

Infrastructure Policies

1 What are the Infrastructure Policies?

The Infrastructure policies are a set of requirements that help to:

- a) Achieve the Objectives of this Plan.
- b) Deal with the main infrastructure issues affecting Aberdeenshire.
- c) Make decisions on planning applications.

2 What are the main infrastructure issues affecting Aberdeenshire?

- a) Ensuring development opportunities can be served by infrastructure.
- b) The provision of infrastructure to manage and dispose of waste.
- c) Ensuring any infrastructure forming part of a development respects the public's health and safety.
- d) The need to provide community facilities, particularly in rural areas.
- e) The demand for new forms of infrastructure, particularly in the fields of renewable energy and telecommunications.

3 Infrastructure Proposals

The main infrastructure issues affecting Aberdeenshire are dealt with through the following set of policies, and through a set of proposals. The proposals fall into two categories:

- a) land use allocations shown in Chapter 8 and on the Plan's Main Proposals Maps; and
- b) a set of actions to be undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council during the period of the Plan. These are, in no order of priority:

- To help with the provision of additional infrastructure.
- To help implement the Council's Local Transport Strategy and other relevant infrastructure related documents.
- To monitor the infrastructure policies against the criteria in Chapter 1 and to alter these where appropriate.
- To work closely with, and support, other infrastructure related bodies such as the Scottish Water Authority, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, the Utility Companies, etc.
- To support development of the Council's Integrated, Sustainable Waste Management Strategy by examining its land use implications and the subsequent investigation of the identification of sites for appropriate facilities.
- To investigate the identification of sites for windfarms.
- To work with the Aberdeen City Council in taking forward transportation proposals including a Western Peripheral Route.

Roads and Accesses

A new road or other access will be approved, in principle, if:

- a) it is designed to be safe, convenient for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, resource efficient and cause minimal impact on the character of the site and surrounding area;
- b) no new private access is taken directly from a road carrying more than 2,000 vehicles per day (average daily flow);
- c) satisfactory arrangements are made for its subsequent maintenance; **AND**
- d) where required, a Transport Assessment shows that the development and any mitigation measures proposed will not have significant transport impacts on existing transport infrastructure or services.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that new accesses and those of which intensified use will be made are safe, convenient, resource efficient and well designed.

New accesses are an essential part of many new *developments*. They must, however, respect the environment and be as safe as possible. Special attention must therefore be given to the design of the accesses in terms of how they can fit into the environment, use as few resources as possible in their construction, meet reasonable standards and not have a *negative impact* on existing traffic patterns.

To help with achieving the optimum access solution, the road or access should be designed to the satisfaction of the Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service (and *Scottish Executive* where applicable). Developers will also usually be required to provide traffic calming in residential areas, and may in some cases also be encouraged to implement more innovative schemes such as 'Home Zones'. Developers should also be aware of the need for *Roads Construction Consent* in most instances.

This policy conforms to:

- *Development Plan* – Objectives 1, 2 & 6.
- *NEST* – Policy 33.

Other main documents:

- *NPPG 17* (Transport and Planning) – main paragraph 76.
- Guidelines and Specifications for Roads within Residential and Industrial Developments.
- *Local Transport Strategy* (Aberdeenshire Council).

Parking, Servicing and Accessibility

Development will be approved, in principle, if:

- a) it is well related to existing settlements, avoids dispersed patterns of development, and complies with the Council's maximum parking standards;
- b) it can be accessed conveniently by walkers and cyclists, and is close to existing public transport services, where available, or delivers major improvements to public transport services in scale with development;
- c) it is designed to be safe, convenient, resource efficient and cause minimal impact on the character of the site and surrounding area;
- d) developer contributions are provided where required to mitigate development impact; **AND**
- e) it can be safely and conveniently accessed by service, delivery and other goods vehicles, as appropriate to the development.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all new *development* can be *satisfactorily* accessed by a variety of modes of transport.

In the recent past, the emphasis has been on ensuring developments meet minimum car parking standards and where this cannot be achieved a contribution is made to parking provision elsewhere. However, this approach is not in keeping with the objectives of this Plan. These objectives, founded on the principles of *sustainability*, support the securing of adequate accessibility to developments by a variety of transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport and relating development proposals to the existing pattern of development.

The Council's parking and servicing standards are set out in the documents listed below. Developer contributions will be required to *mitigate* any adverse effects of the travel patterns created by development.

This policy conforms to:

- *Development Plan* – Objectives 2, 5, 7 & 8.
- *NEST* – Policy 31.

Other main documents:

- *NPPG 17* (Transport and Planning) – main paragraph 57.
- *PAN 57* (Transport and Planning) – main paragraph 36.
- Guidelines and Specifications for Roads (Aberdeenshire Council).
- *Local Transport Strategy* (Aberdeenshire Council).
- Car Parking Standards (Aberdeenshire Council).
- Cycling Strategy (Aberdeenshire Council).

Access for the Less Mobile

Development to which the public will have access will be approved, in principle, if provision is made for ease of access by wheelchair users, people with sensory disabilities, the elderly, those accompanied by small children and other less mobile groups.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that new *developments* are readily accessible by those who are less mobile, thus giving them equal opportunity to access goods, services etc.

People with physical and sensory disabilities, and those with small children are often denied access to places because of the layout and design of developments. By including features to address their needs in all developments the less able and mobile can have a more full and independent role in society.

It is recognised, however, that facilitating access to existing premises which are either *Listed Buildings* and/or within a *Conservation Area* may not be possible.

This policy conforms to:

- *Development Plan* – Objective 2.

Other main documents:

- *NPPG 17* (Transport and Planning) – main paragraph 48.
- *PAN 57* (Transport and Planning) – main paragraph 20.
- Guidelines and Specifications for Roads (Aberdeenshire Council).
- *Local Transport Strategy* (Aberdeenshire Council).
- the Disability Discrimination Act.

• Terms in *italics* are explained in the Glossary.
 • Please note that in determining planning applications more than one policy can apply.

Foul Drainage Standards

Development will be approved, in principle, if proposals for foul drainage are to:

- a) connect to existing or new public drainage infrastructure; **OR**
- b) where a connection to public drainage infrastructure is demonstrated to be unfeasible, taking into account cost and/or practicability, it is demonstrated that private drainage infrastructure can be provided without negative impacts on amenity, public health, the environment and in either case;
- c) where requested, a Drainage Impact Assessment is provided at the applicant's expense to the satisfaction of the planning authority in consultation with the relevant agencies.

All development in areas served by existing and new committed public drainage infrastructure and within a main settlement boundary defined in the local plan must connect to public drainage infrastructure; development requiring the use of private infrastructure for foul drainage will not be accepted.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to achieve *satisfactory* disposal of sewage and thereby maintain and improve standards of, public health, *amenity* and the quality of the environment. Assessment of the adverse impacts on the environment should include water sources/resource, and controlled waters including groundwater.

An applicant must demonstrate that a proposed *development* is effectively served by a satisfactory foul sewerage system. The first presumption must be to provide a system of foul drainage discharging into the public sewer. Only if it is demonstrated that this is not feasible, taking into account cost and/or practicability, should a private treatment system be considered and proposed, if appropriate. The first presumption for a private treatment system should be the disposal of effluent to land via a full soakaway. Only if it is demonstrated that this is not feasible should the disposal of foul effluent to water be proposed, if appropriate. An application for a private treatment system must be supported by a full assessment of the proposed system including an assessment of the impact of disposal of final effluent, whether it is disposed of to ground or discharged to a water body.

If a proposal for private treatment is considered likely to lead to a significant environmental, amenity and public health problem, this is normally considered sufficient to lead to refusal of planning permission.

Development in areas served by public drainage infrastructure which cannot connect to the public drainage infrastructure directly, for example due to lack of capacity or timing of completion of works, may be granted permission subject to a condition

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requiring the development not to be occupied until connected to public drainage infrastructure.

This policy conforms to:

- NEST Policy 22.
- Development Plan - Objectives 1, 5 & 7.

Other main documents:

- NPPG10, (Planning and Waste Management) – main paragraph 99.
- Drainage Impact Assessment Guidance for Developers and Regulators (produced on behalf of North East Scotland Flooding Advisory Group).
- SEPA, Pollution Prevention Guidelines 4: Disposal of Sewage Where No Mains Drainage is Available.

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Surface Water Drainage Standards: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Development will be approved, in principle, if surface water is dealt with in a sustainable manner and in ways that avoid flooding and pollution. Flood risk assessments will be required in those cases where flooding can be expected.

The best available Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) will be required as a means of achieving sustainable disposal and/or re-use/recycling of surface water. In all cases the developer will be required to demonstrate how the effectiveness of the measures taken will be maintained in perpetuity.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to address pollution and flooding problems which may result from directly discharging surface water into sewers and water courses.

Sustainable urban drainage not only reduces the amount of flooding and diffuse pollution, but also improves the environmental quality of development to the benefit of the local community. The SUDS Design Manual requires SUDS to be considered for development at an early stage in project design in order to determine its applicability. It is *Scottish Environment Protection Agency* and Council policy to promote SUDS as the preferred solution for drainage of surface water run-off, including roof water, for all proposed *development, greenfield* and *brownfield*.

The overall objective is to return excess surface water to the natural water cycle with minimal adverse impact on people and the environment. The means by which this can be achieved can be designed as an attractive integral amenity feature within the development and can achieve significant ecological enhancement compared to conventional drainage options.

Developers should take into consideration the land requirement needed for SUDS when considering housing density, and the opportunity that certain SUDS may contribute to satisfying a development's open space requirement. A SUDS scheme should be in place for the treatment of surface water during construction, to reduce the impact of contamination of water courses. In all cases where more than 10 houses are proposed, a Drainage Impact Assessment, which will involve Scottish Water, will be required.

This policy conforms to:

- Development Plan – Objective 5.
- NEST – Policy 22

Other main documents:

- NPPG 10 (Planning and Waste Management) – main paragraphs 40 & 41.
- PAN 61 (Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems).
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Design (The Sustainable Urban Drainage Scottish Working Party), Drainage Impact Assessment – Guidance for Developers and Regulators.

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Water Supply

Development will be approved, in principle, if it can be satisfactorily served by mains water supply, or if the developer is able to demonstrate an alternative adequate supply, including where necessary, potable water supply.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all new *developments* are provided with an adequate and where necessary potable water supply. Where possible this should make use of existing mains water supply, and confirmation of the availability of this should be sought from *Scottish Water*, whose consent will also be required for any new connection.

Where mains water supply is not available, a new private supply may be sourced to service development. The onus will be on the developer to demonstrate that any new supply is adequate to serve the development proposed, and that in the instance of domestic use, it is of potable quality.

This policy conforms to:

- Development Plan – Objective 7.

Waste Management Facilities

While development which assists the reduction, re-use and recovery of waste will be considered favourably, any waste management facility will be required to demonstrate that:

- a) it conforms to the National Waste Strategy and to other area and local waste plans and strategies;
- b) account has been taken of locating it as close as possible to the source of waste;
- c) it would not impact negatively on the character and amenity of the surrounding area;
- d) it would not compromise public health or safety;
- e) it can be safely and easily accessed; **AND**
- f) where applicable, land restoration, after-care and after-use details (including the submission of bonds, where appropriate) have been agreed by the Planning Authority prior to planning permission being granted.

A landfill or land-raise proposal may be approved, in principle, if located:

- a) within a Tier 4 designation (as described in Appendix 12); **OR**
- b) within a Tier 3 designation where it is likely that there would be no harmful effects or, where an adverse impact on a Tier 3 designation is likely, there are no suitable alternative sites in a Tier 4 designation; **OR**

- c) Within a Tier 2 designation, where it can be demonstrated that any likely adverse impact will leave the objectives and overall integrity of the designated area largely unaffected or that any adverse effect on the qualities for which the site has been designated are significantly outweighed by the national benefits that could occur.
- d) Within a Tier 1 designation, but only if it is demonstrated that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

In cases b) - d) above, it should be demonstrated by means of a sequential test that no suitable alternatives exist within the lower tiers.

Justification

There is a need for more sustainable waste management facilities, and they are being introduced to comply with legislative requirements.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that waste management facilities are sited in locations which have the least negative environmental and social impacts.

Aberdeenshire generates one of the highest amounts of waste per head of population in Scotland. Most of this waste is disposed of in *landfill* sites but more sustainable waste management facilities are likely to be introduced. These include material recovery facilities, civic amenity recycling and disposal sites, and mini-recycling centres as part of the “bring” system. All these facilities raise different levels of environmental and social concerns and impacts. It is, therefore, essential they are located where these concerns and impacts are minimised as much as possible. Supplementary guidance will be prepared to identify relevant sites or areas of search for these facilities.

To help assess *development* proposals the views of the relevant key agencies may be sought, and the preparation of either an *Environmental Impact Assessment* and/or a *Traffic Assessment* may be required.

This policy conforms to:

- Development Plan - Objectives 5.
- NEST - Policy 26.

Other main documents:

- NPPG - 10 (Planning and Waste Management) - main paragraph 99
- Integrated Sustainable Waste Management Strategy (Aberdeenshire Council).
- National Waste Strategy and Area Waste Plan (SEPA).

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Waste Management Requirements for New Development

New development will be approved, in principle, if

- a) **adequate space for facilities to collect and store source segregated waste is provided in the layout and design; and**
- b) **adequate space is made available for kerbside collection of source segregated waste; AND**
- c) **sufficient space for home composting is provided, where appropriate.**

New developments will also be required, where adequate space is not already available, to provide space for communal waste recycling and collection facilities. This particularly applies to residential developments of more than 50 houses.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to promote sustainable waste management through the provision of waste management facilities as close to the source of the waste as possible.

Source segregated waste collection is a scheme being introduced to Aberdeenshire. It is the collection of separated materials for recycling or composting (e.g. cans, paper, glass, plastic etc) at the point of origin.

Space should be made available within the layout and design of a new *development* to provide centralised facilities for the public to deposit waste for recycling or recovery (“Bring Systems”). Until that space has been taken up for that purpose, the space should have a flexible function e.g. car parking.

The principles outlined in Policy Gen\2 (The layout, siting and design of new development) and Appendix I (The design of new development in Aberdeenshire) will also apply.

These planning requirements can overlap with requirements under waste management licensing. Developers therefore should involve the *Scottish Environment Protection Agency* at the pre-application discussion stage of their *planning application*.

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Renewable Energy Facilities - Wind energy

Wind energy developments will be approved, in principle, if located, sited, and designed in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) the proposal should be set back from roads and railways to at least the height of the turbine(s) proposed, to assure safety;
- b) it has been demonstrated that no part of any proposed wind energy development will give rise to electro-magnetic interference to communications installations; radar or air traffic control systems of both the National Air Traffic Services (NATS) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD); or adversely affect the quality of radio or TV reception;
- c) it has been demonstrated that no part of any proposed wind energy development will have a detrimental impact on the safeguarding zones for airports; airports, airfields or airstrips either licensed or unlicensed; aircraft flight paths; or MoD low-flying areas;
- d) the proposal has an impact (visual or other) which is assessed and is acceptable on sites of importance to natural heritage, international, national and local landscape designations, and areas of local ecological importance, in accordance with policies Env\1 to Env\7;
- e) the proposal would not have an adverse effect on any existing or proposed public access for walking, cycling or horse riding, in accordance with policy Env\22;

- f) the proposal is appropriate in terms of the scale and nature of the setting of listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeological sites, and historic gardens and designed landscapes, as listed in “The Inventory of Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes’ as prepared by The Countryside Commission for Scotland (now SNH)”;
- g) the proposal is sited to minimise adverse impact on the safety or amenity of any regularly occupied buildings and the grounds which they occupy - with regard to: ice throw in winter conditions, shadow flicker and shadow throw, visual intrusion, and the likely effect of noise generation. It is not anticipated that, taking into account all these factors, development would be less than 400m from the nearest dwelling and it is possible that a greater separation distance will be required;
- h) the proposal is unlikely to result in a material loss of amenity to other sensitive receptors, such as those involved in leisure or recreation on land or water; **AND**
- i) the proposal takes into consideration the cumulative impacts of neighbouring wind turbines or wind farm developments.

Subject to compliance with all of the criteria above, wind farm proposals in particular must also conform to a sequential exploration of the following four tier approach, which is fully defined in Appendix 12. In all cases of wind farm development, where there is a significant impact the developer

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will be required to demonstrate why a site in a less sensitive area is impractical.

TIER 1 - Wind farm developments that would have an adverse impact on international designations will not be permitted unless there is an imperative reason of overriding public interest for doing so and there is no alternative solution. Such alternatives must include taking account of locating the development in lower tier areas.

TIER 2 - Wind farm developments will only be permitted in national designations where it can be demonstrated that the objectives of the designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised, and that there is no alternative site for the development. Such alternatives must include taking account of locating the development in lower tier areas.

TIER 3 - Wind farm developments will only be permitted following careful consideration of its impact on Tier 3 designations. Where harmful effects are likely, it should be demonstrated that no suitable alternatives exist in Tier 4 areas.

TIER 4 - Wind farm developments will be permitted where they respect the character and amenity of the surrounding area.

In all cases, if consent is granted, appropriate conditions (along with a legal agreement under Section 75, where necessary) will be imposed, relating to the removal of the turbine(s) and associated equipment, and to the restoration of the site, whenever the consent expires or the project ceases to operate for a specific period.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage the sensitive *development* of wind energy facilities. As more landowners are expressing an interest in diversifying into wind energy, it is necessary to have a policy that facilitates development while ensuring the protection of the local landscape, nature conservation interests and general *amenity*. Wind energy development can range from a single “domestic” turbine to a commercial wind farm with many wind turbines. Individual domestic wind turbines are not subject to those aspects of the policy related specifically to wind farms.

In order to protect residential amenity, wind energy developments should generally be not less than 400m from dwellings. The actual desirable separation distance will be dependent on a range of factors including topography, safety issues, noise, shadow flicker, shadow throw and the size of the turbines. A separation distance of at least 10 rotor diameters between the wind turbines and nearby dwellings is required, in accordance with good practice identified in PAN 45 to minimise shadow flicker. In the case of noise, a reasonable standard to protect residential amenity would be a limit of 5dB(A) above measured background noise levels, LA90,10min, for both day and night-time, (subject to a lower fixed limit). However, this limit could be varied, depending on the specific localised circumstances, for instance where the occupier of a property has some financial interest in the wind farm or turbine. Supplementary planning guidance will provide more detail on these and other matters. The onus will be placed on the developers to show that the impacts of their development have been minimised and are also within the thresholds stated in PAN45.

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Wind energy developments should not be located on the ridgeline and/or result in the loss of amenity to sensitive receptors, such as those who live, work or enjoy recreation pursuits on land or water. Sites should be selected which minimise skyline silhouettes seen from important roads, footpaths, rivers, lochs, listed buildings, archaeological sites, viewpoints and/or inhabited dwellings. Developers should avoid siting wind turbines in a landscape which is inappropriate for the size or number of wind turbines proposed. For example, in an uncluttered or small scale landscape.

Wind energy developments can interfere with broadcast communications and signals, depending on their location and design. Therefore, it is important that developers consult with the local emergency services, local authority, gas and electricity companies, the Office of Communications, British Aviation Authority (BAA), Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the MoD at the earliest possible stage. The Planning Authority will take into account the views of the relevant communications installations, BAA, CAA, and the MoD when determining a *planning application* for any wind energy development.

The tiered approach should be used as a basis for deciding planning applications for wind farm proposals, which should be located in Tier 4 areas in the first instance. Proposals should generally avoid Tier 1 and 2 areas. Appendix 12 of this Plan provides a detailed breakdown of the tiered policy areas from 1-4. This hierarchical approach to directing development is supported by a number of NPPGs, particularly NPPG 14 on “Natural Heritage”. A number of habitats and features that are not necessarily recognised designations are also included to provide further clarity and direction for development. These include coastal sand and dune systems, river and stream beds, Aberdeen Green Belt, buffer zones and pipeline wayleave routes. To help assess development proposals, the views of the

relevant key agencies will be sought where appropriate.

An *Environmental Impact Assessment* (EIA) under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999 will usually be required to inform judgements on the significance of impact of wind turbines. The usual circumstances where this requirement will apply to wind turbines are set out in paragraph 21 of PAN 45, which provides guidance to the Regulations. Where a proposal does not meet the requirements for a formal EIA, an informal environmental statement will be required as information in support of the application. Such a statement should include an assessment of the landscape, visual impact, transportation, amenity, (TV and radio reception, noise, shadow flicker and shadow throw), safety impacts and, where appropriate, a consideration of alternative sites unless otherwise stated.

Further guidance on the most suitable locations for wind farms, the principles of good design for a wind turbine or wind farm, and the assessment of impact will be produced as supplementary planning guidance from the Renewable Energy Strategy, which was published in 2004.

This policy conforms to:

- Development Plan - Objectives 3, 5, 10 & 11
- NEST - Policies 5 & 26

Other main documents:

- NPPG 6 (Renewable Energy) - main paragraph 77
- PAN 45 (Renewable Energy Technologies)

Footnote:

Wind farm developments can have a significant impact on the amenity and sense of place of communities. Developers should consider whether they would wish to compensate communities for this planning loss. Any such contributions should be directed to the affected local communities, within a 20km radius, for the community benefit. Such contributions would be based purely on good will and developers are encouraged to directly contact communities rather than engaging with the local authorities on this issue.

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Other Renewable Energy Sources

Renewable energy facilities, other than wind energy developments will be approved, in principle, if located, sited, and designed in accordance with the following criteria:

- a) the proposal will not compromise public health or safety, including emissions, effluent, residues or ash being released into the atmosphere or watercourses (for example through leaching or run-off);
- b) the proposal has an impact which is assessed and is acceptable on sites of importance to natural heritage, national and local landscape designations, or areas of ecological importance, in accordance with policies Env\1 to Env\7;
- c) the proposal is appropriate in terms of the scale and nature of the setting of historic buildings, conservation areas, and archaeological sites;
- d) satisfactory steps are taken to mitigate negative development impacts, such as noise (for example from engines, boilers, handling equipment or traffic), visual intrusion, or traffic movement (for example, transporting fuel to the site and subsequent removal of by-products / wastes) on occupiers of nearby properties (in or outwith a settlement boundary);
- e) where applicable, it conforms to the National Waste Strategy and other area and local waste plans and strategies; AND
- f) where applicable, land restoration, after care, and after use details are satisfactory.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage the sensitive *development* of renewable energy facilities whilst ensuring protection of the landscape, nature conservation interests and *amenity*. Attention in particular will be given to ecological, transportation, landscape and amenity considerations under the relevant policies in this Plan.

Renewable energy is power generated from sun, wind, water, plants or some gases. This is the most sustainable way of generating energy and should therefore be encouraged, but only in ways that respect the environment.

To help assess development proposals, the views of the relevant key agencies will be sought where appropriate.

An *Environmental Impact Assessment* (EIA) under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999 will usually be required to inform judgements on the significance of the incineration of non-hazardous waste or hydroelectric schemes. Where a proposal does not meet the requirements for a full EIA, an informal environmental statement will be required as information in support of the application.

Further guidance on the most suitable locations for biomass electricity and/or heating, their design, and the assessment of impact will be produced as supplementary planning guidance.

This policy conforms to:

- Development Plan - Objectives 3, 5, 10 & 11.
- NEST Policies 5 & 26.

Other main documents:

- NPPG 6 (Renewable Energy) - main paragraphs 37 - 44.
- PAN 45 (Renewable Energy Technologies).

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Telecommunications Masts

Telecommunications masts and associated apparatus will be approved, in principle, provided that:

- a) **they are sited and designed to minimise visual impact or they reduce the intrusiveness of existing masts or antennae;**
- b) **the developer provides a certificate in accordance with the ICNIRP guidelines; AND**
- c) **any rejection of options for mast sharing and installation on existing structures has been fully justified.**

In National Scenic Areas and Areas of Landscape Significance additional care must be taken in the siting and design of masts and antennae.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that telecommunications masts and apparatus can be erected without harming the environment and the public.

Use of concealment, disguise and equipment of appropriate scale to the location are all to be encouraged in order to reduce the intrusiveness of telecommunications equipment.

Development of telecommunications masts and apparatus and associated transmitting equipment is increasing as operators seek to provide a satisfactory network for the users of mobile telephones in particular. Therefore, in order to respect the environment and protect the health and safety of the public they must meet certain standards. In this respect, developers and operators should refer to the ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection) guidelines on public exposure. Removal, land restoration and after use details are matters addressed under Government Licensing obligations.

This policy conforms to:

- Development Plan – Objectives 3, 5, 6 & 10 (chapter 2).
- NEST – Policy 4.

Other main documents:

- ICNIRP Guidelines
- NPPG 19 (Radio Telecommunications) – main paragraphs 39-55
- PAN 62 (Radio Telecommunications).

Community Facilities

New community facilities will be approved, in principle, in accessible locations within settlements, with a preference for town centres.

Where existing community facilities within settlements have become surplus to requirements, proposals for their re-use or re-development will be supported, subject to their being consistent with the terms of Policies Gen\1, Gen\4 and Gen\11.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to encourage, where appropriate, the provision of new public and private services, facilities or infrastructure which help to support and enhance a community.

The social foundations of many communities rely on the facilities, such as halls or children's nurseries, within them and they should be supported wherever possible. Otherwise, the roles of some communities could be threatened, particularly in rural areas where meeting places are scarce. In recognition of this, contributions will be sought from developers for, the provision of new facilities or the up-grading of existing facilities.

The provision of new *community facilities*, or the re-organisation of services, may result in existing community facilities becoming surplus to requirements. In these circumstances, where the facilities are located within *settlements*, the general policies in this plan provide the appropriate framework for considering specific proposals for their re-development or change of use. Where the facilities are outwith settlements, the particular circumstances both of the site, and of the proposed *development*, will be considered when assessing whether an exception to the presumptions against development, set out in Policies Gen\13 and Emp\2, would be justified.

Where new facilities are proposed, these shall be fully accessible to potential user groups including the disabled and those who are less mobile.

This policy conforms to:

- Development Plan – Objective 8 (chapter 2)

Airports and Airfields

Development will be refused where it would impact adversely on the safety of the present or possible future operations of existing airports or airfields.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to prevent unnecessary dangers to low-flying aircraft and to safeguard presently unused airfields from *development* which may prejudice their future re-use for air traffic.

A major concern with airports and airfields are dangers to aircraft, such as tall buildings and refuse tips or sewage disposal works that may attract flocks of birds. Another concern relates to development involving large numbers of people congregating in an area, whether for living or working, where they are likely to be affected in the event of a crash, and where noise disturbance from aircraft movements will be greatest. It is therefore important to consider the effect of development on the present and possible future operation of these airports and airfields.

This policy applies in particular to Aberdeen Airport, where the safeguarded area extends 15-23 kms along landing and take-off paths. To help assess relevant development proposals the views of the *Civil Aviation Authority*, and other airfield operators where appropriate, will be sought.

This policy conforms to:

- *NPPG 17* (Transport and Planning) – main paragraph 76.
- *Development Plan* – Objectives 2 & 6 (Chapter 2).

Safeguarding Land for the Modern Transport System

Safeguarded sites have been identified on the Main Proposals Maps for transport infrastructure projects relating to a Modern Transport System in the North East. Proposals for development which would prejudice implementation of such projects will be refused unless a better alternative demonstrating compliance with the “best environmental option not entailing excessive cost” is identified.

In addition to those sites identified on the Main Proposals Maps, safeguarded sites will include currently unused rail lines and other areas of former or otherwise unused railway land, where such sites might contribute to the development and delivery of the Modern Transport System for North East Scotland and the Council’s Local Transport Strategy aims and objectives.

Justification

The aim of this policy is to ensure that *development* does not prejudice our ability to provide for the needs of the future, and that key sites and existing and potential transport routes, corridors and facilities, are safeguarded from speculative development.

Principal amongst these sites are the preferred routes for the *Western Peripheral Route* and sites associated with the Stonehaven to Inverurie passenger rail service. For all proposed development in the vicinity of the preferred routes as outlined above, the advice of the Council’s Transportation and Infrastructure Service and the Trunk Roads Authority will be of paramount importance in determining acceptability.

This policy conforms to:

- *Development Plan* – Objectives 2 & 6 (Chapter 2).
- *NEST* – Policy 32.

Other main documents:

- *NPPG 17* (Transport and Planning) – main paragraphs 64 & 65.
- *Local Transport Strategy* (Aberdeenshire Council).

