

ANGUS COUNCIL

STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE – 11 JUNE 2013

**SCOTLANDS THIRD NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK
MAIN ISSUES REPORT AND DRAFT FRAMEWORK**

REPORT BY STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – COMMUNITIES

ABSTRACT This report comments on and provides the suggested basis for the Council's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Scotland's Third National Planning Framework - Main Issues Report and Draft Framework

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee/Council:-

- (i) note the publication of the Scotland's Third National Planning Framework – Main Issues Report and Draft Framework; and
- (ii) agree this report as the basis of the Council's response to the Scottish Government on the Third National Planning Framework – Main Issues Report and Draft Framework.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Scottish Government published for consultation purposes a draft of Scotland's Third National Planning Framework (NPF3) and Main Issues Report on 30 April 2013. The period for comment on the document extends until 23 July 2013. The draft National Planning Framework is the spatial expression of the 'Government Economic Strategy'. It sets out the national context for development planning in Scotland and provides a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. It also sets out the Government's Development Priorities over the next 20 – 30 years and identifies national developments which support the development strategy. The Main Issues Report (MIR) for draft NPF3 sets out the Government's preferred option as well as reasonable alternatives. A number of supporting documents have also been published including Participation Statement, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitats Regulation Appraisal (HRA), Business and Regulatory Assessment (BRIA), Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) and Report of Analysis of national developments.
- 2.2 Members may recall that the second National Planning Framework (NPF2) was published in June 2009 and provided a long term spatial strategy for the development of Scotland to 2030. Since then the global down turn has changed the economic context and new policy areas have emerged for example, in digital infrastructure and energy generation. Some of the 14 national developments identified in NPF2 have either gained consent, been completed or are on the way to delivery. As an example of national infrastructure projects, members will be aware that the construction of the Forth Replacement crossing has commenced; and development of facilities for the 2014 Commonwealth Games are on schedule. Background work associated with monitoring NPF2 has confirmed that the existing overall spatial strategy remains sound. Draft NPF3 is therefore an evolution of the existing strategy, updated to reflect new circumstances, challenges and opportunities with an even greater emphasis on ensuring that strategy is given effect through new development and infrastructure.
- 2.3 This report has been prepared following consultation through a Member Officer Group (on Planning Related Matters) meeting held on 27 May 2013. The report provides a synopsis of the National Planning Framework 3 Main Issues Report focussing on the elements that are particularly important to Angus and provides the basis for a response to the Scottish Government. When NPF3 is finalised and approved by the Scottish Parliament it will be a material consideration in the preparation of development plan policy and for development management purposes. As is common place with Scottish Government consultation papers,

reaction and comment is sought from a range of users through a series of questions (16) relating to the draft document. These are set out in [Appendix 1](#) of this report and together with the main body of the report form the suggested response by Angus Council.

- 2.4 A copy of the draft NPF3 is available in the Information Hub, Forfar. Alternatively a copy may be viewed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/04/2377>

3. SUMMARY OF DRAFT NPF3

- 3.1 The purpose of draft NPF3 is to set out the spatial expression of the Scottish Government's economic strategy. The preferred spatial strategy of draft NPF3 is built on 'our opportunities' including the Government's commitment to respond to the challenge of climate change; the role of our cities in driving growth; the importance of knowledge and skills; the increasing premium investors are putting on quality of place and environment; and developing digital technologies.

- 3.2 It is recognised that to achieve sustainability it is essential that Scotland makes the most efficient use of our existing assets – our natural resources, our land, towns and cities, our infrastructure. Draft NPF3 is structured around the key areas for change that have emerged since NPF2 was published in 2009.

- 3.3 The vision for Scotland is set out under four key priorities:

A low carbon place – we have seized the opportunities arising from our ambition to be a world leader in low carbon energy generation. Our built environment is more energy efficient and produces less waste, we will have made progress in ensuring our transport networks are largely decarbonised. The benefits are realised across the country.

A natural place to invest – our environment and natural resources are respected, they are improving in condition and represent a sustainable economic, environmental and social resource for the nation.

A successful sustainable place – we have a growing, sustainable low carbon economy which provides opportunities more fairly distributed between and within all our communities. All our people live in high quality, sustainable places which provide enough homes and foster better health. There is a fair distribution of opportunities in cities, towns and rural areas, reflecting the diversity and strengths of our unique people and places.

A connected place – the whole country has access to high speed fixed and mobile digital infrastructure. We have more and better strategic transport links that facilitate our aspirations for a growing economy and inclusive society.

- 3.4 Taking account of each of the above priorities the draft NPF3 sets out the spatial strategy for Scotland and identifies a number of actions and projects which help achieve these priorities. Key points are set out below:

- 3.5 **A Low Carbon Place** - the ambition is to achieve at least 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This will be achieved by

- **Reducing energy demand** - improving energy efficiency in new building (supported through the Building Regulations); and the development of Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing; and the development of draft regulations for minimum energy efficiency standards for private sector housing.
- **Heat** –supporting the transition to a largely decarbonised heat sector by 2050. The aim is to generate 11% of heat requirements from renewable sources by 2020. Encouraging use of biomass and a range of other technologies. (it should be noted that Angus Council is already utilising biomass in localised heating schemes).
- **Onshore wind** - achieving the target of generating the equivalent of at least 100% of gross electricity consumption from renewables by 2020. Recognition of the need to protect iconic landscapes of the national parks and national scenic areas and also the requirement for local authorities to prepare spatial strategies for onshore development. (It should be noted that Angus already has a Renewable Energy Implementation guide and the current Landscape Capacity Study (in conjunction with SNH and Aberdeenshire Council) will provide significant input into a review of our renewable energy spatial strategy and policy as part the Angus Local Development Plan.)

- **Offshore renewable** – increasing opportunity for wind, wave and tidal energy development. Identify and support the onshore electricity grid infrastructure to realise the early opportunities for offshore renewables. Supporting investment in and the development of ports and Enterprise Areas to facilitate the construction and servicing of offshore renewable energy. Currently in Angus this involves the port of Montrose and the landing point at Carnoustie/Barry, undergrounding cables and substation at Tealing for the Firth of Forth offshore wind farm.
- **Community ownership** – the ambition is to increase the combined capacity of community owned schemes to at least 500MW by 2020.
- **Base load electricity generation requirements** – new non nuclear base load capacity at existing power station sites at Longannet, Cockenzie and Peterhead; carbon capture and storage projects. In Angus this would involve reuse of the existing national pipeline network.
- **Electricity transmission, distribution and storage** – electricity grid reinforcements to provide the transmission capacity to realise the potential of renewable energy resources. In Angus this comprises upgrading the existing overhead transmission lines as part of the north and east Scotland grid reinforcement.
- **Further opportunities** in the oil and gas sector.
- **Retaining the benefits** from the energy sector in Scotland – support for the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan (NRIP) to secure investment and new development across the country. In Angus, Montrose is identified in the NRIP and may provide medium to long term opportunities to support wind, wave and tidal technologies.

3.6 **Natural place to invest** – the ambition is to respect, enhance and make responsible use of our natural and cultural assets. This will be achieved by:

- **Key assets** - reflecting the importance of the Governments Land Use Strategy (2011) and linking the principles of the use and management of Scotland's land with both the draft NPF3 and Scottish Planning Policy. Reinforcing the importance of and protection for prime quality agricultural land, woodland cover and peatlands. Support also for Scotland's green network, landscape quality, built and environment and cultural heritage
- **Tourism, recreation and the visitor economy** – protect and enhance the natural and cultural assets which support this.
- **Long distance footpaths** – are a key recreational resource and coverage could be enhanced to provide a unique marketable resource. There are a number of walking and cycle routes in Angus which would form part of a national network.
- **Sustainable Resource Management** – opportunities for making sustainable use of material resources such as minerals, water and waste/energy. There are arrange of opportunities and resources identified within Angus.

3.7 **A Successful, sustainable place** – the ambition is to create high quality, diverse and desirable places to promote wellbeing and attract investment. This will be achieved through:

- **Sustainable economic growth** – support the Economic Strategy through helping deliver a supportive business environment, help the transition to a low carbon economy focussing on renewable energy and grid infrastructure; and delivering greater equity. There will be a focus on cities strategic hubs, enterprise areas, urban regeneration national developments. This includes the city of Dundee and the Dundee Waterfront project Angus hosts a range of companies and activities related to the identified as key sectors and natural assets including food and drink and energy.
- **A Sustainable settlement strategy** – which will mean different things in different areas but all aimed to reduce the need to travel, promote community led regeneration and urban and rural disadvantage which reinforces the current development plan approach in Angus.
- **Green networks** – primarily expanding green networks in the Central Belt, cities and around towns emphasising links and multi-functionality rather than quantity.
- **Health** – the role of planning in promoting health through environmental protection and enhancement, provision for active travel and improved health care facilities. There is a well established active travel network in Angus and environmental improvements and provision of services are actively promoted at a number of locations.
- **The right homes in the right places** – the need for homes is projected to increase including in Angus. Housing provision should respond to varying local requirements by identifying housing land on sites which can be delivered and where people want to live and also contribute to developing lower carbon places.

- 3.8 **A connected place** – ambition is to maintain and develop good internal and global connections through:
- **Decarbonisation of transport and reducing the need to travel** – through a shift to low carbon forms of transport, highlighting city and town centres as transport hubs, promotion of settlement patterns that reduce the need to travel and increasing active transport. The spatial strategy for Angus reflects this focus.
 - **Cities** – facilitate the role of cities as drivers of growth and focus on the need to invest in transport infrastructure between them and within their regions.
 - **Links to support economic investment** – investment should maximise economic benefit from identified projects and proposals through investment in related transport infrastructure, scenic corridors and long distance routes and canals.
 - **Connections to rural areas** – focussing on existing settlements and facilitating higher density development should support public transport in the longer term but continuing dependence on travel by road suggests a spatial priority for provision for electric vehicles. The growing importance of digital links is also recognised. Improvements to rural broadband and mobile communications are currently being supported in Angus.
 - **International connections** – include major ports, airports and high speed rail which may be accessed from Angus.
- 3.9 **Areas of coordinated action** – six areas are identified for coordinated action; none involve the TAYplan area or Angus directly. These six areas were previously identified by NPF2 as where major change is happening or anticipated. NPF provides a summary of the main issues and will develop the proposed actions in the Proposed Framework. The areas involved are:
- Orkney, Pentland Firth and North Caithness
 - Inverness and the Inner Moray Firth
 - Aberdeen and the North East
 - Firth of Forth
 - Firth of Clyde
 - South West Coast

4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Draft NPF3 is a part of the statutory land use planning process establishing the overarching vision for the spatial strategy for Scotland. The finalised NPF3 will be submitted to and approved by the Scottish Parliament. Importantly it links closely with Scottish Planning Policy (see report 375/13 to Strategic Policy Committee 11 June 2013) which provides a non statutory statement on a range of national land use planning policy that will then be taken forward through strategic and local development plans. The Development Plan will take both NPF 3 and Scottish Planning Policy into account in establishing the land use planning response to regional and local issues and the framework for sustainable development for their specific areas.
- 4.2 The main national priorities underpinning the draft NPF3 – low carbon place, a natural place to invest, successful sustainable place and a connected place - are generally supported. Scotland has a wealth of resources. It is also evident that the natural, built and cultural heritage of Scotland is very important to investors, residents and visitors and the key issue going forward remains as to how the planning system can support sustainable economic development balancing the general high quality environment within Scotland and the range of opportunity across the country. Draft NPF3 identifies the key infrastructure or investment opportunity at the national level that will assist in achieving the economic outcomes.
- 4.3 Draft NPF3 identifies the following national proposals which affect the Angus area:
- Offshore renewable energy projects – the Firth of Forth wind farm – and the onshore infrastructure to support that project
 - Carbon capture project which would involve the reuse national pipelines through Angus
 - Electricity grid reinforcements as part of the east coast upgrade
 - Potential of Montrose Port to support wind, wave and tidal renewable energy generation projects. This would of course have wider benefit to the overall Angus economy
 - Dundee Waterfront project
 - Dundee Port Enterprise Area

4.4 It is disappointing that the Dundee area is not one of the Areas of Coordinated Action; Dundee is a key part of the TAYplan strategic planning area and both the Dundee Waterfront (including the V & A project, Dundee Regional airport) and Port Enterprise Zone are national projects. In addition Dundee is very important for medical research, life sciences and the gaming industry. Montrose is one of the potential sites identified through NRIP. The Carnoustie/Barry area is the preferred landing point for the Firth of Forth offshore windfarm, with underground cables extending to a substation at Tealing. On the wider agenda previous transport projects such as improvements to the east coast main line rail network at Montrose and the Dundee Kingsway/outer by pass project have no mention. These were part of the Strategic Transport Projects Review and our response should seek clarification of the future position of both projects. Taking into account the above and the considerable public/private investment across a number of initiatives within the city and the surrounding adjacent area it is considered that this would justify the identification and inclusion of the Dundee area as Area of Coordinated Action.

4.5 The suggested response to the NPF3 formal questions is set out in Appendix 1.

5. PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

There are no property implications arising from this report.

6. RISKS

There are no significant risks to the Council arising from this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required. It should be noted that The Scottish Government have published an Equalities Impact Assessment as part of the document package.

10. ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

This report responds to a document of an external agency and consequently does not directly contribute to the local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2011-2014. It will however influence future land use planning in Angus and therefore contribute subsequently to both Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement.

11. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

There are no SEA implications for Angus Council. It should be noted that The Scottish Government have undertaken SEA of their Draft National Planning Framework and published an Environmental Report.

12. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Strategic Director – Resources, Strategic Director – Communities, Head of Finance and Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

13. CONCLUSION

The draft National Planning Framework 3 provides the national spatial strategy for the development of Scotland over the next 30 years. It identifies key national infrastructure projects and opportunities for development that will enhance the economic role of Scotland.

**ALAN MCKEOWN
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NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Scotland's Third National Planning Framework – Main issues Report and Draft Framework – published by The Scottish Government, April 2013;
- National Planning Framework 2 for Scotland, published by The Scottish Government, 2009.

**P&T/GWC/GDP/IAL
29 May 2013**

APPENDIX 1 : RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION QUESTIONS