



**Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan  
Adopted Plan**

**November  
2018**

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar



# Map of area covered by the Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan



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## Foreword

I am pleased to present the adopted Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan. The Plan sets out the Comhairle's land-use planning policies to facilitate sustainable economic growth in our Islands and help realise the aspirations of the Outer Hebrides Single Outcome Agreement and the Our Islands Our Future (OIOF) initiative.

The opportunities arising from OIOF and the outcomes of the Islands (Scotland) Act will be transformational for our economy and communities. Recognition that different solutions are required for islands is reflected in the Plan through a more flexible Development Strategy and a focus on responsive approaches to areas such as housing provision, infrastructure, and design quality in new developments. The Plan also seeks to provide a framework for some of the challenges we face over the coming years such as climate change adaptation, flooding and housing supply.

The promotion of sustainable growth lies at the heart of our efforts to enable strong, thriving communities, and the Plan has a role to play in the delivery of this. By capitalising on the recent major investment commitment for affordable housing and growth sectors such as marine resources, energy, tourism and aquaculture, our islands will be empowered to build a more prosperous and fairer future for our communities. An up to date land use policy framework provides a sound basis for future investment and decision-making and will help maximise the opportunities arising.

The policies and proposals provided within the Plan, together with associated Supplementary Guidance, will help shape the future of the Outer Hebrides over the next five years. The Plan will ensure development is guided in a way that creates successful, well-designed places and that our environmental, historic and cultural resources are valued and managed in a sustainable way.

Engagement is critical and the Plan's implementation will depend not just on the Comhairle, but crucially on, other bodies, investors, developers, communities, and individuals who all have a part to play by using the Plan to inform their future development considerations. The Plan can play an important role in helping to safeguard and sustain the Outer Hebrides - its resilient people, special character and distinctive qualities.

**Donald Crichton**  
Chair, Sustainable Development Committee  
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar  
November 2018

## How to Use this Plan

The **Introduction section** set the context for the Plan and explains how it has been prepared.

The **Vision and Objectives** sets out a realistic aspiration for the Outer Hebrides over the next 20 years which the Plan has been structured to work towards achieving. Development proposals will be assessed for the extent to which they contribute to the achievement of the Plan's vision and objectives.

The **Development Strategy** sets out the overall spatial strategy to guide development i.e., where development should and should not be located and the principles behind it. For example, in certain cases development may now be acceptable out-with settlements and the Development Strategy sets parameters for determining such proposals. The Development Strategy applies to all development proposals.

The remaining **Development Policies** set out the requirements for different types of development and explains what uses are acceptable in different areas. There are 35 Policies (including the Development Strategy) supported by Supplementary Guidance. Some policies apply to all development proposals, some are topic policies (applying to a certain type of development) and some are map based.

Policies in the Plan are afforded equal weight in the determination of planning applications, so it is important to ensure that your proposal accords with all policies that are relevant to it. Compliance with one particular policy will not mean that a proposal is acceptable in terms of being in accordance with the Plan as a whole. In addition, a development proposal may also be affected by policy or legislation at National and/or European level.

The **Development Proposals** set out the main proposal sites. In considering, how these sites should be developed, proposals must comply with all relevant policies and Supplementary Guidance.

There is a final section on how **Implementation and Monitoring** of the plan will be addressed by the Comhairle. This section also discusses the proposed **Action Programme**, a document which sets out how the Comhairle proposes the Plan will be implemented.

There are a set of **Appendices** which provides further guidance to assist the assessment of development proposals.

## Introduction

The Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan (referred to as ‘the Plan’) sets out a vision and spatial strategy for the development of land in the Outer Hebrides over the next 10-20 years. The Plan provides the planning framework for the Outer Hebrides and contains the land use planning policies which the Comhairle will use for determining planning applications. It also contains a number of development proposals for our settlements and rural areas.

This Plan is the outcome of research and engagement which has been undertaken since work started in 2014. A wide range of interested parties have been instrumental in shaping the Plan. A number of organisations including Scottish Natural Heritage; Historic Environment Scotland; Scottish Water and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency have a particular role to play as the Key Agencies. These organisations have contributed throughout the process.

The Plan builds on the views expressed in response to the Main Issues Report (December 2015) and the Proposed Plan (February, 2017) which were key stages in the consultation process. The Plan is also informed by the strategic policy direction and priorities of the Outer Hebrides Local Housing Strategy and Housing Need and Demand Assessment, the Outer Hebrides Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement and Our Islands Our Future.

The Plan is consistent with the National Planning Framework 3 and Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), and the Scottish Government Land Use Strategy and where relevant takes account of other national policy and legislation such as the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009; The Flood Risk Management Act 2009; Scotland’s National Marine Plan 2015; Designing Places (2001); Designing Streets (2010); and the River Basin Management Plan for Scotland River Basin District 2015-2027 and Outer Hebrides Local Plan District: Flood Risk Management Strategy and Local Flood Risk Management Plan.

Several other documents have been produced in parallel with the Plan including the following:

- The **Action Programme**, which sets out how the Comhairle proposes the Plan will be implemented. This document identifies the actions which will help implement the Plan, who is responsible for the delivery of these actions, and indicative timescales.
- The **Strategic Environmental Assessment Revised Environmental Report**, which is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 (this document includes the Habitats Regulations Appraisal of the Local Development Plan);
- The **Outer Hebrides Housing Land Audit** which provides a comprehensive description of sites that may be suitable for housing within the Outer Hebrides; and
- An **Equalities and Diversity Impact Assessment** (Screening).

The Supplementary Guidances associated with the Plan may be subject to review and updating within the lifetime of the Plan to ensure alignment with national policy and responsiveness to the local development context.

## Outer Hebrides Context

The Outer Hebrides (or Western Isles) is an archipelago of over 70 named islands lying off the north-west coast of Scotland. The prevailing character is of a dispersed population in a predominantly rural landscape. 28% of the total population, close to 7,500 people, live within the Stornoway area with the remaining population scattered over 280 settlements in 11 inhabited islands.

The main sea-links from the islands are between Stornoway to Ullapool, Tarbert and Lochmaddy to Uig (Skye), and Lochboisdale and Castlebay to Oban and Lochboisdale to Mallaig and there are direct air links via Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness. These are complemented by important air and sea inter-island links. Much of the economic and social activity is generated from within the islands but it relies heavily on connections with the mainland for essential supplies and export. The physical distance from its main markets place the islands at an inherent disadvantage and as a result, pressure for development is light, with the real challenges being how to sustain population levels and a diverse local economy.

Commercial and industrial development remains predominantly small scale. An increase in engineering and construction work in connection with anticipated energy development is a long term aspiration of the Comhairle. Tourism is a key growth industry, and much employment depends on visitors to the islands. The Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) scheme has been a major incentive to travel to the islands in recent years. The development of new physical or virtual trading links with the rest of the world will become increasingly important as the globalisation of markets continues.

It is estimated that over two thirds of the Outer Hebrides is in crofting tenure (approximately 6,000 crofts) and the islands now have a significant proportion of land and population under community land ownership. Over the five years from April 2012 to March 2017 the total number of housing completions in the Outer Hebrides was 434 and around 61% of housing consists of private house builds. Due to the current financial climate and the difficulties being faced, e.g. access to mortgages, high build costs, it is anticipated that the next 5-year period may see a further reduction in the number of private house completions. The Outer Hebrides has highest percentage of vacant dwellings at 8.3% and second highest percentage of second homes at 5.4%.

The Outer Hebrides is part of the Gaelic heartland, with a majority of Gaelic speakers, and has a rich cultural heritage with many exceptional archaeological sites and buildings of outstanding architectural and amenity value. The high quality environment hosts an array of internationally important species and habitat types, with a large percentage of land, inland waters and marine sites designated for nature conservation purposes. The landscape and natural heritage of the Outer Hebrides underpins significant industries such as food and drink, art, media and tourism and is a significant economic asset in itself and for the wider economy.



# Plan Vision and Objectives

## National Aims

### ***The National Planning Framework 3 (2014)***

The National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) sets the context for development planning and provides a framework for the spatial development of Scotland. Key aims of the NPF3 (2014) are to increase sustainable economic growth and to make Scotland a successful, sustainable, low carbon, natural, resilient, and connected place.

NPF3 presents a wider appreciation of the challenges and opportunities facing rural areas, recognising the unique context of 'coastal and island communities'. Stornoway is identified as a 'coastal and island hub' and 'key port' and a focal point for investment and transport connections. NPF3 emphasises that growth and investment in key sectors (such as renewables, tourism, food and drink, knowledge economy, aquaculture, crofting, sailing industry and community ownership) relies on the continued environmental quality of the countryside, infrastructure and the sustainable use of natural resources. New energy technologies are highlighted as having the potential to build resilience and help address spatial disadvantages and high fuel costs.

### ***Scottish Planning Policy (2014)***

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) sets out national planning policy that will help deliver the objectives of NPF3. The importance of a plan-led process is emphasised, where Plans are relevant and up to date. SPP introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which is already embedded in the 2006 Planning Act. If a Plan is out of date or has no applicable policies, then 'a presumption in favour of development which contributes to sustainable development' will be a significant material consideration, balanced against wider Plan policies and potential impacts.

SPP indicates that Plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of a plan area in a way which is flexible to adapt to changing circumstances and supports existing business sectors. As with NPF3 (2014) SPP gives greater recognition to the distinct needs, aspirations and capacity of rural, coastal and island areas.

## Local Aims

### ***Single Outcome Agreement (2013-2023)***

The Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership is working to ensure the Outer Hebrides is a prosperous, well-educated and healthy community enjoying a good quality of life where the benefits of its natural environment and cultural tradition are fully realised. The Single Outcome Agreement for 2013 -2023 (SOA) between the Scottish Government and the Community Planning Partners sets out the priorities that will focus the delivery of better outcomes for the Outer Hebrides to meet the needs and aspirations of our communities.

The Partnership took the decision to retain the seven local outcomes from the 2011-13 SOA as their ten year vision for 2013-2023 but to refocus the priority areas for the short term on: sustainable economic growth; accessible, quality services for older people; a better start for young people;

communities that are safer and healthier; increased physical and social activity; addressing inequalities; and better connections with high quality infrastructure supporting broadband, travel and renewables.

### ***Our Islands Our Future***

The Comhairle is a key driving force behind the 'Our Islands Our Future' (OIOF) Initiative which is campaigning for recognition of the special status of island authorities and the unique opportunities and challenges this brings. The campaign focuses on a number of elements which have a land use interest, such as marine resources, energy growth, economic drivers and island wellbeing. The passing of the Islands (Scotland) Bill in May 2018 represents an excellent outcome for OIOF.

The Plan has a key part to play in helping deliver the land use development elements of the SOA and OIOF for the Outer Hebrides. This will require commitment and cooperation of a range of partners including the Scottish Government, key agencies, developers, stakeholders and communities.

Drawing on national and local aims, the following place-making vision and objectives are proposed:

#### **The Vision**

*To encourage and facilitate sustainable economic growth and help build confident and resilient communities, the Plan will provide planning policy that delivers long term benefits to the communities of the Outer Hebrides by ensuring development contributes to the creation of well-designed and attractive places, and that our natural, marine, and cultural resources are valued and utilised efficiently and sustainably.*

#### **Objectives**

The vision aims to make our islands:

- ***A good place to live in and move to***
- ***A successful place for working in***
- ***An attractive place enjoyed by residents and visitors***

## Development Policies

### DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



### Development Strategy

The Development Strategy sets out the overall spatial strategy to guide development (i.e. where development should and should not be located and the principles behind it) and applies to all development proposals.

The context for consideration of development varies across the Outer Hebrides. Seven area types have been identified for planning purposes. These are: Stornoway Core; Main Settlements; Rural Settlements; Outwith Settlements; Remote Areas; Marine and Shore Environment; and Offshore Islands. These areas have different characteristics and capacity for accommodating development and are distinct with the exception of 'Marine and Shore Environment', which may overlap with the adjacent terrestrial area type.

The Development Strategy Map shows Stornoway Core, the Main Settlements, and Remote Areas. A description of all the categories is set out below. For planning purposes a 'settlement' comprises a number of houses at least some of which are permanently inhabited and is defined by the main physical concentration of houses, related buildings, gardens, boundary enclosures and street furniture.

**Stornoway Core** Stornoway is the central administrative and commercial centre for the Outer Hebrides with a diverse mix of uses and relatively high level of accessibility. 'Stornoway Core' has the largest concentration of population and is a focus for development activity with distinct industrial, retail and service areas and a historic core with significant built heritage. A specific policy approach is required for Stornoway Core which recognises its development context, and distinguishes it from Greater Stornoway and other Main Settlements. 'Stornoway Core' is mapped on the Development Strategy Map.

**Main Settlements** These settlements are key ports of entry and rural service centres which serve wider island needs, providing employment infrastructure and public transport hubs. They have a strategic and local function supporting service, administration, housing and community facilities. Some have a core where retail activity is focused and areas which display urban characteristics but these move to more dispersed rural characteristics towards the edges. 'Main Settlements' are Tarbert, Lochmaddy,

Balivanich, Lochboisdale/Daliburgh, Greater Castlebay and Greater Stornoway (excluding Stornoway core).

- Rural Settlements** These settlements are primarily residential and agricultural areas. Often shaped by historic or crofting activity, they vary greatly in size, pattern, and settlement character with some very dispersed and others more concentrated. Their function is mainly to serve local needs through provision of a range of local services including schools, community halls, small shops and post offices. 'Rural Settlements' are defined as all 'Settlements' other than Main Settlements and Stornoway Core.
- Outwith Settlement** These areas act as a separation between settlements which helps to retain distinctiveness. They have some local and strategic resource functions, supporting a diverse range of development activities and largely non-residential uses, which include agriculture, recreation activities, mineral extraction, energy development and storage/waste depots. Generally these areas have dispersed development in a more open landscape, encompassing various landscape character types with machair, moorland and some upland. Development proposals are likely to be mainly resource or tourism based. There may be capacity for a limited amount of development where siting and design are critical to mitigate impacts on landscape. 'Outwith Settlement' is not mapped but is defined as the area between settlement boundaries and mapped Remote Areas.
- Remote Areas** Remote Areas largely consist of undeveloped interior upland areas and isolated coastline. These areas are important for their natural and cultural resources and encompass some of Scotland's most iconic landscapes. They provide a backdrop setting for many settlements and include evidence of historic settlement, including abandoned townships. 'Remote Areas' are shown on an Inset Map on the Development Strategy Maps, they include Wild Land Areas, as identified by Scottish Natural Heritage, and isolated coastline but not offshore islands (separate category).
- Marine and Shore Environment** This category brings the approach to development of the marine environment and marine aquaculture into the spatial strategy and provides reference to emerging marine spatial planning and the National Marine Plan. The 'Marine and Shore Environment' is defined here as: shoreline and transitional habitats which are saline or tide affected; intertidal areas down to mean low water mark, and; out to 3 nautical miles for marine aquaculture (Local Authority). While this definition covers the areas that terrestrial planning has responsibility for, Plans should give due regard to the impact of development on the wider marine environment (including marine species and their habitats), and more specifically out to 12 nautical miles (or as specified in the Scottish Marine Regions Order 2015) for consideration of impacts on marine policy objectives in the National Marine Plan and any subsequent Regional Marine Plan.
- Offshore Islands** The Outer Hebrides has over 70 named islands, many of which are internationally recognised for their natural and cultural resources. This is a new category to reflect the unique environmental context, and distinct development pressures and

opportunities arising on our offshore islands. 'Offshore islands' are defined here as all islands (including tidal islands which are accessible on foot at low tide) which are unconnected by bridge or causeway to the main inhabited islands. The inhabited islands not included in this category are: Lewis; Bernera; Harris; Scalpay; Berneray; North Uist; Baleshare; Grimsay (North); Benbecula; Flodda; Grimsay ('South' Benbecula); South Uist; Eriskay; Barra; Vatersay. Coastline on offshore islands is categorised as 'isolated coastline'.

**References** Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006; Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 40, 79-81; Circular 6/2013 Development Planning, Table 1.



*Vatersay*

## **Policy DS1: Development Strategy**

### **Stornoway Core**

The principal policy objective is to support and promote the strategic role of Stornoway within the Outer Hebrides by accommodating development which facilitates regeneration, successful place-making and infrastructure to support growth. There will be a focus on promoting a compact, accessible and vibrant core with a diverse mix of uses. Assessing the impact of development on the character and amenity of Stornoway Core will be fundamental to sustaining a sense of place which will be attractive to residents, businesses and visitors.

Development proposals within Stornoway Core should:

- a) respect the settlement pattern and historic character of the town;
- b) contribute to a positive streetscape and a quality and accessible public realm through good design, site layout, connectivity, landscaping and use of appropriate materials which are compatible with the surroundings and character of the area;
- c) be well connected and designed to incorporate or enhance routes for walking and cycling;  
and
- d) protect and retain functional Open Space which actively contributes to local amenity, recreation or biodiversity objectives.

Developers will be required to justify the development of a greenfield site in preference over vacant buildings, brownfield, gap and derelict sites.

### **Main Settlements**

The principal policy objective is to support and consolidate the strategic role of main settlements within their island groupings and to promote connectivity between transport and service infrastructure, while ensuring a quality of place-making appropriate to a port of entry and key service centre. New community, education, and healthcare facilities should be located close to transport nodes in order to optimise access.

Development proposals within main settlements will be assessed against all of the following:

- a) Siting and design should be appropriate to the characteristics of main settlements and should contribute positively to the key approaches to the settlement and any waterfront or quayside character.
- b) Proposals for commercial uses should ensure the site layout and access arrangements contribute positively to the space onto which they publicly face. Appropriate landscaping may be required to achieve this.
- c) Higher density development within the settlement centres will be acceptable where it is compatible with the surrounding built form and character.
- d) The protection and retention of functional Open Space which actively contributes to local amenity, recreation or biodiversity objectives.



- e) Developments on 'croft land' should not adversely affect the operational use and sustainability of the croft, unless the development is required for reasons of over-riding public interest. Proposal sites should be sited to use the least amount of productive croft land where practical and should not fragment the croft in such a way that affects its potential to be used for cultivation or other 'purposeful use'. An access corridor to the croft should be maintained.

### **Rural Settlements**

The principal policy objective is to accommodate development to meet sustainable growth for local needs, particularly for residential, agriculture, tourism and service activities. Housing clusters and economic development proposals will be supported provided they are of an appropriate scale and do not threaten residential amenity.

Development proposals within Rural Settlements will be assessed against all of the following:

- a) A siting and design appropriate to the established rural character and settlement pattern of the local area.
- b) Residential proposals should be of a lower level of density and respect the character of the individual settlement.
- c) Developments on 'croft land' should not adversely affect the operational use and sustainability of the croft, unless the development is required for reasons of over-riding public interest. Proposal sites should be sited to use the least amount of productive croft land where practical and should not fragment the croft in such a way that affects its potential to be used for cultivation or other 'purposeful use'. Proposals should ensure access to the croft is maintained and of a suitable width for agricultural machinery to access. At a minimum this should be 4 metres in width.

### **Outwith Settlement**

The principal policy objective is to direct appropriate resource based activity and ensure development has a quality of siting and design suitable to a more open and rural setting.

Development proposals for non-residential uses on green field sites must demonstrate a clearly justified need for the proposed development in that location, unless directed by the Wind Energy spatial strategy.

Development proposals for houses must be of a high quality in terms of design, scale, siting and materials to integrate positively with the surrounding landscape and achieve a sympathetic fit. In addition, proposals for small groups of related housing must demonstrate strong visual cohesion and a sense of place. Affordable housing proposals are required to be supported by a strong justification for the choice of site including evidence that sites within main or rural settlements have been explored and the reasons why these sites have been assessed as unsuitable.

Development proposals for recreational huts\* should be located within reasonable walking distance of a public transport route. They must be designed to physically and visually integrate with the

surrounding landscape and should contribute to the amenity value of the area. Small groupings of huts may be appropriate provided they will not have an unacceptable cumulative impact on the landscape, natural environment and amenity value of the area.

All development proposals will be assessed against the capacity of the surrounding landscape to accommodate the development. Development proposals should avoid raised or high level locations to minimise visual impact (supplementary information to support this is likely to be required early in the application process).

*\*Recreational Huts will only be considered in Outwith Settlement areas.*

### **Remote Areas**

The principal policy objective is to support the sustainable development of natural resources and manage change in the landscape to maintain and enhance distinctive character landscapes. There will be a focus on protecting important environmental assets that underpin the sustainable development of natural resources\* and tourism.

Development in Remote areas will be limited. The creation of new houses will not be permitted and other developments will need to be clearly justified. Careful planning and design will be required to minimise environmental impacts.

Proposals for development will only be acceptable where a locational need has been demonstrated and at least one of the following is met:

- a) The development is required for reasons of over-riding public interest (including those of an economic or social nature) and demonstrates sensitive siting, design and scale of development to minimise impact on the open and rural character of the landscape and its qualities of remoteness; or
- b) it is for a non-residential hut required for land management purposes (e.g. hill shelter / bird or fishing hide), is unobtrusive in the landscape and adheres to the principles of low impact, sustainable development in terms of design, materials, construction and access; or
- c) it is for, or associated with, the sustainable development of a natural resource\* and accords with any relevant Supplementary Guidance and associated spatial strategy; or
- d) it is for the sustainable development of fish farming in freshwater environments.

Proposals should avoid significant adverse effects on the area's ecological and landscape attributes, including the special qualities of NSAs and wildness characteristics of WLAs.

Only applications for detailed planning permission will be considered.

*\*Development of 'natural resources' for the purposes of this policy means the exploitation of naturally occurring resources (e.g. minerals, oil, plants, animals), including energy resources (e.g. wind, sunlight, water).*

## **Marine and Shore Environment**

The principal policy objective is to support the sustainable development of our aquaculture and marine energy resources (including any associated onshore facilities) and facilitate an integrated approach to management of the intertidal zone.

Marine fish farming development proposals must demonstrate accordance with the Marine Fish Farming Supplementary Guidance.

Development proposals within the marine and shore environment will be assessed in accordance with the National Marine Plan, and any subsequent statutory Regional Marine Plan, and may be assessed for potential impacts on other uses and activities in the marine and coastal area, including: commercial fisheries, wild fisheries, ports and harbours, MOD activities, navigational aids, anchorages and marine and water based recreational and tourism activities, including ‘prime beaches’\* and relevant environmental and cultural assets.

*\*Prime Beaches – as identified in Marine Fish Farming Supplementary Guidance.*

## **Offshore Islands**

The principal policy objective is to acknowledge the intrinsic value of our offshore islands and the fundamental role they play in shaping the region’s sense of place and identity. The focus will be on protecting and enhancing the unique environmental qualities of the islands, while ensuring development remains limited and sustainable. Development is anticipated to largely relate to crofting activities, telecommunications, navigational aids and the operational use of lighthouses.

Development on offshore Islands will be limited. All development proposals must be clearly justified and should demonstrate a need for the development in that location. The sympathetic renovation of abandoned buildings will be preferable to new build development unless an exceptional quality of design and integration with the surrounding landscape can be demonstrated. The formation of new accesses from the shore to the site will not be permitted unless reasonable justification and sensitive design can be demonstrated.

All development must demonstrate sensitive siting, design and scale of development to minimise impacts on the distinct and unspoilt character of offshore island landscapes and their qualities of remoteness, isolation and wildness.

Development proposals should adhere to the principles of low impact, ecologically sustainable development and should avoid significant adverse effects on the area’s ecological and landscape attributes, including the special qualities of National Scenic Areas and the character of areas of Wild Land.

Only applications for detailed planning permission will be considered and should detail how it is anticipated the site will be used, serviced and accessed.

## PLACEMAKING AND DESIGN



### Placemaking and Design

#### Context

Proposals which incorporate place-making principles and design tools, and are well sited and designed, will ensure good quality development that fits into its surroundings. The siting and design of development is important in contributing to the quality and sustainability of the environment within which we live and work and is also a practical means of achieving a wide range of social, economic and environmental goals - making settlements that can be both successful and sustainable. There are a number of place-making and design factors that combine to shape a new development and these form the basis of the policy.

Development proposals will be determined taking into account their impact upon the Scottish Government's six qualities of a successful place: Distinctive; Safe and Pleasant; Easy to Move Around; Welcoming; Adaptable; and Resource Efficient (see Appendix 2).

The Comhairle encourages Developers to engage with the Planning Service as early in the process as possible to ensure that the proposed design fits with the policy and contributes to better place-making.

#### References

National Planning Framework 3 paragraph 1.6 & 1.7, Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 36 – 57, 83 & 280; Creating Places: A Policy Statement on Architecture and Place for Scotland & Creating Places Website: <http://www.creatingplacesscotland.org/>; New Design in Historic Settings; Circular 2/2015 Consolidated Circular on Non-Domestic Permitted Development Rights; PAN 39 Farm and Forestry Buildings PAN 67 Housing Quality; PAN 68 Design Statements; PAN 72 Housing in the Countryside; PAN 78 Inclusive Design; PAN 83 Master Planning; Place Standard Tool <http://www.placestandard.scot/>; the Outer Hebrides Design Guide.

#### Policy PD1: Placemaking and Design

Development proposals must demonstrate a satisfactory quality of place-making, siting, scale and design that respect and reflect positive local characteristics and will complement or enhance the surrounding built and natural environment, while taking account of the guidance contained within the Outer Hebrides Design Guide.

Development proposals for new buildings will be permitted where they satisfy the following criteria:

- a) **SITING** should relate to the townscape and streetscape or the settlement pattern and landform, and avoid dominating the sky line. The orientation of the development while respecting the foregoing should also relate to the characteristics of the surrounding area.
- b) **DESIGN** - the development should be designed for the site ensuring design, scale, form and mass respects the surrounding built and natural environment. The mass of larger buildings should generally be managed by either breaking up the design elements or by the use of appropriate materials. The proportions, detailing, materials and colours, should be neutral or make a positive contribution to the character of the surrounding area. For infill development, in streetscapes, details of the height of neighbouring buildings will usually be required to be shown on the proposal drawings.
- c) **AMENITY SPACE** and landscaping shall be commensurate with the scale and character of the development. In housing development, consisting of four or more houses, integrated public spaces which prioritise walking and cycling over vehicular movement and encourages active travel may be required. Developers should provide details on the protection and enhancement of existing functional open space and green networks, where applicable, and other requirements which may be detailed in Supplementary Guidance for specific housing sites.
- d) **TOPOGRAPHY** - on sloping ground the design of development, should generally incorporate the slope, and visible under-build should be minimised. Surplus materials from excavations should be re-graded, landscaped and utilised to backfill against areas of underbuilding and to create landform of natural appearance. The creation of artificial platforms and un-natural gradients should be avoided.
- e) **NEIGHBOUR AMENITY** siting, design, landscaping and boundary treatments should ensure reasonable neighbour amenity is retained. Development will not be supported where it will result in a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

#### **Public Realm Features and Artwork**

Public realm features (which may include paths, street lighting and seating) or artwork should generally relate to and enhance the surrounding environment. Within larger scale development public realm features or artwork should contribute to providing a welcoming approach.

#### **Alterations and Extensions**

Proposals should generally be subservient to, and appropriate in terms of the design, proportion, form and materials in relation to, the existing building and neighbouring properties; they should result in no significant detrimental impact on the appearance of the existing building or the character and amenity of the surrounding area and neighbours.

#### **Agricultural Buildings**

The siting of agricultural buildings shall take into account the landscape, topography, settlement



pattern and historical built heritage. New buildings should use materials and colour, and be of a mass and proportion, that respect the character of the surrounding neighbouring amenity and the built and natural environment. Landscaping and / or screening or planting may be required to minimise visual intrusion and aid absorption of buildings into the landscape and settlement.

### **Design Tools: Planning Briefs, Master Planning and Design Statements**

In determining planning applications, the Comhairle will take account of the potential impact on the Scottish Government's six qualities of a successful place: Distinctive, Safe and Pleasant, Easy to Move Around, Welcoming, Adaptable and Resource Efficient (see Appendix 2).

Planning briefs will be prepared by the Comhairle as Supplementary Guidance for specific housing sites as indicated in the Proposals section of the Plan.

The Planning Brief may direct a Master Plan to be produced by the developer. Appendix 2 provides additional guidance on the contents of a Master Plan.

In addition to legislative requirements, all applications within the following Development Strategy Categories should be supported by a design statement: Outwith Settlement; Remote Areas; and Off-shore Islands.

Appendix 2 provides additional information on the contents of a Design Statement.



*Borrisdale, Harris*



## Car Parking and Roads Layout

**Context** Most new development gives rise to a need for parking and it is therefore important to ensure that appropriate parking provision is made in terms of pedestrian and road safety, free flow of traffic, visual appearance and impact on neighbouring amenity.

Developers should be aware that services such as refuse collection and snow clearance may not be available unless the access road is constructed to an adoptable standard and a Roads Construction Consent has been approved by the Comhairle.

This policy aims to achieve adequate car parking, cycle storage provision and roads layout. It supports Policy DP1: Design and Place-making. The Comhairle will undertake to ensure development fits the principles of *Designing Streets*, Scottish Government policy on street design.

**References** National Planning Framework 3 paragraph 4.15, Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 272-291; PAN 76 New Residential Streets; *Designing Streets – A Policy Statement for Scotland*; National Roads Development Guide.

### Policy PD2: Car Parking and Roads Layout

#### Car Parking

Road design and car parking should be suited to the type, location, scale and circumstances of the development. Subsequent development will be assessed cumulatively.

New Development will be assessed against all of the following:

- a) The Car Parking Standards in Tables 1-3 (Appendix 3), subject to provisions of this policy, and redevelopment or extension or change of use which would qualify for application of the Car Parking Standards;
- b) Car parking spaces should be a minimum of 2.5m x 5m. Specific standards for accessible parking are included at Table 4 and Fig 1 (Appendix 3); and
- c) Cycle storage will be required for new public buildings, community facilities, schools, major business premises and flatted dwellings.

The Comhairle will support the provision of electric car charging points in new development (subject to appropriate design and layout).

Relaxation of parking standards may be considered if the development is:

- within the Stornoway Town Centre Retail Area (as defined on the LDP Development Strategy Map); or
- within a Conservation Area; or
- a Listed Building being brought back into beneficial use and where standards may either be

physically impossible or would compromise the building or its setting; or

- redevelopment of vacant buildings/ brownfield sites; or
- for a temporary use over a specified period which requires associated short term parking provision.

Where car parking requirements cannot be met, the applicant will be required to justify the proposed provision and non-conformity with the Standard.

### **Roads Layout**

On a single-width road, where there is the prospect of future development, the building of permanent structures (for example boundary walls and/or fences) will require to be set back a minimum distance of 5 metres from the centre line of the road. This is to allow for any future highway improvements including drainage, passing places and/or pedestrian walkways.

Housing developments of 2 or more houses will have road standards commensurate with the nature of the adjoining road network. Road networks which are not built to an adoptable standard will not be adopted by the Comhairle - this will have implications for provision of (municipal) services including bin collection services.

All new vehicular accesses must meet the following criteria:

- a) The access road must enter the main road at right angles. The gradient of the access should not be greater than 1 in 10 for the first 10m;
- b) If a gate is to be installed, it should be located at a minimum distance of 7.5m from the main road as per Fig 4 Appendix 3
- c) Where a development accesses onto an adopted or surfaced unadopted road the first three meters on an access will be surfaced with bitmac or concrete. If the development accesses an unadopted road there will be no requirement to surface an access or surface the road;
- d) Vehicles should be visible at a minimum distance of 90m from a point on the access road, 5m back from the main road. Relaxation on visibility splays may be acceptable depending on the road status and site location. Visibility should be taken at a height of 1m;
- e) Where a new vehicular access is provided, it should be possible to enter and exit the access in a forward gear. Off road turning should be provided commensurate with the parking requirements for the development; and
- f) Where a new access comes on to an existing adopted footpath, dropped kerbs must be installed in accordance with the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 and to the Comhairle standards as detailed in Appendix 3. The kerb and footpath must be reinstated to the satisfaction of the Comhairle at the developer's expense.

## Housing

### Context

Housing is a key development activity on the islands with 434 houses being completed in the last 5 years. It is important to help ensure there is sufficient land available for future provision as determined through the Housing Need and Demand Assessment. The Plan has identified a limited number of housing sites which are safeguarded for the provision of affordable or mixed tenure housing development. This is supplemented by a policy framework to best respond to the high incidence of individual self builds on ‘windfall’ sites that is characteristic of the Outer Hebrides and is evidenced in the Outer Hebrides Housing Land Audit 2015. The LDP Housing Policy and Housing Proposal Sites have been informed by the draft Local Housing Strategy, the HNDA undertaken in 2016 (approved 2018) and the Housing Land Audit which evidences the extent of house building on windfall sites. Opportunities to co-locate or connect with district heating schemes or heat producers should be investigated, where they are available.

The Housing Need and Demand Assessment identified a need to replace two care homes / care units in Lewis, and provide around 100 additional units of care housing in the Stornoway area. In response, Plan Proposal Site PP13 Goathill Farm West has been identified for development of accommodation comprising 50 care beds and 52 extra care housing units.

### References

Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 109 – 134 and paragraphs 4 - 83; PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape; PAN 67 Housing Quality; PAN 72 Housing in the Countryside; PAN 2/2010 Affordable Housing and Land Audits; PAN 83 Master Planning; [Circular 2/2012 Houses in Multiple Occupation](#); Housing Strategy 2011 – 2016; Outer Hebrides Housing Land Audit (2018); Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP).



*Mackenzie Avenue, Stornoway*

### Policy PD3: Housing

The effective land supply to deliver a housing supply target of an average of 92 homes per year (of which 50 are expected to be affordable and 42 market) for at least a five year period may be delivered through individual/private sites and, in part for affordable housing, those listed in the LDP Proposal Sites. Sites for affordable housing provision will be safeguarded against uses and development that would compromise the residential function of the site.

In addition to the identified sites, housing development will be permitted where the development accords with the Policy DS1 Development Strategy; and:

- comprises redevelopment of land or premises; or
- is a conversion of an existing property; or
- is for use of derelict land or gap sites; or
- is of small scale (not more than 4 dwellings) at an appropriate density; or
- it is appropriately located within the Rural Housing Market Area.

For housing proposals of:

- a) 4 or more units, an appropriate housing density will be required as follows:

Housing Density by Area (see Pol DS1)	Maximum Density	Minimum Density
Stornoway Core	None	25 units/ha
Outwith Stornoway core & in other main settlements	30 units/ha	15 units/ha
Within rural settlement	20 units/ha	None

- b) 8 or more units, 25% affordable housing will be required as part of proposals for otherwise private market housing unless otherwise determined in a planning brief;
- c) 15 units or more, an appropriate tenure mix will be sought.

A development proposal which does not accord with the above will not be acceptable unless it is demonstrated that there is a need for housing in the area, or the site specific development issues, combined with the overriding public benefit of the development of the site, would justify the proposal.

Planning briefs will be prepared by the Comhairle as Supplementary Guidance for specific housing sites as indicated in the Proposals section of the Plan.

Planning permission will be required for multiple occupation of a property by five or more unrelated people, if it is deemed a material change of use. Proposals for the conversion and sub division of buildings into multiple residential units will be assessed on the contribution the development could make to meeting housing demand balanced against any possible damage to the character and amenity of the area and of adjoining dwellings.

## Zero and Low Carbon Buildings

**Context** Climate change is a significant issue and Scotland is leading the UK with reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Planning Legislation states that all local authorities in their Local Development Plans must seek to reduce carbon emissions through the use of low and zero carbon generating technologies (LZCGT) in all new building developments. This will contribute to meeting Scottish Government's CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction targets and Building Standards Energy and Sustainability requirements.

The principle of sustainability is embedded within Planning and Building Standards, through the concept of Sustainability Labelling which aims to reward the achievement of either meeting or exceeding Building Standards and opting to meet higher levels in terms of energy and carbon emissions targets as well as water efficiency and flexibility in design.

**References** National Planning Framework 3 paragraphs 3.1 & 3.13; Scottish Planning Policy 2014 Paragraphs 45, 152 – 157, 160 & 169; Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009; Scottish Building Standards Handbooks; Sustainability Label Generator (<http://www.s7sust.co.uk/>); Building (Scotland) Act 2003; Low Carbon Scotland: Meeting Our Emissions Reductions Targets 2013- 2027.

### Policy PD4: Zero and Low Carbon Buildings

All Planning applications for new buildings must demonstrate that the carbon dioxide emissions reduction target, as required by Scottish Building Standards, has been met; with at least 15% of this target being met through the use of low or zero carbon technology. This figure will be reviewed in 2021.

Compliance with this policy shall be demonstrated through obtaining an 'active' sustainability label through Building Standards and submission of calculations indicating the SAP Dwelling Emissions Rate (DER) or SBEM Buildings Emissions Rate (BER) with and without the use of the LZCGT.

A suspensive condition may be used to allow the applicant to submit energy saving or onsite LZCGT schemes at the time of Building Warrant submissions.

This policy does not apply to any of the following:

- a) buildings which will not be heated or cooled, other than by heating provided solely for the purpose of frost protection;
- b) alterations and extensions to buildings;
- c) changes of use or conversion of buildings;
- d) ancillary buildings that are stand-alone, having an area less than 50 square metres;
- e) buildings which are designed so that the energy necessary is integral to the structure requiring minimal additional mechanisation (the passive house concept);
- f) buildings which have an intended life of less than two years.

*Calculation for indicating the SAP Dwelling Emissions Rate (DER) or SBEM Buildings Emissions Rate (BER) with and without the use of the LZCGT:*

Step 1- using either SAP or SBEM calculate the 2010 Scottish Buildings Regulations Carbon Dioxide Emissions Standard. This provides the Target Emissions Rate (TER) this is the predicted CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for a building of the specified size.

Step 2 – using either SAP or SBEM calculate the actual emissions rate for the proposed development which includes the low and zero carbon generating equipment. This is the Dwelling or Building Emissions Rate (DER/BER) this is the predicted CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the actual proposal.

Calculate the percentage reduction from step 1 to step 2:

$100 - (\text{step2} \div \text{step 1} \times 100)$

Step 3: repeat step 2 but do not include the low and zero carbon generating equipment in the calculation.

## Open Space and Outdoor Sports Facilities

### Context

Good quality functional open space is important for the amenity value it provides to communities and its role in nature conservation, biodiversity, recreation and physical activity and can improve conditions for health and wellbeing. It is important to protect open space from development where the opportunity for access is limited. Due to the nature of the Outer Hebrides this is more likely to occur within Stornoway and Main Settlements. In 2010 the Comhairle published the Outer Hebrides Open Space Audit which identified and classified significant open space within the Greater Stornoway main settlement. The Comhairle is undertaking a play area review in order to develop a sustainable strategy for play areas throughout the Outer Hebrides. There is also an aspiration for a Sports Facilities Audit to be undertaken to assess levels of outdoor sport facility provision appropriate to the communities of the Outer Hebrides. These audits will inform future decisions on the provision, upgrading, replacement and location of open space in Gtr. Stornoway and outdoor sports facilities and play areas in the islands.

For the purposes of this Plan, 'functional open space' refers to valuable and valued greenspaces which fall under a category listed as 'Open Space' within PAN 65 Planning and Open Space: Appendix 1; or those listed in the Outer Hebrides Open Space Audit.

### References

Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 219-233; PAN 65 Planning and Open Space; Green Infrastructure Design and Placemaking; Outer Hebrides Open Space Audit 2010.



## **Policy PD5: Open Space and Outdoor Sports Facilities**

The Comhairle will safeguard existing functional open space and allotments within Stornoway Core and Main Settlements. Development proposals that adversely impact existing functional open space will not be supported unless there is strong justification and alternative provision is proposed that offers comparable amenity, size, accessibility, biodiversity and quality benefits.

The provision of new high quality open space may be required for large scale or major developments. This will be appropriate to the scale, density and use of the development proposed. Planning briefs prepared for housing sites by the Comhairle as Supplementary Guidance will contain details of the requirements for open space and Green Infrastructure.

Provision of new or enhanced open spaces, including allotments and community growing spaces, shall be supported provided they are attractive, designed for the purpose and sited to promote safety, accessibility and connectivity.

Existing outdoor sports facilities shall be safeguarded from development unless:

- a) the proposed development is ancillary to the principal use of the site as outdoor sports facility;
- b) the proposed development involves a minor part of the outdoor sports facility and would not affect its use and potential for sport and training;
- c) the outdoor sports facility which would be lost would be replaced by a new facility of comparable or greater benefit for sport in a location that is convenient for users or by the upgrading of an existing outdoor sports facility to provide a facility of better quality on the same site or at another location that is convenient for users and maintains or improves the overall playing capacity in the area; or
- d) the relevant strategy and consultation with Sportscotland has shown that there is an excess of facilities to meet current and anticipated future demand in the area, and that the site could be developed without detriment to the overall quality and breadth of provision.

The Comhairle will encourage the use of temporary greening of land awaiting development, where appropriate. Consideration will be given to whether greening of a site could bring about a positive impact on the amenity of the area without compromising any identified future development potential. In particular, greening which provides advance planting to create the landscape framework for any future development will be encouraged.

## Neighbouring Uses

**Context** A key focus of one of the Planning Outcomes of the Scottish Planning Policy is to ensure that proposals are located in the right place, which will improve quality of life and the environment. One way of achieving this outcome is by ensuring that new uses are compatible with existing uses in order to ensure that both the current and the proposed use can operate alongside each other thereby making a positive contribution to placemaking.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraph 108.



*Loch Carnan*

### Policy PD6: Compatibility of Neighbouring Uses

All development proposals shall ensure that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses. Where appropriate, proposals should include mitigation measures to reduce the impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses.

Development proposals adjacent to existing or consented:

- general industrial/ storage sites (use classes 5 & 6);
- mineral extraction or waste management sites;
- LDP Economic Proposal sites;
- non-residential caravan sites;
- or renewable energy development,

should not constrain these uses.

This may be achieved through creation of a buffer zone between the uses or by the use of other design and landscaping techniques.

## Adverts

<b>Context</b>	Advertisements are important in terms of identifying services and providing direction and are required to be maintained in a clean, tidy and safe condition. When poorly managed, advertisements result in visual clutter on roads and at junctions adversely impacting on road safety, visual and neighbour amenity.
<b>References</b>	Scottish Planning Policy Paragraph 43; Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984.

### Policy PD7: Adverts

Applications for advertisements and signs, particularly those with proposed illumination, and/or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area (refer to the Conservation Area Management Plans Supplementary Guidance) or a listed building, must be of a suitable design, dimension, position, material and colour so that:

- a) they are appropriate to their surroundings in scale, character and materials and do not adversely affect architectural detail; and
- b) they avoid creating clutter and do not detract from the amenity of the area or interrupt important features, buildings or views; and
- c) they do not prejudice public safety, highway safety or visibility of official signs; and
- d) the cumulative impact of signs will be a factor in assessing proposals and developers are encouraged to make use of composite signs where appropriate.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### Economic Development

**Context** As set out in Scottish Planning Policy and the National Planning Framework, Development Plans should enable sustainable economic activity and growth, which is responsive to the economic environment of rural and island areas and provides scope for diversification in the rural economy.

The Plan has identified a limited number of key sites which are safeguarded for economic development. This is supplemented by a policy framework to best respond to the distinct nature of economic activity in the Outer Hebrides including for resource based activities, tourism, commerce, food and drink, which requires to be flexible in terms of location, diversification potential and alignment with other activities e.g. crofting, and recognises the role of social enterprise in the Islands.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 58 – 108; Creating Communities of the Future 2002; National Planning Framework 3; PAN 73 Rural Diversification; PAN 52 Small Towns; PAN 59 Improving Town Centres.

#### Policy ED1: Economic Development

The locations identified as the main sites to deliver strategic business needs are listed in the Development Proposals section. These locations will be safeguarded against uses or development that would compromise the business function or economic use of the sites.

Development sites, in other locations, will also be considered in recognition of the diverse nature of economic activity within the Outer Hebrides.

For large-scale sites details of proposed infrastructure and any planned phasing will normally be required in support of a planning application.

## Retail And Service Provision

**Context** The retail and service sectors provide a significant contribution to local employment throughout the islands; however Stornoway, given its size and status as the primary administrative centre, is the main retail and service centre within Lewis and Harris.

The dispersed geographic nature of the islands requires a more local approach to retail provision, particularly in the rural areas. Development should not threaten to undermine the viability of the local community, and the town centre first policy, which applies within Stornoway, is not intended to divert essential services and development away from rural areas.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 58 – 108 ; Creating Communities of the Future 2002; National Planning Framework 3; PAN 73; PAN 52 Small Towns; PAN 59 Improving Town Centres; PAN 73 Rural Diversification; PAN 71 Conservation Area Management; CnES / Scottish Government Stornoway Town Centre Survey.

### Policy ED2: Retail and Service Provision

In line with Scottish Planning Policy the provision of retail, service and other activities should be located to best serve the communities for which they are intended. Proposals for retail, commercial and public uses will be supported in main and rural settlements.

Proposals resulting in the loss of key retail and service facilities (e.g. change of use application affecting 'single' township shops) may only be approved where it has been demonstrated that:

- a) every effort has been made to market the property/business as a going concern; or
- b) the proposal is part of a wider redevelopment which will add to the vitality of the settlement.

The sale of goods from commercial premises (e.g. builders), from aquaculture/fishing businesses; or agricultural produce from crofts will normally be allowed without a specific need for planning consent provided the activity is ancillary to the main business.

Where they help promote rural diversification, smaller scale retail developments (max 100sq.m) for example relating to croft diversification or tourist related development, will be acceptable where they meet the requirements of the Development Strategy.

Retail sales from hotels and other non-retail locations, which require planning permission, should not cause undue parking, road safety or amenity problems.

In line with Scottish Planning Policy, provision of community, education and healthcare facilities in the Islands should be best located for the communities they are intended to serve, within main and rural settlements.

## Caravans, Huts and Temporary Buildings

**Context** Caravans in the Outer Hebrides are used to provide holiday accommodation and as an interim measure during the construction of a new house. The use of temporary buildings (including containers) has increased, but as with caravans, the design materials and finishes of these structures makes them difficult to assimilate successfully in the landscape. The exposure and climate of the Outer Hebrides is such that caravans and temporary buildings are not suitable for long term use, particularly as residential accommodation.

Although there is a long tradition in the Outer Hebrides of sheilings ('airighs') used for summer hill grazing and bothies and hides used for land management purposes, the construction of 'huts' for intermittent recreational accommodation is a new consideration for planning, introduced by Scottish Planning Policy (2014). It is important that these structures are low impact and ecologically sustainable and the landscape can accommodate such development. In line with the Development Strategy, huts for recreational accommodation will only be permitted in 'Outwith Settlement' areas.

The Comhairle's policy on the siting and use of caravans, huts, temporary buildings (including containers) is set out in the Development Strategy and Supplementary Guidance. The policy aims to address and mitigate against adverse environmental and amenity issues arising from such uses and, where appropriate, ensure that such structures are dealt with appropriately at their natural end of life.

**References** Caravan Sites & Control of Development Act 1960; Scottish Planning Policy paragraph 79.

### Policy ED3: Caravans, Huts and Temporary Buildings

Proposals for: caravans as residential or holiday accommodation; touring caravan and camping sites; and temporary buildings (including containers), must comply with the policies contained in the Caravans, Huts and Temporary Buildings Supplementary Guidance. Removal of the caravan or temporary building and reinstatement of the site at the end of the consented period will be a condition of the planning permission.

Proposals for recreational 'huts' must adhere to the principles of low impact, sustainable development in terms of siting, design, materials, access, construction, and water and waste management as detailed in the Caravans, Huts and Temporary Buildings Supplementary Guidance. Huts should be located outwith areas at risk of flooding and must be designed to physically and visually integrate with the surrounding landscape.

Development proposals must avoid adverse environmental and amenity impacts. Consents will be time limited and the length of time will be dependent on the use and anticipated lifespan of the proposed structure(s).



## Fish Farming and Marine Planning

### Context

The Comhairle has a significant role to play in supporting the sustainable development of aquaculture whilst protecting and maintaining the ecosystem on which it depends. Although local authority planning control in the marine environment extends only to fish farming, the Comhairle should be mindful of all activities around the coast, in particular those which may have economic, environmental or social impacts within its shores e.g. energy exploitation, shipping and marine developments that will require associated land based facilities. It is important to ensure integration with any policies and activities arising from the National Marine Plan, or subsequent Marine Planning Partnership, and Regional Marine Plan.

The Supplementary Guidance on Marine Fish Farming sets out a spatial strategy and a development policy framework to guide fish farming development in the Outer Hebrides. The spatial strategy identifies areas for potential growth including areas subject to constraint, and areas that are sensitive to new or further fish farming development, while the development framework sets out a suite of detailed development policies against which fish farming proposals will be assessed.

### References

Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 249-253; The Town and Country Planning (Marine Fish Farming) (Scotland) Order 2007; Scotland's National Marine Plan 2015; Planning Circular 1 2007: Planning Controls for Marine Fish Farming; Marine (Scotland) Act 2010); A Fresh Start: The Renewed Strategic Framework for Scottish Aquaculture; Delivering Planning Reform for Aquaculture 2; Locational Guidelines: Marine Fish Farms in Scottish Waters; The River Basin Management Plan for the Scotland River Basin District: 2015-2027; SEPA LUPS GU17 Marine Development and Marine Aquaculture Planning Guidance.

## Policy ED4: Fish Farming and Marine Planning

### Marine Aquaculture Proposals

The Comhairle will take planning decisions in accordance with the National Marine Plan and any subsequent regional marine plan.

Proposals for new marine fish farming developments or changes to existing marine fish farming sites will be assessed against the Supplementary Guidance for Marine Fish Farming which forms part of the Development Plan.

### Freshwater Aquaculture Proposals

Proposals for new freshwater aquaculture developments will be assessed against all of the following criteria:

- a) acceptable location in terms of Policy DS1 Development Strategy;
- b) sympathetic siting and design of installations and associated facilities;
- c) no unacceptable adverse noise and lighting impacts;
- d) satisfactory construction and operational impacts (including site restoration and waste management arrangements);
- e) no significant adverse impact on other uses of the site or neighbouring land;
- f) no unacceptable adverse environmental or amenity impacts arising from access or servicing considerations;
- g) no significant adverse effect on wild fish populations, either individually or cumulatively with other aquaculture developments;
- h) the incremental or cumulative impact of the proposal; and
- i) no unacceptable adverse impacts upon the water environment.

## Minerals

### Context

Minerals are a valuable, finite natural resource and an adequate and steady supply can provide important economic benefits through the creation of jobs and supporting development. Extraction of minerals can raise significant environmental issues which need to be balanced against their benefits to the national and local economy. Decisions on mineral extraction proposals must be based upon a comprehensive evaluation of the economic and environmental effects. Scottish Planning Policy requires that mineral reserves are safeguarded and not unnecessarily sterilised from development unrelated to mineral extraction. It also outlines the need for local authorities to ensure that there is a minimum 10 year landbank of permitted reserves for construction aggregates at all times and for all market areas.

### References

National Planning Framework 3 paragraphs 4.2 and 4.26 Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 234 – 248; PAN 50: Controlling the Environmental Effects of Surface Mineral Workings; PAN 64: Reclamation of Surface Mineral Workings; Scotland's Zero Waste Plan 2010; Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009; Management of Extractive Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2010; Circular 34/1996 Environmental Act 1995 Section 96; Circular 3/2011 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2011; 2002 Review of Old Mineral Permissions; Circular 1/2010 Planning Agreements; Review of the Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan Minerals Policy (Prepared by LUC in association with Cuesta Consulting Limited August 2016).

## Policy ED5: Minerals

### Applications for mineral extraction

#### Mineral extraction proposals

The Comhairle will seek to ensure an adequate and steady supply of construction aggregate and maintain a landbank of at least 10 years within each market area\* through identified sites, areas of search and implementation of this policy. The Comhairle will support, in principle, mineral extraction in the following circumstances:

- Extension to existing operations/sites;
- Reopening of an inactive quarry;
- A reserve underlying a proposed development where it would be beneficial to extract prior to development.

Proposals for new mineral workings will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that existing reserves have been exhausted or are no longer viable, or where it has been evidenced that there is less than the minimum 10 year supply of construction aggregates available within the mineral market area.

Mineral extraction proposals will be supported where all the following have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Comhairle:

- a) impact from disturbance, disruption and noise, blasting and vibration, and potential pollution of land, air and water;
- b) the impact on local communities, individual houses, sensitive receptors and economic sectors important to the local economy;
- c) the impact on natural heritage and biodiversity, landscape, visual amenity, and the historic environment both during and after development;
- d) the impact on the water environment, air quality, and on all land especially carbon rich or rare soils;
- e) effective and sustainable waste solutions in the reuse of mineral waste or any secondary material (proposals may require to be accompanied by a Waste Management Plan);
- f) the cumulative impact of all of the above with other mineral, waste transfer and landfill sites in the area, especially if there are already two or more consented sites that could raise similar impacts within 5km of a nearby settlement;
- g) the impact on the road network (a Transport Impact Assessment may be required where potential impact on the surrounding road network is uncertain);
- h) restoration and aftercare proposals; and,
- i) a fully developed method statement.

Applicants should provide sufficient information to enable a full assessment to be made of the likely

effects of development, together with appropriate control, mitigation and monitoring measures.

Development proposals for mineral extraction for export from the Outer Hebrides will be considered against all the criteria listed above together with the impacts on the long term sustainability of the local community and environment.

*\*Mineral market areas as identified in the 'Review of the Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan Minerals Policy' are:*

- *Hard Rock and Aggregate: Lewis; Harris; North Uist & Benbecula; South Uist; and Barra*
- *Sand and Gravel: Lewis and Harris*
- *Gravel\*\*: North Uist; and Benbecula*
- *Shell Sand: Lewis; Harris; North Uist & Benbecula; South Uist; and Barra*

*The market areas in italics have sufficient resources for 10 years beyond the plan period.*

*\*\*With regard to gravel for Benbecula, South Uist and Barra the 'Review' advised that the position is unclear for these islands. The report then stated "In those areas, in the absence of any significant deposits of Quaternary sand & gravel, any requirements for such materials are likely to be supplied by products from hard rock quarries. For this reason, there is no particular need to identify new sources of gravel within those islands (p25)."*

### **Borrow pits**

Proposals for borrow pits will be supported to allow the extraction of minerals near to or on the site of associated development (e.g. wind farm development or infrastructure projects) provided it can be demonstrated that there are significant benefits compared to obtaining the materials from local quarries and that criteria a) to i) above are met. These consents will be time-limited, tied to the proposal and must be accompanied by full restoration proposals and aftercare.

### **Restoration of mineral extraction sites**

Planning applications for mineral extraction must include detailed proposals for the phased restoration and aftercare of the site, including its intended after-use. Returning the land to a productive and beneficial use should take place at the earliest opportunity. Restoration should be designed and implemented to the highest standard and after-uses should result in environmental improvement. Opportunities to add to the cultural, recreational or environmental assets of the area will be encouraged.

If operators cannot demonstrate that their programme of restoration (including the necessary financing, phasing and after-care of the sites) is sufficient, a financial guarantee may be sought to ensure the restoration of the site is completed to the required standard.

### **Areas of Search and Mineral Safeguarding Areas**

*Supplementary Guidance will be prepared to provide further guidance on Minerals policy and to identify Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSA) and, as appropriate, Areas of Search (AoS).*

Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) will be defined around all mineral resources in the main islands of the Outer Hebrides (Lewis, Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist and Barra) which are considered to be of existing or potential economic importance. All such resources within the

identified MSAs will be protected from unnecessary sterilisation by other forms of development or incompatible land use change.

Proposals for non-mineral development or land use change within MSAs will need to be weighed against the importance of the mineral resource at that location and the likely significance of sterilising that part of the resource for future use. Proposals that would result in the sterilisation of a significant resource will not be permitted unless the extraction of all, or a substantial part, of that resource is completed before the development or land use change commences.

Subject to need, Areas of Search may be defined around particular locations within each of the main islands to identify the locations in which future mineral extraction is encouraged to take place, subject to the determination of site-specific planning applications and the use of appropriate conditions.

# ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE



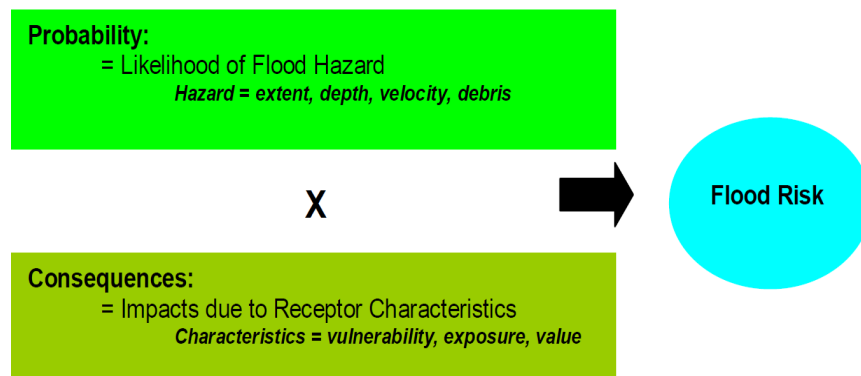
## Flooding

**Context** The Outer Hebrides has a range of low-lying areas of land potentially at risk of flooding, from the sea and/or other sources, e.g., fluvial (water course), pluvial (surface water), groundwater or blocked culverts. The risk of flooding from all sources is likely to increase with projected climate change. The likelihood of a site being flooded is measured in terms of probabilities per annum, which are defined as: very low (0.1% [1:1000]); low to medium (0.1 – 0.5% [1:1000 – 1:200]); and medium to high (greater than 0.5% [1:200]). Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) provides a Risk Framework which divides flood risk into the above three categories and outlines an appropriate planning response. The policy approach aims to minimise any potential risk that might arise from a flood event.

The Comhairle will support the delivery of relevant objectives and actions within Flood Risk Management Strategy and Local Flood Risk Management Plans as part of its responsibilities under the Flood Risk Management Act.

The diagram below is the components of the Definition of 'Flood Risk' taken from SEPA's 'Land Use Vulnerability Guidance'.

Components of the Definition of 'Flood Risk'



NB: Vulnerability is a function of resilience and susceptibility.



**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 45, 88 and 254-268; SEPA Planning Information Note 3: Flood Risk Advice for Planning Authorities; SEPA – Planning Authority Protocol (Policy 41); SEPA Interim Position Statement on Planning and Flooding; SEPA Technical guidance for stakeholders on flood risk, SEPA Land use vulnerability guidance, SEPA standing advice for low impact proposals in flood risk areas; Scottish Government Online Planning Advice on Flood Risk; Outer Hebrides Local Plan District: Flood Risk Management Strategy and Local Flood Risk Management Plan; CREW Coastal Flooding in Scotland, A guidance document for coastal practitioners; SEPA Planning background Paper.

## **Policy EI 1: Flooding**

### **General**

Development proposals should avoid areas susceptible to flooding and promote sustainable flood management.

Where sustainable flood management measures are proposed they should incorporate environmental improvements, for example natural methods such as restoration of floodplains, wetlands and water bodies, which can also contribute to reducing flood risk and help implement the proposals within the Outer Hebrides Local Flood Risk Management Plan.

Development proposals should have regard to the probability of flooding from all sources. Where a proposal could lead to an increase in the number of persons affected or buildings at risk of being damaged by flooding then the submission of suitable information, which may include a Flood Risk Assessment will be required to demonstrate compliance with Scottish Planning Policy (SPP).

### **Flood Risk Assessments**

Information which demonstrates compliance with Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) will be required for development proposals within or closely bordering a medium to high risk flood area (1:200 year extents (0.5% Annual Probability), or greater), as identified by the flood risk management dataset issued by SEPA.

It is not possible to plan for development solely according to the calculated probability of flooding and therefore a Flood Risk Assessment or other suitable information which demonstrates compliance with SPP may be required where:

- a) a 'Most Vulnerable' land use or 'essential infrastructure' (as specified in the SPP flood risk framework and in the SEPA Land Use Vulnerability Classification Guidance) is proposed in a low to medium risk flood area (1:1,000 to 1:200 year extents (0.1% to 0.5% Annual Probability));
- b) a development proposal is within an area where local flood risk information (known to the Comhairle, in terms of its flood prevention remit) suggests a risk of flooding; or
- c) a development borders the coastal edge and its elevation relative to sea level suggests it

may be at increased risk of flood due to extreme weather events; or

- d) the site contains or is adjacent to a watercourse that suggests it may be at increased risk of flood.

Development permitted in medium to high risk flood areas (that accord with SPP) or civil and essential infrastructure and the most vulnerable uses located in low to medium risk areas (1000 year – 200 year (0.1% – 0.5% annual probability) should be built to a water resilient design to enable them to remain operational during flood events.

Where it can be demonstrated that the location is essential for operational reasons e.g., harbours, piers, offshore energy and fisheries related activities, development proposals will be allowed in flood risk areas subject to sustainable flood management measures being incorporated at design stage that mitigate against flood risk.

### **Allowances for Climate Change**

The following allowances, or subsequent revised allowances, for climate change should be used when calculating estimated design flood levels:

**Fluvial:** at least 20% should be added to the estimated design flood peak;

**Coastal:** The following UK Climate Change Projections (UKCP09) sea level rise projections should be used to derive an allowance above the extreme still water design flood level:

- Lewis and Harris - 0.55m
- North Uist and Berneray - 0.53m
- Benbecula, South Uist and Barra - 0.52m

## **Water and Wastewater**

**Context** Good quality water and waste water infrastructure is important not only to serve new development but also to protect the environment. The Comhairle will support Scottish Water in pursuing investment in areas of limited capacity to ensure sufficient capacity for development potential within the Plan period. Prospective developers should liaise with Scottish Water as early as possible in their planning process to ensure adequate supporting documentation is compiled to assist with any subsequent investment projects and phasing of connections. Where appropriate, developers will be required to make a contribution to ensure adequate network capacity is in place. Where possible rain water harvesting should be used to conserve water usage.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy 2014 paragraphs: 29, 40, 45, 169, 194 - 195, 202, 255, and 267 - 268; PAN 51 Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (Revised 2006), PAN 61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems; PAN 79 Water and

Drainage; SEPA's LUPS GU19 Planning Advice on Waste Water Drainage; EC Shellfish Directives 79/923/EEC (as amended), 91/492/EEC; EC Bathing Waters Directive 76/160/EEC; CIRIA SUDS Manual, Sewers for Scotland 3rd Edition; Water for Scotland 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition; The Private Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

## Policy EI 2: Water and Waste Water

New developments will be required to adopt the principles of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The Comhairle will support retrofitting of SuDS and the controlling of surface water through the use of permeable surfaces and green roofs.

Sewerage: New buildings in settlements with public sewerage systems, and developments\* of 25 houses or more in unsewered settlements, will be required to connect to the public sewer unless the developer can demonstrate that there are specific technical reasons as to why the development cannot reasonably be connected to a public sewer. In such cases, the development will only be permitted if the developer can demonstrate a sustainable alternative method that will not significantly adversely impact on the environment or neighbour amenity.

Private waste water systems should discharge to land. Where this is not possible, the developer must submit evidence that discharge to the water environment is acceptable to SEPA. Discharge from waste water systems direct to waters designated under EC Shellfish Directives will not be permitted.

Water: New developments in areas with public water supplies will be required to connect to the public water supply. In situations where there is no, or an inadequate, public water supply the details including the sufficiency and wholesomeness of the private water supply will require to be demonstrated.

*\*For developments of 25 houses or more in unsewered settlements, the developer will be required to develop a new sewage system for adoption as a public sewer.*

## Water Environment

**Context** The Comhairle has a duty as a responsible authority under the Water Framework Directive to protect and, where possible, improve and promote the sustainable use of the Outer Hebrides water environment.

A key objective of the Scotland River Basin Management Plan is that water bodies achieve good ecological status/potential, and that there is no deterioration in current ecological status/potential.

The Comhairle will ensure that the water environment is safeguarded and enhanced by ensuring that new developments protect, and where possible deliver improvements to, water bodies (rivers, streams, lochs, groundwater, estuaries, coastal waters (to 3 nautical miles) and wetlands).

Water dependent protected areas must be safeguarded from inappropriate

development, and where possible, new developments should improve the water environment. Improvements to the water environment can contribute to flood risk management objectives. The creation of riparian habitats for mammals, birds, insects and other aquatic species, will also contribute to meeting the objectives of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 29, 40, 169, 194, 195, 202, 232, 237, 255-268; Scotland's National Marine Plan 2015, policy GEN 12; [Scotland River Basin Management Plan 2015-2027](#); SEPA Guidance on the Water Framework Directive including River Basin Planning; [Renewable | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#), guidance on assessing the impact of windfarm proposals on groundwater abstractions and groundwater terrestrial ecosystems, Guidance on Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003.

### **Policy EI 3: Water Environment**

Development proposals should avoid adverse impact on the water environment. All proposals involving activities in or adjacent to any water body must be accompanied by sufficient information to enable a full assessment to be made of the likely effects, including environmental effects, of the development.

Where a site contains or is adjacent to a watercourse or the sea then all the following must be demonstrated:

- a) the site layout avoids development within the water environment unless the location is essential for operational reasons, e.g. for navigation and water-based uses. A minimum buffer strip of 6m should be incorporated between the water body\* and the proposed development, to enable access and maintenance all year round. Engineering activities such as culverts, bridges, watercourse diversions, bank modifications or dams should be avoided unless there is no practicable alternative;
- b) the management or enhancement of existing and new habitats such as the provision of riparian/green corridors, natural flood management within flood plains, control of invasive non-native species, removal of redundant structures such as weirs or culverts;
- c) no significant effect both during construction and after completion on:
  - Water quality in groundwater, adjacent watercourses or areas downstream;
  - Existing groundwater abstractions within 250m;
  - Water quantity and natural flow patterns and sediment transport processes in all water bodies.

For Major developments, where a site contains or is adjacent to a wetland or boggy area then a Phase 1 habitat survey should be carried out for the whole site and a 250m buffer around it. Where a Groundwater Dependent Terrestrial Ecosystem is identified then the site layout should avoid it and drainage designed to ensure groundwater flows to the habitat are maintained.

*\*May be subject to technical assessment and possible consultation with statutory consultees.*

## Waste Management

**Context** Waste should be seen as a resource and an opportunity, rather than a burden. Scotland has a Zero Waste Policy, which is backed up by The Waste (Scotland) Regulations 2012. This means wasting as little as possible and recognising that every item and material we use, either natural or manufactured, is a resource which has potential value for our economy. Waste should be dealt with as high up the Waste Hierarchy (i.e. prevention; re-use; recycle; energy recovery and disposal) as possible. The LDP seeks to support the provision of recycling facilities and infrastructure to maximise business development whilst minimising waste. In bringing forward proposals developers should maximise the use of recycled materials and design site layouts to minimise the generation of waste.

In line with Scotland's Zero Waste Plan the Comhairle will work towards reducing waste to landfill to 5% or less by 2025. This will be done by increasing diversion from landfill; by recycling and developing alternative waste processing options; by maximising opportunities for local recovery options wherever environmentally and economically feasible; and by seeking to increase opportunities for biomass.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 19, 29, 45, 96, 175 – 192, 245; PAN 63; Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 2013; [Site waste management plans | NetRegs | Environmental guidance for your business in Northern Ireland & Scotland](#), Scottish Government's [Online Planning and Waste Management Advice](#); [Scotland's Zero Waste Plan \(ZWP\)](#); Making Things Last, A Circular Economy for Scotland 2016.



## Policy EI 4: Waste Management

The LDP Context Map identifies (licensed) waste management and recycling sites.

Provision of new waste management sites should be taken into account when considering sites suitable for a range of industrial, business, storage, and distribution uses and the development and/or reinstatement of mineral extraction sites or other previously developed land.

New sites for, or incorporating, waste management facilities will require to meet all the following criteria:

- a) to safeguard landscape interests and the natural environment, the siting and operation of new or additional waste facilities should avoid significant adverse impacts on the environment (including landscape and visual impact);
- b) details of on-site management arrangements are submitted as part of any planning application and deemed acceptable;
- c) appropriate buffer zones in accordance with Paragraph 191 of Scottish Planning Policy;
- d) where applicable, the programme of remediation, including end use, is submitted as part of any planning application and deemed acceptable;
- e) any proposal for energy from waste facilities should first seek to utilise or store energy on site, or where feasible be designed to enable links to be made to potential users of heat and/or power generated at the site;
- f) the proposal accords with Scotland's Zero Waste Plan.

Space to accommodate the provision of recycling facilities must be designed and built into all new industrial, commercial, retail and residential development proposals both during the construction phase as well as the completed development.

Preparation of a Site Waste Management Plan will be required to accompany proposals for Major developments and developments involving significant demolition works. For all other developments, waste will be managed in accordance with the Waste Hierarchy. Details of how waste is to be managed should be provided as part of the sustainability label required through Policy PD4 Zero and Low Carbon Buildings.





## Soils

**Context** The disturbance of some soils, particularly peat, may lead to the release of stored carbon, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. The Scottish Soil Framework promotes the sustainable management and protection of soils consistent with the economic, social and environmental needs of Scotland. The most significant pressures on soil are climate change and the loss of soil organic matter through disturbance. Scottish Planning Policy requires that planning decisions take account of the implications of development for soil quality generally and the effects of development on carbon dioxide emissions. While the conservation of peat is important for nature conservation, archaeological interests and for the role it plays as a carbon sink, by necessity, much construction in the Outer Hebrides occurs on peat. Developers will be asked to refer to SEPA guidance on developments on peat in drawing up plans.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 29, 161, 163, 169, 194, 205, 241; Scottish Soil Framework 2009; SEPA Regulatory Position Statement - Development on Peat; [Guidance on the Assessment of Peat Volumes, Reuse of Excavated Peat and Minimisation of Waste](#); Scotland's National Peatland Plan 2015; [Guidance+on+developments+on+peatland++peatland+survey+-+2017.pdf](#) ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)), SNH Carbon and Peatland Map, 2016.

### Policy EI 5: Soils

Development should be designed to minimise adverse impacts on soils caused by ground disturbance, compaction or excavation. Developers should assess the likely effects associated with any development work on soils, particularly machair soil, peat, or other carbon-rich soils and associated vegetation, and aim to mitigate any adverse impacts arising.

Where disturbance of peat or other carbon-rich soil is likely to give rise to significant emissions of carbon dioxide, developers may be required to justify the location of the proposed development and to show how emissions will be minimised.

For Major developments, minerals and some large scale renewable energy proposals (see Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development), development will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that unnecessary disturbance of carbon rich soils such as peat and any associated vegetation is avoided. A peat survey must be submitted which demonstrates that areas of deepest peat have been avoided and the impacts on carbon-rich soils and associated habitats minimised. Where required, a peat management plan must also be submitted along with any planning application which demonstrates best practice in the movement, storage, management and reinstatement of soils.

Large scale commercial peat extraction will not be permitted. Other commercial peat extraction will only be permitted in areas suffering historic, significant damage through human activity and where the conservation value is low and restoration is impossible.

## Coastal Erosion

**Context** The coastline of the Outer Hebrides is around 2,700km in length and forms the predominant landscape feature of the islands. The coastal land, sea lochs and inshore waters of the islands are rich in natural resources, wildlife, and cultural and archaeological heritage.

In the Outer Hebrides many people live in close proximity to the coast and its in-shore waters. Much of the islands' economy relies heavily upon activities associated with coastal areas and the coast is used for a range of recreational purposes. Developments in the renewable energy and aquaculture sectors have increased the focus on coastal and offshore areas with a likely increasing need for coastline locations for associated facilities. Rising sea levels and more extreme weather events resulting from climate change will potentially have a significant impact on coastal areas and islands in particular. Therefore a precautionary approach to coastal flood and erosion risk needs to be taken.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 88-91; Scotland's National Marine Plan 2015, policy GEN 8; CREW Coastal Flooding in Scotland, A guidance document for coastal practitioners; Outer Hebrides Local Plan District: Flood Risk Management Strategy and Local Flood Risk Management Plan; Scotland's Coastal Change Assessment (Scotland's Dynamic Coast).

### Policy EI 6: Coastal Erosion

Development proposals on areas liable to coastal erosion will only be permitted when the applicant can demonstrate that the development will not exacerbate coastal erosion at the development site or elsewhere along the coast and when the applicant can demonstrate that the development meets one or more of the following:

- a) it will have exceeded its useful life expectancy before natural erosion is likely to occur;
- b) it is of a temporary nature;
- c) it will not give rise to, or require, defence measures;
- d) it is associated with the defence of the coastal area where one or more of the following is threatened:
  - I. occupied buildings;
  - II. important habitats such as the machair;
  - III. scheduled monuments or listed buildings; and
  - IV. major infrastructure and utilities.

Any coastal protection method(s) to be employed should be justified and detailed as part of a planning application.

## Countryside and Coastal Access

**Context** The opportunity for outdoor recreation is a key selling point of the Outer Hebrides tourism product and is an important factor in the health and wellbeing of local island communities. The Outer Hebrides Outdoor Access Forum has developed an Outdoor Access Strategy to promote and develop access to key amenity resources and encourage responsible and sustainable attitudes both by those who partake in outdoor activity and by land managers. The primary legislation governing access to the countryside in Scotland is the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Strategy seeks to facilitate the delivery of the requirements set out in the Act. The development of a Core Path Network is a key component of this strategy and the Core Paths have been selected so as to provide a basic framework of routes sufficient for the purpose of giving both visitors and locals reasonable access throughout the Islands. This framework of routes links into and supports the wider path network.

**References** National Planning Framework 3 paragraph 4.34; Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 221 - 222 & 228; Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003; Outer Hebrides Outdoor Access Strategy; Outer Hebrides Core Paths Plan; Scotland's National Marine Plan, Policy GEN 15.

### Policy EI 7: Countryside and Coastal Access

Development proposals must be located to ensure the Hebridean Way, the Core Path network and established and functional access points to water are kept free of obstruction unless it can be demonstrated that it can either:

- a) retain the existing path or water access point while maintaining or enhancing its amenity value; or
- b) ensure alternative access provision that is no less attractive and is safe and convenient for public use.

Where practical, development proposals should avoid 'other routes' as identified in the Core Paths Plan.

Proposals for improvements to, and expansion of, the existing path network (including the improvement of access to the Core Path network) that facilitates greater access and enjoyment of key natural and built heritage resources (e.g. beaches and coastline, mountains, moorland and lochs, archaeological and historic sites) are encouraged and will be required to:

- c) accord with the Outer Hebrides Outdoor Access Strategy and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code; and
- d) demonstrate appropriate consideration has been given to the need for associated way marking, information boards, car parking and other facilities.

## Energy & Heat Resources

### Context

The Comhairle wishes to capitalise on the significant renewable energy generation potential in and around the Outer Hebrides, e.g. wind and wave resources. There is already an established manufacturing base in the fabrication of energy equipment, and the Outer Hebrides has the potential to service and support further onshore and offshore activities and decommissioning. Equally the Islands could seek to expand energy from other sources including energy from heat and waste and to a lesser degree biomass.

Opportunities to co-locate or connect with district heating schemes or heat producers should be investigated, where they are available.

### References

Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 152-192 & 236-238; Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development 2015; [Scottish Government Online Renewables Planning Advice](#); [Heat demands: planning advice - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#); Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009; National Renewables Infrastructure Plan; Climate Change Delivery Plan; [Microgeneration: planning advice - gov.scot](#), SEPA LUPS GU18 Planning Guidance on Hydropower Developments.; SNH Guidance [www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/renewable-energy/](http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/renewable-energy/)

## Policy EI 8: Energy and Heat Resources

The Comhairle will support proposals that contribute to meeting the targets and objectives of the National Planning Framework 3, the Climate Change Act, and the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan in relation to electricity grid reinforcement, infrastructure and renewable energy generation.

Development proposals for all scales of onshore wind energy development will be assessed against the Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development.

The Comhairle supports the principle of wind farm development in *Areas with Potential for Wind Farms* (SG Map 1) subject to a satisfactory assessment against other policies in this plan and the Supplementary Guidance. Many of these areas, particularly in the Uists, will however be constrained by MoD radar. The Supplementary Guidance will give further details of the radar constraints.

The Comhairle will also consider wind farm development in *Areas of Constraint, with potential in certain circumstances* (Map 1) subject to a satisfactory assessment against other policies in this plan and the Supplementary Guidance.

The Comhairle will not support wind farm developments in *Areas Unacceptable for Wind Farms*

(Map 1).

Proposals for all other renewable energy projects and oil and gas operations (including land based infrastructure associated with offshore projects) will be required to demonstrate all the following:

- a) appropriate location, siting and design including the technical rationale for the choice of site;
- b) no significant adverse impact (including cumulative) on: landscape, townscape and visual aspects; natural, built and cultural heritage resources; the water environment; peatlands; aviation, defence and telecommunications transmitting and receiving systems, e.g., broadband; public health and safety, and amenity (including noise); neighbouring land uses, transport management and core paths;
- c) appropriate decommissioning and site reinstatement arrangements;
- d) phasing arrangements, where appropriate;
- e) the contribution towards meeting national energy supply targets and local economic impact.

Micro generation\* renewable energy developments, not subject to the Supplementary Guidance for Wind Energy Development, will be required to meet criteria a) to c) above and all the following criteria:

- f) the proposal does not have a significant adverse direct, indirect or cumulative impact on residential amenity; and
- g) colour, form, finish and height are appropriate to the setting and are designed to minimise visual impact and distraction; and
- h) sufficient information is provided to enable a balanced assessment of any other likely effects of the development.

The type, scale and size of the proposed development will have a significant effect on the way the Comhairle will consider an application and the level of accompanying information that will be required. Conditions and, where necessary, a planning agreement may be used to control the detail of the development. Non-permanent elements of a development will be granted permission consistent with their lifespan and/or projected period of use.

In line with the Zero Waste Plan the Comhairle will support 'energy from waste' developments subject to wider Plan policies.

Opportunities to co-locate or connect with district heating schemes or heat producers should be investigated.

*\*micro generation is the production of heat (less than 45 kilowatt capacity) and/or electricity (less than 50 kilowatt capacity) from zero or low carbon source technologies.*

## Transport Infrastructure

- Context** Efficient transport infrastructure plays a vital role in supporting successful economic development as well as ensuring maximum accessibility of facilities to residents and visitors. The Comhairle’s land use planning objectives for transportation are to support improvements in the transport infrastructure including public transport and where possible to deliver highway improvements and traffic management initiatives. The creation of new footpaths and cycle-ways in and around settlements, particularly those which allow safe access between residential areas and shopping and other community facilities and between transportation nodes may be required as part of new developments.
- References** National Planning Framework 3 paragraphs 5.30, 5.36-5.38; Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 269 – 291; A Roadmap to Widespread Adoption of Plug-in Vehicles.

### Policy EI 9: Transport Infrastructure

The priority areas for the upgrading and development of the transport infrastructure within, and serving the Outer Hebrides, are:

- a) the spinal and inter island routes;
- b) the airports at Barra, Balivanich and Stornoway;
- c) ports and harbours, including ferry facilities for mainland and inter island connections.

Development proposals associated with new or improved transport infrastructure and traffic management measures will be required to meet all the following:

1. fit with the character of the area in relation to the Development Strategy and the immediate surrounding area and include a landscaping plan;
2. utilise a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) to deal with surface water;
3. accommodate pedestrians (within settlements) and cyclists, and secure improved road safety related to the proposal, in particular around schools, community or leisure facilities.

The Comhairle will support the provision of electric car charging points in new development (subject to appropriate design and layout).



## Communications Infrastructure

**Context** The Scottish Government has an ambition for Scotland to have the availability of world class digital connectivity. This will be achieved through four priorities set out within the Digital 2020 vision: Digital Connectivity (ensuring that everyone in Scotland has access to high quality digital connectivity); Digital Economy (raising awareness and use technology and platforms across the nations businesses which will grow the economy); Digital Participation (ensuring that everyone is capable, confident and has access to the right technology for use at work and home); and Digital Public Services.

Recognising the potential benefits of ICT in helping sustain the islands, the Comhairle, in partnership with others, strive to ensure that suitable land, buildings and infrastructure (including provision of superfast broadband links which is identified as a national development with NPF3) is available for the development of ICT related businesses.

Emissions of radiofrequency radiation are controlled and regulated under other legislation and it is therefore not necessary for the Comhairle to treat radiofrequency radiation as a material planning consideration.

**References** National Planning Framework 3 Paragraphs 5.29 & 5.35; Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 292-300; PAN 62 Radio Telecommunications; Circular 2/2015 Consolidated circular on non-domestic Permitted Development Rights; Scottish Government's Mobile Action Plan; Digital 2020 Vision; Circular 2/2003 Safeguarding of Aerodromes, Technical sites & Military Explosives Storage Areas (as amended); International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) (EU Council recommendation 1999/519/EC) as covered in PAN 62.

### Policy EI 10: Communications Infrastructure

The Comhairle recognises the importance of digital connectivity for social, economic and civil resilience and is supportive of the infrastructure roll out plans of digital communications operators, community groups and other organisations.

Opportunities for the provision of digital infrastructure to new homes and business premises should be explored as an integral part of development. This should be done in consultation with service providers so that appropriate, universal and future-proofed infrastructure is installed and utilised.

Proposals for new mast sites should be supported by:

- a) an explanation of how the proposed equipment fits into the wider network; and
- b) a statement on alternative options considered including justification that mast sharing has been explored and the reasons why it is not suitable or possible; and
- c) details of the design, including height, materials and other components of the proposal.

In addition, an assessment of visual impact may be required for proposals close to housing, sited in sensitive landscapes or a National Scenic Area or where they may impact upon the setting of a Listed Building or Scheduled Ancient Monument or where this information is considered necessary to inform an assessment of the proposal.

The removal of redundant masts and equipment and restoration of the site will be a condition of planning consent.

## Safeguarding

**Context** The Outer Hebrides has both civil and military infrastructure which by their nature are protected by statutory safeguarding zones. The consultation process with the operator of notified sites is set out within Circular 2/2003. Certain safeguarding zones within the islands are identified on Development Plan Maps. The notified safeguarding zones are provided by the operator and are neither Proposals nor the responsibility of the Comhairle.

The safeguarding process does not only relate to the height of buildings, structures erections or works. A building or structure, because of its size, shape, location or construction materials, can reflect or diffract radio and radar signals.

**References** Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006; Circular 2/2003 Safeguarding of Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage areas.

### Policy EI 11: Safeguarding

For all development proposals the Comhairle will take account of the advice of the relevant agencies with regard to safeguarding and consultations zones notified by the Health and Safety Executive, Civil Aviation Authority, Highlands & Islands Airports, NATS, Ministry of Defence, Meteorological Technical Sites, Marine Consultation Areas, relevant Harbour Authorities and Marine Protected Areas.

## Developer Contributions

**Context** Circular 3/2012 sets out when planning obligations can be used. The conclusion of obligations should not delay appropriately planned development which is generally in compliance with policy, or add significant costs to developers or infrastructure providers. The policy is the Comhairle's interpretation of the requirements for developer contributions where infrastructure and or services will be required as a result of proposed development.

Within the Outer Hebrides examples of when contributions may be required include larger scale housing developments, renewable energy and mineral applications.

**References** Town & Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006; Circular 3/12 Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements; Circular 3/2013 Development Management Procedures.

### Policy EI 12: Developer Contributions

The Comhairle may negotiate with developers a fair and reasonable contribution towards infrastructure and/or services required as a consequence of the proposed development. The contributions will be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development (including cumulative) and will be addressed through planning conditions or through a legal agreement if appropriate.

## NATURAL AND BUILT HERITAGE



### Landscape

#### Context

The landscapes of the Outer Hebrides are a valuable resource for our island communities, shaping the distinctiveness and identity of place, the cultural heritage and the quality of people's everyday lives. Encompassing some of Scotland's most scenic images, they are a unique asset and offer a competitive advantage in an international market place. As a critical element of the 'tourism product' they underpin a growth industry for the islands and the contribution they make to the wider economy is increasingly recognised and valued. The Plan has a key role to play in managing change in the landscape whilst maintaining and enhancing its distinctive character. By integrating landscape considerations with wider economic development aspirations, the Plan can proactively support development that will contribute to sustainable economic growth.

Over 40% of the islands are designated as National Scenic Areas, confirming the national importance and value of the islands landscapes. These are: South Lewis, Harris and North Uist; South Uist Machair; and St Kilda. The Islands also have one Historic Garden and Designed Landscape designation in the Lews Castle Grounds.

As different landscapes have a different capacity to accommodate new development, the siting and design of new development should be informed by its landscape character. The Landscape Character Assessment of the 'Western Isles' identifies eleven major landscape character types within the islands; the Landscape Capacity Study for Onshore Wind Energy increased these character types within the Outer Hebrides to 15. This includes some that are rare in Scotland or particularly unique and distinctive to the Outer Hebrides. Peat bog is the most common habitat in the islands, forming characteristic smooth blanket bogs studded with numerous water bodies. At higher altitudes, the peatlands give way to montane areas which support a limited range of plants and animal species. On the west side of the islands lie the flat and fertile coastal plains known as 'machair'. The machair habitat of the Outer Hebrides is considered a 'rare' type in terms of the biodiversity it sustains.

The Hebrides include wilder landscapes of distinctive and special character identified by SNH as Wild Land Areas (WLAs), which are recognised in the Scottish Government's National Planning Framework 3 (2014) as a nationally important

asset. Three WLAs have been identified across the South Uist Hills, Harris – Uig Hills and Eisgean, each of which has an accompanying description drawing out their individual wild land qualities. (The descriptions can be found on the SNH website via <http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/landscape-policy-and-guidance/wild-land/>)

**References** National Planning Framework 3 paragraph 4.4; Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 194, 197, 200, 202 – 204, 215; Scotland’s National Marine Plan policy GEN 7; PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage; PAN 44 Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape; Western Isles Landscape Character Assessment (1997) (WI LCA); Landscape Capacity Study for Onshore Wind Energy Development in the Western Isles (2004); SNH Special Qualities of National Scenic Areas (2010); SNH Map of Wild land Areas June 2014.

<b>Policy NBH1: Landscape</b>
<p>Development proposals should relate to the specific landscape and visual characteristics of the local area, ensuring that the overall integrity of landscape character is maintained.</p> <p>The Western Isles Landscape Character Assessment (WI-LCA) will be taken into account in determining applications and developers should refer to Appendix 1 of this Plan for a summary of this guidance.</p> <p>Development proposals should not have an unacceptable significant landscape or visual impact. If it is assessed that there will be a significant landscape or visual impact, the applicant will be required to provide mitigation measures demonstrating how a satisfactory landscape and visual fit can be achieved.</p>
<b>National Scenic Areas</b>
<p>Development that affects a National Scenic Area (NSA) will only be permitted where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or</li> <li>b) any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance.</li> </ul>
<b>Wild Land</b>
<p>Development proposals should be able to demonstrate no unacceptable adverse impact on the character of areas of Wild Land, as identified on the 2014 SNH Maps, and that any significant effects on these qualities can be substantially overcome by siting, design or other mitigation.</p>

## Natural Heritage

**Context** The Outer Hebrides has an outstanding natural heritage resource with international and national recognition for its special qualities. It is widely acknowledged that a high quality environment can contribute positively to economic growth and the Plan promotes sustainable development within a framework that recognises and safeguards the most important natural heritage resources of the islands.

Traditional land management practices on the islands have helped create the character of the crofting environment and the conditions for many species and habitats to survive and thrive. The opportunity to maintain and enhance biodiversity through development proposals and restoration plans is promoted through the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 193 - 214; PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage; Scotland's National Marine Plan Policy GEN 9; EU Habitats and Birds Directives June 2004; The Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations 1994; EC Habitats Directive, the EC Wild Birds Directive or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); Scottish Biodiversity List of Species and Habitats of Principal Importance in Scotland.

Information on areas important for nature conservation, protected species and landscape can be found on the SNH website via <http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/>

### Policy NBH2: Natural Heritage

Development which is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura site and is not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of that site will be subject to an Appropriate Assessment by the Comhairle.

Development which is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura site will only be permitted where:

- a) an Appropriate Assessment has demonstrated that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site; or
- b) there are no alternative solutions; and
- c) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature; and
- d) compensatory measures are provided to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura network is protected.

Development that affects a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Nature Reserve (NNR) will only be permitted where:

- a) the objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or
- b) any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance.

All Ramsar wetland sites are also Natura sites and/or Sites of Special Scientific Interest and are included in the statutory requirements noted above.

Development that affects a Marine Protected Area will only be permitted where there is no significant risk of the activity hindering the achievements of the conservation objectives of the Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area (NC MPA) or:

- c) there is no alternative that would have a lesser impact on the Conservation objectives of the NC MPA; and
- d) the public benefit outweighs the environmental impact; and
- e) the applicant will arrange for measures of equivalent environmental benefit to offset the anticipated damage.

Where there is good reason to suggest that a European Protected Species (EPS)\* is present on site, or may be affected by a proposed development, the Comhairle will require any such presence to be established and, if necessary, a mitigation plan provided to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts on the species, prior to determining the application.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would be likely to have an adverse effect on an EPS unless the Comhairle is satisfied that:

- f) there is no satisfactory alternative; and
- g) the development is required for preserving public health or public safety or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment; and
- h) the development will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of an EPS at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

Planning permission will not be granted for development that would be likely to have an adverse effect on a species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended in Scotland)\* unless the development is required for preserving public health or public safety. For development affecting a species of bird protected under the 1981 Act there must also be no other satisfactory solution.

Applicants should submit supporting evidence for any development meeting these tests, demonstrating both the need for the development and that a full range of possible alternative courses of action have been properly examined and none found to acceptably meet the need identified.

Development affecting the Loch Stiapavat Local Nature Reserve should aim to enhance the site and will not be permitted if it will have an unacceptable impact on the features of interest of the site.



Development proposals should avoid having a significant adverse effect on, and where possible should enhance, biodiversity and ecological interests of the site. Developers are encouraged to assess the impacts of their proposed development on UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species and habitats and Local BAP habitats and species. Developers should refer to the Scottish Biodiversity List\*\* for a full list of animals, plants and habitats considered to be of principal importance for biodiversity conservation in Scotland (this list includes all UK priority species).

Development proposals that would potentially damage or destroy geological interests, such as those found within Geological Conservation Review sites, are unlikely to be supported. Applications for development potentially affecting geological interests must demonstrate how damage will be avoided or minimised so that the interest of the site is preserved. The Comhairle will also seek to consider how geological interests can be created or enhanced through development.

*\*Developers should refer to the list of protected species and supporting information on the SNH website <http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/protected-species/>.*

*\*\*<http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/biodiversity-scotland/scottishbiodiversity-list>*

## Trees and Woodlands

**Context** Trees and woodland cover a very small area in the Outer Hebrides. Native and mature planted woodlands in particular, are a rare and valued asset. With the islands climate, the shelter that shrubs and trees can provide for people and livestock is of importance, and even small areas of woodland can bring a range of socio/economic benefits including increased biodiversity, contribution to climate change through carbon dioxide absorption, and provision of local biofuel production. Trees can also help to slow water flow which can be of particular significance in flood-prone catchments.

The Western Isles Woodland Strategy (WIWS) supports opportunities to enhance existing native, broadleaf and non-commercial woodland and to develop a diversity of new wooded areas, with the most suitable trees growing where they will thrive, giving pleasure and enjoyment as well as providing a range of social, economic and educational opportunities.

The Native Woodland Survey of Scotland at [Scottish Forestry - Native Woodland Survey of Scotland](#) provides more detail on the existing native woodland resource in the islands.

Where removal of woodland is proposed developers should refer to the Forestry Commission's Control of Woodland Removal Policy 2009 for further information.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 216-218; PAN 60 Planning for Natural Heritage; PAN 65 Planning and Open Space; Western Isles Woodland Strategy 2003; Western Isles Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Native Woodlands HAP); Western Isles Native Woodland Restoration Survey Report; Native Woodland Survey of Scotland (NWSS)

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (revised 2013); Tree Preservation Order and Trees in Conservation Areas (Scotland) Regulations 2010; Planning Circular 1 2011: Tree Preservation Orders; Forestry Commission's Control of Woodland Removal Policy 2009.

### **Policy NBH3: Trees and Woodland**

The Comhairle will safeguard individual trees, groups of trees and woodland areas where they are considered important for amenity or their cultural or historic interest by establishing Tree Preservation Orders.

There is a strong presumption against the removal of established individual trees and woodland of mixed native species which have a landscape and amenity value and/or contribute to nature conservation, unless removal would achieve significant additional economic, environmental or social benefits.

In order to minimise any adverse impacts on amenity, biodiversity or landscape value, developers will be required to incorporate existing trees and woodland into developments through sensitive siting and design. Where loss is unavoidable, appropriate replacement planting should be sought through the use of planning conditions or through a legal agreement if appropriate.

The Comhairle will seek opportunities to create new woodland and plant native trees in association with new development.

The Comhairle will support proposals associated with the restoration and enhancement of the native woodland resource as identified in the Western Isles Native Woodland Restoration Survey Report.

### **Built Heritage**

**Context** The Outer Hebrides has a variety of important built heritage resources with many structures of international, national and local importance. These are central to the Islands' cultural identity and include commemorative sites, listed buildings and thatched buildings. Built heritage assets are valued because of their historic, cultural, artistic, and commemorative significance and they form an integral part of the historical, architectural and cultural development of the area, demonstrating past patterns of life, and important episodes in history.

Listed building status provides protection for some of the best examples of the nation's buildings and structures, many of which are still in use today. Proposals for alterations to listed buildings are expected to enhance them and respect original features. The curtilage of listed buildings is also legally protected as defined in national policy.

The Outer Hebrides has the largest concentration of surviving thatched properties in Scotland. There is a wide range of thatching techniques and styles which in some cases are unique to the islands. This includes the use of a thatching stick at each hip, sky lights and the roof sitting on the inner wall head in Lewis, to the use of chimneys and the roof sitting on the outer wall head in the Uists. Berneray in North Uist is unique as it incorporates both the use of chimneys and the roof sitting on the inner wall head. There is still a wide variety of thatching materials used in the Outer Hebrides including marram grass, heather, reed and straw, which can still be obtained locally in the islands, although, it is acknowledged that sourcing some materials locally is getting harder. Together, these techniques and sites form a unique historic and cultural asset along with a local skills base within the Outer Hebrides.

In addition, other cultural heritage sites such as war memorials and cairns formally dedicated to people or events such as the land struggle are important sites for contemplation, commemoration and inspiration. Many of these sites remain undesignated, but they are culturally significant and reflect Island communities' emotional engagement with the built environment.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 135 – 137, 139 – 142, 151; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997; Historic Environment Circular 1 (2016); Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement 2016; Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Note Series; various Historic Environment Scotland Technical Advice Notes; Historic Environment Scotland Thatched Buildings Maintenance Grant Scheme (administered by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar); SPAB Scotland; A Survey of Thatched Buildings in Scotland.

<b>Policy NBH4: Built Heritage</b>
<b>All Development</b>
<p>Development which preserves or enhances the architectural, artistic, commemorative or historic significance of built heritage assets will be supported.</p> <p>Where there is clear evidence of historic significance, development which would have a substantial adverse impact on this significance will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) all reasonable measures will be taken to mitigate any loss of this significance; and</li> <li>b) any lost significance which cannot be mitigated is outweighed by the social, economic, environmental or safety benefits of the development.</li> </ul>
<b>Listed Buildings</b>
The Comhairle will seek to manage the special architectural and historical interest of listed buildings and their settings and will support sympathetic conversions and extensions to secure their future

use. Every effort will be made to retain listed buildings and bring them back into use.

### **Development**

All proposals for listed buildings shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building and its setting or any features of special historic, architectural or cultural interest which it possesses.

Proposals should identify the special interest of the building and seek to preserve the building in its existing state, or subject only to such alterations or extensions as can be carried out without an adverse impact to its character. A record of any special features of the building may be required, in proportion to what is proposed.

Where a proposal involves alteration or adaptation which is likely to have an adverse impact on the special interest of the building, all the following criteria must be considered:

- a) the special interest of the building; and
- b) the impact of the proposals on that special interest; and
- c) the impact of the proposed layout, siting, design, materials, and use on that special interest; and
- d) whether there are other options which would ensure a continuing beneficial use for the building with less impact on its special interest.

Proposals that do not protect, enhance, retain or reinstate the special interest and character of a listed building will not be supported.

Where work to a listed building also requires planning permission, the listed building consent application shall be accompanied by a detailed planning application. An application for a planning permission in principle will not be acceptable.

### **Demolition**

A listed building; or any structure or object in the curtilage of a listed building, may only be demolished where evidence is provided to demonstrate that every effort has been made to retain it and:

- a) the building is no longer of sufficient architectural or historic interest to meet the criteria for designation as a listed building; or
- b) the building is incapable of repair; or
- c) the demolition of the building is essential to delivering significant benefits to sustainable economic growth or the wider community; or
- d) the repair of the building is not economically viable and that it has been marketed at a price reflecting its location and condition to potential restoring purchasers for a reasonable period.

Applications for demolition of listed buildings will require to be accompanied by detailed proposals for the future use of the site. In addition, for proposals within Conservation Areas, Stornoway Core

and Main Settlements, where the principle of redevelopment is accepted, detailed planning consent for the future use of the site will be required before consent for demolition will be granted. In the event of any demolition consent, the developer will be required to notify Historic Environment Scotland to allow for the building to be recorded should this be required. At least three months must be allowed for such recording to take place.

### **Thatched Buildings**

Where works are proposed to thatched buildings, either listed or located within a Conservation Area, it is required that they are restored to their original style. Where planning permission is required for unlisted thatched buildings within a Conservation Area, restoration of the roof in a traditional manner is preferred.

All roof restoration measures will be required to reflect the local traditional style of thatched roof including pitch, ridge and eave details and where appropriate the use of skylights. Where it is considered necessary, the use of sarking boards\* or a layer of building paper will be permitted, however the use of felt will not be acceptable.

Locally sourced (i.e. Outer Hebrides) thatching materials should be used and the use of imported material from outwith the Outer Hebrides will be strongly discouraged\*\* unless it can be evidenced that local materials are not available.

Sympathetic alterations and extensions to the original thatched building will also be considered acceptable where these will give the building a viable future.

The use of solar panels or photo voltaic panels is not appropriate on thatched buildings. However, such installations, where discreetly sited separate from the building or on an extension, may be acceptable where the impact on the site is sufficiently minimised.

*\*Sarking is defined as individual boards (not sheet or foil covered materials) – a minimum of 5mm between boards is advised.*

*\*\*Guidance for the Historic Environment Scotland Thatched Buildings Maintenance Grant scheme states that material should preferably be sourced locally.*

### **Commemorative Sites**

The Comhairle will seek to manage the special architectural, historic and cultural interest of war memorials, and commemorative sites of local importance. Any site with features which are known to have been formally dedicated as a memorial to a person or event will be deemed to have commemorative significance. In addition, any site with features which are widely understood to be closely associated with a person or event may be considered to have commemorative significance.

## Archaeology

### Context

The importance of the Islands' history and culture is demonstrated by their abundant archaeology and much can be learnt about the past from these remains. Key factors such as low impact farming practices and environmental conditions have meant that archaeological sites and features have been well preserved within the machair, beneath the peat and submerged underwater. Therefore, development affecting archaeology should be carefully assessed to ensure preservation of any information that such sites might provide. This resource is not static; the effects of climate change and development pressure increase the potential for new archaeological sites to be discovered, adding to the already rich archaeological record. Some of these sites may be of international importance and offer an as yet untapped cultural and economic resource. Many archaeological features are yet to be identified, recorded or afforded legal protection.

The Outer Hebrides has a rich mixture of designated and non-designated archaeological sites. These include 213 Scheduled Monuments, which are of national importance, as well as over 12,000 non-designated heritage assets recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record. They range in date from prehistory through to the twentieth century. These resources are an important part of the Islands' heritage and should be protected and preserved as far as possible, *in situ* wherever feasible. The Comhairle Planning/Archaeology Service welcome pre-application discussions regarding development proposals in order to identify any potential impact on historic assets and their settings early in the process to ascertain what level of assessment will be appropriate. The Greater Callanish area is a significant prehistoric landscape incorporating a complex of 15 Scheduled Monuments and many more undesignated heritage assets. Views from and between the monuments, and their presence in views from the surrounding landscape are an important part of our understanding, experience and appreciation of their setting and this has led to the development of a planning tool, the Callanish Sensitive Area, as shown on the Plan Area Context Map. This sensitive area has been determined using GIS visibility data and should not be equated with the setting of the Calanais (Callanish) complex itself.

### References

SPP paragraphs 135, 136, 137, 139, 140, 145, 150, 151; PAN 2/2011 Planning and Archaeology; The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (the 1979 Act); Historic Environment Circular 1(2016); Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement 2016; Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Note Series; Marine (Scotland) Act 2010; National Marine Plan; Western Isles Sites and Monuments Record; Protection of Military Remains Act 1986; [Calanais Standing Stones: Setting Document, 2014](#); Scotland's National Marine Plan, Policy GEN 6.



## **Policy NBH5: Archaeology**

Development proposals which preserve, protect, or enhance the archaeological significance of heritage assets, including their settings, will be supported.

### **Development Impact on Scheduled Monuments or their Setting**

Scheduled Monuments (scheduled archaeological remains) are nationally important monuments or archaeological sites. Where there is potential for a proposal to have a direct impact on a scheduled monument, the written consent of Historic Environment Scotland is required in addition to any other consent required.

There is a presumption in favour of the *in situ* preservation of all scheduled archaeological remains and the Comhairle will support proposals that seek to protect, enhance and interpret them. Development proposals that will adversely impact upon scheduled archaeological remains or the integrity of their settings will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where there is no practical alternative site and where there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

Development proposals that may adversely impact upon the cultural significance of scheduled archaeological remains or the integrity of their settings will require to be supported by:

- a) an assessment of the significance of any heritage assets which are affected by the development; and
- b) the measures that will be taken to mitigate any adverse effect on the archaeological significance; and
- c) the measures that will be taken to preserve and protect the special interest of the heritage asset; and
- d) a justification that demonstrates the social; economic; environmental, safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest that would outweigh any adverse effect which cannot be mitigated.

### **Development Impact on other Sites of Archaeological Importance**

Where a development proposal is likely to negatively affect any regionally or locally important archaeological remains, applicants may be required to undertake archaeological assessment.

Where, on the advice of the Comhairle Archaeology Service, information or evidence available indicates that significant archaeological remains may exist; a predetermination evaluation may be required in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). The evaluation may include: desk based assessment (DBA); geophysics; field survey; trial trenching; or other methods of gathering information. The findings of such evaluations will help define the character and extent of any remains and their likely significance and inform what further archaeological mitigation may be required.

Where further archaeological investigation is required, or in cases where archaeological remains of lesser significance are considered likely to be present, archaeological investigation of the site

and/or mitigation may, on the advice of the Comhairle Archaeology Service, be secured by archaeological planning conditions or through use of a planning agreement.

On receipt of the findings of an archaeological investigation, further investigation and/or mitigation may be required on the advice of the Comhairle Archaeological Service.

Development which would affect unscheduled sites of archaeological interest or potential will be permitted where the significance of the remains does not justify their physical preservation on site.

Where archaeological features provide potential for amenity, cultural tourism, place-making, or as an *in situ* educational or research resource, the Comhairle will support proposals for long term management, access and interpretation of the historic environment assets on the site.

### **Callanish Sensitive Area**

Within the Callanish Sensitive Area there is a heightened potential for impacting on known sites and their settings as well as the possibility of encountering unknown archaeological sites and features. Further explanation and guidance on assessment of impact from development proposals can be found in the Calanais Standing Stones Setting Document, 2014. If ground disturbance is part of the development, developers may be required to carry out a predetermination evaluation prior to determination of any planning application. These points should be viewed as considerations in proposed development designs and not as an impediment to development.

### **Archaeologically Sensitive Areas**

Within the Stornoway and Howmore Archaeologically Sensitive Areas (as shown in the relevant Conservation Area Management Plans) developers may be required to carry out a predetermination evaluation prior to the determination of the planning application if ground disturbance is part of the development. The results of the evaluation will help determine any mitigation required as part of the consent.

## **Historic Areas**

**Context** The Outer Hebrides has several Historic Areas which have been designated because of their special architectural, historic or cultural character. Change within Historic Areas should be guided by the overriding principles of preserving the character of the area, enhancing it by following best conservation practice, and encouraging high standards of design and construction in new development.

The Islands are home to a famous dual status World Heritage Site, St Kilda, which is designated for its outstanding environmental heritage and cultural landscape value. Further policy on St Kilda is set out in Policy NBH7 St Kilda.

There are four Conservation Areas in the Outer Hebrides. These are in: Stornoway, Lewis; Gearrannan, Lewis; Ruisgarry, North Uist; and Howmore, South Uist. Conservation Area Appraisals have been prepared for each area and these have provided the framework within which Conservation Area Management Plans have been produced.

There is one designated historic garden and designed landscape in Lewis. The entry in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes states that the design, extent of planting and ornamentation of Lady Lever Park and Lews Castle gives the site outstanding value as a work of art and the association of the site with the Matheson and Leverhulme families and their role in the history of Lewis gives the site outstanding historical value.

There is one historic battlefield in the Islands at Carinish in North Uist which is undesignated, but it is of historical and cultural importance to the local community.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 135 - 137, 139, 140, 143, 144, 147 - 149, 151; PAN 68 Design Statements; PAN 71 Conservation Area Management; Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997; amended in 2011 to include the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes; New Design in Historic Settings; Exemption from Demolition Control in Conservation Areas Direction 1987; Historic Environment Circular 1 (2016); Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement 2016; Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Note Series; Conservation Area Appraisals.

<b>Policy NBH6: Historic Areas</b>
All Development should preserve or enhance the settings of Historic Areas.
<b>World Heritage Site</b>
Where a development proposal has the potential to affect the World Heritage Site of St Kilda, or its setting, the Comhairle will protect and preserve the site's Outstanding Universal Value.
<b>Conservation Areas</b>
There is a presumption in favour of the preservation of individual historic assets and the pattern of the wider historic environment. Proposals in a Conservation Area will be assessed with the aim of protecting, conserving and, where possible, enhancing the built and natural environment.
<b><u>Development</u></b>
Only applications for Planning Permission in Detail with full plans will be acceptable for consideration of proposed development in any Conservation Area. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how the proposal enhances or preserves the appearance or character of the

Conservation Area and meets the objectives of the relevant Conservation Area Management Plan. The Management Plans are contained in the Conservation Area Management Plans Supplementary Guidance which forms part of the Local Development Plan.

Proposals will be assessed against all of the following:

- a) the scale, form, proportion, materials and detailing must respect the characteristics of the historical setting;
- b) the plot layout, density and height must reflect and respond to the buildings, pattern and distinct characteristics of the area;
- c) historically significant boundaries and other elements contributing to the established pattern of development in the area must be retained and, where possible, enhanced;
- d) undeveloped spaces important to the character and historic value of the Conservation Area, including those within individual curtilages, are protected and, where possible, enhanced;
- e) important views within, into and out of the Conservation Area are protected;
- f) landscape features and landmarks contributing to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area are protected.

Any proposal assessed to have a negative effect on the Conservation Area and its setting will not be permitted.

Where a redundant or derelict building is proposed to be brought back into use a Conservation Plan should be provided which sets out the significance of the building and what measures will be adopted to maintain it and safeguard its significance in the future.

### **Conservation Area Consent**

No historic asset within a Conservation Area should be lost without adequate consideration of its local significance and that all means available to manage, conserve and achieve a sustainable use for it have been fully investigated and considered before proposals to demolish are seriously investigated.

Where the demolition of an unlisted building is proposed within a Conservation Area, Conservation Area Consent must be applied for. A Conservation Area Consent application will be assessed against the criteria for the demolition of listed buildings, as set out in Policy NBH4 Built Heritage.

For demolitions in a Conservation Area there must be acceptable proposals for the development of the cleared site.

Consideration will be given to the importance of the building itself and how its loss will impact on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area and its setting. Demolition of building(s) in a Conservation Area will normally not be supported, unless:

- a) it can be demonstrated that the demolition will result in no harm to the character or

appearance of a Conservation Area or part of it; or

- b) it can be demonstrated that its structural condition rules out retention and conservation at reasonable cost; or
- c) its form or location makes it difficult to bring back into use.

Policy NBH4 Built Heritage will also apply where works to thatched buildings within Conservation Areas are proposed.

### **Gardens and Designed Landscapes**

Any development proposal must preserve and, where appropriate, seek to enhance Lews Castle and Lady Lever Park as described in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

### **Battlefields**

Any development proposal within the boundary of Feith na Fala (the ditch of blood) site of the Battle of Carinish (1601) must demonstrate that it takes appropriate measures to preserve any archaeological and physical remains relating to the battle, and does not have an adverse effect on the setting of the battlefield.

## **St Kilda**

**Context** There are 1052 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List. St Kilda was the first site in Scotland to be inscribed on the List in 1986 for its outstanding natural heritage. The inscription was extended in 2014 to include the surrounding marine environment. In 2005, the archipelago's cultural landscape was also inscribed on the World Heritage List. St Kilda is the only mixed World Heritage site in the UK and is one of 35 worldwide. Further policy on St Kilda is set out in Policy NBH6 Historic Areas.

The National Trust for Scotland owns St Kilda and has prepared, in conjunction with the Comhairle, Historic Environment Scotland, The Ministry of Defence and SNH, a five year Management Plan to direct activities and development on the islands.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 147; Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement June 2016; Historic Environment Circular 1 (2016), Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Guidance Note Series (including World Heritage and Setting); St Kilda World Heritage Site Management Plan, 2012-2017; Statement of Outstanding Universal Value; Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments; Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage; Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (2015).

### **Policy NBH7: St Kilda**

Development proposals will only be permitted where the developer can demonstrate that the proposal will have no adverse impact upon all the following:

- a) visual aspects - arising from scale, form, materials and detailing;
- b) historically significant boundaries and other elements of importance to the character of the site;
- c) important landscape features of the site;
- d) views into and out of the World Heritage Site;
- e) the outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

Developers should ensure the proposal accords with the approved St Kilda World Heritage Site Management Plan.

## STORNOWAY

### Stornoway Retail and Stornoway Town Centre Areas

**Context** The National Planning Framework recognises Stornoway’s strategic location, economic potential and role as a service centre to underpin the entire Outer Hebrides. Further, NPF3 states that many coastal and island communities have key towns, where development opportunities, employment, homes and services are often clustered. Plans for coastal and island areas should recognise the role of these towns as important focal points for investment and transport connections.

Scottish Planning Policy recognises that a network of centres conventionally found in other areas does not necessarily apply in an islands context and thus the application of a ‘town centre first’ policy approach in the islands needs to be flexible. The Development Strategy does recognise the significance of Stornoway as a focus for activity whilst noting the need to facilitate social, commercial and retail activity throughout the Islands. The ‘town centre first’ principle now also applies to promoting a town centre location to offices, community and cultural facilities and uses which attract significant numbers of people. The ‘town centre first’ policy is not intended to divert essential services and development away from rural areas.

With support from Scottish Government, Scotland’s Towns Partnership undertook an audit of Stornoway town in 2016 and identified a strong independent retail environment and positive optimism amongst businesses, with some recommendations/actions to follow.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 58 – 108; National Planning Framework 3; PAN 52 Small Towns; PAN 59 Improving Town Centres; PAN 73 Rural Diversification; PAN 71 Conservation Area Management; CnES / Scotland’s Towns Partnership (Scottish Government) Draft Stornoway Town Centre Survey and Strategy Report (Audit and Place Report).

#### Policy STY1: Stornoway Retail and Stornoway Town Centre Areas

Within the town of Stornoway there are two defined town centre areas: the Stornoway Town Centre Retail Area; and the wider Stornoway Town Centre Development Area.

In line with Scottish Planning Policy’s ‘town centre first’ approach appropriate development will be directed into these areas; however, SPP does recognise the role of other areas in rural and island communities which can accommodate retail and service activity.

In Stornoway Town Centre Retail Area, as defined on the Development Strategy Map, uses should contribute positively to the vitality and viability of the town centre as a primary focus for



pedestrians, and retail and commercial activity. Uses that would undermine the viability of the retail function will not be acceptable.

Ground floor uses should fall within Use Classes 1, 2 and 3 and town centre appropriate uses in line with Scottish Planning Policy. In addition, the use of upper floorspace for residential purposes will also be acceptable in principle.

Development proposals within the Town Centre Retail Area will be assessed to:

- a) ensure the design fits within the overall street frontage;
- b) minimise the impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses;
- c) ensure that the storage and servicing requirements of the development are adequate;
- d) ensure the development accords with the Stornoway Conservation Area Management Plan.

Retail proposals in Greater Stornoway should be located within the Town Centre Retail Area. In line with Scottish Planning Policy 'sequential locational test', where no suitable site is available within the Town Centre Retail Area, sites should then be sought within the wider Stornoway Town Centre Development Area, and then other sites suitable to accommodate the proposed use may be considered, subject to wider Plan Policy assessment.

For proposals outwith the Town Centre Retail Area the developer will be expected to demonstrate all of the following:

- e) development of the scale proposed is appropriate to the local setting;
- f) site accessibility and parking is satisfactory including adequacy of public transport provisions;
- g) no significant adverse impact on vitality/viability of existing Town Centre Retail Area.

The developer may be requested to provide an assessment (including a retail impact assessment for developments over 2,500sq.m) to support a development proposal.

Shops located and designed to primarily serve local needs, including residential areas, are exempt from the sequential test requirement.

In the wider Stornoway Town Centre Development Area, as defined on the Development Strategy Map, a range of investment and regeneration activities may be appropriate where criteria e) to g) above can be met. These may include a range of functions such as commercial, residential, marine or harbour related activities.

## Newton Commercial Area

**Context** Newton is an extensive area adjacent to Stornoway Town Centre and the Outer Harbour area, and accommodates the major energy (electric and gas) plants on the island. As the historic industrial area of Stornoway it has seen growth of commercial and retail businesses alongside historic industrial and residential activity. This growth has contributed to conflicts of car parking and amenity, and restriction arising from the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) safeguarding in relation to the gas plant, which this policy considers.

**References** Scottish Planning Policy paragraphs 58 – 108; PAN 52; Stornoway Regeneration Action Plan; Planning Circular 6 2011 - Compulsory Purchase Orders; HIE Newton Strategy Study 2015.

### Policy STY2: Newton Commercial Area

Development within the Newton Commercial Area, as identified on the LDP Strategy Map, will be for commercial, industrial, professional or other services, or limited retail uses. Retail uses may be subject to specific constraints arising from Health and Safety Executive (HSE) safeguarding and parking requirements.

The majority of the Newton Commercial Area sits within the HSE Safeguarding Area for the Stornoway LPG plant and the formal opinion of the HSE on any development proposal requires to be taken into account.

Development Proposals must meet all of the following criteria:

- a) does not result in or contribute to an increase in congestion problems arising from on-street vehicle parking;
- b) be accompanied by details of off street parking provision within or close to the proposed development;
- c) takes account of the advice of the HSE.

The Comhairle will over the period of the Plan, in partnership with other organisations and landowners, seek to identify areas with potential for strategic and / or local area parking provision. These areas may be subject to conditions to manage their use.

To protect the established commercial and industrial activities in the area and the amenity of any new development, new housing provision will only be considered where:

- It is an extension to an existing residential use or a gap site between two existing residential uses; and
- It takes account of the advice of requirements for safeguarding zones notified by the Health and Safety Executive.

To enable wider growth potential and regeneration to be realised, the Comhairle (under Section 189

of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997) may undertake to consider compulsory purchase of key sites, or long term vacant or derelict sites in the Newton Commercial Area, which are considered to be inhibiting development.

## Development Of Stornoway Port Area

**Context** The area of identified ‘Developed Coast’ in the Outer Hebrides is within the extents of Stornoway Harbour Area. Stornoway Port Area is identified in Scotland’s National Planning Framework as one of six ‘key ports’ in Scotland. NPF3 notes that Stornoway harbour’s strategic location means that it will be well placed as a stopping point for international shipping with the opening of the North East Passage to navigation. It also has significant potential as a destination for cruise ships and leisure craft. Further, NPF3 designates Arnish as a part of the Low Carbon/Renewables North Enterprise Area, which is subject to a Comhairle Planning Protocol.

**References** National Planning Framework 3; Scottish Planning Policy, Stornoway Port Authority Draft Master Plan 2016/17.

### Policy STY3: Development of Stornoway Port Area

Developments within the extent of Stornoway Harbour Limits or on the adjacent identified developed coast should take account of:

- a) the Stornoway Port Authority Masterplan; and
- b) the need to safeguard key sites as identified in the Stornoway Port Authority Masterplan; and
- c) the provisions of the Supplementary Guidance Stornoway Conservation Area Management Plan (CAMPs); and
- d) the implication of or from flooding or coastal erosion, recognising that some developments will require to be located on the coast; and
- e) the National Marine Plan and any subsequent Regional Marine Plan.

## Development Proposals

### DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

A key function of the Development Plan is to identify areas of land for a range of uses. The sites proposed in this second LDP are set out below. Further detail on the individual sites is set out in the accompanying Proposal Sites Booklet.

HOUSING	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PS1 Corran Cismaol, Barra	PS14 Gassay, Lochboisdale, South Uist
PS2 Garrynamonie, South Uist	PS15 Lionacleit, Benbecula
PS3 Seilebost, Harris	PS16 Arnish, Lewis
PS4 Balallan, Lewis	PS17 Creed Business Park, Lewis
PS5 Cleascro, Leurbost, Lewis	
PS6 Crowlista, Uig, Lewis	
PS7 Steinish Road, Lewis*	INFRASTRUCTURE / MIXED USE / ENVIRONMENT
PS8 Blackwater, Laxdale, Lewis*	PS18 Spinal Route, Outer Hebrides
PS9 Melbost Farm West, Lewis*	PS19 Rubha Bhuilte, Lochboisdale, South Uist
PS10 Oliver's Brae, Lewis	PS20 Balivanich Comm Dev Area, Benbecula
PS11 Rear of Anderson Rd Nurseries, Lewis	PS21 Balivanich Environmental Improvements
PS12 Goathill Farm West, Lewis*	PS22 Leverburgh Environmental Improvements
PS13 Stoneyfield Farm, Lewis*	PS23 Castlebay Environmental Improvements

\*A Planning Brief may be prepared for this site.

These sites should help facilitate the delivery of housing and economic development throughout the islands. However the development context in the Outer Hebrides is different to that of other areas.

Despite a known housing need and specific household make-up, there are very few volume house builders or speculative market developers operating in the Islands. Instead there is a complex land tenure system tied in with crofting and a high incidence of individual self builds with around 70% of house builds being individual developments on wind fall sites. The Plan therefore has to have an appropriate development strategy in place to manage this type of housing delivery. The supply of land for affordable housing provision has been directed by the programming of the area's Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP) and the list of Proposal Sites here identifies the larger sites most likely, but not exclusively, to come forward within the period of the Plan. This has been determined in consultation with housing stakeholder partners.

Similarly the economy in the Outer Hebrides is different from elsewhere with a high incidence of multiple occupations, secondary jobs etc. and a lifestyle economy and crofting activity tying

economic activities to home working and dispersed locations. This non-conventional economy needs an adaptable responsive policy framework to facilitate it, which Scottish Planning Policy and the National Planning framework recognises. The Plan only identifies sites for strategic economic development purpose with the wider policy framework recognising the distinct nature of economic activities in the islands and the need for an adaptive and responsive policy approach.

The identification of land for proposal sites has been informed by the allocation of existing sites; the 'Call for Site' process undertaken in 2015; sites identified by partner agencies, developers, land owners, and community trusts.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Landscape Character Assessment Summary - Outer Hebrides

The Western Isles Landscape Character Assessment (Richards, 1998) was produced as one of a National Programme of Landscape Character Assessments (LCA). Its production was led by Scottish Natural Heritage in partnership with local authorities and other agencies and it is available on the SNH website<sup>1</sup> and includes a map based tools, [www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/lca/](http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/lca/).

The LCA describes in detail the *key characteristics* that make the landscape of the Outer Hebrides distinctive. It also highlights the *key forces for change* on this landscape and offers *guidance* on how these might be accommodated to best relate to landscape character. While the forces for change in the landscape may have changed slightly since 1997, the key characteristics typically remain the same. Application of the information within the LCA involves the following key stages:

- Identifying the landscape character type(s) in which a proposal is located (in reference to the two maps at the back of the LCA report);
- From the description of the landscape character type(s), identifying the key characteristics which the proposal may affect; then
- Based on this information, planning, siting and designing a proposal to relate to these key characteristics.

The consideration of landscape character by an applicant should inform and direct a proposal so that it can be sited and designed to best relate to the character of the landscape which, in this case, makes the Outer Hebrides distinctive and special.

When considering a development proposal in detail, it is recommended that reference is made to the full Western Isles LCA report. However, as a preliminary and quick reference, Table 1 overleaf highlights some of the key characteristics that are likely to be relevant to a development proposal.

The guidance within Table 1 overleaf and the LCA report should be considered in combination with the policies within the Local Development Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/lca/](http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/lca/)

**Table 1**

Summary of key characteristics of landscape character types within the Western Isles LCA particularly relevant to proposed development.

Crofting settlement landscape character types
<p><b>(1) ALL CROFTING TYPES</b> <i>(further guidance specific to individual crofting types included below)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>distinctiveness of a settlement</b> typically arises from a unique combination of built elements and landscape management in relation to natural features. It is important that new development does not change the balance of these elements within an area or at its distinct edges, or obstructs or divides key landscape features, such as key views passing between interior moorland and the coast.</li><li>• It will be important for new buildings to follow the <b>distinctive pattern</b> established within the crofting settlement, <b>relating to siting, orientation and spacing</b>; this may be specific to the different crofting types one to four described in further detail within the following sections 1.1 – 1.4.</li><li>• A consistency of design should be maintained and/or reinforced by any new building, adopting the <b>characteristic scale, form, proportions and style of buildings</b> within an area. This may be achieved by sensitively-designed contemporary interpretations as well as more traditional structures. Good effect is easiest to achieve where there is limited variation between existing building types within an area. Where, conversely, there has been a lot of recent building of mixed styles, many of which do not relate to the underlying landscape characteristics, capacity for new buildings may need to be limited to a restricted suite of styles, for example through a design code, to restore cohesion and the distinctiveness of the settlement.</li><li>• On an existing croft, consideration should first be given to the possibility of <b>replacing, renovating, or extending the original croft house or outbuildings</b>.</li><li>• New buildings can be more easily accommodated where there is an <b>obvious land use pattern</b> in which they can fit to follow the existing layout. Not only should they relate to the characteristic pattern of existing buildings, but also the characteristic relationship between buildings and the surrounding land, for example following the pattern of croft tenure and the characteristic balance between built elements and natural elements (see point below regarding rural character).<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is difficult to accommodate individual new buildings within an evenly <b>dispersed settlement pattern</b> without resulting in some local increase in density in the short term. However, the pattern of even dispersal can be maintained by controlling incremental development over time and ensuring that infill only increases the density of the pattern gradually and evenly within an area and avoids local concentrations.</li><li>• A <b>linear pattern</b> lends itself more easily to incremental addition at either end of settlement areas or as infill within gaps. However care has to be taken to follow the pattern in terms of the spacing between buildings and their position within plots. It is also important to avoid local concentration that would change the rhythmic pattern of the settlement, or excessive extension at the edges that would encroach on open space that highlights distinction between neighbouring settlements.</li><li>• In some places, there seems an <b>irregular pattern</b> of settlement; however, even in these locations, the position of buildings will usually have been located in relation to a consistent feature, for example slightly elevated ground to avoid poor drainage or within the lee of a</li></ul></li></ul>



slope to benefit from shelter. Thus, although the pattern may be irregular, new buildings should still relate to the same underlying features to maintain cohesion of the settlement pattern.

- Distinction of the characteristic landscape pattern is typically influenced by **distinct physical edges**, such as loch shores, coastlines, woodland edge or a break of slope and, if a new development is sited in direct relation to these, this connection can help it appear linked to its surroundings. It is important that new buildings relate to these distinct edges too, even though current day engineering methods may mean that there is less actual restriction on which areas can technically be developed; for example avoid buildings being constructed upon steep slopes or low-lying wet ground on which buildings within a settlement have previously avoided (and thereby may also have highlighted due to the lack of development).
- On or near to the **edge of a settlement**, a building should be sited and located so that it seems to extend the existing settlement following similar spacing, orientation and retaining key views. The addition of a new building at a settlement edge, both individually and cumulatively by having incremental effect, should not erode the distinction between neighbouring settlements and should enhance the entrance/ exit experience.
- New buildings should be sited to respect the **landform** within a settlement and relate to the edge and shelter that may be provided by slopes. These factors will have affected the traditional siting of structures and thus, in this way, new buildings can appear more fitting into the existing settlement. The scale of buildings should not dominate the scale of the local landform, e.g. seeming to overwhelm it, and they should be sensitively sited and designed to minimise earthworks. Where the landform is sloping, and particularly where undulating, buildings will tend to be viewed from alternative elevations and orientations within an area, so these various views need to be taken into account when siting and designing a development.
- The distinctive nature of the landform is typically emphasised most clearly along the **skyline and/ or coastline** and these features tend to be prominent in views. For this reason, it will be inappropriate to locate a new building upon the skyline or on the coastline unless this is following the existing pattern of development.
- In many locations, there is a **horizontal emphasis to the landform**, with **wide open panoramas** over moorland and across the sea. In these places, buildings tend to appear very prominent and isolated. For this reason, it is best to locate new developments near natural edges within the landscape, for example at the base of slopes or in relation to the coast. Where vertical features are not obvious, a more subtle rationale for the location of a building may need to be selected – perhaps an area of slightly better drained ground and/or richer vegetation or a watercourse. In addition, given the prominence of new buildings in these areas, it will be important to adopt sensitive, traditional proportions and to relate in scale, form and design to other key landscape features.
- New buildings can cumulatively affect the **open and rural character** of an area by changing the balance between built elements and open or agricultural land. In addition, within open and rural settings, it will be difficult to accommodate **urban or infrastructure elements** such as tracks or roads, powerlines, signs, pavements and lamp posts without these elements seeming to dominate the local and/or rural character. For this reason, it will be important for development to minimise these elements, rationalise existing infrastructure elements and adopt styles for these elements that are 'low key' and rural in character.

## 1.1 CROFTING ONE

*Settlements predominantly in northern Lewis where crofts sit on open exposed moorland edges and sweep*

*down to the sea, typically with a linear and uniform pattern of crofts.*

In addition to general guidance described above for all crofting landscape character types (or emphasising particular aspects of this), the following guidance is highlighted for Crofting One:

- On account of the typically long, sweeping, gentle slopes and exposed character of the landscape, it is particularly important to consider **distant visibility** as well as close visibility of any proposal within the landscape. Because of the openness and exposure of the landscape, it will also be particularly important that the **form of buildings** relate to traditional structures and do not appear incongruous.
- Given the typically **distinct linear pattern of crofts**, new development will generally be best accommodated as infill within gaps or extension at settlement edges. However, this will need to follow the characteristic spacing, orientation, scale and form of buildings within this pattern as well as the typical siting in relation to the croft land holding. At **settlement edges**, while extension may be possible following the linear pattern, there will be limited capacity for this, principally determined by the need to keep within the 'natural' edges of the settlement and/ or to maintain a clear and distinct separation from other settlements. It will also be important to follow the existing pattern that retains distinction between the character of the inbye and outbye.

*For further information, refer to pages 12 – 30 of the LCA.*

## **1.2 CROFTING TWO**

*Settlements which generally have a linear field pattern overlain on a relatively complex landform of rocky or boggy moorland. Mainly distinguished from Crofting One by the more pronounced landform.*

In addition to general guidance described above for all crofting landscape character types (emphasising particular aspects of this) the following guidance is highlighted for Crofting Two:

- This landscape character type tends to comprise **both a linear pattern of crofts and an irregular landform**. At the outset, when planning a new development, it will thus be important to establish which of these characteristics is most obvious and distinctive and to site and design the development in direct relation to this without contrasting to the other. It will typically be most appropriate to site a structure at the edge/ base of knolls/ slopes to afford shelter and avoid the impacts of constructing on slopes. It will also be important for a structure to appear inferior in scale to knolls/ slopes.
- The range of elements within this landscape character type can be quite **diverse**. It will thus be very important to relate to the **specific characteristics at a local level**, including historic features where these occur.
- The **open areas of common grazing** that separate neighbouring settlements tend to be relatively **narrow within this type** and thus it will typically be difficult to locate new development at the edges of these settlements without resulting in coalescence. This means that infill within the settlement may be most appropriate as long as it follows the existing pattern and characteristics of built development.

*For further information, refer to pages 31 – 41 of the LCA.*

## **1.3 CROFTING THREE**

*Crofting settlements typically in coastal locations, distinguished from Crofting One and Two by its more varied landform and less regular field pattern.*

In addition to general guidance described above for all crofting landscape character types (or emphasising particular aspects of this), the following guidance is highlighted for Crofting Three:

- To relate to the character of existing buildings within this landscape character type, it will

typically be most appropriate to locate new structures within the **small low-lying areas of flattish ground that occur between the knocks and rock outcrops**. The siting and orientation of structures should also relate to **landform edges** so that they benefit from the shelter these afford and, where possible, **orient towards the coast**. Given the **small scale and intimate character** of this landscape, it is important that new structures do not dominate in scale, either in relation to the scale of the landform or existing buildings. Nevertheless, the high diversity of elements and irregular pattern within this landscape does allow scope for integrating new structures within **existing clusters** of buildings.

*For further information, refer to pages 42 – 50 of the LCA.*

#### **1.4 CROFTING FOUR**

*Occurs only in the Uists, characterised by an almost flat landform studded with lochs and overlain by a pattern of large rectangular fields, extending along the west coast between the Machair and moorland to the east.*

In addition to general guidance described above for all crofting landscape character types (or emphasising particular aspects of this), the following guidance is highlighted for Crofting Four:

- Given the **vast horizontal scale and flattish landform** of this landscape, vertical features including croft houses form key features that distinguish the character type and act as unifying features. These tend to be **widely and evenly spaced** resulting in an **overriding feeling of openness**. New structures should follow this even and widely spaced pattern, avoiding the creation of clusters of buildings within the landscape. Recognising the fact that buildings tend to form foci in the landscape, it is important that these relate to the **form and design of traditional buildings** within this landscape and **appear discrete**. They should also be not so prominent that they distract from the **characteristic wide openness and simplicity of views** within this landscape that tend to include fairly subtle features such as lochs and lochans.

*For further information, refer to pages 51-61 of the LCA.*

#### **Moorland landscape character types**

**(2) ALL MOORLAND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES** (further guidance specific to individual moorland types included below)

- The moorland landscapes are typically **open and of large scale**, with a **strong sense of exposure** and **wide distant views**. They also tend to comprise a **simple** and limited range of components. Most areas remain **uninhabited** and contain **few focal features** apart from lochans; rather, views tend to be directed to the coast, to adjacent settlements or to distant mountains. Given these characteristics, the introduction of **any development tends to be highly prominent** and may create a focal feature. For this reason, new development thus tends to be most appropriate where it is located near to existing settlement, where it is set low within the landscape, and where there is an obvious rationale for its location, e.g. due to favourable local conditions such as shelter or a bridging point.
- The introduction of new developments within an open area can introduce a feature that **illustrates the scale of the landscape** where this was previously difficult to perceive. Within some locations, this may result in a moorland area appearing much smaller or less extensive than it previously seemed. Not only may this seem to reduce the seemingly expansive character of the landscape and, in some places, its sense of grandeur, but it may also reduce the capacity of the area to accommodate additional features as it seems less spacious.
- The moorland landscape character types are predominantly **uninhabited**, with the exception of some isolated crofts and groups around coastal bays and lochs. This tends to result in a **sense of wildness**, particularly within interior moorland areas. This means that it is typically difficult to

locate new developments within moorland areas without compromising these qualities, not only because of the presence of a structure, but also because of associated activity. However, development may be easier to accommodate within **marginal areas where existing structures occur or where historic features exist** such as shielings and ruined croft houses.

- As moorlands often occur around and between settlements, **elements of infrastructure** are often located within these areas, including telecom masts, powerlines and roads. These elements tend to have significant impacts as they contrast to some of the key characteristics of moorland, such as the openness, simple land cover, and irregular landform. For this reason, it will generally be preferable to not extend these elements further and, rather, to take opportunities when/ where they arise to **rationalise existing structures** or replace them with more sensitive designs.

## 2.1 BOGGY MOORLAND

*Large scale undulating peat moorlands interspersed with numerous lochans, covering large parts of the Western Isles, particularly Lewis and the Uists. Predominantly uninhabited, it is a simple landscape of few elements with an upland remote character.*

In addition to general guidance described above for all moorland landscape character types, (or emphasising particular aspects of this), the following guidance is highlighted for Boggy Moorland:

- The Boggy Moorland of the Western Isles is **extensive** and consequently seems **extremely expansive** in quality, with a **horizontal emphasis** extending under ‘wide skies’. Because these areas tend to be highly exposed and physical conditions are generally not suited to inhabitation, new structures will typically appear highly prominent and incongruous unless there is a very obvious rationale for their location.
- As there are not many built elements within this landscape, its **scale is typically difficult to estimate** and areas may appear much more extensive than they actually are. This means that the introduction of a built element that can be scaled may make the area appear less extensive than was previously perceived and thus less remarkable. For this reason, built elements should mainly be kept to the margins of these areas and/ or where structures already exist.
- Within the margins of these areas, **cultural features** often occur, such as shielings and peat cutting with associated tracks and shelters, the patterns of which often form key landscape foci. New development **should not impinge upon the focal qualities** of these features or on the experience of tranquillity that is often experienced within these areas.
- The landform of Boggy Moorland often forms **sea cliffs** at the coast. It will be important that new structures do not compromise the distinctive edge formed by these cliffs or distract from views along coastal cliffs lying between the twin horizontal expanses of moorland and sea.

*For further information, refer to pages 73 – 85 of the LCA.*

## 2.2 ROCKY MOORLAND

*Irregular topography of rocky knolls interspersed with peaty moorland vegetation and occasional small lochans. There is considerable diversity of form and texture. Rocky moorland is predominantly uninhabited with occasional isolated croft houses occurring in coastal locations, sheltered within the landform and frequently associated with a small natural harbour.*

In addition to general guidance described above for all moorland landscape character types (or emphasising particular aspects of this), the following guidance is highlighted for Rocky Moorland:

- A key characteristic of the Rocky Moorlands landscape type is the simple **balance of rocky knolls interspersed with peaty moorland**, with little human influence. Much of the landscape has a strong sense of **remoteness** with which any new development would contrast. However, in less

remote areas, development may be able to be accommodated as long as it is sited and designed carefully to fit in with the variable scale and form of the rocky topography, typically ‘tucked in’ or ‘weaving in and out’ of the landform rather than using cuttings and embankments.

- The predominance of **rock outcrops and thin soils** within this landscape means that it is typically difficult to construct new structures within this landscape. This means that particular care is needed when siting and designing new developments and planning construction methods to minimize ground disturbance and/ or structures needing to be raised up above the ground level which would increase their prominence.
- This landscape character type often occurs within the **transition between the coast and/ or settlements and the more expansive interior moorlands or mountains**. In this location, these areas may be under particular pressure for new developments, particularly for infrastructure. The impacts of this may be limited by **focusing development in distinct areas** which are of adequate scale to accommodate development and thereby allowing large tracts of moorland to retain their intrinsic characteristics unaffected.

*For further information, refer to pages 86 – 101 of the LCA.*

### **2.3 KNOCK AND LOCHAN (&) ROCK AND LOCHAN**

*Knock and Lochan describes a complex landscape of irregular knocks interspersed with small lochans. It is sparsely vegetated and predominantly uninhabited, Where it meets the sea there is a coastline of rocky promontories, small bays and offshore skerries. Rock and Lochan describes a small sub area of Knock and Lochan in south east Harris. It is distinct by the amount of bare rock visible and the prevalent north west – south east orientation of the rock outcrops and lochans that result in the formation of linear repetitive features.*

In addition to general guidance described above for all moorland landscape character types (or emphasising particular aspects of this), the following guidance is highlighted for Knock and Lochan and Rock and Lochan:

- It is typically very difficult to locate new development within this landscape without it seeming to create a focus that contrasts to the **characteristic prevalence of natural features and lack of definite scale indicators** within the landscape which mean the landscape appears infinitely expansive. If new developments are located in this landscape, they need to appear of **inferior scale to the knocks** and appear fitted into the base slopes of these so that they do not seem to obstruct the **distinctive landform horizons/ skyline**. In addition, they need to appear of minor prominence to avoid disrupting the characteristic balance of high and low points, with no single feature typically dominating. It is important that any development or activity associated with it does not seem to compromise the **intricate scale and sense of shelter and tranquility** that occurs within the low-lying areas of this landscape.
- Given the typical **patchy arrangement of elements** within this landscape, such as rock outcrops, knocks and lochans, it is very difficult to locate linear features without these seeming to create incongruous dividing lines. For this reason, if linear features do need to be accommodated, is typically preferable for these to be routed to follow the natural linear features that do exist such as the shore of large lochs and the coast.

*For further information, refer to pages 102 –112 of the LCA.*

## **Mountain landscape character types**

### **(3) MOUNTAIN MASSIF ONE AND MOUNTAIN MASSIF TWO**

*These landscape character types comprise mountain massif extending along most of the Outer Hebrides, between Barra in the south, along the eastern edge of the Uists, over Harris and across the southern bulb of Lewis. Individual peaks with pronounced summits rise from long ridges and steep slopes and a deeply indented coastline where the massif meets the sea. Mountain Massif Two is distinguished from Mountain*

*Massif One by more rounded summit ridges and with a greater prevalence of rock outcrops and boulders.*

- It is difficult to accommodate any new development within this landscape due to its strong qualities of **wild land and wildness** which are derived partly from its **remoteness, ruggedness** and **naturalness**, although some isolated lodges, bothies and/or historic features exist. New structures may also seem impinging where previously the scale and ruggedness of the landscape was perceived to be impenetrable.
- This landscape tends to be **massive in scale** with a vertical emphasis, and its character is strongly defined by **landform features**. The location of built development may seem to compromise the scale of the landscape by introducing size indicators, as it may be perceived as a consequence to be less grand and/ or extensive in scale. However, in some circumstances, the introduction of built features may actually emphasize the scale of the mountains if they appear very small in comparison.
- It will be important for any new development to avoid seeming to contrast to key focal features within the landscape, such as **focal peaks, landform horizons** or the **coastline**.
- Given the **simple pattern** of vegetation and exposed rock within this landscape, it is important that any new development follows and fits in with the landform and ground cover, minimizing disturbance and avoiding earthworks. Linear features such as roads or powerlines tend to appear incongruous within this landscape unless following natural linear features such as glens or the coast.
- The **transect** between massifs to lower-lying moorland and settlement landscape character types and the coast is a distinctive characteristic of the Outer Hebrides. Thus it is important that any development does not separate or obstruct this link between the massifs to surrounding areas.

*For further information, refer to pages 113 – 121 of the LCA.*

#### Coastal landscape character type

##### (4) MACHAIR

*Found along the west coast of the islands, this highly distinctive landscape is characterised by sandy beaches and low headlands backed by dune systems which protect expansive areas of machair grassland that are a focus of agricultural activity.*

- This landscape is predominantly **open with a strong sense of exposure**. The landform is typically flattish to gently sloping with overriding **horizontal emphasis** and **sweeping curves**. There are **key views along the coast and out to sea**. Within this composition, any new development is likely to appear prominent and thus should be sited and designed with great care to consider **cumulative impacts**, such as contribution to pattern with other vertical elements. It is very important that the **scale, form and style of structures** relates to traditional buildings, even if of a contemporary design, to retain the **cohesiveness of settlements** and the distinct character of the machair. It is also important that new buildings relate to the characteristic siting of traditional buildings upon the exposed expansive machair, typically relating to and gaining shelter from minor landform variations. This helps integrate structures into the landscape and retains the expansive, open qualities of the machair.
- New development should **relate to the dispersed pattern of croft houses, avoiding concentrations** that would contrast to the fairly even and widely spaced pattern of built features, with no single one dominating and, alternatively, the focus of attention tending to be dispersed and/ or directed to the coast.
- It is important that any new development relates to the **characteristic balance of landscape**

**elements** within the machair – principally the combination of beaches/ dunes, open agricultural fields and built elements, avoiding the concentration of structures and/ or infrastructure elements such as powerlines.

- It is crucial that the sensitivity of the **machair as a dynamic system** is considered when built development of any form is being proposed, along with the wider implications of the impacts of access roads and associated services.

*For further information, refer to pages 62 – 72 of the LCA.*



## Appendix 2: Placemaking and Design

### Six Qualities of a Successful Place

Although at first placemaking may appear to be an urban concept it equally applies to the Outer Hebrides. The Scottish Government within the Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) describes placemaking as *“a creative, collaborative process that includes design, development, renewal or regeneration of our urban or rural built environments. The outcome should be sustainable, well designed places and homes which meet people’s needs. The Government Economic Strategy supports an approach to place that recognises the unique contribution that every part of Scotland can make to achieving our shared outcomes. This means harnessing the distinct characteristics and strengths of each place to improve the overall quality of life for people. Reflecting this, NPF3 sets out an agenda for placemaking in our city regions, towns, rural areas, coast and islands.”*

The Scottish Government has advocated six qualities of a successful place for a number of years. Below is an extract from Paragraphs 41 to 46 of the SPP which defines the aim of each quality.

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<b>Distinctive</b>	This is development that complements local features, for example landscapes, topography, ecology, skylines, spaces and scales, street and building forms, and materials to create places with a sense of identity.
<b>Safe and Pleasant</b>	This is development that is attractive to use because it provides a sense of security through encouraging activity. It does this by giving consideration to crime rates and providing a clear distinction between private and public space, by having doors that face onto the street creating active frontages, and by having windows that overlook well-lit streets, paths and open spaces to create natural surveillance. A pleasant, positive sense of place can be achieved by promoting visual quality, encouraging social and economic interaction and activity, and by considering the place before vehicle movement.
<b>Welcoming</b>	This is development that helps people to find their way around. This can be, by providing or accentuating landmarks to create or improve views, it can be locating a distinctive work of art to mark places such as gateways, and it can include appropriate signage and distinctive lighting to improve safety and show off attractive buildings.
<b>Adaptable</b>	This is development that can accommodate future changes of use because there is a mix of building densities, tenures and typologies where diverse but compatible uses can be integrated. It takes into account how people use places differently, for example depending on age, gender and degree of personal mobility and providing versatile greenspace.
<b>Resource Efficient</b>	This is development that re-uses or shares existing resources, maximises efficiency of the use of resources through natural or technological means and prevents future resource depletion, for example by mitigating and adapting to climate change. This can mean denser development that shares infrastructure

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and amenity with adjacent sites. It could include siting development to take shelter from the prevailing wind; or orientating it to maximise solar gain. It could also include ensuring development can withstand more extreme weather, including prolonged wet or dry periods, by working with natural environmental processes such as using landscaping and natural shading to cool spaces in built areas during hotter periods and using sustainable drainage systems to conserve and enhance natural features whilst reducing the risk of flooding. It can include using durable materials for building and landscaping as well as low carbon technologies that manage heat and waste efficiently.

**Easy to move  
around and  
Beyond**

This is development that considers place and the needs of people before the movement of motor vehicles. It could include using higher densities and a mix of uses that enhance accessibility by reducing reliance on private cars and prioritising sustainable and active travel choices, such as walking, cycling and public transport. It would include paths and routes which connect places directly and which are well-connected with the wider environment beyond the site boundary. This may include providing facilities that link different means of travel.

**Master Planning**

The definition of what constitutes a Masterplan can vary. Most commonly, it is a plan that describes and maps an overall development concept, including present and future land use, urban design and landscaping, built form, infrastructure, circulation and service provision. It is based upon an understanding of place and it is intended to provide a structured approach to creating a clear and consistent framework for development.

An effective Masterplan should explain how a site, or series of sites, will be developed, describing and illustrating the proposed urban form in three dimensions. It should show how that form will achieve the intended vision for the place, and how the project will be implemented through a delivery strategy which sets out phasing, timing and funding (source PAN 83 Master Planning, Scottish Government).

A Master Plan should take account of any relevant statutory Planning Briefs (which may inform development of specific sites), Supplementary Guidance, and the policies contained within the Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan and in particular will address the relevant points in Policy PD1 Placemaking and Design.

As a minimum a Masterplan document (including for separate ownership and possible different Masterplans for different areas of the site) should include the following:

- Outline timetable for the development of the whole area within the developer’s ownership, with a phasing schedule;
- Details of each development stage indicating number of units, open space provision, and infrastructure requirements in line with the requirements of the Planning Brief;

- A site layout indicating proposed housing, open space and recreational facilities, roads layout, access and circulation (pedestrian and vehicular);
- Details of house scale, style and design, including any energy efficiency measures;
- A Landscaping Strategy that includes open space, amenity areas, and recreational provision; treatment of water bodies; boundary edges; and footpath / cycleway routes.

In preparing a Master plan and phasing schedule, developers should note the trigger points at which additional services and facilities (particularly relating to transport and recreation) will be required along with further housing and should ensure these are reflected in the Masterplan.

The text within a Masterplan should be kept short and illustrate the process undertaken to achieve the concept. The document should explain the design philosophy and proposals as well as the role that stakeholders have played in developing the concept.

### **Design Statements**

A design statement can be prepared for large or small scale developments. The design statement enables the developer to set out the concepts that have been applied to the development and provide a justification of why the selected design solution is the most suitable in the circumstance in terms of the building(s) and the quality of spaces created. The statement should have regard to the Scottish Government's six qualities of a successful place. A building may be of a high architectural design but if it is sited inappropriately it may not contribute to a quality of place.

Applications for planning permission within the following designations will require a design statement:

1. a World Heritage Site
2. a conservation area
3. a historic garden or designed landscape
4. a National Scenic Area
5. the site of a scheduled monument
6. the curtilage of a category A listed building
7. Sites within the following Development Strategy Categories: outwith the settlement; remote areas; and off shore Islands

Within categories 1-5 the following applications do not require a design statement: applications for alterations or extensions to an existing building; a Section 42 Application; engineering or mining operations; householder development; a material change in the use of land or buildings; or applications for planning in principle.

Within category 6 the following applications do not require a design statement: a Section 42 Application; engineering or mining operations; householder development; or a material change in the use of land or buildings.



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- National Guidance.
  - Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan.
  - Outer Hebrides Design Guide.
  - Site specific Development Briefs or Masterplans.
  - Account as to design and how Policy PD1 Placemaking and Design has been applied.

**Consultation**

Discuss any pre- application discussion undertaken with the Planning Service on issues relating to the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development.

If the project has been subject to public consultation provide details of the consultation.

What was the outcome of these consultations detail what account has been taken of the consultation outcome (i.e. detail any changes made to the project)?

**Design Solution**

Explain why the selected design is the most suitable for the site taking in to account the above sections.

Provide details of any project phasing.

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## Appendix 3: Car Parking and Road Layouts

### Car Parking Standards

Tables 1-4 below set out the car parking standards required for development proposals.

**Table 1: Residential Parking**

Type of Development	Appropriate Provision	Comment
<b>Housing</b>		Includes for visitors.
Dwelling House	2.0	
Flat or 1 bedroom house	1.5	
<b>Old People's Homes/ Children's Homes</b>	1 space per 4 residents	Includes provision for staff and visitors.
<b>Student Flats</b>	1 space per 7 students + 1 space per 3 staff + 1 space per warden	Allowance should be made for future provision of parking assessed on the basis of possible subsequent occupation as mainstream housing.

**Table 2: Commercial Parking** (applies to internal floor area)

Type of Development	Appropriate Provision - Spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> Gross Floor Area (GFA) unless otherwise indicated	Comment
<b>Office Accommodation</b>	4-7	Detailed provision depends on specific location and nature of activity.
<b>Shops</b>	5	Minimum permissible provision.

<b>Food Superstore (Stand Alone - includes Supermarkets)</b> 0-500m <sup>2</sup> FGA 500-2000m <sup>2</sup> GFA 2000-5000m <sup>2</sup> GFA 5000-8000m <sup>2</sup> GFA >8000m <sup>2</sup> GFA	5.0 6.5 8.0 7.0 6.0	Extensions to freestanding shopping developments to be assessed according to their incremental effect on the Gross Floor Area (GFA) rather than as a separate development.
<b>Cash and Carry Warehouse</b> Trade Retail	5.0 5.0 - 10.0 (+ 1 space per 3 staff)	Includes staff parking. Lower figure applicable to bulky non-food sales such as carpets and furniture.
<b>Motor Trade</b> Vehicle Display Area Spares Department Servicing/Bodywork Tyre & Exhaust Centre Car Wash Scrap Yards Staff	2.0 2.0 2 spaces per service bay 2 spaces per service bay 2 queuing spaces 2 spaces 1 space per 2 staff	Includes showrooms and any external display area. Provision stated is for customers only and must be reserved and marked for their use. Developers will be required to demonstrate that space has been allowed for storage of new/used cars and other operational requirements.
<b>Petrol Stations</b>	1 space per 2 staff	Additional parking to be assessed where there is a shop.
<b>Hotels and B &amp; B</b>	1 space per 2.5 bed spaces (+ 1 space per 3 staff)	For bars open to non-residents additional parking will be required in line with public house provision.



**Table 3: Industrial, Recreational and Service Industry Parking**

Type of Development	Appropriate Provision - Spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> Gross Floor Area (GFA) unless otherwise indicated	Comment
Factories	1.1	Special provision may be required for buses.
Warehousing	0.5	Office space to be assessed separately.
Business Park	2.0	
Public Houses	10	
Theatres and Concert Halls	1 space per 10 seats	
Sports Centres/Swimming Pools	10 spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> pool area	Special provision for buses/ coaches may be necessary.
Snooker Halls	1 space per table	
Other Facilities	1 space per 2 players at peak time	
Spectators	1 space per 10 seats	
Staff	1 space per 3 staff	
Marinas	1 space per berth + 1 space per 3 staff	
Museums/Public Art Galleries	1 space per 30m <sup>2</sup> public display space + 1 space per 2 staff	
Licensed Clubs	20 + 1 space per 3 staff + 1 space per solo performer and/or group	
Dance Halls and Discotheques	10 + 1 space per 3 staff + 3 spaces for performers	
Bowling Alleys	2 spaces per bowling lane	
Hospitals	1 space per 3 beds + 1 space per doctor/surgeon + 1 space per 3 other staff	Includes provision for visitors.

**Table 3 Industrial, Recreational and Service Industry (continued)**

Type of Development	Appropriate Provision -Spaces per 100m <sup>2</sup> Gross Floor Area (GFA) unless otherwise indicated	Comment
Health Centres/Clinics (includes Dental and Veterinary Surgeries)	4 spaces per consulting room + 1 space per practitioner + 1 space per 3 other staff	
Schools – Nursery, Primary and Secondary	2 spaces per staff member + provision for buses where required	Includes for casual visitors but playgrounds should be used to accommodate visitors parking on open days and for evening activities. Intensive staffing at nursery schools.
Universities and Colleges	1 space per staff member + 1 space per 10 students	Additional parking for residences.
Libraries	3 + 1 space per 3 staff	
Community Centres	5 - 20	Lower figure applicable to centres with catchment within walking distance.
Churches	1 space per 4 seats	
Outdoor Recreational Developments		Assess on individual merits of application.
Restaurants and Cafes	1 space per 4 seats. 1 space per 4 staff	

### **Mixed Developments**

Where a proposal incorporates more than one element (e.g. public house and shop) the parking requirement for each element will be assessed independently and then added together. However, where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Comhairle that peak operating times of the various elements would occur at different times, some discounting of the required number of spaces may be acceptable.

## Staff Parking Provision

Assessment of appropriate provision for any staff parking requirements outlined above for commercial, industrial, recreational and service industry categories, should be based on the likely maximum number of staff present at the busiest time period.

## Accessible Parking Standards

Special consideration should be given to the needs of disabled people concerning the number of designated spaces, their location and the pedestrian routes to these spaces. Developers are encouraged to consult with the Local Access Panels on provision. Table 4 details the number of disabled parking bays to be designated in car parks provided for employees and visitors associated with various developments.

**Table 4 Disabled Parking Requirements**

Type of Development	Size of Car Park	No of Designated spaces	Comment
Employment Premises	Up to 200 spaces	5% of total	Minimum of 2 spaces.
	Over 200 spaces	6 spaces plus 2% of total number	
Shopping, Leisure or Recreational	Up to 200 spaces	6% of total	Minimum of 3 spaces.
	Over 200 spaces	4 spaces plus 4% of total number	
Residential (over 8 units)			Refer to Housing for Varying Needs guidance. Consult with Local Access Panels. Minimum of two spaces

Where space permits, at least one large designated parking space, 4.8 metres wide x 8.0 metres long, should be provided to cater for commercial vehicles converted for side or rear access using hoists or ramps.

## Designated Disabled Parking Bays

Where designated on-street parking bays are provided, they should be sited where road gradient and camber are reasonably level, e.g. 1:50. A dropped kerb (with associated blister paving) or level surface should be provided to permit convenient access from the parking bay onto the pavement. The dimensions of such parking bays, parallel to the kerb, should be as shown in Fig. 1,

to permit access to the rear of a vehicle to use a ramp or tail lift and to enable the driver or passenger to alight on the side where traffic might be passing.

Accessible bays should be a minimum of 4.8 metre long and 2.4 metres wide with a 1.2 metre wide safety zone provided between designated parking spaces and a roadway (without reducing the width of the roadway) to enable a disabled driver or passenger to get in or out of a vehicle and access the boot or rear hoist safely.

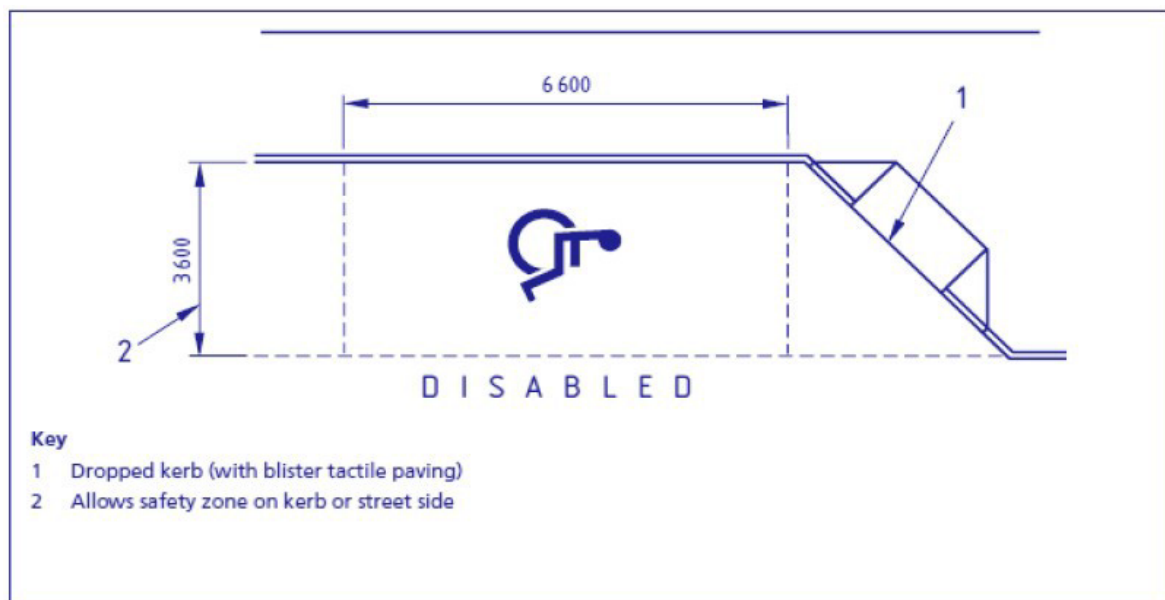
Detailed design of access parking should accord with the recommendations of **BS 8300:2009+A1:2010; Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people — Code of practice**. With regard to residential design, reference should also be made to **Housing for Varying Needs a Design Guide** (published by The Stationery Office, [www.tso.co.uk](http://www.tso.co.uk)).

### Parent and Child Parking Bays

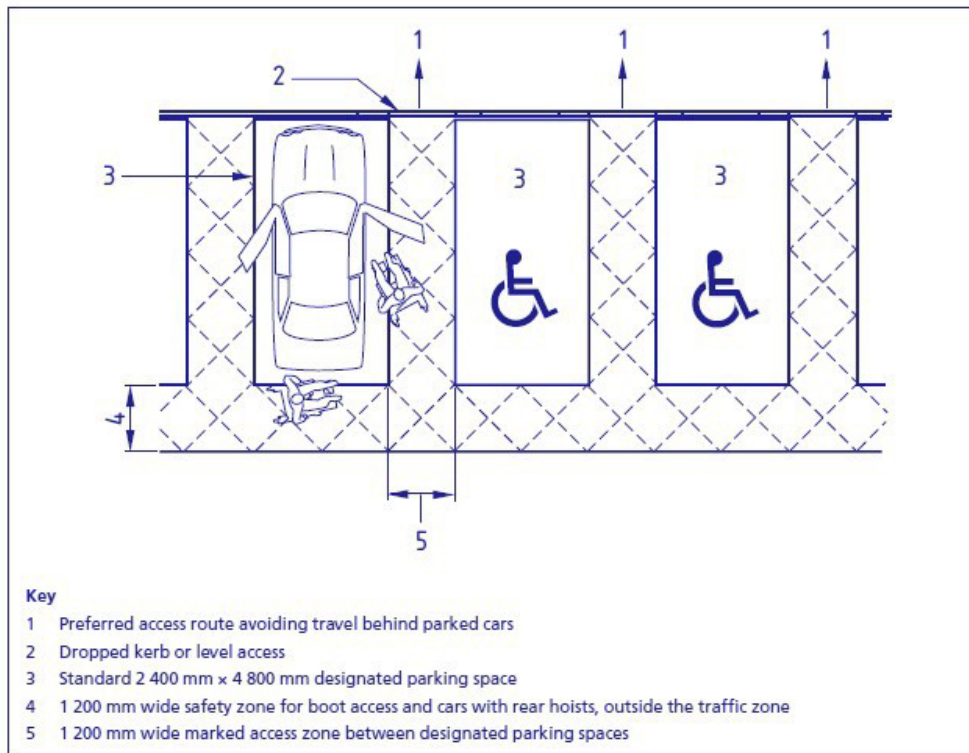
If a developer wishes to provide these as a courtesy, it is recommended that they conform to the same specification as the designated disabled parking bay.

Drawings are provided for illustration in Fig 1, 2 and 3.

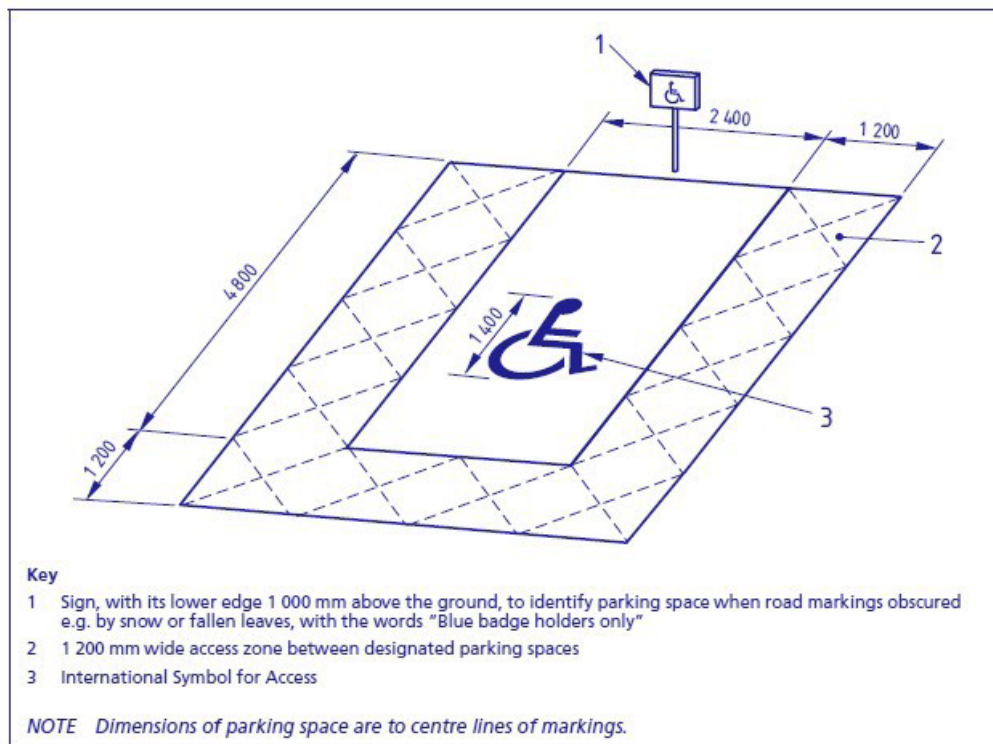
**Fig 1 Example of designated on-street parking bay** (Dimensions in millimetres)



**Fig 2 Access around designated off-street parking spaces**



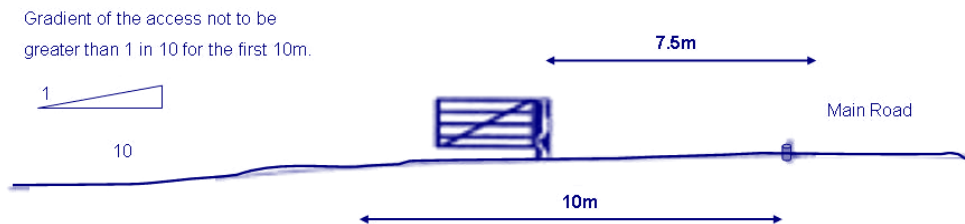
**Fig 3 Markings for designated off-street parking spaces**



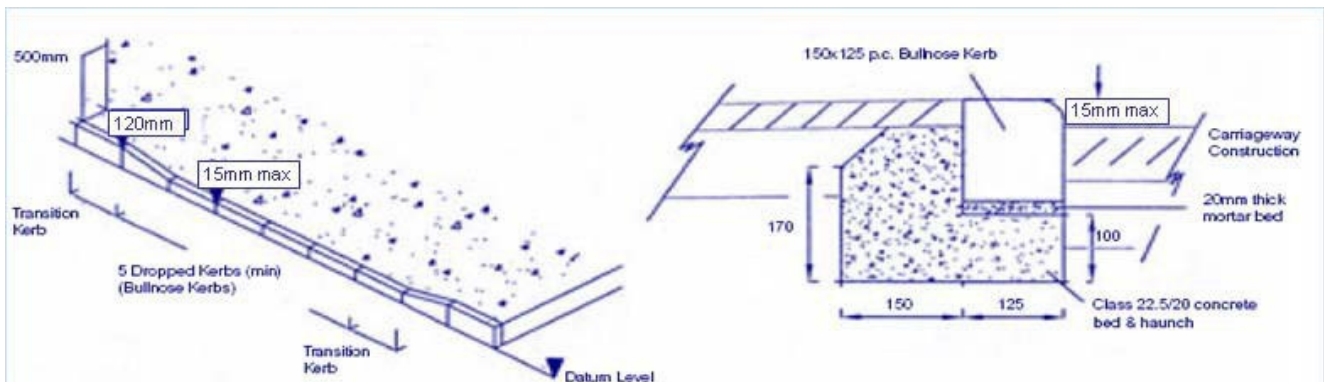
## ROADS LAYOUT

Figures 4 and 5 below illustrate the access gradients, gate and kerb requirements as set out in Policy PD2 Car Parking and Roads Layout

**Fig 4 Gate Gradient Details**



**Fig 5 Kerb Details**



## Road Opening

If the road has to be opened for connecting services to a house, the Comhairle's Technical Services Department must be notified by completing a Road Opening form. A fee is required before work can start.

The developer is responsible for the maintenance of the road crossing for 2 years after the date that the reinstatement has been completed.

This form is not required for kerbing works in a full planning application. It is only required when services cross the road or footpath

## Appendix 4: List of Supplementary Guidance

Seeking to Re-adopt	To be Developed or Revised in Future
Caravans and Temporary Buildings	Minerals
Wind Energy Developments	Caravans, Huts, and Temporary Buildings
Marine Fish Farming	Conservation Area Management Plans
Conservation Area Management Plans	Goathill Farm (West) Planning Brief
Melbost Farm (East) Planning Brief	Marine Fish Farming
	Wind Energy Developments
	Briefs for Plan Proposal Sites as required

## **Appendix 5: Schedule of Land Owned by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar**

Section 15(3) of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 requires that the Plan contains a Schedule of land in the ownership of the Comhairle which is affected by site specific policies and proposals for development in the proposed Outer Hebrides Local Development Plan.

<b>Description of Comhairle Owned Land</b>	<b>Local Development Plan Reference</b>
Oliver's Brae	Proposal Site 10
Spinal Route	Proposal Site 18
Balivanich Commercial Development Area	Proposal Site 20
Leverburgh Pier	Proposal Site 22



## Appendix 6: Glossary and Commonly Used Planning Terms

<b>Action Programme</b>	A working document developed in consultation with key stakeholders which sets out, in very broad terms, how and by whom the key elements of the Local Development Plan strategy will be implemented.
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Housing reserved for those for whom it would be impossible or inappropriate to pay full market price for housing in a particular area. This may be low cost owner occupation, co-ownership or rent from a registered social landlord.
<b>Allotments</b>	An allotment is a piece of land no larger than ¼ acre which is primarily used for growing fruit and vegetables for the personal and family use of the tenant.
<b>Archaeological Sensitive Area</b>	An area where there is a concentration of important archaeological features.
<b>Archaeological Significance</b>	Any site that contain, or is likely to contain, material which provides evidence about any period prior to the end of 1945 will be deemed to have some archaeological significance. In exceptional circumstances remains relating to later periods will also be considered. The extent of archaeological significance of a heritage asset will depend on the extent of the remains, their state of preservation, and the degree to which they can add to existing knowledge.
<b>Appropriate Assessment</b>	Is one part of the Habitats Regulations Appraisal process. An ‘appropriate assessment’ is only required where the plan-making body determines that the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site in Great Britain, or a European Offshore Marine Site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and the plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of the site.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The variety of all living things in the natural world – all plants, animals and people and the ecological systems of which they are part.
<b>Brownfield Land</b>	A site which has previously been developed or used for some purpose which has ceased.
<b>Caravan</b>	<u>Section 29 (1) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 ("The 1960 Act")</u> defines a caravan as: “... any structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is capable of being moved from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer) and any motor vehicle so designed or adapted [but does not include any railway rolling stock ... or any tent]”, additionally: <u>Section 13 (1) of the Caravan Sites Act 1968 ("The 1968 Act")</u> , provides that: "A structure designed or adapted for human habitation which is composed of not more than two sections separately constructed and designed to be assembled on a site by means of bolts, clamps or other devices and is, when assembled,

*physically capable of being moved by road from one place to another (whether by being towed, or by being transported on a motor vehicle or trailer)' is a 'twin-unit' caravan provided it does not exceed the following maximum dimensions:*

<b>Length (exclusive of any drawbar)</b>	60ft (18.3m)
<b>Width</b>	20ft (6.1 m)
<b>Overall height of living accommodation</b> <i>(measured internally from the floor at the lowest level to the ceiling at the highest level)</i>	10ft (3.1m)

For further guidance relating to 'Caravans', please view the Supplementary Guidance.

<b>Character</b>	A combination of features which distinguish an area. These may include architectural styles, main uses, landscape type and such like.
<b>Civil Infrastructure (with regard to Flooding)</b>	Hospitals, fire stations, emergency depots, schools, care homes, ground based electrical and telecommunications equipment.
<b>Climate Change</b>	The long-term change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns over periods ranging from decades to millions of years. It may be a change in average weather conditions or the distribution of events around that average (e.g.: more or fewer extreme weather events).
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Community facilities provide for the health, welfare, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community.
<b>Conservation Area</b>	An area of special architectural or historic interest designated by the Planning Authority under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. Current locations are: Stornoway (Lewis); Gearrannan (Lewis); Ruisgarry (Berneray), and; Howmore (South Uist).
<b>Conservation Area consent</b>	An application to demolish unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas. Conservation area consent required for demolition of unlisted buildings in conservation areas shall not apply to certain specified buildings and structures (see the Exemption from Demolition Control in Conservation Areas Direction 1987 – Appendix 4).
<b>Conservation Area Management Plans (CAMPS)</b>	Plans developed by the planning authority that set out guidelines by which the special character of a particular Conservation Area can be preserved and enhanced.
<b>Crofting Activities (PoI DS1)</b>	Cultivation or other approved 'purposeful use'
<b>Croft land</b>	A unit of land subject to the Crofting Acts and recorded in the Commissions Register of Crofts. Definition taken as the meaning of "croft" as defined in Section 3 of the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993.
<b>Cumulative Impact</b>	Relates to potential changes by a proposed development in conjunction with any other developments (not just similar developments) or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together. This includes proposals which have been permitted as well as those that have been submitted and are waiting to be

determined. It can relate to landscape and visual effects as well as a wider range of social, economic and environmental effects.

<b>Departure (from the Plan)</b>	A planning application considered not to be in accordance with a Plan but which due to exceptional circumstances, the planning authority intends to approve. Significant departures must be notified to Scottish Ministers. All national developments which are significantly contrary to a Development Plan must also be subject to a pre-determination hearing.
<b>Design Statement</b>	A design statement can be prepared for large and small scale developments. As for every development, the applicant in discussion with the client, should consider and set out the design principles which determine the design and layout of the development proposal. This should be done as early as possible. A design statement enables the applicant to explain why the selected design solution is the most suitable in the circumstances -in terms of the building(s) and the quality of spaces created. A building may be good architecturally but if it is inappropriate for its context it may not contribute to a quality place.
<b>Designed Landscape</b>	An area of significant parkland and woodland, generally centred upon a castle or mansion house, which has been laid out for artistic effect and identified in the 'Scottish Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes.'
<b>Effective Land Supply</b>	The part of the established housing land supply which is free or is expected to be free of development constraints in the period under consideration, and will therefore be available for the construction of housing.
<b>Essential Infrastructure</b> (with reference to Flooding)	Is defined in SEPA guidance on vulnerability as 'essential transport infrastructure and essential utility infrastructure which may have to be located in a flood risk area for operational reasons. This includes electricity generating stations, power stations and grid and primary sub stations; water treatment works and sewage treatment works and wind turbines.'
<b>European Protected Species</b>	European protected species (EPS) are species listed in Annex IV of the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/ EEC).
<b>Extractive waste</b>	Waste produced by the extractive industry and resulting from prospecting, extraction treatment and storage of mineral resources and the working of quarries. In the Outer Hebrides this will include weathered rock, below the specification or otherwise unsaleable, overburden and soil.
<b>Flood Risk</b>	The combination of the probability of a flood and of the potential adverse consequences, associated with a flood for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity.
<b>Flood Risk Assessment</b>	An assessment which is carried out to predict and assess the probability of flooding for a particular site or area and recommends mitigation measures including maintenance.
<b>Functional Open Space</b>	For the purposes of this Plan, 'functional open space' refers to

valuable and valued greenspaces which fall under a category listed as 'Open Space' within PAN 65 Planning and Open Space: Appendix 1; or those listed in the Outer Hebrides Open Space Audit.

<b>Greenfield Site</b>	Land which has not been developed.
<b>Habitats Regulations Appraisal</b>	Article 6(3) of the EC Habitats Directive requires that any plan (or project), which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site, but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of its implications for the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The plan-making body shall agree to the plan only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned, unless in exceptional circumstances, the provisions of Article 6(4) are met. This procedure is applied in Scotland through The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), and is known as the 'Habitats Regulations Appraisal' of plans.
<b>Heritage Asset</b>	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and non-designated assets identified by the local planning authority. A heritage asset has value to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, historic or commemorative.
<b>Hierarchy of Developments</b>	Refers to the way in which planning applications are processed with regard to their scale into three types: National, Major and Local. This approach will ensure that applications are dealt with in an appropriate way to their scale and complexity, allowing decisions to be taken at the most appropriate level. More detailed information on this approach can be found in the Scottish Planning Series Circular 5 2009: Hierarchy of Developments.
<b>Historic Environment</b>	The physical legacy of thousands of years of human activity in the form of monuments, buildings, sites and landscapes.
<b>Incremental Impact</b>	Impact arising from a number of developments which, individually and in themselves, may have insignificant effects but together combine to create a significant impact.
<b>Infill Development</b>	Development within a built up area, usually involving building on a gap site or between two buildings.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Utility services (roads, sewers, and supplies of gas, water, electricity) or social and community services (schools, community halls, health centres etc.) which are needed to allow a development to take place.
<b>Isolated Coast</b>	Areas of wild or natural coastline that are characterised by the absence of occupied settlement, lack of road infrastructure, and absence of human activity on or off-shore, both industrial, power, port, military or tourism related.

**Landscape Character Assessment**

Landscape Character Assessments help to understand, and articulate, the character of the landscape, and to identify the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpoints what makes it different from neighbouring areas.

The Western Isles Landscape Character Assessment (Richards, 1998) was produced as one of a National Programme of Landscape Character Assessments (LCA). Its production was led by Scottish Natural Heritage in partnership with local authorities and other agencies and it is available on the SNH website<sup>2</sup>.

The LCA describes in detail the key characteristics that make the landscape of the Outer Hebrides distinctive. It also highlights the key forces for change on this landscape and offers guidance on how these might be accommodated to best relate to landscape character.

**Key Agencies**

Key agencies are bodies specified by Scottish Ministers who are under a duty to co-operate with planning authorities at the following stages in the development plan process: The compilation of the main issues reports; The preparation of the proposed LDPs; and the preparation of action programmes and proposed action programmes. Key Agencies are defined as: Scottish Natural Heritage; Scottish Environment Protection Agency; Scottish Water; Historic Environment Scotland; Scottish Enterprise (only in its area of jurisdiction); Highland and Islands Enterprise (only in its area of jurisdiction); Regional Transport Partnerships (only in relevant areas of jurisdiction); Crofters Commission (only in crofting counties); and Health Boards.

While legislation cannot specify them individually, the following bodies should have the same level of involvement in the development plan process: Transport Scotland; and Forestry Commission Scotland.

**Listed Building**

A building designated by Historic Environment Scotland on behalf of Scottish Ministers for its special architectural or historic interest and accorded special protection.

**Local Housing Strategy**

An assessment of housing needs and provision setting out how the planning authority and its partners aim to meet these needs and associated economic and social aims.

**Local Nature Reserve**

An area designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, as amended by the Local Government and Planning (Scotland) Act 1982, by a local authority with high natural heritage interest and particular value for education and informal enjoyment of nature by the public.

**Machair**

Word derived from the Gaelic 'mach', meaning 'plain' referring to a rare coastal habitat consisting of dune grassland on a base of blown sand which is known for its vast array of wildflowers and abundant birdlife. This habitat type is found in parts of Ireland and Scotland.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at [www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/lca/](http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/lca/)

<b>Main Settlements</b>	‘Main Settlements’ is a category in the Spatial Strategy (Policy DS1: Development Strategy). They are: Tarbert, Lochmaddy, Balivanich, Lochboisdale/Daliburgh, Greater Castlebay and Greater Stornoway (excluding Stornoway core).
<b>Marine and Shore Environment</b>	‘Marine and Shore Environment’ is a category in the Spatial Strategy (Policy DS1: Development Strategy). It is defined in this Plan as: shoreline and transitional habitats which are saline or tide affected; intertidal areas down to mean low water mark, and; out to 3 nautical miles for marine aquaculture (Local Authority).
<b>Material Considerations</b>	Matters in addition to the Development Plan which a planning authority is required to take into account when making a planning decision. Material considerations in planning must be factors relating to the use and development of land and not to the personal circumstances of individual applicants.
<b>Micro generation</b>	Is the production of heat (less than 45 kilowatt capacity) and/or electricity (less than 50 kilowatt capacity) from zero or low carbon source technologies.
<b>Most Vulnerable use (in the context of flooding)</b>	Basement dwellings, isolated dwellings in sparsely populated areas, dwelling houses behind informal embankments, residential institutions such as residential care homes/ prisons, nurseries, children’s homes and educational establishments, caravans, mobile homes and park homes intended for permanent residential use, sites used for holiday or short let caravans and camping, installations requiring hazardous substance consent.
<b>Non-residential hut</b>	A simple building with <u>no residential use</u> (i.e. overnight accommodation is not permitted). Constructed from low impact materials, not connected to mains water, electricity or sewerage and built in such a way that is removable with little or no trace at the end of its life. Shipping containers, caravans, porta cabins and buildings made with high ecological or visual impact (e.g. breeze blocks) will not be classed as a non-residential hut.
<b>National Planning Framework (NPF)</b>	The Scottish Government’s strategy for Scotland’s long term spatial development. It identifies key issues and drivers of change, sets out a vision to 2030, and identifies priorities and opportunities for each part of Scotland in spatial perspectives. Planning authorities must take the NPF into account in development plans and development management decisions.
<b>National Scenic Area</b>	An area of land designated by the Scottish Government and considered of national significant to Scotland due to their outstanding scenic interest and which must be conserved as part of the country’s national heritage.
<b>Natura 2000 network</b>	EU wide network of nature conservation sites (SACs and SPAs) established under the EC Habitats and Birds Directives. Ramsar sites are also protected under this statutory regime.
<b>National Designated sites</b>	National Scenic Area, National Nature Reserve, and Site of Special Scientific Interest.

<b>Natural Heritage</b>	The natural heritage of Scotland includes flora, fauna, geological and physiographical features, its natural beauty and its amenity - Natural Heritage (Scotland) Act 1991.
<b>Notification / Safeguarding Zones</b>	Defined areas within which a specified Government agency or department must be notified of development proposals. Examples include airports and locations where hazardous or dangerous materials are stored. The LDP Context Map indicates the main safeguarding consultation zones covering airport, MOD and Health and Safety Executive matters.
<b>Offshore Islands</b>	'Offshore islands' is a category in the Spatial Strategy (Policy DS1: Development Strategy). It is defined in this Plan as all islands (including tidal islands which are accessible on foot at low tide) which are unconnected by bridge or causeway to the main inhabited islands. The inhabited islands not included in this category are: Lewis; Bernera; Harris; Scalpay; Berneray; North Uist; Baleshare; Grimsay (North); Benbecula; Flodda; Grimsay ('South' Benbecula); South Uist; Eriskay; Barra; Vatersay. Coastline on offshore islands is categorised as 'isolated coastline'.
<b>Outdoor Sports Facilities</b>	Uses where sportscotland is a statutory consultee under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, which establishes 'outdoor sports facilities' as land used as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) an outdoor playing field extending to not less than 0.2ha used for any sport played on a pitch;</li> <li>(b) an outdoor athletics track;</li> <li>(c) a golf course;</li> <li>(d) an outdoor tennis court, other than those within a private dwelling, hotel or other tourist accommodation; and</li> <li>(e) an outdoor bowling green.</li> </ul>
<b>Outwith Settlement</b>	'Outwith Settlement' is a category in the Spatial Strategy (Policy DS1: Development Strategy). The area is not mapped but is defined in this Plan as the area between settlement boundaries and mapped Remote Areas.
<b>Place</b>	Place is defined in the Scottish Planning Policy as the environment in which we live; the people who inhabit these spaces; and the quality of life that comes from the interaction of people and their surroundings. Architecture, public space and landscape are central to this.
<b>Planning Advice Note (PAN)</b>	A series of documents on specific planning issues, providing advice on good practice and information to planning authorities. These are published by the Scottish Government.
<b>Predetermination evaluation</b>	In some cases, the archaeological advisor to the Planning Service may feel that they are not in possession of enough information to arrive at an informed decision on a planning proposal. In this case they will often request what is called a predetermination, or early discussions between developers and the planning authorities.

Predetermination may include desk-based assessment, evaluation, geophysics, field survey or other methods of collecting enough information on the site to allow for an informed decision to be made. Predetermination should be seen as pre application, as the results of the work may or will have a bearing on the final development and the scope of further work - if required. A predetermination evaluation is usually necessary where the outcome of the evaluation has the potential to alter the determination of the application e.g. it may discover something that may require preservation, or it may reveal a site requiring excavation that is so onerous as to be an unreasonable burden to secure through a condition. A predetermination evaluation is strongly advised for major developments where given the scale of the development the potential for previously unidentified archaeological remains of this nature to be discovered is greater. It is also strongly advised for larger developments so that the resulting mitigative investigations can be incorporated into the development program. Early evaluation also facilitates the incorporation of the historic environment features into the design and enables the positive aspects of the historic environment to be presented with the planning application.

<b>Private Water Supply</b>	A private water supply is any water supply not provided by Scottish Water, this can either be a single house or a group of houses.
<b>Proposed Plan</b>	A stage in the preparation of the Local Development Plan. This forms the plan that Comhairle nan Eilean Siar would wish to see adopted and will consult upon. The Proposed Plan is a material consideration in considering planning applications.
<b>Ramsar Site</b>	A site listed as a wetland of international importance under the provisions of the 'Ramsar Convention'. A Ramsar site is not a European site as a matter of law, but all Ramsar sites in Scotland are also European sites and / or Sites of Special Scientific Interest and are protected under the relevant statutory regime.
<b>Purposeful use</b> (with regard to crofting)	Any planned and managed use which does not adversely affect the croft, the public interest, the interests of the landlord or (if different) the owner; or the use of adjacent land. 'Purposeful use' may require consent from the Crofters Commission. Definition taken from Section 5(8) of the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993.
<b>Recreational hut</b>	A simple building used intermittently as recreational accommodation (i.e. not a principal residence), having an internal floor area of no more than 30m <sup>2</sup> ; constructed from low impact materials, generally not connected to mains water, electricity or sewerage and built in such a way that is removable with little or no trace at the end of its life. Shipping containers, caravans, porta cabins and buildings made with high ecological or visual impact (e.g. breeze blocks) are not accepted as 'huts'.
<b>Remote Areas</b>	'Remote Areas' is a category in the Spatial Strategy (Policy DS1: Development Strategy). Remote Areas are shown on an Inset Map on the Development Strategy Maps; they include Wild Land Areas, as identified by Scottish Natural Heritage, and isolated coastline but not



	offshore islands (separate category).
<b>Retail Impact Assessment</b>	A study which assesses the likely effect a new development will have on existing shops.
<b>River Basin Management Plan</b>	River Basin Management Planning is a requirement of the Water Framework Directive which has led to the preparation of River Basin Management Plans that promote sustainable water use in a way which protects and improves the water environment.
<b>Rural Settlements</b>	‘Rural Settlements’ is a category in the Spatial Strategy (Policy DS1: Development Strategy) and are defined in this Plan as all ‘Settlements’ other than Main Settlements and Stornoway Core.
<b>Scheduled Ancient Monument</b>	A monument or site of archaeological importance which has been scheduled for protection by Historic Environment Scotland under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Special consent from Historic Scotland is required for any form of works affecting the monument, in addition to any planning permission required.
<b>Scottish Planning Policy</b>	Scottish Government planning policy on land use.
<b>Sensitive receptor</b>	Aspect of the environment likely to be significantly affected by a development, which may include for example, populations, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, landscape and the inter-relationship between these factors.
<b>Settlement</b>	For planning purposes a ‘settlement’ comprises a number of houses at least some of which are permanently inhabited and is defined by the main physical concentration of houses, related buildings, gardens, boundary enclosures and street furniture.
<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest</b>	(SSSI) Area of land or water of special interest by reason of its flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features identified by SNH and designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
<b>Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)</b>	The purpose of the SOA is to identify areas for improvement and to deliver better outcomes for the people of the Outer Hebrides, through specific commitments made by the Comhairle, its community planning partners and the Scottish Government.
<b>Special Area of Conservation (SAC)</b>	Special Areas of Conservation under the EC Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna. All SACs are European sites and part of the Natura 2000 network.
<b>Special Protection Areas (SPA)</b>	Special Protection Areas under EC Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Birds. All SPAs are European sites and part of the Natura 2000 network
<b>Stornoway Core</b>	‘Stornoway Core’ is a category in the Spatial Strategy (Policy DS1: Development Strategy) mapped on the Development Strategy Map.
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</b>	An assessment of the environmental impacts of any plan, programme or strategy of any public body in Scotland as required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 which transposes the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effect of certain plans and

	programme on the environment).
<b>Supplementary Guidance</b>	A document which gives further detail on policies and proposals within the Plan and has the same statutory basis as the Plan itself once adopted.
<b>Sustainable Development</b>	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (as defined by the Bruntland Commission 1987 for the United Nations). The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 requires Development Plans and the National Planning Framework to be prepared with the objective of achieving sustainable development.
<b>Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)</b>	(SuDS) Drainage techniques used to treat and return surface water run-off from developments (roof water, road run off, hard standing areas) to the water environment (rivers, groundwater, lochs) without adverse impact upon people or the environment. Further guidance can be found in CIRIA's SuDS manual C697 or Sewers for Scotland 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition.
<b>Tenure Mix</b>	The idea that neighbourhoods or new housing developments are designed to support a mix of different types of housing: affordable, rented or part-rented and private owner-occupied in order to create better mixed, economically viable and sustainable communities.
<b>Transport Infrastructure</b>	Transport services and facilities, including roads, bus services, and ferry links, that are needed to allow development to take place.
<b>Tree Preservation Order</b>	Mechanism for safeguarding trees and woodland where this appears expedient in the interests of amenity or their cultural or historic interest.
<b>Use Classes</b>	<p>The statutory instrument termed the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997/3061, which sets out various classes of use for the purpose of clarifying when a change of use requires planning permission. Summarised below:</p> <p>Use class 1: Shops</p> <p>Use class 2: Financial, professional &amp; other services</p> <p>Use class 3: Food and drink</p> <p>Use class 4: Business</p> <p>Use class 5: General industrial</p> <p>Use class 6: Storage or distribution</p> <p>Use class 7: Hotels and hostels</p> <p>Use class 8: Residential institutions</p> <p>Use class 9: Houses</p> <p>Use class 10: Non-residential institutions</p> <p>Use class 11: Assembly and leisure</p> <p>Types of development not belonging to the above classes are referred to as 'sui generis' uses (e.g. fun fairs, scrap yards and hot</p>

	food takeaways).
<b>Viability</b>	A measure of the capacity to attract ongoing investment for maintenance, improvement and adaptation to changing needs.
<b>Waste Management Hierarchy</b>	An approach to the management of waste: prevention; re-use; recycle; recovery and disposal.
<b>Water Framework Directive</b>	This substantial EU Directive requires that all inland and coastal water bodies must reach at least “good ecological status” by 2015. It will do this by establishing a river basin district structure within which demanding environmental objectives will be set, including ecological targets for surface waters. The Directive therefore sets a framework which should provide substantial benefits for the long term sustainable management of water.
<b>Wholesome Water</b>	Water complying with the requirements of The Public Water Supplies (Scotland) Regulations 2014 for household purposes and/or food production.
<b>Wild Land Character</b>	Land that is characterised by being relatively remote and inaccessible, not noticeably affected by contemporary human activity. For the purposes of this Plan, it is land identified in SNH’s’ <a href="#">Search Areas for Wild Land</a> ’ document.
<b>Windfall Sites</b>	Development sites which are not identified through forward planning processes but become available for various ad hoc reasons. Allowance for a certain level of windfall sites is usually made by planning authorities when calculating the forward supply of development land for which Development Plans will make provision.
<b>World Heritage Site</b>	World Heritage Sites are inscribed by UNESCO as cultural and/or natural heritage sites which are of outstanding universal value.
<b>Written Scheme of Investigation</b>	A WSI (method statement) sets out exactly what type of archaeological work is need and what standards are required for development sites (this takes in known archaeological assets and potential unknown assets) in order for them to gain planning approval and discharge of conditions. This document will be agreed by the developer and or their contractor and the planning authority. In other words all work should be subject to an agreed WSI or project design prior to archaeological investigation work starting. This could include desk based assessment (DBA), evaluation, excavation, watching brief, building recording, and other activities. This ensures that investigative work that is carried out is done to the required standard.
<b>Zero Waste Plan</b>	A national plan which proposes to increase resource efficiency and waste prevention in order to reduce the amount of municipal and commercial waste that is produced.

## Appendix 7: List of Acronyms in the Plan

AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
DBA	Desk Based Assessment
DER	Dwelling Emissions Rate
EPS	European Protected Species
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
HES	Historic Environment Scotland
ICNIRP	International Commission on Non Ionizing Radiation Protection
ICT	Information Communications Technology
LZCGT	Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technologies
NBN	National Biodiversity Framework
NPF	National Planning Framework
NSA	National Scenic Area
NC- MPA	Nature Conservation Marine Protected Area
ROMP	Review of Mineral Permission
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SBEM	Simplified Building Energy Model
SSSI	Special Site of Scientific Interest
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
WI-LCA	Western Isles – Landscape Character Assessment
WIWS	Western Isles Woodland Strategy

*Front Cover Photo kindly provided by John Maher, for Rural Design Ltd.*



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