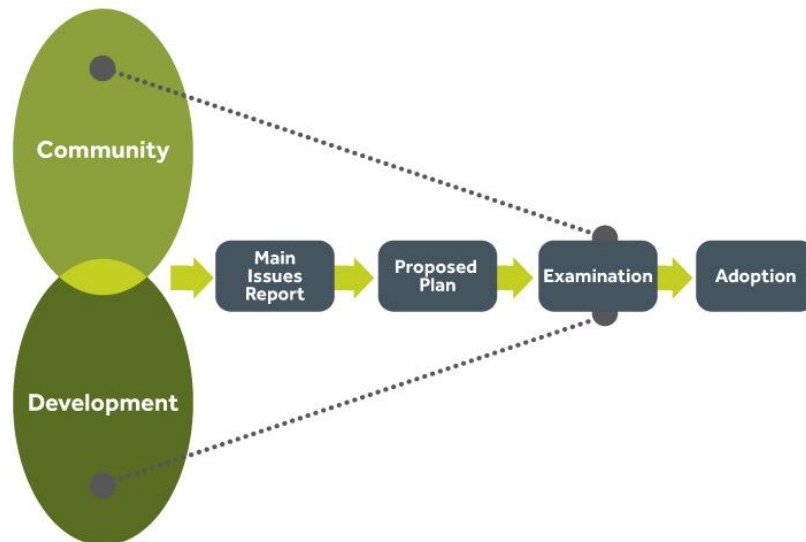
The target for consultation is now from April to the end of June. This is expected to be from Monday 28 April until Monday 7 July, which is 10 weeks. The statutory minimum is 6 weeks.

Following analysis and review of the feedback and consultation responses, the Proposed Plan will be prepared which includes detailed policies and the development sites. No new development sites can be included at this stage as all sites require to be considered fully at the current Main Issues Report stage. Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance will also be prepared, with the aim of having a shorter, more focussed Plan with the detail left in the Guidance which will carry greater statutory weight than current Guidance. The diagram on the next page summarises the overall process.

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Main Areas of Interest

The following section summarises the approach, key themes and locations in the Main Issues Report (the text is attached in Appendix 1). It is important to remember that the existing Local Plan is relatively new and only needs updated and reviewed in particular areas.

The conclusion of the review, engagement and research work was that the existing Development and Locational Strategy (sections 3.3 and 3.4 in the Local Plan), with a focus on growth with new development in existing settlements, remains sound and relevant.

The policies and strategies for the key development sectors – Housing, Economic Development and Tourism – require review and update. The key issue is the overall low rate of housing and economic development activity (excluding tourism) which is a Scotland wide issue but merits review of options for the National Park area with a view to help secure an increase in development levels and in turn realisation of the Development Strategy. For Tourism, it is proposed that this is more minor and is to update to reflect the already approved National Park Partnership Plan.

In reviewing of the use and application of the planning policies in the Local Plan, it is concluded that the Enabling & Management Policies (including landscape, natural and built environment policies) remain robust and effective, with only minor updates required.

The importance of the provision and condition of the Park's infrastructure – roads, car parks, visitor facilities, paths and broadband for example and services – including schools, shops, community facilities, post offices – was highlighted as being critical for the Park's

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communities and businesses as well as our visitors. While not solely a planning issue, it is considered this key theme should be highlighted as a planning concern.

The four National Park specific 'Main Issues' are therefore proposed to be:

- Rural Economy
- Visitor Experience
- Housing
- Infrastructure

Overarching considerations of relevance to all we do in the new Plan are also identified as Climate Change, Placemaking, Addressing Population Change as well as Community and Partner Engagement.

Turning to the Park's Towns and Villages, the main areas with additional land identified are Callander and to a lesser extent in the Arrochar and Tarbet area (including Succoth). New land is proposed for housing and existing or additional land is shown for tourism or economic development. Significant existing land for both tourism and housing in Balloch remains and is proposed to be continued.

These potential developments, over the longer term would provide sustainable based growth – an increase in employment opportunities with new homes that can facilitate improvements in services and infrastructure as development is implemented. It is not inconsistent with the current Local Plan strategy focusing development to existing settlements.

The same principles have been applied when reviewing sites in other towns and villages, with a purpose to ensure there is a 10 year housing land supply but also to provide a range of options for housing, economic development and tourism. Additional smaller sites for development, are also identified in:

- Aberfoyle
- Crianlarich
- Drymen
- Gartocharn
- Luss
- Balmaha

Engagement

It is expected that planning authorities employ a range of innovative methods to meaningfully engage with their stakeholders, partners and communities throughout the Local Development Plan process. Consultation at the MIR stage is vital, as it ensures feedback is received on whether there is agreement on the approach proposed before it is finalised.

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Work is at an advanced stage in designing a programme of engagement. This will include a range of opportunities, with a particular focus on young people and working age families, while maintaining communication with established means and forums.

For the purpose of the consultation the MIR and all consultation material will be branded as LIVE Park. LIVE reflects an acronym which means:

Live
Invest
Visit
Experience

The purpose is to make the consultation more attractive, accessible and easily understood to a wider audience.

The illustration below provides examples of some of the expected programme elements:



There will also be tailored events, for areas where there is more change outlined or where there is particular community interest. For example:



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5. Recommendation

That Members:

- i. Approve the Main Issues report for public consultation
- ii. Agree to a consultation period of 10 weeks starting in April 2014
- iii. Agree to delegate responsibility to the Director of Operations for:
 - making any final minor editorial amendments and desktop publishing with the use of drawings, illustrations or diagrams
 - publishing the accompanying Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment and Technical/Background Reports

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Main Issues Report (text only with maps separate)

Appendix 2 - Site Assessment Report (available on the National Park website) ([weblink](#))

Appendix 3 – Development Plan Scheme, December 2012 ([weblink](#))

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