



## **TN06 SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2**

## TN06 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable Development can be defined as being “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (The Brundtland Definition, as sourced in Appendix F of NPF4).

This technical note provides additional detail to policies 04 - *Sustainable Development*, 05 - *Design and Placemaking* and 08 - *Sustainable Siting* of the adopted Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2), and NPF4 policies 14 - *Design, Quality and Place*, 15 – *Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods* and 29 *Rural Development*. This technical note provides guidance on the wider considerations of siting a development in the natural or built landscape as well as the impact of a development on the community, economy and environment.

Following this technical note is a Sustainability Checklist. **It is mandatory that potential developers complete this for all applications for development, and it is recommended that this be completed at Pre-Application stage and updated as required should a planning application be made.** In some cases a Visual Impact Illustration (VII) or Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) may be required under LDP2 policies 02, 70 and 71 as a separate, but inter-related, assessment. To allow a proportionate approach this will not always be a full LVIA as set out by the Landscape Institute, but in appropriate cases will be a “light” version. This requirement will be decided by the Planning Authority on the basis of the information provided within the Sustainability Checklist and other relevant considerations.

### Related Issues

Technical Note TN07 - *Sustainable Buildings* should be read in conjunction with TN06, which provides guidance on the sustainable design of the building itself.

Aesthetic design considerations will follow and compliment sustainable building considerations, and this is covered in Policy 10 *Design- All Development* and the council’s Design Guidance (which is intended to be consolidated and updated during the Plan period).

### **1.0 SITE APPRAISAL**

The initial step to be undertaken by anyone proposing a new development, is a comprehensive site appraisal which will help identify the limitations and opportunities of the site at an early stage. This is the starting point of any design process. Some surveys may be required to be carried out by specialists.

## **1.1 SUITABILITY OF THE SITE – COMMUNITY, ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT (LIVEABLE, PRODUCTIVE & SUSTAINABLE PLACES)**

- Development should maximise the opportunity for local community benefit
- Development should maximise the use of existing infrastructure and services and minimise the need for people to travel for essential services. Where travel is required active travel routes or public transport should be available.
- Most of the agricultural land in Argyll and Bute is of low quality, however agriculture remains an important part of Argyll and Bute’s economy and provides continuous land management. Therefore countryside development should not result in the loss of better quality agricultural land or result in the fragmentation of field systems or the loss of access to better quality agricultural land.
- Development will not be supported on land that is subject to flooding or land erosion
- Landscape designations of the site itself or area around this must be considered and policies within the High Quality Environment section of the LDP2 taken into account
- Historic Built Environment designations – where applicable reference should be made to the Historic Built Environment policies within the LDP2 as well as Conservation Area Appraisals
- Habitats and/or protected species - The biodiversity within and adjacent to development sites should be maintained and improved where possible – further detail can be found in LDP2 policy 73 *Development Impact on Habitats, Species and Biodiversity*) and the associated Biodiversity Checklist Technical Note TN04)

## **1.2 CHARACTER OF THE SITE AND WIDER AREA**

### **1.2.1 NATURAL RESOURCES**

- Microclimate, prevailing winds, daylight/sunlight
- Topography
- Trees and planting
- Key views in, from and across the site
- Boundary treatments

### **1.2.3. MANMADE RESOURCES**

- Layout and density of the built context and building lines – development should integrate within this existing built form in terms of urban grain and density and also ridge height, scale and massing.
- Key views in, from and across the site
- Boundary treatments
- Access and existing infrastructure

## 2.0 SUSTAINABLE SITING

### 2.0.1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Landscape is about the relationship between people and place. The term **does not mean just special or designated landscape and does not only apply to the countryside**. It results from the way that different components of our environment – both natural and cultural– interact together and are perceived

Examples of key characteristics within a landscape character area might be:

- landform, drainage and water bodies; vegetation and tree cover; human activity such as land management and use, settlements and buildings;
- The context or setting of the urban area and its relationship to the wider landscape;
- The layout, scale and density of buildings
- Settings of listed buildings (see HES guidance)
- Access and connectivity, including streets and footways/pavements;
- water bodies, water courses and other water features;
- The nature and location of vegetation, including the different types of green space and tree cover and their relationships to buildings and streets;
- Coastal features;
- Views to and from the sea;

The Sustainability Checklist which follows this Technical Note, requires basic information to determine the landscape character. Should the Planning Authority determine that there is preliminary evidence that there may be adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity (in Countryside Areas) or the site is located in a National Scenic Area (NSA) or Local Landscape Area (LLA) then a VII or LVIA (light or full) will be required.

**2.0.2 INTEGRATION INTO THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE** – this will minimise the detrimental impact on the landscape and minimise environmental disturbance

- The development should be positioned within the landscape to make the best use of solar gain, natural ventilation and shelter from the elements.
- Hilltop, skyline or ridge locations should be avoided not only for visual reasons but to avoid exposure to high winds. The siting must respect existing landforms and key views. Only in some exceptional cases will there be a case for landmark development, which would require a high quality design and would still be based on robust site analysis and understanding.
- Existing trees and hedgerows on the site should be retained where possible
- Large un-fenestrated under-buildings generally are detrimental to buildings and look inappropriate in most settings. They also generally increase construction costs while not providing useable accommodation on sloping sites. On sloping sites, careful positioning

combined with minor excavation works often provides a cheaper and more attractive design solution than under-building and can also give a house added shelter from prevailing winds. If a 1 ½ or 2 storey house is required, on a sloping site a split level solution could be designed, which will minimise both visual and physical impact.

- The extent of any under-building or excavations should be clearly shown on submitted plans including the use of cross sections. Any waste material from excavations should be re-graded, landscaped and utilised to backfill against areas of under-build that would otherwise remain exposed or alternatively be removed from the site, restoring the site to its natural condition.

### **2.0.3 INTEGRATION INTO THE BUILT LANDSCAPE** – in order to respect existing development patterns and the amenity of other dwellings.

- The layout of new development must reflect the local character and building patterns and be compatible with neighbouring uses.
- New development must be sympathetic to traditional building forms as well as landmarks, historical features and key views.
- New development must be compatible with, and consolidate, the existing settlement. The relationship with neighbouring properties is paramount, as issues such as loss of daylight and overlooking could arise:
  - Householders can legitimately expect a reasonable amount of direct daylight into all or at least some living room windows, and this should be protected as far as possible in order to maintain reasonable levels of household amenity.
  - When considering a site for a new house, or an extension to an existing house, applicants should ensure that the house will not significantly affect daylight and direct sunlight to existing neighbouring properties. Applicants should refer to published standards “Site Layout Planning for Sunlight and Daylight” BRE 1991 (check date)
  - No main window of a habitable room (i.e. all rooms except bathrooms and hallways) within a dwelling shall overlook (directly face) the main windows of habitable rooms in neighbouring dwellings at a distance of less than 18 metres\*. Plans submitted with planning applications will be required to show the location of all adjoining properties and the exact position of their main windows. A distance of 12 metres is required between habitable room windows and gable ends or elevations with only non-habitable room windows. These standards may be relaxed where the angle of view or the design (i.e. use of frosted glass) of the windows allows privacy to be maintained.

- The use of windows that are taller than they are wide can greatly reduce problems of overlooking in built up areas.
- Existing infrastructure should be utilised where possible such as access roads and tracks as well as services. The remaining capacity of infrastructure such as private water supplies must be taken into account.

\*this may not be possible in densely built areas or “courtyard-type” schemes

### **3.0 PRESENTATION OF THE APPRAISAL AND THE DESIGN SOLUTION**

A Sustainability [checklist](#) has been prepared as an Appendix to this Technical Note which **must be completed and submitted with all applications. It is recommended that this be completed at Pre-Application stage and updated as required should a planning application be made.** Should the Planning Authority determine that a VII or LVIA (light or full) is required then this should form a separate but inter-related assessment.

Separately, a Sustainable Buildings Checklist (TN07) covering the design of the building itself must be completed.

Additionally, the Scottish Government Planning Advice Note 68 *Design Statements* provides detailed advice on the presentation of the information gathered, considered and developed. Whilst Design Statements are only a requirement with certain categories of planning applications, it is advisable to include one with every application for new development as good practice. A Design Statement may either be integrated with the VII or LVIA (light) (where required) or submitted as an accompanying document. Due to the nature of a full LVIA in those limited cases they would require to be kept as separate documents.

## TN06: SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST

**It is mandatory that potential developers complete this checklist for all applications for development. It is recommended that this be completed at Pre-Application stage and updated as required should a planning application be made.**

It is intended that by completing the checklist the applicant could take the opportunity to review the sustainability of their project and make changes to their application, where appropriate and to ensure compliance with LDP policies. Not every criterion will be relevant for every development, for example extensions, in which case “not applicable” should be noted in the details column.

Where applicable, additional supporting information should be appended to this document and the relevant appendix number should be noted in the details column.

<b>COMMUNITY – LIVEABLE PLACES</b>	<b>Give details</b>
Demonstrate how the project contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of the community, including but not limited to the creation or diversification of businesses; essential community services; digital infrastructure skills training or education; healthcare or social support; play and recreation facilities; a district (renewable) heat network.	
Demonstrate how the project support new ways of working such as home working, remote working or community hubs.	
Demonstrate how the proposal minimise the need for people to travel to access employment, food, education, recreation and other essential services.	
Provide details of any existing public transport or active travel routes. Demonstrate how the proposal incorporates new active travel proposals.	

Does the proposal involve the resettlement of previously inhabited areas?	
Any other comments	

<b>ECONOMY – PRODUCTIVE PLACES</b>	<b>Give details</b>
Demonstrate how this is considered an appropriate location for regeneration and growth. (refer to national and local spatial strategies and policies)	
Provide details of how the project has any effect (positive or negative) on any existing organisations.	
Demonstrate how the proposal maximises the use of existing infrastructure capacity or contributes towards new essential infrastructure.	
Would the proposal result in the loss of agricultural land, or the fragmentation of farm units? If so, provide details.	
Any other comments	

<b>ENVIRONMENT – SUSTAINABLE PLACES</b> <i>Additionally, a Biodiversity Checklist must be completed as required by Policy 73 and TN04, and/or a Flood Risk Assessment must be completed as required by SEPA or the Planning Authority</i>	<b>Give details</b>
Is the site brownfield? If so, what is the extent of naturalisation on the site?	

Or does the proposal re-use a redundant or unused building? If so, provide details.	
What measures are proposed to improve or restore the natural environment?	
Would the proposal involve the loss of trees and/or woodland? If so, provide details.  And would the proposal involve the loss of a protected open space? If so, provide details.	
Would the proposal disturb carbon rich soils such as peat? If so, provide details.	
Would the proposal result in the loss of an existing waste site? If so, provide details.	
Provide details of any specific measures in place to protect existing landscape and vegetation from damage or degradation during construction.  Provide details of any specific measures in place to protect the water environment during construction?	
Any other comments	

<b>LANDSCAPE CHARACTER</b>	<b>Give Details</b>
Is the proposed site in a settlement area or countryside area?	
Is the proposed site within a National Scenic Area (NSA) or Local Landscape Area (LLA)?	

<p>Describe the landscape character, referring to section 2.0.1 for examples of key characteristics that may need to be considered.</p> <p>Please identify any relevant landscape studies, conservation area appraisals etc that you have taken into consideration.</p> <p>Where appropriate, it is recommended that maps highlighting designations and sensitive non-designated receptors, as well as related photos, are appended to this document. Please note relevant appendix numbers within the details section.</p>	
<p>List any unimplemented but live planning consents in the vicinity of the site which will be considered in terms of cumulative effects.</p>	

<b>INTEGRATION OF THE BUILDING INTO THE NATURAL OR BUILT LANDSCAPE</b> <i>It is recommended that this section is detailed more fully within a Design Statement</i>	<b>Give Details</b>
<p>Describe the number of units (plus ancillary buildings) proposed along with the proposed floor areas, heights (to ridge) and materials</p>	
<p>Outline how the building has been designed on the site to make the best use of solar gain, natural ventilation and shelter from the elements</p>	
<p>Does the development avoid land engineering works such as cut and fill?</p> <p>How has the building been designed to integrate into the topography?</p>	
<p>Are any trees or hedgerows to be removed to allow for the</p>	

development and if so is there any compensatory tree planting proposed?	
How has the character, form and design of any surrounding buildings been taken into account in the design and siting of the building?	
How has existing infrastructure been utilised?	

**Should the Planning Authority determine that there is preliminary evidence that there may be adverse effects on landscape and visual amenity (in Countryside Areas) or the site is located in a National Scenic Area (NSA) or Local Landscape Area (LLA) then a VII or LVIA (light or full) will be required.**

<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PLANNING AUTHORITY</b>	
On the basis of the information provided in the Sustainability Checklist is further landscape and/or visual information required?	Nothing further <input type="checkbox"/> VII <input type="checkbox"/> LVIA (light) <input type="checkbox"/> LVIA (full) <input type="checkbox"/>
Reason for decision	