

Review of SG DC2: Access to new development

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to review the current Local Development Plan (LDP) policy approach to developer contributions and make recommendations in light of changes in national policy and the local context. In this case the policy under review is SG Developer Contributions2: Access to new development (SG DC2).

2. Background

National Context

- 2.1 In terms of the accessibility of new development, in order to contribute to the Scottish Government's aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) advises that sites should be less focused in the private car and should rather concentrate on promoting the use of walking, cycling and public transport. SPP states that new housing development should be "integrated with public transport and active travel networks such as footpaths and cycle routes". When public transport is commercially unviable, contributions may be required towards the provision of the service. Initiatives such as Dial-a-Bus and small-scale park and ride facilities may be required in rural areas

Strategic/Regional Context

- 2.2 . The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 advises that all development should contribute towards reducing the need to travel by encouraging people to walk, cycle and use public transport. In section 5 of the current plan "Putting the plan into practice" a number of proposals are made relating to park and ride services and road and rail improvements to make environmentally friendly methods of transport more attractive. These proposals are indicated on the key diagram. These have been carried forward into the new Strategic Development Plan although the aspiration for park and ride sites has been reduced to two, on the outskirts of Aberdeen City. Protection of these sites will be achieved through the implementation of SG Safeguarding 4: Safeguarding transportation facilities.

3. Approach

- 3.1 SG DC2 aims to ensure that all new development is accessed by a range of modes of transport not only the private car. All accesses should be safe, convenient, and accessible for all and not cause barriers to further development. In order to protect the natural form of landscapes, hill tracks should not be visually intrusive, should follow the "tram track" form, not cause any erosion and not impact negatively on existing tracks or footpaths.

4. Drivers of Change

- 4.1 The Scottish Government continues to promote the importance of varieties of modes of transport in order to reduce emissions and improve well-being. The overall aim of the policy continues to align with the aims of the Government.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 An additional criterion is required to include small scale development. While the policy provides details on how to provide an appropriate access for larger scale proposals, there is no reference to individual sites where a new private access is required to join the public road. This amendment need not be discussed in the Main Issues Report.
- 5.2 SPP promotes the provision of public transport in all areas. In remote rural areas bus services can often be unviable. The sustainability of the settlement pattern in rural Aberdeenshire is a significant issue and is likely to be considered as a main issue in the context of Policy 3. SG SD2 currently provides an “escape clause” for developments which do not have availability of public transport so as to avoid a potential policy conflict with the rural development policy. This may need to be reconsidered as consequential change if the Rural Development policy is revised.
- 5.3 A minor amendment is required within the Reasoned Justification to reflect organisational changes within Aberdeenshire Council. All roads and accesses should be designed to the satisfaction of (Roads Development) Infrastructure Services. This amendment need not be discussed in the Main Issues Report.

6. Summary of main points

- 6.1 This supplementary guidance addresses the key issues on how to achieve appropriately designed accesses to serve new development. New development must be accessed by a range of modes of transport in order to support sustainability, reduce emissions and improve well-being. All accesses should be safe, convenient, accessible for all, not visually dominant and not cause barriers to further development. The following minor actions are proposed:
- The following criterion should be added to reflect small scale developments where a private access onto a public road is required.
“Any new private access onto a public road is designed to the satisfaction of the Council’s Roads Development Department and, in the case with a trunk road, Transport Scotland”;
 - Transportation and Infrastructure should be amended to Roads Development.

Bibliography

Aberdeenshire Council (2012) *Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012*
Scottish Government (2010) *Scottish Planning Policy*
SNH (2006): *Constructed Tracks in the Scottish Uplands*