

**Local Review Reference:** 23/00001/RREF

**Planning Application Reference:** 22/00933/FUL

**Development Proposal:** Erection of timber storage and processing facility with new access junction, yard area, landscaping, tree planting, SUDs and associated works and planning permission in principle for associated dwellinghouse with office for the timber processing facility

**Location:** Land South West Of West Loch Farmhouse  
Peebles

**Applicant:** Mr Richard Spray

## **Scottish Borders Local Development Plan 2016**

### **POLICY PMD1: SUSTAINABILITY**

In determining planning applications and preparing development briefs, the Council will have regard to the following sustainability principles which underpin all the Plan's policies and which developers will be expected to incorporate into their developments:

- a) the long term sustainable use and management of land
- b) the preservation of air and water quality
- c) the protection of natural resources, landscapes, habitats, and species
- d) the protection of built and cultural resources
- e) the efficient use of energy and resources, particularly non-renewable resources
- f) the minimisation of waste, including waste water and encouragement to its sustainable management
- g) the encouragement of walking, cycling, and public transport in preference to the private car
- h) the minimisation of light pollution
- i) the protection of public health and safety
- j) the support to community services and facilities
- k) the provision of new jobs and support to the local economy
- l) the involvement of the local community in the design, management and improvement of their environment

### **POLICY PMD2: QUALITY STANDARDS**

All new development will be expected to be of high quality in accordance with sustainability principles, designed to fit with Scottish Borders townscapes and to integrate with its landscape surroundings. The standards which will apply to all development are that:

#### **Sustainability**

- a) In terms of layout, orientation, construction and energy supply, the developer has demonstrated that appropriate measures have been taken to maximise the efficient use of energy and resources, including the use of renewable energy and resources such as District Heating Schemes and the incorporation of sustainable construction techniques in accordance with supplementary planning guidance. Planning applications must demonstrate that the current carbon dioxide emissions reduction target has been met, with at least half of this target met through the use of low or zero carbon technology,
- b) it provides digital connectivity and associated infrastructure,
- c) it provides for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems in the context of overall provision of Green Infrastructure where appropriate and their after-care and maintenance,
- d) it encourages minimal water usage for new developments,
- e) it provides for appropriate internal and external provision for waste storage and presentation with, in all instances, separate provision for waste and recycling and, depending on the location, separate provision for composting facilities,

- f) it incorporates appropriate hard and soft landscape works, including structural or screen planting where necessary, to help integration with its surroundings and the wider environment and to meet open space requirements. In some cases agreements will be required to ensure that landscape works are undertaken at an early stage of development and that appropriate arrangements are put in place for long term landscape/open space maintenance,
- g) it considers, where appropriate, the long term adaptability of buildings and spaces.

#### Placemaking & Design

- h) It creates developments with a sense of place, based on a clear understanding of the context, designed in sympathy with Scottish Borders architectural styles; this need not exclude appropriate contemporary and/or innovative design,
- i) it is of a scale, massing, height and density appropriate to its surroundings and, where an extension or alteration, appropriate to the existing building,
- j) it is finished externally in materials, the colours and textures of which complement the highest quality of architecture in the locality and, where an extension or alteration, the existing building,
- k) it is compatible with, and respects the character of the surrounding area, neighbouring uses, and neighbouring built form,
- l) it can be satisfactorily accommodated within the site,
- m) it provides appropriate boundary treatments to ensure attractive edges to the development that will help integration with its surroundings,
- n) it incorporates, where appropriate, adequate safety and security measures, in accordance with current guidance on 'designing out crime'.

#### Accessibility

- o) Street layouts must be designed to properly connect and integrate with existing street patterns and be able to be easily extended in the future where appropriate in order to minimise the need for turning heads and isolated footpaths,
- p) it incorporates, where required, access for those with mobility difficulties,
- q) it ensures there is no adverse impact on road safety, including but not limited to the site access,
- r) it provides for linkages with adjoining built up areas including public transport connections and provision for buses, and new paths and cycleways, linking where possible to the existing path network; Travel Plans will be encouraged to support more sustainable travel patterns,
- s) it incorporates adequate access and turning space for vehicles including those used for waste collection purposes.

#### Greenspace, Open Space & Biodiversity

- t) It provides meaningful open space that wherever possible, links to existing open spaces and that is in accordance with current Council standards pending preparation of an up-to-date open space strategy and local standards. In some cases a developer contribution to wider neighbourhood or settlement provision may be appropriate, supported by appropriate arrangements for maintenance,
- u) it retains physical or natural features or habitats which are important to the amenity or biodiversity of the area or makes provision for adequate mitigation or replacements.

Developers are required to provide design and access statements, design briefs and landscape plans as appropriate.

## **POLICY ED7: BUSINESS, TOURISM AND LEISURE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

### **BUSINESS, TOURISM AND LEISURE**

Proposals for business, tourism or leisure development in the countryside will be approved and rural diversification initiatives will be encouraged provided that:

- a) the development is to be used directly for agricultural, horticultural or forestry operations, or for uses which by their nature are appropriate to the rural character of the area; or
- b) the development is to be used directly for leisure, recreation or tourism appropriate to a countryside location and, where relevant, it is in accordance with the Scottish Borders Tourism Strategy and Action Plan;
- c) the development is to be used for other business or employment generating uses, provided that the Council is satisfied that there is an economic and/or operational need for the particular countryside location, and that it cannot be reasonably be accommodated within the Development Boundary of a settlement.

In addition the following criteria will also be considered:

- a) the development must respect the amenity and character of the surrounding area,
- b) the development must have no significant adverse impact on nearby uses, particularly housing,
- c) where a new building is proposed, the developer will be required to provide evidence that no appropriate existing building or brownfield site is available, and where conversion of an existing building of architectural merit is proposed, evidence that the building is capable of conversion without substantial demolition and rebuilding,
- d) the impact of the expansion or intensification of uses, where the use and scale of development are appropriate to the rural character of the area,
- e) the development meets all other siting, and design criteria in accordance with Policy PMD2, and
- f) the development must take account of accessibility considerations in accordance with Policy IS4.

Where a proposal comes forward for the creation of a new business including that of a tourism proposal, a business case that supports the proposal will be required to be submitted as part of the application process.

## **POLICY HD2: HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

The Council wishes to promote appropriate rural housing development:

- a) in village locations in preference to the open countryside where permission will only be granted in special circumstances on appropriate sites,
- b) associated with existing building groups where this does not adversely affect their character or that of the surrounding area, and
- c) in dispersed communities in the Southern Borders housing market area.

These general principles in addition to the requirement for suitable roads access will be the starting point for the consideration of applications for housing in the countryside, which will be supplemented by Supplementary Planning Guidance / Supplementary Guidance on New Housing in the Borders Countryside and on Placemaking and Design.

### **(A) BUILDING GROUPS**

Housing of up to a total of 2 additional dwellings or a 30% increase of the building group, whichever is the greater, associated with existing building groups may be approved provided that:

- a) the Council is satisfied that the site is well related to an existing group of at least three houses or building(s) currently in residential use or capable of conversion to residential use. Where conversion is required to establish a cohesive group of at least three houses, no additional housing will be approved until such conversion has been implemented,
- b) the cumulative impact of new development on the character of the building group, and on the landscape and amenity of the surrounding area will be taken into account when determining new applications. Additional development within a building group will be refused if, in conjunction with other developments in the area, it will cause unacceptable adverse impacts,
- c) any consents for new build granted under this part of this policy should not exceed two housing dwellings or a 30% increase in addition to the group during the Plan period. No further development above this threshold will be permitted.

In addition, where a proposal for new development is to be supported, the proposal should be appropriate in scale, siting, design, access, and materials, and should be sympathetic to the character of the group.

The calculations on building group size are based on the existing number of housing units within the group as at the start of the Local Development Plan period. This will include those units under construction or nearing completion at that point.

#### (B) DISPERSED BUILDINGS GROUPS

In the Southern Housing Market area there are few building groups comprising 3 houses or more, and a more dispersed pattern is the norm. In this area a lower threshold may be appropriate, particularly where this would result in tangible community, economic or environmental benefits. In these cases the existence of a sense of place will be the primary consideration.

Housing of up to 2 additional dwellings associated with dispersed building groups that meet the above criteria may be approved provided that:

- a) the Council is satisfied that the site lies within a recognised dispersed community in the Southern Borders housing market area,
- b) any consents for new build granted under this part of this policy should not exceed two housing dwellings in addition to the group during the Plan period. No further development above this threshold will be permitted,
- c) the design of housing will be subject to the same considerations as other types of housing in the countryside proposals.

#### (C) CONVERSIONS OF BUILDINGS TO A HOUSE

Development that is a change of use of a building to a house may be acceptable provided that:

- a) the Council is satisfied that the building has architectural or historic merit, is capable of conversion and is physically suited for residential use,
- b) the building stands substantially intact (normally at least to wallhead height) and the existing structure requires no significant demolition. A structural survey will be required where in the opinion of the Council it appears that the building may not be capable of conversion, and
- c) the conversion and any proposed extension or alteration is in keeping with the scale and architectural character of the existing building.

#### (D) RESTORATION OF HOUSES

The restoration of a house may also be acceptable provided that the walls of the former residential property stand substantially intact (normally at least to wallhead height). In addition:

- a) the siting and design reflects and respects the historical building pattern and the character of the landscape setting,
- b) any proposed extension or alteration should be in keeping with the scale, form and architectural character of the existing or original building, and
- c) significant alterations to the original character will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that these provide environmental benefits such as a positive contribution to the landscape and/or a more sustainable and energy efficient design.

#### (E) REPLACEMENT DWELLINGS

The proposed replacement of an existing house may be acceptable provided that:

- a) the siting and design of the new building reflects and respects the historical building pattern and the character of the landscape setting,
- b) the proposal is in keeping with the existing/original building in terms of its scale, extent, form and architectural character,
- c) significant alterations to the original character of the house will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that these provide environmental benefits such as a positive contribution to the landscape and /or a more sustainable and energy efficient design.

#### (F) ECONOMIC REQUIREMENT

Housing with a location essential for business needs may be acceptable if the Council is satisfied that:

- a) the housing development is a direct operational requirement of an agricultural, horticultural, forestry or other enterprise which is itself appropriate to the countryside, and it is for a worker predominantly employed in the enterprise and the presence of that worker on-site is essential to the efficient operation of the enterprise. Such development could include businesses that would cause disturbance or loss of amenity if located within an existing settlement, or
- b) it is for use of a person last employed in an agricultural, horticultural, forestry or other enterprise which is itself appropriate to the countryside, and also employed on the unit that is the subject of the application, and the development will release another house for continued use by an agricultural, horticultural, forestry or other enterprise which is itself appropriate to the countryside, and
- c) the housing development would help support a business that results in a clear social or environmental benefit to the area, including the retention or provision of employment or the provision of affordable or local needs housing, and
- d) no appropriate site exists within a building group, and
- e) there is no suitable existing house or other building capable of conversion for the required residential use.

In ALL instances in considering proposals relative to each of the policy sections above, there shall be compliance with the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance where it meets the terms of this policy and development must not negatively impact on landscape and existing communities. The cumulative effect of applications under this policy will be taken into account when determining impact.

### **POLICY HD3: PROTECTION OF RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

Development that is judged to have an adverse impact on the amenity of existing or proposed residential areas will not be permitted. To protect the amenity and character of these areas, any developments will be assessed against:

- a) the principle of the development, including where relevant, any open space that would be lost; and
- b) the details of the development itself particularly in terms of:
  - (i) the scale, form and type of development in terms of its fit within a residential area,
  - (ii) the impact of the proposed development on the existing and surrounding properties particularly in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy and sunlighting provisions. These considerations apply especially in relation to garden ground or 'backland' development,
  - (iii) the generation of traffic or noise,
  - (iv) the level of visual impact.

### **POLICY EP1: INTERNATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION SITES AND PROTECTED SPECIES**

Development proposals which will have a likely significant effect on a designated or proposed Natura site, which includes all Ramsar sites, are only permissible where:

- a) an appropriate assessment has demonstrated that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site, or
- b) there are no alternative solutions, and
- c) there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature

Where a development proposal is sited where there is the likely presence of an EPS, the planning authority must be satisfied that:

- a) there is no satisfactory alternative, and
- b) the development is required for preserving public health or public safety or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance to the environment, and
- c) the development is not detrimental to the maintenance of the population of a EPS at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

### **POLICY EP2: NATIONAL NATURE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTED SPECIES**

Development proposals which are likely to have a significant adverse effect, either directly or indirectly, on a Site of Special Scientific Interest or habitat directly supporting a nationally important species will not be permitted unless:

- a) the development will not adversely affect the integrity of the site, and
- b) the development offers substantial benefits of national importance, including those of a social or economic nature, that clearly outweigh the national nature conservation value of the site.

The developer will be required to detail mitigation, either on or off site, of any damage that may be caused by development permissible under the exception criteria.

### **POLICY EP3: LOCAL BIODIVERSITY**

Development that would have an unacceptable adverse effect on Borders Notable Species and Habitats of Conservation Concern will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the

public benefits of the development clearly outweigh the value of the habitat for biodiversity conservation.

Any development that could impact on local biodiversity through impacts on habitats and species should:

- a) aim to avoid fragmentation or isolation of habitats; and
- b) be sited and designed to minimise adverse impacts on the biodiversity of the site, including its environmental quality, ecological status and viability; and
- c) compensate to ensure no net loss of biodiversity through use of biodiversity offsets as appropriate; and
- d) aim to enhance the biodiversity value of the site, through use of an ecosystems approach, with the aim of creation or restoration of habitats and wildlife corridors and provision for their long-term management and maintenance.

## **POLICY EP8: ARCHAEOLOGY**

### **(A) NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES**

Development proposals which would destroy or adversely affect the appearance, fabric or setting of Scheduled Monuments or other nationally important sites will not be permitted unless:

- a) the development offers substantial benefits, including those of a social or economic nature, that clearly outweigh the national value of the site, and
- b) there are no reasonable alternative means of meeting the development need.

### **(B) BATTLEFIELDS**

The Council may support development proposals within a battlefield on the Inventory of Historic Battlefields Register, or a regionally significant site, that seek to protect, conserve, and/or enhance the landscape characteristics or important features of the battlefield. Proposals will be assessed according to their sensitivity to the battlefield.

### **(C) REGIONAL OR LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSETS**

Development proposals which will adversely affect an archaeological asset of regional or local significance will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the proposal will clearly outweigh the heritage value of the asset.

In all of the above cases, where development proposals impact on a Scheduled Monument, other nationally important sites, or any other archaeological or historical asset, developers may be required to carry out detailed investigations.

Any proposal that will adversely affect a historic environment asset or its appropriate setting must include a mitigation strategy acceptable to the Council.

## **POLICY EP13: TREES, WOODLANDS AND HEDGEROWS**

The Council will refuse development that would cause the loss of or serious damage to the woodland resource unless the public benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss of landscape, ecological, recreational, historical, or shelter value.

Any development that may impact on the woodland resource should:

- a) aim to minimise adverse impacts on the biodiversity value of the woodland resource, including its environmental quality, ecological status and viability; and

- b) where there is an unavoidable loss of the woodland resource, ensure appropriate replacement planting, where possible, within the area of the Scottish Borders; and
- c) adhere to any planning agreement sought to enhance the woodland resource.

## **POLICY IS2: DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS**

Where a site is otherwise acceptable in terms of planning policy, but cannot proceed due to deficiencies in infrastructure and services or to environmental impacts, any or all of which will be created or exacerbated as a result of the development, the Council will require developers to make a full or partial contribution towards the cost of addressing such deficiencies.

Contributions may be required for one or more of the following:

- a) treatment of surface or foul waste water in accordance with the Plan's policies on preferred methods (including SUDS maintenance);
- b) provision of schools, school extensions or associated facilities, all in accordance with current educational capacity estimates and schedule of contributions;
- c) off-site transport infrastructure including new roads or road improvements, Safer Routes to School, road safety measures, public car parking, cycle-ways, bridges and associated studies and other access routes, subsidy to public transport operators; all in accordance with the relevant standards and the provisions of any Travel Plan;
- d) leisure, sport, recreation, play areas and community facilities, either on-site or off-site;
- e) landscape, open space, allotment provision, trees and woodlands, including costs of future management and maintenance;
- f) protection, enhancement and promotion of environmental assets either on-site or off-site, having regard to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity, including compensation for any losses and/or alternative provision;
- g) provision of other facilities and equipment for the satisfactory completion of the development that may include: measures to minimise the risk of crime; provision for the storage, collection and recycling of waste, including communal facilities; provision of street furniture and digital connectivity with associated infrastructure.

Wherever possible, any requirement to provide developer contributions will be secured by planning condition. Where a legal agreement is necessary, the preference for using an agreement under other legislation, for example the 1973 Local Government (Scotland) Act and the 1984 Roads (Scotland) Act will be considered. A planning obligation will only be necessary where successors in title need to be bound by its terms. Where appropriate, the council will consider the economic viability of a proposed development, including possible payment options, such as staged or phased payments.

## **POLICY IS7: PARKING PROVISION AND STANDARDS**

Development proposals should provide for car and cycle parking in accordance with approved standards.

Relaxation of technical standards will be considered where appropriate due to the nature of the development and/or if positive amenity gains can be demonstrated that do not compromise road safety.

In town centres where there appear to be parking difficulties, the Council will consider the desirability of seeking additional public parking provision, in the context of policies to promote the use of sustainable travel modes.



## **POLICY IS9: WASTE WATER TREATMENT STANDARDS AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE**

### **WASTE WATER TREATMENT STANDARDS**

The Council's preferred method of dealing with waste water associated with new development will be, in order of priority:

- a) direct connection to the public sewerage system, including pumping if necessary, or failing that:
- b) negotiating developer contributions with Scottish Water to upgrade the existing sewerage network and/or increasing capacity at the waste water treatment works, or failing that:
- c) agreement with Scottish Water and SEPA where required to provide permanent or temporary alternatives to sewer connection including the possibility of stand alone treatment plants until sewer capacity becomes available, or, failing that:
- d) for development in the countryside i.e. not within or immediately adjacent to publicly sewered areas, the use of private sewerage treatment may be acceptable, providing it can be demonstrated that this can be delivered without any negative impacts to public health, the environment or the quality of watercourses or groundwater.

In settlements served by the public foul sewer, permission for an individual private sewage treatment system will normally be refused unless exceptional circumstances prevail and the conditions in criteria (d) above can be satisfied.

Development will be refused if:

- a) it will result in a proliferation of individual septic tanks or other private water treatment infrastructure within settlements,
- b) it will overload existing mains infrastructure or it is impractical for the developer to provide for new infrastructure.

### **SUSTAINABLE URBAN DRAINAGE**

Surface water management for new development, for both greenfield and brownfield sites, must comply with current best practice on sustainable urban drainage systems to the satisfaction of the council, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (where required), Scottish Natural Heritage and other interested parties where required. Development will be refused unless surface water treatment is dealt with in a sustainable manner that avoids flooding, pollution, extensive canalisation and culverting of watercourses. A drainage strategy should be submitted with planning applications to include treatment and flood attenuation measures and details for the long term maintenance of any necessary features.

## **POLICY IS13: CONTAMINATED LAND**

Where development is proposed on land that is contaminated, suspected of contamination, or unstable the developer will be required to:

- a) carry out, in full consultation with, and to the satisfaction of Scottish Borders Council, appropriate phased site investigations and risk assessments; and
- b) where necessary, and to the satisfaction of Scottish Borders Council design, implement, and validate appropriate remedial or mitigation measures to render the site suitable for its proposed use.

## **POLICY EP16: AIR QUALITY**

Development proposals that, individually or cumulatively, could adversely affect the quality of air in a locality to a level that could potentially harm human health and wellbeing or the integrity of the natural environment, must be accompanied by provisions that the Council is satisfied will minimise such impacts to an acceptable degree. Where it is considered appropriate the Council may request that an Air Quality Assessment is undertaken to assist determination of an application.

## **National Planning Framework 4**

### **Policy 1 Tackling the climate and nature crises**

When considering all development proposals significant weight will be given to the global climate and nature crises.

### **Policy 3 Biodiversity**

a) Development proposals will contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including where relevant, restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them. Proposals should also integrate nature-based solutions, where possible.

b) Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This will include future management. To inform this, best practice assessment methods should be used. Proposals within these categories will demonstrate how they have met all of the following criteria:

- i. the proposal is based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of any irreplaceable habitats;
- ii. wherever feasible, nature-based solutions have been integrated and made best use of;
- iii. an assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements;
- iv. significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. This should include nature networks, linking to and strengthening habitat connectivity within and beyond the development, secured within a reasonable timescale and with reasonable certainty. Management arrangements for their longterm retention and monitoring should be included, wherever appropriate; and
- v. local community benefits of the biodiversity and/or nature networks have been considered.

c) Proposals for local development will include appropriate measures to conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, in accordance with national and local guidance. Measures should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development. Applications for individual householder development, or which fall within scope of (b) above, are excluded from this requirement.

d) Any potential adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts, of development proposals on biodiversity, nature networks and the natural environment will be minimised through careful planning and design. This will take into account the need to reverse biodiversity loss, safeguard the ecosystem services that the natural environment provides, and build resilience by enhancing nature networks and maximising the potential for restoration.

## **Policy 4 Natural places**

- a) Development proposals which by virtue of type, location or scale will have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment, will not be supported.
- b) Development proposals that are likely to have a significant effect on an existing or proposed European site (Special Area of Conservation or Special Protection Areas) and are not directly connected with or necessary to their conservation management are required to be subject to an “appropriate assessment” of the implications for the conservation objectives.
- c) Development proposals that will affect a National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest or a National Nature Reserve will only be supported where:
  - i. The objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the areas will not be compromised; or
  - ii. Any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance. All Ramsar sites are also European sites and/ or Sites of Special Scientific Interest and are extended protection under the relevant statutory regimes.
- d) Development proposals that affect a site designated as a local nature conservation site or landscape area in the LDP will only be supported where:
  - i. Development will not have significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been identified; or
  - ii. Any significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of at least local importance.
- e) The precautionary principle will be applied in accordance with relevant legislation and Scottish Government guidance.
- f) Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect on species protected by legislation will only be supported where the proposal meets the relevant statutory tests. If there is reasonable evidence to suggest that a protected species is present on a site or may be affected by a proposed development, steps must be taken to establish its presence. The level of protection required by legislation must be factored into the planning and design of development, and potential impacts must be fully considered prior to the determination of any application.

## **Policy 5 Soils**

- a) Development proposals will only be supported if they are designed and constructed:
  - i. In accordance with the mitigation hierarchy by first avoiding and then minimising the amount of disturbance to soils on undeveloped land; and
  - ii. In a manner that protects soil from damage including from compaction and erosion, and that minimises soil sealing.
- b) Development proposals on prime agricultural land, or land of lesser quality that is culturally or locally important for primary use, as identified by the LDP, will only be supported where it is for:
  - i. Essential infrastructure and there is a specific locational need and no other suitable site;
  - ii. Small-scale development directly linked to a rural business, farm or croft or for essential workers for the rural business to be able to live onsite;
  - iii. The development of production and processing facilities associated with the land produce where no other local site is suitable;

- iv. The generation of energy from renewable sources or the extraction of minerals and there is secure provision for restoration; and

In all of the above exceptions, the layout and design of the proposal minimises the amount of protected land that is required.

- c) Development proposals on peatland, carbon-rich soils and priority peatland habitat will only be supported for:
  - i. Essential infrastructure and there is a specific locational need and no other suitable site;
  - ii. The generation of energy from renewable sources that optimises the contribution of the area to greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets;
  - iii. Small-scale development directly linked to a rural business, farm or croft;
  - iv. Supporting a fragile community in a rural or island area; or
  - v. Restoration of peatland habitats.
- d) Where development on peatland, carbon-rich soils or priority peatland habitat is proposed, a detailed site specific assessment will be required to identify:
  - i. the baseline depth, habitat condition, quality and stability of carbon rich soils;
  - ii. the likely effects of the development on peatland, including on soil disturbance; and
  - iii. the likely net effects of the development on climate emissions and loss of carbon.

### **Policy 9 Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings**

- a) Development proposals that will result in the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and buildings, whether permanent or temporary, will be supported. In determining whether the reuse is sustainable, the biodiversity value of brownfield land which has naturalised should be taken into account.
- b) Proposals on greenfield sites will not be supported unless the site has been allocated for development or the proposal is explicitly supported by policies in the LDP.
- c) Where land is known or suspected to be unstable or contaminated, development proposals will demonstrate that the land is, or can be made, safe and suitable for the proposed new use.
- d) Development proposals for the reuse of existing buildings will be supported, taking into account their suitability for conversion to other uses. Given the need to conserve embodied energy, demolition will be regarded as the least preferred option.

### **Policy 14 Design, quality and place**

- a) Development proposals will be designed to improve the quality of an area whether in urban or rural locations and regardless of scale.
- b) Development proposals will be supported where they are consistent with the six qualities of successful places:
  - Healthy:** Supporting the prioritisation of women's safety and improving physical and mental health.
  - Pleasant:** Supporting attractive natural and built spaces.
  - Connected:** Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency
  - Distinctive:** Supporting attention to detail of local architectural styles and natural landscapes to be interpreted, literally or creatively, into designs to reinforce identity.
  - Sustainable:** Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live,

play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience, and integrating nature positive, biodiversity solutions. Adaptable: Supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can be changed quickly to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time.

Further details on delivering the six qualities of successful places are set out in Annex D.

c) Development proposals that are poorly designed, detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area or inconsistent with the six qualities of successful places, will not be supported.

### **Policy 17 Rural homes**

a) Development proposals for new homes in rural areas will be supported where the development is suitably scaled, sited and designed to be in keeping with the character of the area and the development:

- i. is on a site allocated for housing within the LDP;
- ii. reuses brownfield land where a return to a natural state has not or will not happen without intervention;
- iii. reuses a redundant or unused building;
- iv. is an appropriate use of a historic environment asset or is appropriate enabling development to secure the future of historic environment assets;
- v. is demonstrated to be necessary to support the sustainable management of a viable rural business or croft, and there is an essential need for a worker (including those taking majority control of a farm business) to live permanently at or near their place of work;
- vi. is for a single home for the retirement succession of a viable farm holding;
- vii. is for the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; the scale of which is in keeping with the character and infrastructure provision in the area; or
- viii. reinstates a former dwelling house or is a one-for-one replacement of an existing permanent house.

b) Development proposals for new homes in rural areas will consider how the development will contribute towards local living and take into account identified local housing needs (including affordable housing), economic considerations and the transport needs of the development as appropriate for the rural location.

c) Development proposals for new homes in remote rural areas will be supported where the proposal:

- i. supports and sustains existing fragile communities;
- ii. supports identified local housing outcomes; and
- iii. is suitable in terms of location, access, and environmental impact.

d) Development proposals for new homes that support the resettlement of previously inhabited areas will be supported where the proposal:

- i. is in an area identified in the LDP as suitable for resettlement;
- ii. is designed to a high standard;
- iii. responds to its rural location; and
- iv. is designed to minimise greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.

### **Policy 23 Health and safety**

a) Development proposals that will have positive effects on health will be supported. This could include, for example, proposals that incorporate opportunities for exercise, community food growing or allotments.

b) Development proposals which are likely to have a significant adverse effect on health will not be supported. A Health Impact Assessment may be required.

c) Development proposals for health and social care facilities and infrastructure will be supported.

d) Development proposals that are likely to have significant adverse effects on air quality will not be supported. Development proposals will consider opportunities to improve air quality and reduce exposure to poor air quality. An air quality assessment may be required where the nature of the proposal or the air quality in the location suggest significant effects are likely.

e) Development proposals that are likely to raise unacceptable noise issues will not be supported. The agent of change principle applies to noise sensitive development. A Noise Impact Assessment may be required where the nature of the proposal or its location suggests that significant effects are likely.

f) Development proposals will be designed to take into account suicide risk.

g) Development proposals within the vicinity of a major accident hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline (because of the presence of toxic, highly reactive, explosive or inflammable substances) will consider the associated risks and potential impacts of the proposal and the major accident hazard site/pipeline of being located in proximity to one another.

h) Applications for hazardous substances consent will consider the likely potential impacts on surrounding populations and the environment.

i) Any advice from Health and Safety Executive, the Office of Nuclear Regulation or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency that planning permission or hazardous substances consent should be refused, or conditions to be attached to a grant of consent, should not be overridden by the decision maker without the most careful consideration.

j) Similar considerations apply in respect of development proposals either for or near licensed explosive sites (including military explosive storage sites).

## **Policy 26 Business and industry**

a) Development proposals for business and industry uses on sites allocated for those uses in the LDP will be supported.

b) Development proposals for home working, live-work units and micro-businesses will be supported where it is demonstrated that the scale and nature of the proposed business and building will be compatible with the surrounding area and there will be no unacceptable impacts on amenity or neighbouring uses.

c) Development proposals for business and industry uses will be supported where they are compatible with the primary business function of the area. Other employment uses will be supported where they will not prejudice the primary function of the area and are compatible with the business/industrial character of the area.

- d) Development proposals for business, general industrial and storage and distribution uses outwith areas identified for those uses in the LDP will only be supported where:
- i. It is demonstrated that there are no suitable alternatives allocated in the LDP or identified in the employment land audit; and
  - ii. The nature and scale of the activity will be compatible with the surrounding area.
- e) Development proposals for business and industry will take into account:
- i. Impact on surrounding residential amenity; sensitive uses and the natural and historic environment;
  - ii. The need for appropriate site restoration at the end of a period of commercial use.
- f) Major developments for manufacturing or industry will be accompanied by a decarbonisation strategy to demonstrate how greenhouse gas emissions from the process are appropriately abated. The strategy may include carbon capture and storage.

### **Policy 29 Rural development**

- a) Development proposals that contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of rural communities and local rural economy will be supported, including:
- i. farms, crofts, woodland crofts or other land use businesses, where use of good quality land for development is minimised and business viability is not adversely affected;
  - ii. diversification of existing businesses;
  - iii. production and processing facilities for local produce and materials, for example sawmills, or local food production;
  - iv. essential community services;
  - v. essential infrastructure;
  - vi. reuse of a redundant or unused building;
  - vii. appropriate use of a historic environment asset or is appropriate enabling development to secure the future of historic environment assets;
  - viii. reuse of brownfield land where a return to a natural state has not or will not happen without intervention;
  - ix. small scale developments that support new ways of working such as remote working, homeworking and community hubs; or
  - x. improvement or restoration of the natural environment.
- b) Development proposals in rural areas should be suitably scaled, sited and designed to be in keeping with the character of the area. They should also consider how the development will contribute towards local living and take into account the transport needs of the development as appropriate for the rural location.
- c) Development proposals in remote rural areas, where new development can often help to sustain fragile communities, will be supported where the proposal:
- i. will support local employment;
  - ii. supports and sustains existing communities, for example through provision of digital infrastructure; and
  - iii. is suitable in terms of location, access, siting, design and environmental impact.
- d) Development proposals that support the resettlement of previously inhabited areas will be supported where the proposal:
- i. is in an area identified in the LDP as suitable for resettlement;
  - ii. is designed to a high standard;
  - iii. responds to their rural location; and
  - iv. is designed to minimise greenhouse gas emissions as far as possible.

## **Other Material Considerations**

- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance on Biodiversity 2005
- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance Housing in the Countryside 2008
- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance on Developer Contributions 2019
- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance on Placemaking and Design 2010
- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems 2020
- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance on Waste Management 2015
- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance on Trees and Development
- SBC Supplementary Planning Guidance on Developer Contributions 2011, updated 2022