

ANGUS COUNCIL**PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE 6 JUNE 1996****SUBJECT: STRUCTURE PLANNING POLICY: LAND FOR HOUSING****REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Abstract: This Report advises the Committee of the terms of the Secretary of State's recent Parliamentary Statement proposing a new policy covering the allocation of land for housing in Structure plans. Details of this new policy have yet to be made available. However, it appears likely that this will have significant implications both for the terms of the final approval of the Tayside Structure Plan 1993 currently with the Secretary of State for consideration, and for important aspects of future Structure Plan and Local Plan work in Angus

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee -

- i. Notes the recent announcement by the Secretary of State of a new policy covering the allocation of land for housing in structure plans.
- ii. Note that the new policy may have significant implications for both the terms of a final decision on the Tayside Structure Plan 1993 and for future Structure and Local Plan work in Angus.
- iii. Request the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Development to bring forward a further Report on the implications of the proposed changes and action required following receipt of further details and guidance to be issued by the Scottish Office Development Department.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 On 15 May 1996, the Secretary of State for Scotland announced, in a Written Answer to a Parliamentary Question, a new policy covering the allocation of land for housing in Structure Plans. A copy of a letter, dated 20 May 1996, from the Scottish Office Development Department including the relevant extract from Hansard announcing the new policy is attached as Appendix 1 to this Report.
- 2.2 While details of the new policy are still awaited it is likely that this may have significant implications for the terms of approval of the Tayside Structure Plan 1993, including a further delay in the timescale for the Secretary of State's approval.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 National guidance on housing land matters to be tackled through Structure Plans is currently set out in:

- National Planning Policy Guideline 3: Land for Housing
 - Planning Advice Note 37: Structure Planning
 - Planning Advice Note 38: Structure Plans: Housing Land Requirements
- 3.2 The above guidance and advice covers issues such as calculating and categorising the availability of the current supply of housing land; forecasting the future requirement for housing land taking account of various considerations affecting need and demand; maintaining an appropriate supply of land within housing market areas including the allocation of further greenfield and brownfield sites for housing development.
- 3.3 Various concerns have previously been expressed by former Local Authorities in many parts of Scotland including former Tayside authorities, on aspects of the National Guidance for matching land supply with likely requirement. However the most controversial issues have arisen when the Secretary of State has modified Structure Plan housing land allocation policies at a settlement level significantly changing the strategies developed by the Structure Plan authorities.
- 3.4 Previous experience in Tayside included changes by the Secretary of State to various aspects of the 1988 Tayside Structure Plan housing land allocation policies. More recently draft modifications to the Finalised Tayside Structure Plan 1993, issued by the Secretary of State in August 1995, included significant proposed changes to the scale and location of future housing land allocations including the relationship between future housing land release in Dundee and Carnoustie, Forfar and Kirriemuir. Appendix 2 to this Report summarises the changes proposed by the Secretary of State.
- 3.5 Report No. AC56/95, which was considered by Angus Council on 30 August 1995, discussed the modifications proposed by the Secretary of State to the Tayside Structure Plan 1993 highlighting relevant issues for Angus. The Council agreed to advise the Secretary of State that:
- the proposed housing land modifications are likely to put further pressure on the A92 between Arbroath and Dundee; and
 - the need for investment in infrastructure in Angus to support additional development and improve the environment is reinforced by the proposed modifications.
- 3.6 It is also worth noting that the former Tayside Regional Council, as Structure Plan Authority, formally objected to several of the proposed changes to housing policies. This included objections on the basis that the changes proposed are too constrained by a continuation of past trends and fail to provide sufficient discretion for forward planning to respond positively to needs and opportunities arising through the formulation and implementation of an appropriate Development Strategy.
- ## 4 DISCUSSION
- 4.1 In advance of further details on the announcement by the Secretary of State, it is not possible to gauge the extent of additional discretion which may be available to new

Structure Plan Authorities. Similarly the implications for the timing and nature of the Secretary of States final decision on the Tayside Structure Plan 1993 are as yet unclear. However, from the terms of the Scottish Office letter, dated 20 May 1996, there is potentially scope for a significant delay in approval of the Structure Plan. This includes the provision, in due course, for further submissions from interested parties including Angus Council in advance of the Secretary of State reaching a final decision.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Director of Law and Administration and Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 At present the full implications of the recent announcement by the Secretary of State of a new policy covering the allocation of land for housing in structure plans is unclear. This announcement gives rise to an unusual situation where approval of the Tayside Structure Plan 1993 had been expected shortly. Further guidance will be issued by the Scottish Office in due course and this will be reported to the Committee including the implications for Structure and Local Planning work in Angus.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/CGR/rj

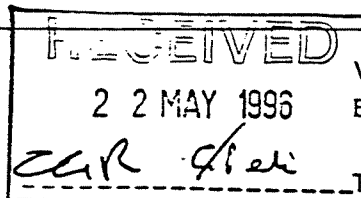
Alex Anderson
Director of Planning, Transport & Economic Development
27 May 1996



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE
Development Department

Appendix 1

Chief Executives
Local Authorities



Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
Telephone 0131-244
Fax 0131-244

20 May 1996

Dear Sir or Madam

STRUCTURE PLANNING POLICY: LAND FOR HOUSING

I am writing to advise you that, on 15 May, the Secretary of State for Scotland announced, in a Written Answer to a Parliamentary Question, a new policy covering the allocation of land for housing in structure plans. A copy extract from Hansard is attached.

The new policy is intended to give Councils greater freedom in deciding the overall level of housing provision and how it might best be allocated in their structure plans giving due weight to their own detailed knowledge of local circumstances and priorities, as well as to housing demand. Significantly, it will enable authorities to take on real responsibility for deciding what level of provision is appropriate in their areas, having regard both to those who want to live in the area and those who already live there. The initiative is consistent with the Government's general aim of devolving more power from central to local government in Scotland, and responds to representations about the inflexible way the present policy is being applied and persistent claims about central government imposing unacceptable levels of development on existing communities.

New guidance, in the form of revisions to NPPG3 and PAN38, will be issued as soon as possible to assist local authorities. The guidance will set out the factors which should be considered when developing a housing land strategy and indicate how the Secretary of State expects authorities to approach the balancing of these factors. In considering a plan which is submitted to him, the Secretary of State will want to satisfy himself that the way in which a particular authority has carried out this balancing is reasonable in the light of the policy guidance.

Structure plans for the former Central, Grampian, Lothian, Tayside and Strathclyde areas are presently with the Secretary of State for consideration. Because of the substantial nature of this policy change, the Secretary of State intends, before reaching a final decision on these structure plans, to give relevant authorities and others the opportunity to consider what effect

it will have on them and if they wish to make submissions to him. We shall provide authorities with further advice when the revised guidance issues, probably in about a month's time.

If you have any queries concerning the general aspects of the new policy, please contact Fiona Harrison (0131-244 7710). Queries about the application of the new policy to the structure plans mentioned above should be directed to Ian Firth (0131-244 7077), Jack Gillespie (0131-244 7079) or Mike Scott (Strathclyde only) (0131-244-7078).

A copy of this letter goes to each Director of Planning.

Yours faithfully



M T AFFOLTER

Local Authorities (Structure Plans)

Mr. Gallie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will devolve more power to local authorities in Scotland in relation to structure plans; and if he will make a statement. [29814]

Mr. Michael Forsyth: I am delighted to announce a new initiative today which is consistent with my general aim to devolve more power from central to local government in Scotland. I propose to give councils greater freedom for deciding how best to allocate appropriate land for housing in structure plans on the basis of their own detailed knowledge of local circumstances and priorities, including housing demand. This responds to representations about the inflexibility of the present policy and persistent claims about central government imposing unacceptable levels of development on existing communities. Accordingly, what I propose represents a change from the current position where the Government set out guidance on what needs to be provided and I take decisions about whether to approve, or modify the structure plans in the light of these. In my view, this is too prescriptive and means too many planning decisions are taken centrally.

My new policy will enable authorities to take on real responsibility for deciding what level of provision is appropriate in their areas having regard both to those who want to live in the area and those who already live there. To assist authorities with this task I will be publishing shortly fresh guidance which will set out the factors authorities should take into account. In addition to housing demand these will include economic, infrastructure, environmental and amenity considerations with a view to authorities striking a balance in the light of local priorities. Authorities will now, for example, be better able to protect small towns and villages from inappropriate large scale development where they consider this would adversely affect the local environment and amenity.

In considering the structure plans which come before me, I will retain my present obligation to satisfy myself that the way authorities have carried out this balancing is reasonable and complies with policy guidance.

APPENDIX 2

Finalised Tayside Structure Plan 1993
Schedule 1 - Housing Land Allocations by Planning Area 1993 - 2006
(on Sites of 5 Units or More)

	Effective Land Supply at June 1993	Additional Allocation		Total Allowance 1993-2006
		1993-2001	2001-2006 (Subject to Review)	
Montrose	50	210	180	440
Brechin	70	150	130	350
Montrose/Brechin Landward	10	100	80	190
Montrose/Brechin Planning Area	130	460	390	980
Arbroath	430	130	280	840
Carnoustie	70	70 (170)	120 (320)	260 (560)
Arbroath/Carnoustie Landward	60	50 (100)	100	210 (260)
Arbroath/Carnoustie Planning Area	560	250 (400)	500 (700)	1310 (1660)
Forfar	190	100 (200)	250 (300)	540 (690)
Kirriemuir	220	100 (200)	150 (250)	470 (670)
Forfar/Kirriemuir Landward	80	100	110	290
Forfar/Kirriemuir Planning Area	490	300 (500)	510 (660)	1300 (1650)
Dundee District Greenfield Sites	530	1040 (890)	1280 (1130)	2850 (2550)
Dundee District Brownfield Sites	1490	1040 (890) No Limit (assume 2500) (2300)	1280 (1130) No Limit (assume 2700) (2500)	2850 (2550) No Limit (assume 6690) (6290)

Note: Figures in Brackets () are DRAFT modifications proposed by Secretary of State

