

The rural proofing checklist

Consider all the questions below. Will your initiative encounter the challenges presented by rural circumstances? Some potential solutions are indicated to help you consider appropriate adjustments.

Name of policy/ strategy: Scottish Borders Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2022-27

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Completed by: Gerry Begg Lead Officer – Housing Strategy, Policy and Development. Scottish Borders Council.

RURAL ISSUE	Yes	No	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
<p>1. Will the SHIP have a negative affect on the availability or delivery of services for people living in rural areas?</p> <p>In general the delivery of SHIP will have a positive effect, with developments in more rural locations and in less accessible rural locations.</p>		✓	Summary of likely impacts:
			Summary of adjustments made:
			Other Comments:
<p>2. Will access to the service be restricted for people living in rural areas?</p> <p>It is possible that RSLs may consider Local Lettings initiatives during this SHIP although these may not be considered in some of the areas identified for development.</p>		✓	Summary of likely impacts: Will allow for overcrowded/ under occupying households to remain within the same community
			Summary of adjustments made:
			Other Comments:
<p>3. Will the cost of delivery be higher in rural areas (where customers are more widely dispersed or it is hard to be cost-effective)? If yes, how will this extra cost be met or lessened?</p> <p><i>Rural solutions: allow for higher unit delivery costs when calculating costs (e.g. a 'sparsity' factor) or when specifying cost-efficiency criteria; encourage joint provision to reduce costs.</i></p>	✓		Summary of likely impacts: Increased building and management costs due to housing being located near to rural population by sustaining rural communities may reduce cost related to other services provided by public sector.
			Summary of adjustments made: Projects in this year's SHIP include affordable and modern methods of construction and renewable technologies.
			Other Comments: Most of Scottish Borders Council area is defined using Scottish Government urban/rural classification as being categories 6 and 7.

RURAL ISSUE	Yes	No	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
<p>4. Will the SHIP have a negative affect on the availability of affordable housing in rural areas?</p> <p><i>Rural solutions: consider provision of alternative affordable rural housing solutions.</i></p>		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts: Outcomes of SHIP will have a positive impact by increasing supply of affordable housing in rural and other locations.</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made: A rural weighting has been developed in the Project Priority Assessment Matrix to ensure that rural projects are not disadvantaged.</p> <p>Other Comments: The SHIP may potentially stimulate and drive the private market in delivering affordable housing to rural areas.</p>
<p>5. Will the SHIP be delivered by the private sector, or through a public-private partnership or local institution that may limit provision in rural areas?</p> <p>Private sector has role to play through the provision of land through Section 75 Agreements and carrying out development but will not limit provision of affordable housing in rural areas.</p>		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts:</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p> <p>Other Comments:</p>
<p>6. Does the SHIP rely on infrastructure for delivery (e.g. mobile phone coverage, broadband ICT, main roads, utilities) that may be limited in rural areas?</p>	✓		<p>Summary of likely impacts: Lack of infrastructure which impacts on development opportunity and timing of deliverability - lack of utilities in particular.</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made: Engaged utilities in the SHIP process and through regular meetings in order to identify project utility requirements availability to ensure deliverability. Infrastructure constraints are taken in to account in the Deliverability criteria assessment. Quarterly meetings are held with Scottish Water and SEPA.</p> <p>Other Comments:</p>

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<p>7. Will the SHIP have a negative impact on rural businesses, or land-based businesses, (including the self-employed) and therefore, on rural economies and environments?</p>		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts:</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p> <p>Other Comments: Housing development will have positive impacts through economic enhancement and providing a range of different opportunities, which primarily create housing, jobs and sustainability of communities. It also creates opportunities for diversification for traditional land based business (ie; farmers and forestry).</p> <p>In addition housing developments will create a range of training opportunities, including modern apprenticeships. Procurement processes may also seek to provide community benefits.</p>
<p>8. What will be the impact of the policy on employment in rural areas?</p> <p>SHIP should have a positive impact on employment in rural areas, creating rural jobs and opportunities for rural businesses</p> <p>The SHIP provides affordable housing for people on lower incomes ensuring community sustainability and retaining social networks particularly in a low wage economy of Borders.</p>	✓		<p>Summary of likely impacts:</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p> <p>Other Comments:</p>
<p>9. Is the SHIP to be targeted at disadvantaged people? If yes, how will it target rural disadvantage, which is not usually concentrated in neighbourhoods?</p>		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts:</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p> <p>Other Comments: Helps to sustain communities and rebuild social networks by increasing the supply of affordable housing which provides access to people on all levels of income.</p>
<p>10. Will the SHIP take into account the different size and needs of smaller rural schools and other service facilities?</p> <p>SHIP is the delivery plan for affordable housing which dovetails with the Council's Local Housing Strategy which aligns with other plans and strategies.</p>	✓		<p>Summary of likely impacts:</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p> <p>Other Comments:</p>

Steps to take

1. Ensure you are clear about the objectives of the proposed policy, its intended impacts or outcomes (including which areas, groups or organisations should benefit) and the means of delivery.
2. Run through each question in the checklist, identifying where the proposed policy is likely to have a different impact in rural areas.
3. Where there is uncertainty or a potentially different (worse) impact, this should be investigated further (and included in the overall assessment of the costs and benefits of the policy).
4. Where the impact in rural areas will be significantly different, explore policy options to produce the desired outcomes in rural areas or avoid/ reduce any undesirable impacts. This exercise may also highlight opportunities to maximise positive impacts in rural areas.
5. Feed the results of your appraisal, including solutions, into the decision-making process and ensure a record is kept, to be included in your Department's annual proofing report.