

4th December 2012

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out the main elements of the Proposed Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan (LDP) with particular reference to land use issues within your area. The LDP has been developed following extensive consultation and discussion with a wide range of stakeholders including local communities, landowners, key agencies and developers. The LDP aims to provide a land-use vision for Argyll and Bute for the next 10 years, subject to a 5-year review, that addresses key challenges facing Argyll and Bute through a clearly identified vision, set of aims and thematic policy responses. The LDP consists of three elements for consideration by the Area Committee in this report prior to them recommending approval to the Council at its meeting on the 20th of December 2012. Following approval by the Council the Proposed LDP is intended to be released for a 3 month public consultation period commencing in mid-January 2013. The three elements of the LDP consist of the Written Statement (attached as **Appendix A**), Proposals Maps (attached as **Appendix B**) and Supplementary Guidance (attached as **Appendix C**).

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Bute and Cowal Area Committee recommend to the Council that it approves the Proposed Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan (LDP), as attached to this report as Appendices A (Written Statement), B (Supplementary Guidance) and C (Bute and Cowal Proposals Maps), subject to any changes they require to be made for a 3 month period of public consultation commencing in mid-January 2013.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Following approval of the Argyll and Bute local Plan in August 2009 work immediately began on the renewal of the Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan) with their proposed replacement by a single document to be known as the Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan (LDP). Initial work included a series of local and strategic stakeholder meetings to identify future challenges and areas of change and a call for new development sites. From the findings of these consultations the Main Issues Report (MIR) was produced and subsequently published for a nine week consultation period that ended on the 18th July 2011. Over 700 representations were received and their content analysed to inform the proposed LDP. A further public consultation was also carried out on a range of potential additional development sites that could be included in the LDP and this was concluded on the 20th August 2012 with 120 responses received.

3.2 Both of these public consultation processes, together with contributions

from key agencies (such as SNH, SEPA, Historic Scotland and Scottish Water), community organisations such as community councils, other organisations, developers, land owners and private individuals together with monitoring of outputs from the current Development Plan have shaped the content and overall approach taken in the Proposed Local Development Plan. It should be noted that much of the content of the existing Development Plan has been retained with the new LDP focussing on areas of change that have been brought to our attention through legislative change or changes in local circumstances or new opportunities.

4. KEY ELEMENTS

4.1 There are a number of key differences of approach proposed in the LDP that include:

- Spatial approach taken for each council administrative area;
- Creation of Green networks and Wild areas of land;
- Merging Sensitive Countryside with Countryside Around Settlement to form a new Countryside Zone;
- Reducing the size of the Rural Opportunity Areas in National Scenic Areas to reflect the landscape capacity studies;
- Higher densities for development on appropriate housing sites to generate greater economies of scale;
- Introduction of potable water conservation measures in our islands and parts of Lorn;
- Taking a more flexible and pro active approach to the need for sustainable economic development particularly in our more economically fragile areas;
- Adjusting the affordable housing policy to better meet local needs and the challenges of the economy;
- Introducing the concept of Strategic Industrial Business Locations;
- Identification of key investment sites in the LDP that require a strategic masterplan approach;
- Identification of crofting township sites and community plan areas;
- The creation of Tourism Development Zones and the identification key tourism development sites
- The creation of 27 Key Rural Settlements;
- The creation of a new coastal development strategy as supplementary guidance;

- A landscape capacity study and design guide for on-shore windfarm developments;
- Consolidation of strategic and local Areas For Action (AFAs);
- Reducing core policies in the plan to 11 and placing more detail in statutory Supplementary Guidance.

4.2

The central challenge of the LDP is to deliver sustainable economic growth in order to support the retention and growth of our population. The LDP sets out a vision for each planning area that is linked to an Area Spatial Diagram, schedule of development and regeneration sites and aspiration action points:-

“The Island of Bute, together with the peninsular community of Cowal, are facing numerous challenges given their falling population levels and fragile economies. Therefore it is important that the LDP capitalises on existing and new opportunities to assist further town centre regeneration, to create sustainable economic growth and better connectivity to the Glasgow conurbation and beyond.”

By 2024, Bute and Cowal will be:

- A **competitive place, better connected to the global economy** with thriving local communities that provide an incentive for businesses to locate too, particularly major new tourism developments in places such as Portavadie, Castle Toward and Ardyne.
- A place of **outstanding natural and built heritage** with enhanced natural assets, better public realm and restored iconic buildings such as the Royal Hotel and Pavilion in Rothesay and the Burgh Hall in Dunoon.
- A better **connected and accessible place** with improved ferry services, road and active travel links, together with improved telecommunications networks and broadband coverage.
- A place that can offer a **wide range of housing choice** in places with modernised essential services and infrastructure, with a focus of larger scale growth in Rothesay and Dunoon.
- A reduced requirement for **affordable housing** in Bute and specific areas of Cowal to assist with the delivery of main stream housing.

5. LOCAL LDP ISSUES

- 5.1** In addition to all of the existing Allocations and PDAs in the current Argyll and Bute Local Plan that are to be retained, a number of new development sites have been identified for a range of new housing, and business opportunities together with identified support for new community led initiatives at Glendaruel and North Bute.

6. TIMETABLE

- 6.1** Following approval by the Area Committee, incorporating any changes required by Members, the LDP will be presented to the full Council meeting scheduled for 20th December 2012. Thereafter it is intended to carry out a three month period of public consultation beginning in mid-January 2013 to avoid the Christmas/New Year holiday period.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1** The proposed LDP will replace the current Development Plan (Structure and Local Plan) following its adoption. The new LDP focusses on areas of change in response to changing legislation, local issues and new opportunities. The LDP contains a vision, key aims and core policy statements together with a settlement and spatial strategy that all seek to articulate a land-use vision of where Argyll and Bute needs to be to respond to the key challenges we have to address over the next decade and beyond. Sustainable economic growth remains at the heart of the LDP but re-emphasised as our central message with additional flexibility built in throughout the plan in order to assist delivery in the current economic climate. This report asks for the Area Committee to recommend to the Council to approve, subject to any changes they might have the three elements of the LDP that consist of the Written Statement (attached as Appendix A), Proposals Maps (attached as Appendix B) and Supplementary Guidance (attached as Appendix C) for a three month period of consultation commencing in mid-January 2013.

For further information
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