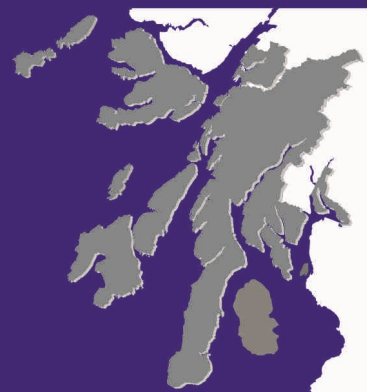




Argyll and Bute Council
Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services

Planning Performance Framework 2017-18

Frèam Dèanadas Dealbhaidh 2017-18



Argyll and Bute Council
Comhairle Earra-Ghaidheal agus Bhoid
www.argyll-bute.gov.uk



Front cover photos

1. Portavadie Marina
2. Tiree Croft No1
3. Aqualibrium, Campbeltown
4. New Social Housing, Lochgilphead
5. Rothesay
6. MainStreet, Inveraray
7. Oban bay and Ben Cruachan



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Foreword:

The Planning Performance Framework report prepared by Argyll and Bute Council for the financial period 2017/18 is the seventh edition of the annual report.

All Local Authorities are required to produce an annual Planning Performance Framework report which addresses performance against a broad range of outcomes and improvement actions, including speed of decision making, quality of service, resources, governance, successes, achievements and engagement/customer feedback.

Our Planning Service is closely aligned with and integral to the delivery of the Council's corporate objective of seeking to address population decline through sustainable economic growth, the strengthening of existing communities, and the protection of and investment in our exceptional built and natural environment. This document shows that we have a Planning Service which is 'open for business' with a focus on the promotion of sustainable economic development whilst securing an appropriate balance to protect the special qualities of Argyll and Bute. The document also demonstrates the dedication and enthusiasm from all Council officials, our funding partners, our Communities and developers to collectively drive forward positive change and evolution in our built and natural environment.

In addition to providing detail on the delivery of service improvements and commitments for 2018/19, this year's PPF provides a flavour of the wide range of the activities in which the Planning Service and its partners have engaged to facilitate and deliver on the Council's corporate aspirations and promoting the Council area as a fantastic place to live, work and enjoy.



Cllr David Kinniburgh

Chair of the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing (PPSL) Committee

Argyll and Bute Council



Pippa Milne

Executive Director - Development & Infrastructure Services

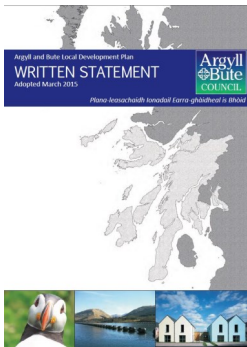
Argyll and Bute Council

Part 1: Defining and Measuring a High Quality Planning Service

1.1 QUALITY OF OUTCOMES

1.1.1 Throughout 2017/18 the Planning Service has worked closely with communities, developers and partner organisations to deliver a range of developments across Argyll and Bute.

1.1.2 The [adopted Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015](#) (the LDP) is



firmly embedded into decision making with 12 key policies which seek to promote the delivery of sustainable long term economic growth to support the retention and growth of our population; to support the transition to a low carbon economy; to help retain and improve essential services; to

protect and enhance our outstanding natural and built environment, and to maintain and improve our quality of life.

1.1.3 Interpretation and implementation of the LDP policy aims is assisted by a suite of Supplementary Guidance and non-statutory Technical Working Notes. During 2017/18 these have been augmented with the preparation of two new Technical Working Notes relating to the display of [advertisements](#), and to the [replacement of windows](#) in the historic built environment.

1.1.4 In addition to providing a policy and [guidance](#) framework, the Council seeks to promote high quality design through its own [Sustainable](#)



[Design Award](#) scheme and identification of [exemplar designs](#) via the Council's website. The Sustainable Design Awards are not run on an annual basis but are programmed to be held again during 2019.

1.1.5 There are [32 conservation areas](#) across Argyll and Bute providing protection to the historic built environment. The Council has continued to successfully pursue investment in these locations through establishment of Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THIs) and Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes (CARS). During 2017/18 members of the Planning team have been involved in projects in [Dunoon](#), [Rothesay](#), [Inveraray](#) and [Campbeltown](#) where significant investment and improvement to the fabric and appearance of these historic town



centre locations have been delivered. The Planning Service has also participated in the delivery of site specific projects, including the restoration and extension of the Category A listed Campbeltown Picture House detailed in Case Study 3.

1.1.6 Involvement of the Planning Service has been instrumental in facilitating a number of developments which have/will deliver new housing, schools, employment, renewable energy, and tourism accommodation/facilities. Case Studies 1, 2, 3, and 5 detail some of these quality outcomes. The Council has made a significant investment in the development of new schools in [Oban](#) and

[Campbeltown](#), these developments have been progressed to a tight timescale with project managed planning applications in which the Planning Service has been integral to ensuring the timely delivery of these projects.

1.2 QUALITY OF SERVICE AND ENGAGEMENT

1.2.1 The LDP and priorities of the Planning Service are closely aligned with the [Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-23](#) (previously known as the Single Outcome Agreement and Community Plan). The Outcome Improvement Plan remains the sovereign document and the LDP aims to translate its objectives in to a deliverable spatial strategy. The Council's [Action](#) Programme is utilised to focus action on priority proposals and allocations, and to identify work which is required to enable development. Case Study 4 provides an example of these corporate aims being delivered on the ground by LDP policy.

1.2.2 During 2017/18 preparation of LDP2 moved into and concluded the Main Issues Report (MIR) engagement phase. Engagement including an 8 week public consultation period with Community Council

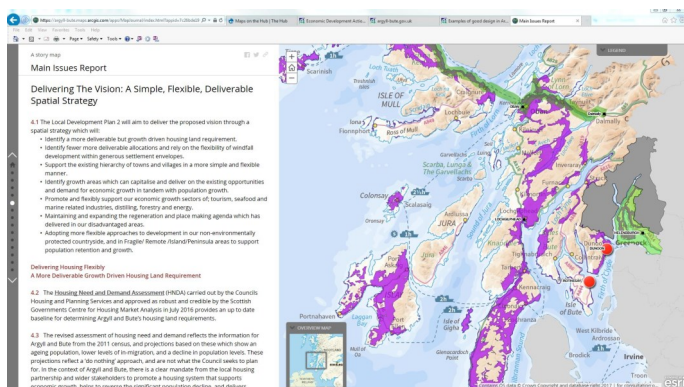
for the [Development Plan Scheme](#) was published in January 2018 which confirms that preparation of LDP2 remains on track for adoption by 2020.

1.2.3 The Planning Service is located in four offices across the main settlements of Argyll and Bute providing relatively easy access to a large proportion of the population. Customers on remoter mainland and island locations are also able to access Council services at Customer Service Points. The Planning Service also provide website, e-mail, and telephone based services to customers, and continues to utilise social media as a means of public engagement.

1.2.4 The Planning Service has reached pre-assessment stage in its preparation of an application to attain the [Customer Service Excellence Standard](#). Initial feedback from the assessor has been positive and preparations are now underway for a formal assessment in September/October 2018.

1.2.5 The Planning Service continues to build partnerships both internally and externally. These include an internal restructure during 2017/18 which saw the Council's Housing Services being brought within the portfolio of the Development Policy Manager to better realise the synergies between these services in the delivery of affordable housing development and the [Strategic Housing Investment Plan](#).

1.2.6 Customer User Forums were held during October and November 2017 as a joint exercise between the Development Management, Development Policy and Building Standards Services providing a co-ordinated approach to engagement with regular professional customers. The content of the Forum included an update on the LDP2 process, introduction of new National



meetings, public drop in events, consultations activity included social media, [use of interactive 'story map'](#) and an online submissions form. An updated project plan

validation standards, the Scottish Government's ongoing Planning Review, promotion of processing agreements and a performance appraisal of the Planning Service.

1.2.7 In addition to engaging with individual companies on application specific issues, the Planning Service also seeks to engage directly with the aquaculture industry by arranging an annual liaison meeting with local industry representatives. This year's event was hosted by Scottish Sea Farms in November 2017. The agenda included an update on LDP2, the [Clyde Marine Plan](#), Planning Performance, revised Industry Planning Protocols, changes to SEPA's consenting regime (DZR) and implications for planning, wild fish interactions, and updated EIA Regulations.

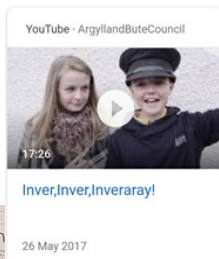
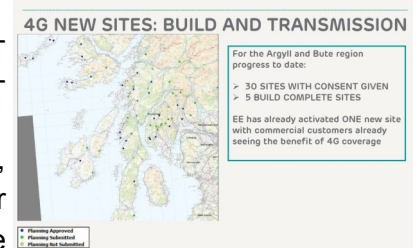
1.2.8 The Development Policy Service have reviewed housing land supply in order to verify that it is fit for purpose and does not act as an impediment to the delivery of new house building. The Council is now exploring innovative ways in which it can contribute to or facilitate the further delivery of a variety of housing types, this approach is outlined in Case Study 6.

1.2.9 PPF 6 reported on the success of [Inveraray CARS](#). The project included a series of traditional craft skills training events for residents, building contractors, professionals and school students. Engagement with the community in 2017/18 included promotion of the CARS outcomes in the local press, and a

successful theatre project ["Inver, Inver, Inveraray!"](#) run in conjunction with Inveraray Primary School and the Walking Theatre Company. The project concluded in February 2018 with a final celebration event attended by local residents, archivists from the Written in the Landscape project, and included a presentation of archive photos of Inveraray.

1.2.10 2017/18 has seen significant investment in the roll out of 4G and the [Emergency Service Mobile Communication Programme](#) involving 74 new and upgraded masts across Argyll and Bute. The Council identified a dedicated liaison officer to provide a single point of contact for telecommunications operators, to co-ordinate pre-application consultation activity, and to monitor performance on the determination of applications and delivery of new sites. Given the National interest of this project and the high volume of casework involved the Development Management Service identified officers with specialist knowledge in telecommunications development and rolled out an internal protocol requiring that these individuals be engaged to provide technical advice where required and to resolve issues with challenging applications.

1.2.11 The Development Management Service continues to offer a [pre-application and permitted development enquiry service](#), however in the challenging financial climate it has been necessary to introduce charges to maintain delivery of this non-statutory service. In 2017/18 this saw the introduction of charges for 'major' development proposals with charges extended to 'local' development and 'permitted development' enquiries from 2018/19. Despite the



introduction of charging, the informal advice service continues to be well used by customers with over 1100 submissions received in 2017/18. The Service has taken the opportunity to improve delivery arrangements through the introduction of an online submission form and to review the quality and consistency of output through introduction of updated template reports and letters. The updated templates include new sections which clearly identify any requirement for submission of supporting information at formal application stage and provide information on processing agreements. Case Study 4 looks at an example of early engagement with developers.

1.2.12 The Development Management Service introduced a new protocol in August 2017 on the [role of elected Members at the PAN stage](#) of an application for 'major' development. The new protocol requires all PANs to be reported to the PPSL Committee and allows Members the opportunity to identify matters which they consider would be material to the determination of any subsequent application. Any issues raised by Members are then fed back to the applicant to take into account in the preparation of their formal application.

1.2.13 We have reported in previous PPFs on the certainty provided through development of masterplans and LDP allocations. 2017/18 has seen development, including affordable housing, delivered within masterplan/LDP allocations in Bowmore, Campbeltown, Dunoon, Helensburgh, Lochgilphead, Inveraray, Port Ellen, and Tobermory. Dunbeg masterplan area is currently the subject of an application for 300 dwelling units in accordance with phase 1 of the approved masterplan. A collaborative and proactive approach between stakeholders has



secured necessary funds for delivery of necessary road improvements and infrastructure upgrades which the Council is currently implementing to enable the development. The early involvement of Architecture and Design Scotland (A&DS) at Masterplan stage has been followed up with meetings to discuss and evaluate the current planning application thus maintaining communication links as the proposal has evolved.

1.3 GOVERNANCE

1.3.1 Development Management and Development Policy items are reported to the centralised Planning, Protective Services and Licensing Committee which meets monthly (except for July) and convenes for site visits and discretionary Local Hearings as required. The PPSL Committee met on 18 occasions during 2017/18. Local Review Bodies operate flexibly to demand with 26 LRB meetings and 8 site visits convened during 2017/18.

1.3.2 The Council's [Scheme of Delegation](#) to officers continues to operate effectively with 98.1% decisions being made under delegated powers in 2017/18. During this period 97.6% of applications were approved demonstrating the effectiveness

of a plan-led system, flexible/pro-development policies which are aligned to the corporate priority of sustainable economic growth, and a commitment to delivering positive outcomes.

1.3.3 Argyll and Bute Council's Planning Service continues to face significant budget pressures due to the requirement for delivery of savings across all Council services and the continuing depressed level of planning fee income which is largely related to a decline in 'major' applications. During 2017/18 the Development Management Service operated with vacancies of 5fte for a significant portion of the reporting period in order to reduce costs and has subsequently deleted three of these posts as part of its corporate budget strategy savings package for 2018/19. Budgets and efficiency measures are considered at management meetings at all levels with updates provided regularly to the Executive Director and elected Policy Lead.

1.3.4 Reduction in Development Management staff resources has seen a 50% cut to dedicated enforcement resources over a two year period with enforcement duties now being combined with Development Management casework in the East of the Council area. The Planning service delayed a scheduled review of the Enforcement Charter to monitor the effectiveness of these revised working arrangements and to ensure that revised targets setting out customer expectations for the service were deliverable. A review of [The Enforcement Charter](#) was completed in March 2018 and subsequently adopted by the Council.



1.3.5 The Council's Housing Service was brought under the umbrella of the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services in November 2017. The revised Service structure has combined management responsibilities for Housing with the Development Policy team. The revised arrangements have already helped to forge better linkage and integration of activity between these complimentary services and has seen Planning and Housing staff being represented at each Service's annual conference.

1.3.6 The Development Policy Service have engaged in a multi-agency project in the development of the Oban Strategic Development Framework. It is intended to deliver a long term strategic vision for the town and to act as a vehicle to co-ordinate and maximise synergies between a variety of ongoing project streams. This ongoing work is detailed in Case Study 7.

1.3.7 The Planning Service continues to engage with other Council Services through Area Property Action Groups (APAGs). This approach and some of its successful, high quality outcomes are explored in Case Study 1.

1.3.7 The Development Management Service continue to seek to review and refine existing processes to deliver efficiency savings and improve performance and outcomes for customers. During 2017/18 the Central Validation Service have moved to electronic only validation of applications and in doing so have delivered efficiencies through reduced printing/scanning volumes.

1.3.8 All professional staff within Planning Services are provided with laptops/tablets to facilitate their ability to travel efficiently and work flexibly across the Council area.

1.3.9 Customer appetite for

Processing Agreements remains indifferent. The Development Management Service did not process any planning applications with Processing Agreements during 2017/18 despite engaging with all applicants for Major development. Information on the availability of [Processing Agreements](#) is available on the Council's website, is now highlighted in all pre-application reports, and has been promoted in User Forums. An identified Service Improvement for 2018/19 will seek to implement a project management approach to all applications for 'major' and locally significant 'local' developments in an effort to improve performance and will include further promotion of Processing Agreements as a tool to assist in this aim.

1.3.10 Argyll and Bute Council has a [corporate complaints process](#); customer information is provided on the Council website and in customer Charters. All complaints are subject to performance reporting and 'Stage 2' complaints require review by senior management.

1.3.11 Legacy cases are reviewed regularly as part of caseload management. Whilst the Development Management Service has managed to reduce the number of legacy cases during 2017/18 it is recognised that further work is required in this respect. During 2018/19 legacy cases will also be the subject of additional monthly reporting and performance review by the DM Management Team.

1.3.12 Applications which are to be subject to planning legal agreements are flagged up on lists of undetermined applications to ensure that the progress can be reviewed on a regular basis. Whilst the average time period for processing applications with legal agreements increased in 2017/18 the average time period remained less than 6 months.

1.4 CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

1.4.1 During 2017/18 the Planning Service delivered on a range of Improvement Actions identified in PPF 6. An overview of progress is set out in Part 3 of this document.

1.4.2 The Council continues to benchmark its performance on the determination of planning applications against the National average and the performance of other rural local authorities.

1.4.3 Internally, team meetings are held on a regular basis. The Head of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services attends the fortnightly Departmental Management Team meeting, and holds his own Service meetings on a quarterly basis. The DM Management Team also meet quarterly; with area teams meeting weekly to assign casework, and review caseload performance.

1.4.4 All Council staff are required to prepare an annual Performance Review and Development plan (PRD). This process allows staff to individually review their performance with their line manager and identify training/development needs. With the exception of staff on maternity leave, all Planning Services staff had completed their PRDs within the allocated time period. Case Study 9 provides detail of where the PRD process has identified a wider training issue in relation to minerals development and how this need was addressed through direct engagement with industry.

1.4.5 The second Annual Planning Conference had a general theme of recognising and encouraging collaborative working across the Council. This included attendance and presentations from colleagues in the Council's Housing, Economic Development, and Roads



Services, in addition to the Local Biodiversity Officer, the Marine and Coastal Development Officer, and GIS Manager. Topics for the day included delivery of affordable housing, homelessness, SuDS, flooding and coastal erosion, Construction Environmental Management Plans, the Clyde Regional Marine Plan and the availability of new GIS services. The conference was an extremely useful exercise for exchange of ideas and knowledge between different Council services and will help foster smarter, more efficient working moving forward.

1.4.6 For the past five years, the Planning Service has delivered a series of short training events for elected Members. These are normally undertaken in bite size sessions in the hour prior to a meeting of the PPSL Committee but have also included half day workshops and site visits. Training during 2017/18 included Public Access, Local Review Bodies, the Planning Review, LDP2 processes, Flooding and Landscape Capacity for Wind Energy.

1.4.7 Planning Services representatives regularly attend meetings of Heads of Planning Scotland (inc. DM and DP subgroups), Scottish Planning Enforcement Forum, the Local Authority Aquaculture Forum, Clyde Marine Planning Partnership and West of Scotland Archaeology Service.

1.4.8 The Planning Service have engaged with Scottish Government consultations, in particular during 2017/18 to those relating to the draft Planning Bill by providing feedback directly, to elected Members for input via COSLA, and to the Heads of Planning Scotland.

1.4.9 During 2017/18, the Planning Service has published two new Technical Working Notes. The [Advertisement and Signage Policy](#) was produced in response to elected Member concerns primarily relating to unauthorised 'A'-board advertisements within the main settlements. The updated guidance provides information to assist in identifying the requirement for permission and the circumstances where applications for advertisements will be supported. The [Argyll and Bute Windows](#) guidance was developed following success of an earlier approach to the replacement of windows piloted within the Rothesay Conservation Area, and in response to requests from both elected Members and the public for up to date advice on window replacements in the historic environment.

1.4.10 [Conservation Area Character Appraisals for Easdale and Ellenabeich Conservation Areas](#) were prepared and published for public consultation in December 2017.

1.4.11 The Central Validation Team have made significant contributions to the development of a [National Validation Standard](#) by Heads of Planning Scotland. These were published in November 2017 and have since been adopted as the validation



A guidance note on the national standards for the validation and determination of planning applications and other related consents in Scotland

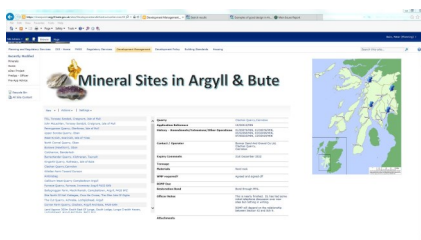


standard by Argyll and Bute Council. The availability of a nationally consistent validation standard has proven to be helpful and it is noted that the proportion of applications which are valid on receipt has improved by almost 15% from the previous reporting period.

1.4.12 Throughout 2017/18 there have been recurring issues that have affected the availability of the Public Access System which allows external consultees and the public to review planning files and to submit representations. The Planning Service has continued to work with the Council's IT Service and have identified the requirement to invest in updated software/systems during 2018/19 to facilitate a more resilient Public Access service.

1.4.13 The [pre-application advice service](#) has been updated with an online submission form and fee calculator. The new form continues to be improved in light of customer feedback and there are further developments ongoing in 2018/19 which will extend payment options and provide connectivity between the webform and Uniform back office systems to improve the efficiency of case handling and reduce the cost to the Council of delivering this service.

1.4.14 The Development Management Service have utilised Sharepoint during 2017/18 to provide a new internal hub for the monitoring of strategic and minerals developments.



Previously databases of monitoring activity have been maintained locally by area based

staff, this has however led to a lack of consistency in the implementation of monitoring activity across the Council area. The Minerals hub is already up and running and provides a centralised resource

accessible to all officers allowing quick identification of mineral sites, key details and status of all live permissions. The Strategic Monitoring hub remains under development and is expected to be launched during 2018/19.

1.4.15 We reported in PPF 6 on the development of a £35 million salmon hatchery at Barcaldine by Scottish Sea Farms. Case Study 8 provides an update on this case and details further work undertaken by the Planning Service with the developer to prepare a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP project was awarded a Bronze award in the Argyll and Bute Excellence Awards 2017.



1.4.16 The online and mobile capabilities of the Council's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) continue to be developed saving officer time and providing customers with quicker access to information. During 2017/18 an online app has been developed to promote appreciation of landscape and accessibility to remoter areas. The Story Map functionality of GIS continues to provide a new interactive solution for publishing online content making it easier to locate specific locations and navigate to a customer's area of interest. The Main Issues Report was published in this format during 2017 and this format is considered to be a replacement for the pdf format document in future publications.

1.4.17 The Development Policy Service's use of the Place Standard Tool during the MIR consultation was subject to a [best practice case study published by Architecture + Design Scotland](#).

Case Study 1

Area Property Action Groups (APAGs)

Area Property Action Groups

Area Property Action Groups (APAGs) have been established in all 4 administrative areas of Argyll and Bute Council to address concerns regarding unsafe/problematic buildings. Officers from various services are involved. This includes; Housing, Planning, Building Standards, Landlord Registration, Environmental Health and Community Safety and Economic Development.

The aims of the partnership meetings associated with APAG are to identify 'problematic buildings' and to develop a pro-active, co-ordinated and strategic approach for practical and effective Council intervention across services. This method provides an opportunity for Officers to address the relevant issues associated with a variety of buildings and to identify the most effective/appropriate tools and service to liaise with owners/ responsible parties.

Whilst there are many statutory powers available that Services can utilise to bring properties up to an acceptable standard, this type of action can result in high costs to the Local Authority with limited scope for recuperation. By linking the different powers and tools available to each service, Officers can now take a more targeted and joined up approach to addressing the particular problems associated with each building that have been highlighted by colleagues, elected members, and/or our customers.

The APAGs have resulted in more pro-active Officer involvement across services and in the case of Campbeltown this has helped with the delivery of the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) and Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS). APAGs have played an active role, assisting the THI and CARS to enable a number of target and priority building projects that have safeguarded homes and businesses and led to a number of vacant buildings being brought back into use.

In Campbeltown recent APAG successes with multi-ownership tenements include:

- 10-20 Longrow South – 6 homes and 3 ground floor businesses saved and one new business opened. Contract included replacement of rear first floor amenity deck.
- McLean Place West (10-14 Main Street) – Input from Planning Enforcement Officer helped facilitate extensive repair project that will bring 3 vacant commercial units back into use.
- 22-30 Main Street/2-8 Longrow South – APAG involvement led to £600,000+ repair project safeguarding businesses and bringing vacant homes back into use.
- Amenity Deck Project at 1-21 Longrow South – By working together APAG members have helped deliver the replacement of a failing rear amenity deck that serves 20 homes. This will also help safeguard the future of 8 ground floor businesses supporting 33 jobs.



Case Study 2

Ardfin, Isle of Jura Estate Development

Ardfin Estate, located in the south of the Isle of Jura, has been the subject of significant development in recent years which is delivering significant economic benefit and employment opportunity on the Island which has attracted new families to the island and fuelled demand for new housing development. The evolution of the estate from initial pre-application discussions in 2011 to the present day has been staggering and the Development Management Service have remained engaged with the owners/developers throughout this period as the proposals for the Estate have evolved. The development of the estate has comprised four principal elements: the formation of an 18-hole golf course; significant alterations and extensions to Jura House; and the conversion and extension of stables to form boutique hotel/guest house facilities, and a 360kW run of the river hydro scheme.

18 Hole Golf Course Development



Located within the highly sensitive landscape of the Jura National Scenic area, the proposal to construct an 18-hole golf course which blended into its surroundings was always going to be extremely challenging.

Officers were engaged with this proposal from its inception through early pre-application discussion with the golf course designer based in Australia. Liaising with other key stakeholders and consultees

(including Scottish Natural Heritage, the Council's Biodiversity Officer, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency and the West of Scotland Archaeology Service) at an early stage was crucial to ensuring that the development could be accommodated with minimal impact on the host and surrounding environment.



Planning permission was granted in April 2014, with appropriate conditions to mitigate certain impacts and secure appropriate measures for managing the construction process to ensure that the effects of the large scale engineering operations were contained with appropriate restoration. The development was monitored by officers and SNH during construction, the contractors operated to an exemplary standard and their demonstration of successful vegetation restoration techniques were integral to the Estate obtaining permission to develop a hydro scheme on the west of the Island. The golf course is now substantially complete and the result is quite spectacular.

Run of the River Hydro-Electric Development

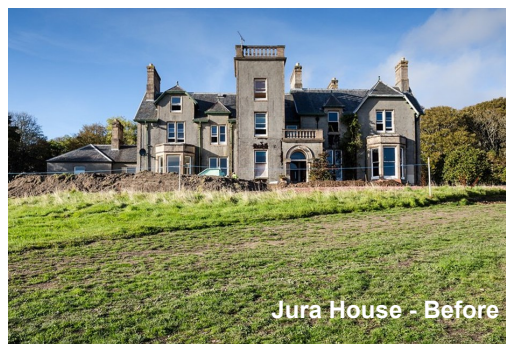
In tandem with their development aspirations Ardfin Estate have an aspiration to become more self-sufficient and to develop sustainable sources of income. They identified the potential to contribute toward this aim through a 360kW run of the river hydro scheme located in the west of Jura. The proposal was also located within the Jura National Scenic Area and gave rise to significant concern to SNH that the resultant excavation of pipeline routes would result in disturbance to peat land with consequent adverse landscape impacts. The planning case officer was familiar with the ongoing golf course development and suggested during a joint site inspection with the SNH case officer that they should inspect the golf course site to ascertain whether these techniques would be appropriate for deployment in the hydro development. SNH's concern's were suitably allayed by the applicant's demonstration of competence in this area and the hydro development was subsequently approved in 2016.

Refurbishment and extension of Jura House

Jura House, built in 1881 with later additions, is set in a magnificent situation overlooking the Sound of Islay. It is a category 'C' listed building, noted for being the former seat of the Campbells of Jura and Craignish.

Proposals came forward between 2012 and 2014 for sensitive extensions to the north, west and east of the building and alterations to the existing building. These applications were the subject of extensive pre-application discussions between the case officer and the applicant. The key considerations were the preservation and enhancement of the character of the building; and its context within, and impact upon, the Jura National Scenic Area. Consents for the final version of the project were issued in 2015. In recommending approval the case officer surmised that:

"The proposals contained within this application represent a chance to preserve and enhance a valuable and important listed building. The intention of the design proposals is to respect the qualities of the existing listed building but also to add something new of architectural quality on this important site. It will enhance the special qualities and sense of place that currently exists".



Jura House - Before

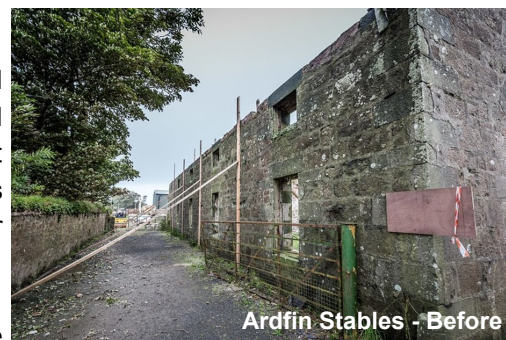


Jura House - After

Conversion and extension of Ardfin Stables

Planning permission and listed building consent has been granted for the conversion and extension of disused stables and traditional agricultural buildings to create a 2,700sqm hotel/guest house facility which is intended to be run as a private members club by the Estate. The development is currently under construction.

As with all the developments across the estate, the design of the proposals was of an extremely high quality and sought to preserve the traditional character and form of the buildings wherever possible. Once again, engagement between the Planning Authority and the developers was extensive and provided a solid platform for highlighting key considerations and issues in the assessment of the eventual planning application. This resulted in a relatively smooth application process.



Ardfin Stables - Before



Ardfin Stables - After

Customer Feedback:

The Ardfin projects were major developments for a location such as Jura so great care had to be taken on how they were implemented in relation to both the environment and the Island's infrastructure. Pre planning consultation with Argyll and Bute Planning Dept. was vital if the desired outcome was to be achieved. The planning officers advised and guided us through the whole process in a most helpful and professional manner and the completed projects at Ardfin are now a testament of how team working at the earliest possible stage can deliver outstanding results.

Ardfin Estate

Case Study 3

Campbeltown Picture House

Campbeltown Picture House

This Case Study has been submitted by the project architects. The evolution of the project involved multiple planning permission, listed building consent, and advertisement consent applications.



"The case study provides background to the Centenary Project then focuses on providing a 'customer's' perspective of the added value that Council Officers have contributed to the realisation of a high quality development, notwithstanding the challenges presented by the project and the regulatory framework.

The primary objectives of the Centenary Project were to conserve the Campbeltown Picture House and provide it with a sustainable future as a cinema and to upgrade it to meet the expectations of a modern cinema operator and cinema going audience without harm to its high architectural and historical significance. As well as conserving the historic cinema building and annexe, a new accessible entrance and foyer has been developed in the gap between the two buildings and improved ancillary facilities, a multi-use space and a new Screen 2 have been developed on land to the rear.



There was a high priority placed on low energy solutions to power and heating, including the installation of PVs and a biomass boiler and the use of low energy LED lighting throughout the project.

The Campbeltown Picture House, designed by Albert V Gardner of Glasgow in 1913 in Glasgow School Art Nouveau is a Category A cinema. It is one of only five Category A listed buildings in Campbeltown and dominates the heart of the Campbeltown Conservation area. Situated in Hall Street on the waterfront, it is flanked on one side by another Category A listed building built by Glasgow architect JJ Burnet, and on the other by the 19th century Category B listed Royal Avenue Mansions. This area forms part of the Heritage Lottery Fund's recently completed Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme and complements Historic Scotland's Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (2015- 2020). Both are heritage led regeneration projects run by Argyll and Bute Council. The cinema, its adjacent annexe, and courtyard to the rear of the site form a key part of the composition of the historic environment and the townscape.



The availability of Council Officers within Planning and Regulatory Service (Argyll and Bute Council) to provide advice throughout the project and to coordinate communication with Historic Scotland greatly assisted the development of design proposals that met the objectives of the Centenary Project, without harm to the heritage asset and the character of the Conservation Area. This was in marked contrast with our experience of engagement with Council Officers in England, where customers need to pay a fee to obtain advice, which is then limited in scope. Without the opportunity for close communication and consistent engagement with Council Officers and their informed advice, delivery of the project would have been hindered. The availability of James Lafferty, Argyll and Bute Council, Campbeltown CARS to provide information on the wider context of heritage led regeneration within the town further informed our understanding of how the Centenary Project could best contribute to these objectives."



Case Study 4 Helensburgh Waterfront Early Engagement

16

The Helensburgh Waterfront Development is located at the heart of Helensburgh, one of the main towns in Argyll and Bute.

The site is located at Helensburgh Pierhead and is identified within the Local Development Plan as a Strategic Masterplan Area suitable for mixed use including tourism, retail, leisure and public realm. An updated Masterplan was approved for this site in 2012.

The site is currently in a very poor condition and detracts from the wider town centre which has recently undergone public realm improvements through the Council's [CHORD](#) project. The existing swimming pool and gym is still operates from the site but this has reached the end of its life. There is also a large car park which accommodates both cars and coaches and a skate park.

This large site, which measures in excess of 2 hectares, presents a key opportunity for the continued regeneration of the town. The successful development of this site will build upon recent successes undertaken by the Council including the CHORD project within the town centre, the relocation of community accessible offices and open space immediately to the east of the town centre and the forthcoming upgrade of Hermitage Park immediately to the north of the town centre.

The proposals for redevelopment of the site include a new leisure facilities building, the installation of flood defences, the formation of car parking, and the formation of public realm space.

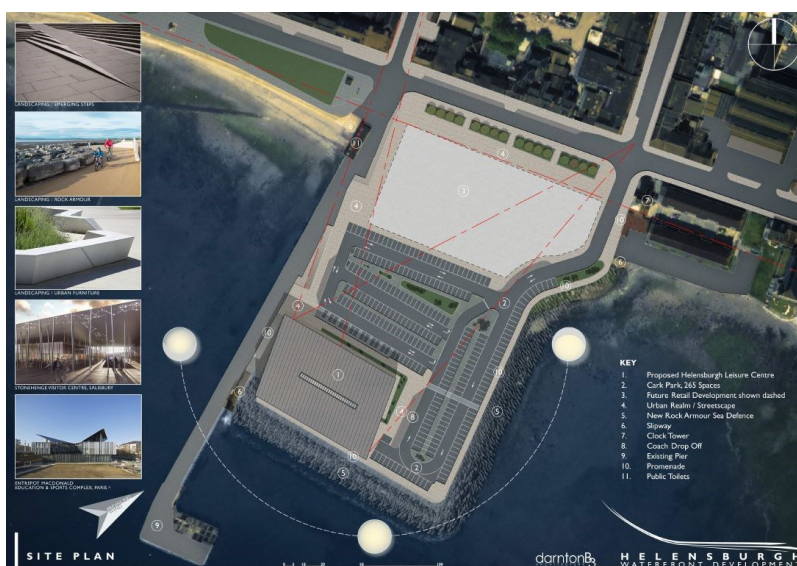
A Proposal of Application Notice for this site was submitted in February 2018 and the Council as applicant has undertaken in depth [community consultation](#) as part of the pre-application consultation (PAC) process.



In parallel to this process, a detailed pre-application discussion has been ongoing. In February 2018 the Planning Service facilitated a round-the-table meeting of statutory consultees where representatives from SEPA, SNH, Scottish Water, West of Scotland Archaeology, Helensburgh Community Council, and internal representatives from Roads, Environmental Health, Flood Prevention, Core Paths, Local Biodiversity all attended. This exercise has proven to be extremely helpful in identifying issues which require to be addressed prior to submitting the planning application and the requirement and scope of additional supporting information that the stakeholders require to be provided.

In addition, this proposal is subject to a processing agreement which has been drafted in order to assist the management of the planning application process.

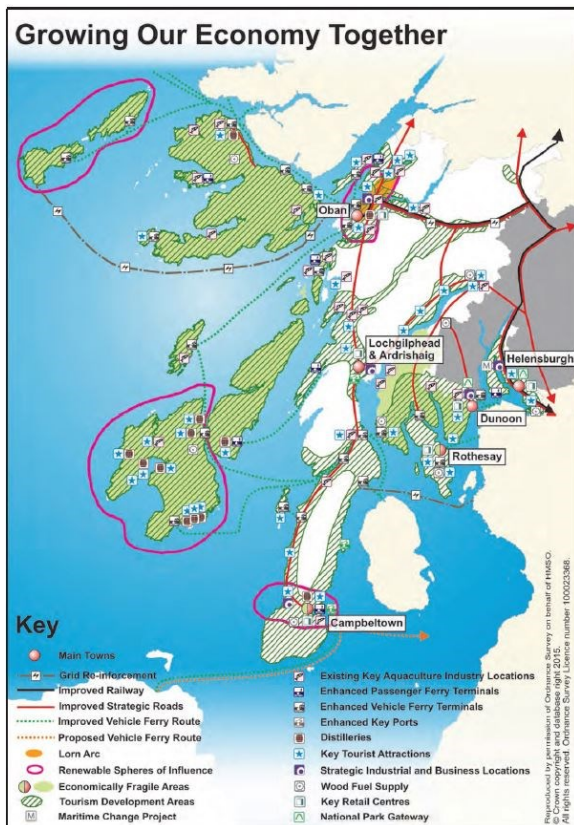
The work undertaken in advance of the application and the adherence to the processing agreement will ensure that the project is delivered in a timeous manner.



Case Study 5 Ardnahoe Distillery, Islay

Flexible Settlement Strategy - Open for Business

Within Argyll and Bute delivery of Development Management is corporately aligned with Outcome 1 of the [Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan](#) which sets out the aspiration for a “thriving broad based economy” with growth in sectors including “renewables, tourism, food and drink, marine science and digital knowledge”. The strategy for delivery of economic growth is set out in the Council’s [Economic Development Action Plan](#) (EDAP).



Whilst there is a primary focus within the [Local Development Plan](#) at directing larger scale business and industry development to the most sustainable locations in and around our Main Settlements the Settlement Strategy also recognises that much of Argyll and Bute is “Economically Fragile” and is characterised by factors including declining population, scarcity of economic opportunities, ageing populations, geographical challenges, and below average income levels. The LDP Settlement Strategy accordingly includes sufficient flexibility to provide support for larger scale business and industry proposals within rural areas identified as being “Economically Fragile” where these are aligned with the Economic Development Action Plan.

The development of a new 2,600 sqm distillery with an installed production capacity of 500,000 litres per annum and visitor centre within a 1.6ha site at Ardnahoe on the Isle of Islay is considered to be a prime example of this flexible policy approach in operation.

The development is located in a remote rural location where ordinary operation of the LDP Settlement Strategy would only be supportive of development of up to 200sqm within a site area of less than 0.5ha. The distillery proposal

was however aligned with aspirations in the EDAP for growth in food and drink, and tourism related development on Islay and the developer successfully demonstrated a locational requirement to utilise this particular site based upon a number of factors including a sequential assessment of in relation to the availability of preferable alternative locations. The application was accordingly able to be supported by the provisions in the LDP and associated Supplementary Guidance relating to development within an “Economically Fragile Area”.



Positive Engagement with Developers - Resolution of Issues and Building Confidence in Outcomes

The following information has been provided by the Agent for the Ardnahoe Distillery development and is intended to provide a customer perspective on engagement by the Council's Development Management Service both at pre-application stage and in resolution of additional issues which arose during the application process. The Development Management team were engaged for an initial pre-application site meeting in Sept. 2015. Planning permission for a subsequent application was granted in Sept. 2016 and the development has subsequently commenced and is nearing completion.

Customer Feedback:

"The siting, design and construction of Ardnahoe Distillery presented a challenge for both the designer and planning authority. The site was identified initially for access to the requisite resources required to operate a distillery. Pre-application meetings with the team from Argyll & Bute were necessary to identify the road map for presenting an application that was sensitive and appropriate.

Initial meetings prepared the groundwork for making the design as aesthetically intrinsic within the countryside location as possible. As the project developed different challenges presented themselves which were assimilated and identified by the Planning team. These were then presented in a way that consultants could be engaged to negate any possible adverse impact on the environment. Planning gain was extracted in a sensible way and proportionate to the development.

During the formal application, consultees and limited local opposition identified a number of areas of clarification required to properly assess the application. The Planning Authority proposed that the initial application should be withdrawn and a new proposal presented which would address the concerns of the consultees. This obviously raised concerns with the applicant who had spent significant sums on the initial application and had alternative contingency plans in other areas. The planning authority arranged direct meetings with the applicants and their agent to outline the regulatory concerns. During this engagement the Planning Authority assured the applicant that sufficient information was garnished during the initial application to make a positive outcome likely, should the areas of



concern be addressable. This reassurance provided the applicant with the confidence to proceed and invest the necessary sums in the requisite consultants.

During construction variations were identified due to the fuller dissemination of the mechanical design within the distillery. Argyll and Bute Planning worked with the designer to vary the Planning Permission sensitively and practically. As the project comes to a completion Argyll and Bute Planning are continuing to engage with the clients to maximize the employment potential of the distillery within the framework of the area.

Planned opening date will be August 2018. The client intends to apply for planning Permission to operate a restaurant and bar prior to this date, and has indicated an intention to increase the production capacity of the site. New employment number are 5 direct production staff and 14 for the Restaurant, Bar and Visitors Centre. Where possible local contractors have been used. The main contract was awarded to McEachern Bros from Keils, Islay with an approximate value to date of around £2.5 million. The travelling work force have kept the local accommodation full throughout last winter.

Iain Hepburn - Project Consultant

Case Study 6 Innovative Housing Delivery



Reflecting the concern that a lack of housing contributes to population decline, over recent years the Council has worked hard to review its housing land supply in order to verify that it is fit for purpose and not acting as an impediment to the delivery of new housing building. Building on this work the Council is now exploring innovative ways in which it can contribute to or facilitate the further delivery of a variety of housing types.

The Council along with a wide range of stakeholders including landowners, stakeholders, housebuilders and communities has inputted to a recent Highlands and Islands Enterprise Report: Stimulating Housing and Development which was produced during 2017.

Some of the main issues which have emerged from the study are: a need for access to land for the right type in the right places; Infrastructure, site servicing and connecting to utilities is an impediment; Planning and Building Regulations are still perceived as an impediment; limited building sector

capacity and labour supply; there is need for Innovations in funding; there is a need to Enable community led approaches



Many of these issues mirror those we have been tackling within our Area and to take consider and take forward the recommendations in more detail a Housing Innovation Working Group has been set up to include HIE, Planning and Housing Services of the Council, and stakeholders from the Local Housing Forum including RSLs and private builders.

Amongst some of the actions being explored and or taken forward are:

- Developing [Simplified Planning Zones](#) for Lochgilphead and Salen which will deliver self-build plots to the local market.
- Disposal of public sector assets for housing development which is seeing significant numbers of affordable and private housing.
- Supporting community lead housing schemes such as on [Iona](#).
- Utilisation of Scottish Government Housing Infrastructure Funding to deliver strategic infrastructure unlocking housing and business sites.
- Exploring the options of pre-fabricated building thus reducing the cost of construction times in remote rural areas.
- Exploring the use of container units for accommodating construction staff in remote areas.
- Understanding and tackling additional island building costs.
- Exploring the potential to grant or loan funds for small site infrastructure.
- Providing self-build mortgages
- Producing Local Area Housing Needs Studies
- Employing an empty homes officer who has brought into use over 300 empty properties.
- Collaborating with [Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust](#)

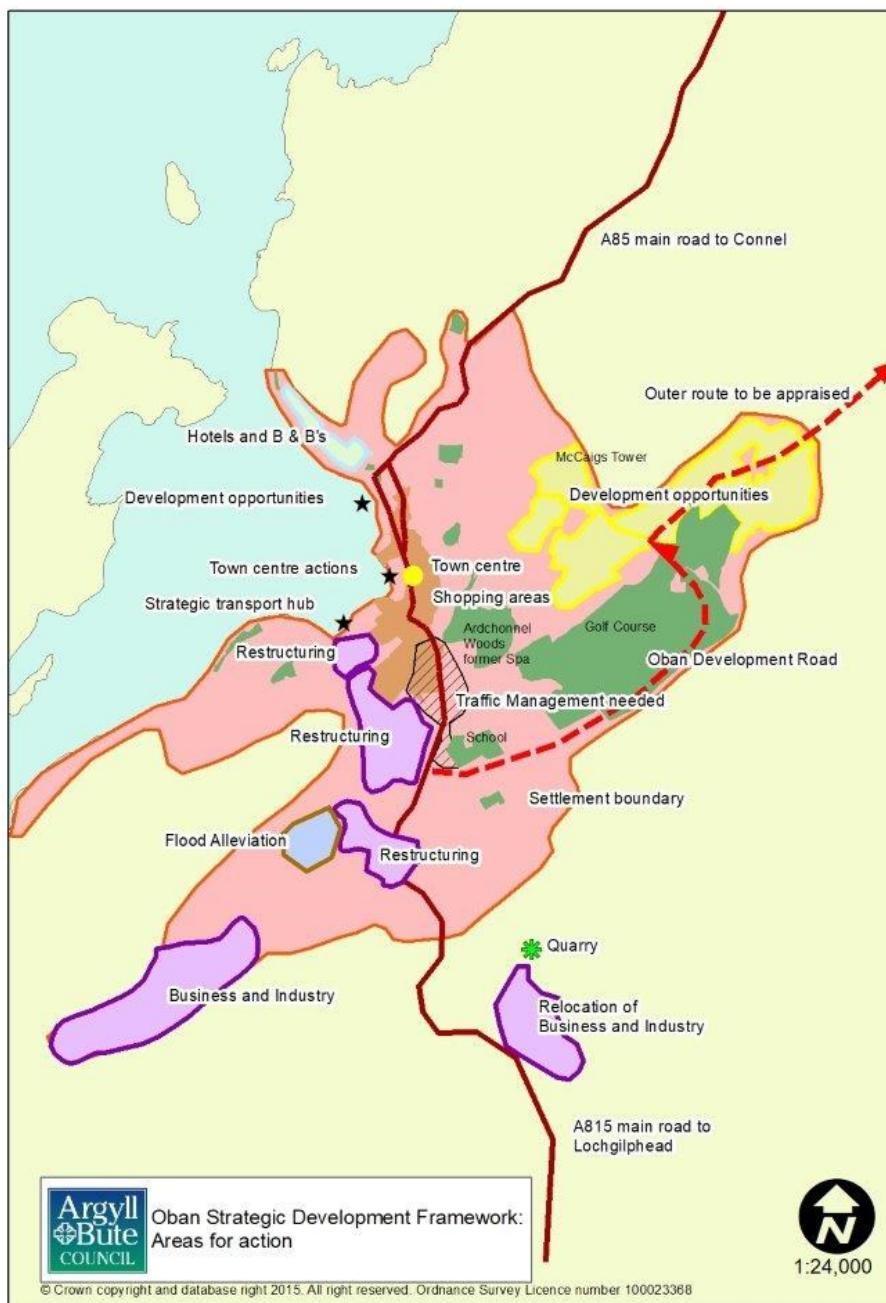
Case Study 7

The Oban Strategic Development Framework

The Development Policy Service was tasked with instigating a holistic approach to the future development of Oban. The [Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan](#) sets the aspiration that the “opportunities and potential for growth in Oban and Lorn are being developed and realised.”

Oban is a Main Town that is experiencing population growth and lies within an area with significant potential for economic growth. A number of actions are currently being progressed by different sections of the Council and its partners in this area to achieve growth but these are not necessarily happening in a coordinated manner. Therefore, there is a risk that the opportunity to capitalize on synergies may be missed. There is also a risk factor in that the aims of one project may have a negative impact on the delivery of another.

A scoping meeting was held with key officers to gain an understanding of the range of activities/projects being pursued in the Oban area by the Council, and to establish a collaborative way forward to ensure the potential for sustainable economic and population growth is maximised and the potential for conflict between projects is minimised. This identified the following elements fundamental to achieving the successful development of Oban and its hinterland into the future:-



- [Local Development Plan 2 / Main Issues Report](#) - Oban is identified as the Main Town at the heart of the Tobermory to Dalmally strategic growth corridor. Need for additional development opportunities, traffic management solution and restructuring of Oban South. The preferred option to progress these issues in an integrated manner is a Strategic Development Framework for Oban. This proposal received support from 93% of respondents.
- Smarter Places - Public bodies in Oban are seeking to rationalise function and accommodation creating opportunities for restructuring.

- [Oban Lorn Arc](#) – delivery of economic projects within the growth corridor.
- [Oban University Town](#) – growing and supporting the student base
- Oban Road and Car Parking Network – Significant issues in terms of development capacity, resilience of the road network and congestion. Potential to realize additional development opportunities in a topographically constrained area.
- Community Planning – Local Outcome Improvement Plan being developed
- Council Assets and potential inward investments
- Wider engagement needed - HIE, UH&I, Argyll College, Ballet West, [BID4Oban](#), landowners, Community Councils, HiTrans, CMAL.
- Related projects – including Dunbeg and Oban Airport Masterplan areas.

The concept of an Oban Strategic Development Framework has been endorsed through the LDP2 process, by Directorate management Team, Strategic Management Team and the Policy and Resources Committee. A Project Initiation Document (PID) has been prepared by the Local Development Plan Team and this will now be taken forward by Economic Development. The PID sets out the scope, content, timeframe, resources, outputs and outcomes for the proposed Oban Strategic Development Framework.

The Oban Strategic Development Framework is proposed to be developed to:-

- Establish a collaborative way forward to ensure the potential for sustainable economic and population growth, as identified in the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan, is maximised and the potential for conflict between projects is minimised;
- Promote delivery through an action plan identifying actions, resources, partners and timeframe;
- Act as a catalyst for additional private sector led investment
- Ensure the strategic integration of projects such as the emerging Rural Deal;
- Support funding bids with a clear strategy and identified priorities.
- Provide a vehicle for joint working both internally and with our external partners such as Transport Scotland and HIE.
- Perform the role of a pilot for long term vision and strategies for other towns and settlements.

This project involves a number of multi-disciplinary teams working together to integrate projects across Oban and engage with external stakeholders.

Case Study 8 CEMP Project

Supporting the construction of Scottish Sea Farms £35 million salmon hatchery by means of a site specific Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) and by supporting the delivery of affordable housing to meet anticipated additional local demand

Introduction:

Planning Permission has been granted for a Major Application on behalf of salmon producer Scottish Sea Farms (SSF) for a new £35m freshwater hatchery at Barcaldine, near Oban. The site will be used to rear young salmon, or smolts, until they are ready to transfer for ongrowing within the company's marine farms. In light of the site being adjacent to a marine Natura site (Special Area of Conservation) a requirement for the development company's main contractor to prepare and implement a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) was imposed via planning condition.



The Construction Environment Management Plan:

A large construction project in a sensitive location prompts the requirement for a CEMP to avoid, minimise or mitigate construction impacts upon the environment, including biodiversity interest on the site and within the surrounding area. It is a 'live' document to be reviewed and updated which will make sure that construction staff are aware of the environmental and biodiversity sensitivities of the site, and to ensure that that appropriate management action is implemented in order to protect important features, including habitats and species. The CEMP template was drafted to fit the needs of the site by the Council's Local Biodiversity Officer in tandem with main contractor Robertsons and a fee was accrued for this work.



Cultural Change:

This initiative reflects a cultural change in the Council, in seeking additional income though offering a service to assist a range of end users, including other local authorities, community groups, developers/contractors and individuals. By taking this proactive approach with developers and contractors, the Council is seeking to ensure that biodiversity is protected, and where appropriate enhanced, thereby meeting our biodiversity duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 whilst also securing a valuable source of additional income.

Outcomes:

1. CEMP Drafted which includes a flexible template to meet the needs of the site;
2. Accrual of fees; and
3. Building relations with contractors and developers to deliver the aims and objectives of the CEMP.

The CEMP project received a Bronze Award in the Argyll and Bute Council Excellence Awards 2017.

Customer Feedback:

"The support and assistance given from Argyll & Bute Council through Marina Curran-Colthart and Richard Kerr has been of great benefit in developing good relationships between a Principal Contractor and the local authority on such a large-scale project next to an environmentally sensitive area."

Robertson's – Principal Contractor.



Case Study 9 Minerals Training Event

Through the Performance Review and Development plan (PRD) process it was identified during 2017 that there is a requirement for professional development and training of officers when it comes to processing applications for minerals extraction and monitoring permissions. In recent times mineral applications have been handled by the Major Application Team with reliance upon a small core of professional officers to handle pre-application enquiries and minerals applications. Monitoring work is expected to be undertaken by local enforcement officers and planning technicians. However, given the lack of mineral application casework at local level it is often an area of expertise that officers lack in confidence hence applications are passed to those with specialist knowledge.

It was recognised that there is a requirement to widen the knowledge base and professional experience of area based staff. To address the development requirement a training event was arranged providing a site visit to a hard rock quarry at Bonawe and was followed by a visit to a sand and gravel working at Benderloch. These are the two types of quarries found in Argyll and Bute.



The visits were hosted by Breedon who operate both sites with tours conducted by their Director of Estates, a Geologist and the quarry Foreman. The visits allowed officers to learn about the challenges that the industry face, to build working relationships with operatives at Breedon, and to experience the activity of quarry working and associated activities relating to the production of hard rock products, asphalt and cement at first hand.



Feedback from participating officers has confirmed that they now feel more confident with the prospect of visiting minerals sites and carrying out inspections. The aim of the day event was to help officers overcome their concerns of the unknown and it achieved that.

Following the success of this event it is hoped that a follow up visit to a quarry undergoing restoration can be secured during 2018/19 to improve officers understanding of aftercare arrangements.

Customer Feedback:

"Breedon play a significant role in the supply of and Bute. Securing planning permission for our construction materials and services within Argyll and Bute, helping to support the local economy. With the local confidence to invest in infrastructure to maintain supplies authority boundary, we have an Area Office and well into the future. A good example of this is the consent Contracting Division based at Dunbeg, as well as four granted last year to replace our asphalt plant at Furnace Quarries, two asphalt plants and two RMX concrete plants. At each of our sites, we enjoy good working relationships with neighbours and have a strong record of planning compliance. Our experience in dealing with the Council Planning Department has been very knowledge and a platform for strengthening relationships." positive. Mineral extraction is a specialised technical discipline within Town & Country Planning and perhaps not an everyday topic for staff but we have nevertheless find good levels of responsiveness and engagement in Argyll

Gavin Mennie

Director of Estates, Planning and Geology



Part 2: Supporting Evidence & Performance Markers

Wherever possible weblinks have been provided within the body text of the report.

This report was compiled drawing on evidence from a variety of sources including:

- [Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan 2013-2023](#)
- [Argyll and Bute - Economic Development Action Plan 2016 - 2021](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Development Plan Scheme LDP 2 2018](#)
- [Argyll and Bute - Main Issues Report 2017](#)
- Argyll and Bute Council [Website](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Council Enforcement & Monitoring Charter 2018](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Windows Technical Working Note 2018](#)
- [Advertisement & Signage Technical Working Note 2017](#)
- [Argyll and Bute Council PPF Report 2016/17](#)
- Argyll and Bute Council, PPSL Committee Minutes
- [Argyll and Bute Council Scheme of Administration and Delegation](#)
- Argyll and Bute Council, Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services Service Plan
- A range of committee reports
- Customer feedback
- Reports from IDOX UNiform

Further Background Information on Case Study Submissions:

Case Study 1: APAGs

- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/campbeltown-regeneration>
- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/22-26-main-street-2-8-longrow-south>

Case Study 2: Ardfin Estate:

- <http://www.harrisingolf.com.au/ardfin-estate-golf-course>
- <https://www.scotsman.com/news/jura-island-course-creator-has-designs-on-golf-conference-1-4341660>
- <https://www.top100golfcourses.com/golf-course/ardfin>

Case Study 3: Campbeltown Picture House

- www.campbeltownpicturehouse.co.uk
- <http://www.bff-architects.com/news/2018/4/20/official-opening-of-the-campbeltown-picture-house>
- <https://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/news-features/lights-camera-action-campbeltowns-restored-atmospheric-picture-house>
- www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-42097852

Case Study 4: Helensburgh Waterfront

- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2018/feb/have-your-say-helensburgh-waterfront-development>
- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/helensburgh-waterfront>
- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/news/2018/jun/helensburgh-waterfront-project-takes-big-step-forward>

Case Study 5: Ardnahoe Distillery, Isle of Islay

- <https://ardnaoedistillery.com/>
- <https://scotchwhisky.com/magazine/in-depth/19431/how-whisky-tourism-is-transforming-scotch/>

Case Study 6: Innovative Housing Delivery

- <http://www.hie.co.uk/regional-information/economic-reports-and-research/archive/stimulating-housing-development-in-the-highlands-and-islands.html>
- <http://ruralhousingscotland.org/home/oih/projects/iona>
- <http://www.hscht.co.uk/>

Case Study 7: Oban Strategic Development Framework

- <https://www.obanunitown.org/>
- https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bid4oban_final_business_plan_2017.pdf

Case Study 8: Minerals Training Event

- <https://www.breedongroup.com/>

Case Study 9: CEMP

- <https://www.obantimes.co.uk/2016/07/06/13928/>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-36728357>

PERFORMANCE MARKERS REPORT 2017/18

	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE / COMMENTS
1.	Decision-making: Authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types.	Part 4—Table B & Part 5—Table A. Contextual commentary setting out factors affecting performance on decision-making are set out under Part 5 C.
2.	Project management: Offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in all major applications and availability publicised on planning authority website.	Part 1—1.3.9 Processing Agreements for major and 'locally significant' developments are promoted through pre-application discussion, user forums and online. Argyll and Bute Council - Processing Agreements
3.	Early Collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability and promotion of pre-application discussion for all prospective applications. • Clear and proportionate requests for supporting information. 	Part 1—1.2.11 & 1.4.11 Case Studies 2, 3, 4, 5 The Development Management Service provides a <u>pre-application advice service</u> . This is promoted on the Council website, through user forums, and by officers when engaged by prospective applicants. Pre-application assessment of proposals seeks to identify all relevant issues which will be material to the determination of a subsequent application, and will involve engagement with consultees where appropriate. The report template issued to applicants has been revised during 17/18 to include a dedicated section identifying the requirement for supporting information - this list is populated following a review of relevant planning constraints and the advice of consultees (including other Council Services) to ensure that any request for further information is specific and proportionate to the development proposed. Where applicants do not engage at pre-application stage a similar approach is undertaken to identify issues and any requirement for further information at an early stage in the handling of the application. Applications are validated against the <u>National Validation Standard</u> published by HoPS to ensure that submissions and requirements for supporting information are quality checked on a consistent basis. This document is also promoted and published on the Council website to assist applicants in the preparation of their application.
4.	Legal agreements: Conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant'.	Part 1—1.3.12 & Part 5—Table A Applications subject to legal agreements were determined with an average time period of less than 6 months during 2017/18. Applications requiring a legal agreement are reviewed regularly and are highlighted on officers outstanding items case lists.

	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE / COMMENTS
5.	Enforcement charter: updated / republished.	Planning Enforcement and Monitoring Charter has been reviewed and updated in March 2018 to reflect revised service arrangements and subsequently adopted by the Council Planning Enforcement and Monitoring Charter 2018
6.	Continuous improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show progress/improvement in relation to PPF National Headline Indicators; Progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report. 	Part 4—Tables A, B, C and Context D Part 3 details previous and committed Service Improvements. Contextual commentary on delivery/identification of improvements is included within: Part 1—1.1.3, 1.1.4, 1.1.5, 1.2.2, 1.2.4, 1.2.8, 1.2.11, 1.2.12, 1.3.4, 1.3.9, 1.4.9, 1.4.10, 1.4.11, 1.4.12, 1.4.13, 1.4.16 & Case Study 6
7.	Local Development Plan: Less than 5 years from adoption.	The Local Development Plan was adopted in 2015. Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan 2015
8.	Development plan scheme: Demonstrates next LDP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On course for adoption within 5 year cycle. Project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale. 	LDP2 is project planned and currently on track for adoption in 2020. Argyll and Bute Development Plan Scheme LDP 2 2018
9.	Elected members engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation:	During 2016 and 2017 all Members were engaged in the pre-MIR process through a series of seminars and workshops including Senior Management, which considered potential strategic options and identified and agreed Main Issues which would be presented in the MIR. Subsequently the MIR was reported to PPSL committee as training in August 2017 and for approval in September 2017 .
10.	Cross sector stakeholders, including industry, Agencies and Scottish Government, engaged early (pre-MIR) in development plan preparation.	The Council chose to hold a call for sites exercise over a six month period in an attempt to engage all developers, landowners and other stakeholders pre-MIR. It consulted widely on the results of this exercise including with Key Agencies and Scottish Government. The Council has used the Place Standard Tool with the assistance of Scottish Government and collaboratively with Community Planning Partners as part of the pre-MIR consultation and engagement process and particularly targeting hard to reach groups.

	PERFORMANCE MARKER	EVIDENCE / COMMENTS
11.	Production of regular and proportionate policy, advice, for example through supplementary guidance, on information required to support applications.	<p>The Council website provides applicants with information that they need to consider before making an application.</p> <p>Argyll and Bute - Planning Application Info</p> <p>The Central Validation Team contributed to the development of and have subsequently adopted the National Validation Standard published by HoPS in 2017.</p> <p>HoPS National Validation Standard</p> <p>Technical Working Notes relating to display of advertisements and replacement of windows in the historic environment have been produced during 2017/18.</p> <p>Advertisement & Signage Technical Working Note 2017</p> <p>Argyll and Bute Windows Technical Working Note 2018</p>
12.	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (for example: protocols; joined up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice.)	Part 1—1.1.5, 1.1.6, 1.2.1, 1.2.5, 1.2.6, 1.2.9, 1.2.10, 1.2.12, 1.2.13, 1.3.5, 1.3.6, 1.3.7, 1.4.5, 1.4.6, 1.4.12, & Case Studies 1, 3, 4, 6, & 7.
13.	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities.	Part 1—1.4.2, 1.4.7, 1.4.8, 1.4.11, 1.4.17
14.	Stalled sites / legacy cases: Conclusion / withdrawal of planning applications more than one year old.	<p>Part 1—1.3.11, & Part 4—Table B.</p> <p>During 2017/18 20 legacy cases were cleared. At 31st March 2018 there were 23 'live' legacy applications remaining to be concluded.</p>
15.	Developer contributions: Clear expectations set out in development plan and in pre-application discussions.	<p>The adopted Local Development Plan sets out expectations in respect of Developer Contributions for affordable housing and green / play space and is supported by Supplementary Guidance which sets out that the Council will seek appropriate elements of planning gain proportionate to the scale, nature, impact and planning purposes associated with the development.</p> <p>Where Developer Contributions are required these will be flagged up at pre-application stage where applicable, or where no pre-application engagement is sought then officers will seek to make the developer aware of the requirement and justification for any developer contribution as soon as such a requirement is identified in the assessment process.</p> <p>The Council is continuing to review its approach to Developer Contributions and included consultation during 2017/18 on this issue within the Main Issues Report (Q11).</p>

Part 3: Service Improvements

SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS TO BE DELIVERED IN 2018/19

COMMITTED SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS
1. Attain Customer Service Excellence
2. Deliver 2 pilot Simplified Planning Zones
3. Prepare 2 Conservation Area Appraisals
4. Engagement with regular customers and promotion of National Validation Standards to improve proportion of applications valid upon receipt.
5. Review and Update Customer Charters
6. Production of Hill Tracks Guidance
7. Improve Planning Application Timescales at Consideration Stage - Implement Project Management Approach for 'Major' and 'Locally Significant' developments and encourage increased use of Processing Agreements.
8. Run Sustainable Design Awards
9. Deliver improvements to the reliability of the Public Access system.

DELIVERY ON SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS ACTIONS FOR 2017/18

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT	STATUS
1. Deliver Technical Working Note on Replacement Windows	Complete
2. Production of Hill Tracks Guidance	Ongoing
3. Review of Monitoring and Enforcement Charter	Complete
4. Deliver chargeable pre-application service.	Complete
5. Attain Customer Service Excellence	Ongoing - Assessment scheduled for FQ 3 2018/19
6. Prepare 2 Conservation Area Appraisals	Complete
7. Improve Planning Application Timescales at Consideration Stage	Ongoing
8. Develop and implement mobile app platform for use of LDP and live time capture of data.	Complete
9. Carry out Main Issue Report consultation using Story Board GIS tool.	Complete
10. Deliver 2 pilot Simplified Planning Zones	Ongoing
11. Delivery and adoption of new Signage Strategy	Complete
12. Development of a protocol and process for involving Members in providing early key advice for 'major' development.	Complete

Part 4:

National Headline Indicators (NHI's) 2017/18

A: KEY OUTCOMES—DEVELOPMENT PLANNING	2017/18	2016/17
Local and Strategic Development Planning		
Age of local / strategic development plan(s) at end of reporting period. <i>Requirement: less than 5 years.</i>	3 years	2 years
Will the local / strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme?	Yes	Yes
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year?	No	No
Were development plan scheme engagement / consultation commitments met during the year?	Yes	Yes
Effective Housing Land Supply		
Established housing land supply	5471 units	5865 units
5-year effective housing land supply	3808 units	3908 units
5-year effective land supply total capacity	4419 units	n/a
5-year housing supply target	3725 units	3725 units
5-year effective housing land supply (<i>to one decimal place</i>)	5.1 years	5.2 years
Housing approvals	539 units	866 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	1088 units	1149 units
Marketable employment land supply	88/7 ha	88.7 ha
Employment land take-up during the reporting period	0 ha ¹	0 ha
B: KEY OUTCOMES—DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT	2017/18	2016/17
Project Planning		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	17.7% (229)	19.6% (258)
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	0%	0%
Decision Making		
Application approval rate	97.6%	97.4%
Delegation rate	98.1%	97.0%
Validation	25.4% ²	10.7%
Decision-making Timescales		
Major Developments	37.9 weeks ³	22.1 weeks
Local Developments (non-householder)	12.6 weeks	12.4 weeks
Householder Developments	7.9 weeks	7.5 weeks
Legacy Cases		
Number cleared during reporting period	20 ⁴	1
Number remaining	23	39

C: KEY OUTCOMES—ENFORCEMENT	2017/18	2016/17
Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed	34 months ⁵	22 months
Complaints lodged	241	298
Cases taken up	139	240
Breaches identified	139	240
Cases resolved	214	241
Notices served	36	42
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

D: NHI KEY OUTCOMES COMMENTARY:

1. It is noted that this NHI is not wholly reflective of the uptake of employment land within Argyll and Bute where the rural nature of the Council area and local economy stimulates demand for development in locations that are not readily addressed through take up of allocated land. The Council's settlement strategy seeks to promote sustainable economic development and focuses allocation of employment land in and around existing key settlements where there is demand of employment, existing housing provision and infrastructure to support new development. The LDP does however recognise that the requirements of traditional rural industries, particularly those which are island based including the whisky industry and aquaculture, will give rise to occasional demand for development in countryside locations - our settlement strategy is sufficiently flexible to accommodate this demand as is evidenced in Case Study 5 but also means that take up of land for employment purposes is not wholly captured in the NHIs.
2. It is noted that during 2017/18 the Council has adopted the [National Validation Standard](#) published by HOPS.
3. It is noted that the data subset for 'major' applications is small and easily skewed. Contextual commentary on other factors affecting decision-making timescales are set out within Part 5 C of the report.
4. It is noted that the Development Management Service has introduced processes during 2017/18 requiring more regular review of legacy files - see Part 1— 1.3.11.
5. It is noted that during 2017/18 the Enforcement Service staff has been reduced by a further 1fte, previously 1fte was also deleted in 2016/17. The Council delayed the planned review of the Enforcement Charter in FQ1 2018 in order to review the effectiveness of revised service delivery arrangements before finalising revised standards for handling of enforcement matters. The Enforcement Charter was reviewed and updated in March 2018 and formally adopted by the Council in June 2018. See Part 1—1.3.4.

Part 5: Official Statistics

A: DECISION-MAKING TIMESCALES (based on ‘all applications’ timescales)					
Timescales	2017-18	2017-18	2016-17		
	No of Cases / %	Weeks	Weeks		
Overall					
Major developments	5	35.7	22.1		
Local developments (non-householder)	685	12.6	12.4		
• Local: less than 2 months	375 (54.7%)	6.8	6.9		
• Local: more than 2 months	310 (45.3%%)	19.5	18.6		
Householder developments	349	7.9	7.5		
• Local: less than 2 months	284 (81.4%)	6.3	6.2		
• Local: more than 2 months	65 (18.6%)	15.3	15.1		
Housing Developments					
Major	1	33.4	38.1		
Local housing developments	324	13.6	13.4		
• Local: less than 2 months	162 (50.0%)	7.0	7.0		
• Local: more than 2 months	162 (50.0%)	20.2	19.0		
Business and Industry					
Major	1	32.7	9.8		
Local business and industry developments	32	12.1	9.2		
• Local: less than 2 months	17 (53.1%)	6.9	7.0		
• Local: more than 2 months	15 (46.9%)	18.0	13.8		
EIA Developments	0	-	0		
Other Consents	255	8.4	8.4		
Planning / Legal Agreements					
• Major: average time	0	-	-		
• Local: average time	9	25.9	22.0		
B: DECISION-MAKING: LOCAL REVIEWS AND APPEALS					
Type	Total Number of Decisions	Original Decision Upheld			
		2017-18		2016-17	
		No.	%	No.	%
Local reviews	10	10	40%	6	66.7 %
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	7	7	57.1%	7	57.1

C: Context

Argyll and Bute Council's Development Management Service continues to process planning applications with the aspiration to deliver positive outcomes in all cases. This approach is reflected in our high approval rates but is often achieved by providing applicants with additional time beyond prescribed statutory determination periods where this is required to negotiate and address resolvable deficiencies in their submissions. Whilst it is recognised that this approach can have a negative impact upon performance in decision-making time periods it is contended that this is outweighed by the economic benefits of delivering on improved development proposals which might not otherwise have obtained permission had the Council sought to determine within prescribed statutory time periods; additionally resources required to handle amended applications, appeal and LRB work is minimised.

2017/18 proved to be an extremely challenging year for the Development Management Service both financially and in relation to the availability of resources. Whilst the number of applications received reduced by 1.3% from 2016/17 our planning fee income was down by 25% from the same period. This is largely attributed to a 50% fall in the volume of submissions for 'major' development and a comparable drop in the number of high value 'local' applications from the previous year.

In order to mitigate against the budgetary impact of a £336k shortfall in income, the Development Management Service sought to reduce costs by not backfilling staff vacancies; in practice this resulted in a 20% reduction of the RTP1 qualified professional resource available within the preceding year. Three of the vacant posts have subsequently been permanently deleted as part of the corporate budget saving strategy for 2018/19.

Notwithstanding the significant reduction in staff resources, the Development Management Service's performance is comparable with the previous year with only minor increases to average time periods for 'local' and 'householder' development types. The time periods for handling of 'major' applications has reduced from 22.1 to 35.7 weeks during 2017/18. This is again reflective of reduced staff resources with one of the unfilled posts being within our Major Application Team; it is also noted that the average time period is based upon a very small dataset of only five applications and as such is easily skewed.

Reduced staff resource combined with unplanned absence of key personnel during 2017/18 has resulted in very limited capacity to develop and implement planned process improvements to deliver efficiencies and savings through BPR. Progression of process re-engineering, project management for 'major' applications, service redesign, and succession planning have been identified as priorities for 2018/19 and will offer some scope to maintain and improve current performance levels by freeing up capacity within the remaining staff resource, and to deliver upon further committed budget savings. It has also been identified in our budget preparation work that only by achieving a cost neutral position in the delivery of Development Management will it be possible to break the vicious cycle of annual local authority budget cuts which are eroding performance and threaten the quality of service delivery. Whilst we will continue to pursue further efficiency savings and service improvements to this end it is recognised that a Scottish Government review of planning fees in the short term which provides for full cost recovery is fundamental to achieving this aspiration.

Part 6: Workforce Information (at 31.03.18)

	Tier 1 <i>Chief Executive</i>	Tier 2 <i>Director</i>	Tier 3 <i>Head of Service</i>	Tier 4 <i>Manager</i>
Head of Planning Service			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

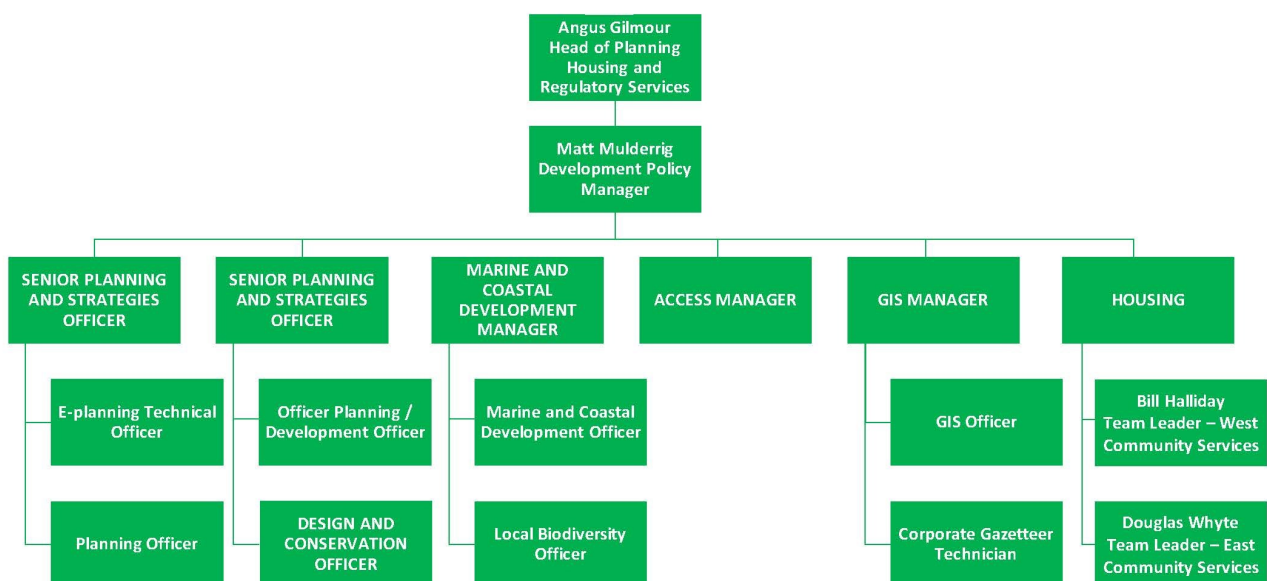
RTPI Qualified Staff	Number	Staff Age Profile	Number
Development Management	20	Under 30	0
Development Policy	4	30 - 39	8
Enforcement	2	40 - 49	7
Other	1	50 and over	12

Planning Services sit within the Development and Infrastructure Services Department, and within the portfolio of the Head of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services.

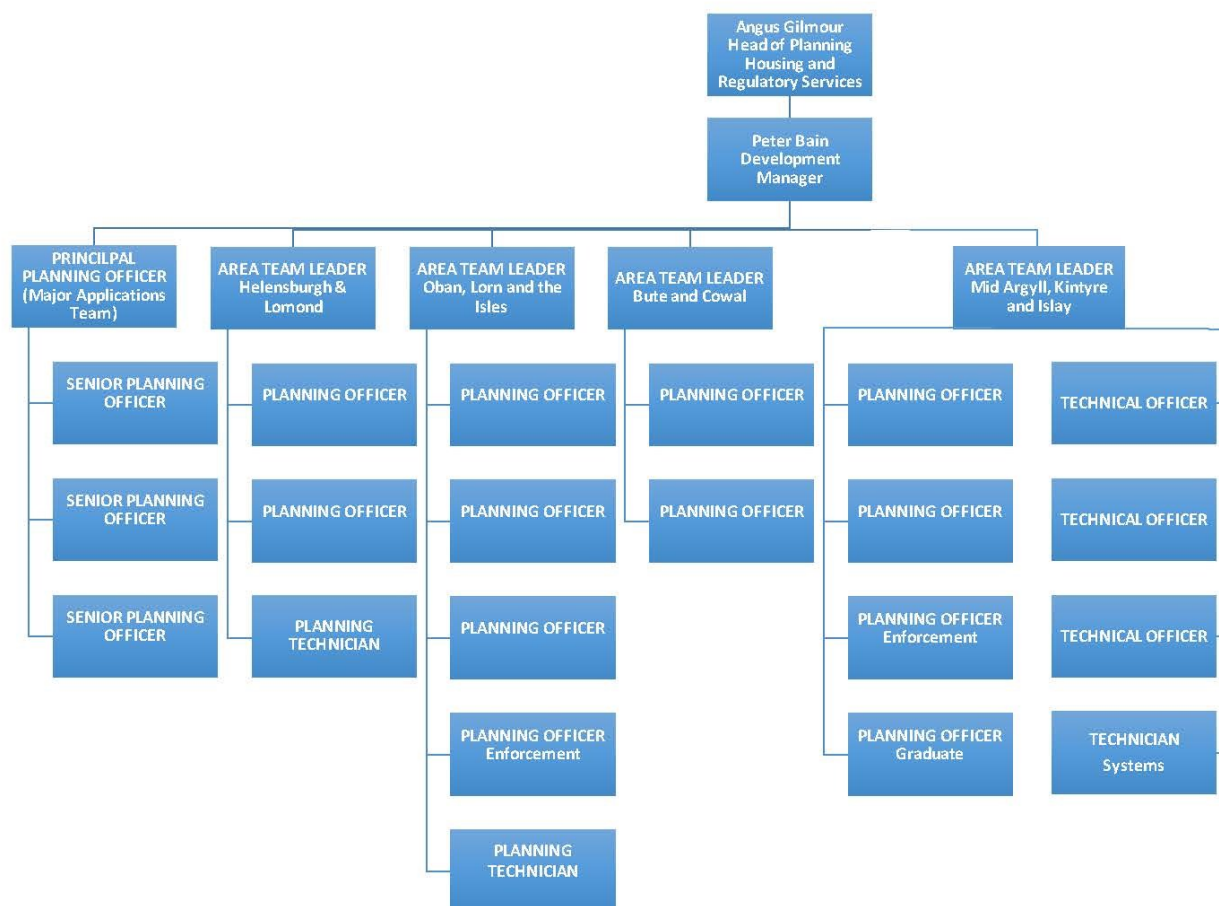
The service structure of the key teams which deliver the planning function are set out below, and on the following page.

Staff Structure diagrams as at 31.03.18

Development Policy & Housing



Development Management



Part 7: Planning Committee Information

Committees & Site Visits	Number
Full Council Meetings	10
Planning Committees	18
Area Committees	20
Local Review Body	26
LRB Site Visits	8



Colchester Square, Lochgilphead



Mussel Farm, Loch Creran



Argyll and Bute Council
 Development and Infrastructure Services
 Director: Pippa Milne
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Chomhairle Earra-Ghàidheal is Bhòid

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