

To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 15 March 2022

Report by: Chief Executive

Scottish Government Consultations on the Draft National Planning Framework 4, Local Development Planning Regulations & Guidance, Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following the enactment of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, the Scottish Government is now taking steps to successfully implement the Act and the wider reforms of the planning system. As part of the delivery of transforming planning, the Scottish Government have published a series of consultations including the draft National Planning Framework 4, significant changes to the development planning regulations and guidance and new duties on planning authorities to prepare and publish an Open Space Strategy and to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children in all local authority areas.
- 1.2 The full consultation papers can be found at:
[National Planning Framework 4](#)
[Local Development Planning Regulations & Guidance](#)
[Open Space Strategies & Play Sufficiency Assessments](#)
- 1.3 The final date for the Council's response to all three consultations is 31 March 2022.
- 1.4 Section 6 of this report summarises the key points being taken forward in the consultation responses. However in overall terms the draft responses indicate that the Council is supportive of the approach outlined in all three consultations. There are some aspects of each of the documents which it is suggested might require further consideration, clarification and detail before finalising and publishing the framework, regulations and guidance. The proposed responses to the consultations are attached at Appendix 1.
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2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Board:

- (i) approve the proposed consultation responses to the draft National Planning Framework 4, Local Development Planning Regulations & Guidance and Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments attached at appendix 1 for submission to the Scottish Government.
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3. Draft National Planning Framework 4

3.1 NPF4 sets out the Scottish Government's priorities and policies for the planning system up to 2045 and for the first time incorporates Scottish Planning Policy and the National Planning Framework into a single document.

3.2 The draft NPF4 is split into four parts:

- National spatial strategy for Scotland to 2045 – set out an approach to tackle and adapt to climate change, restore biodiversity loss, improve health and wellbeing, build a well-being economy and create sustainable places;
- 18 national developments which will support the spatial strategy - National developments relevant to Renfrewshire include:
 - Clyde Mission;
 - Central Scotland Green Network;
 - National walking, cycling and wheeling network;
 - Urban mass/ rapid transit network;
 - Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage;
 - Circular Economy Materials Management;
 - Digital Fibre; and,
 - Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure.
- National planning policy handbook consisting of 35 policies which set out the policies for the development and use of land which are to be applied in the preparation of local development plans and assessing planning applications. Once approved NPF4 will be part of Renfrewshire Council's statutory development plan. The framework contains 35 policies including 6 universal policies which will apply to all planning decisions.

The 6 universal policies are:

- Policy 1: Plan-led approach to sustainable development
- Policy 2: Climate emergency
- Policy 3: Nature crisis
- Policy 4: Human rights and equality

- Policy 5: Community Wealth Building
- Policy 6: Design, quality and place

- Delivery programme which will set out how NPF4 will be delivered once it has been approved and adopted.

3.3 Once approved by the Scottish Parliament, NPF4 will form part of the statutory development plan for Renfrewshire with the current Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan (July 2017) no longer being part of the development plan.

4. Local Development Planning Regulations & Guidance Consultation

4.1 Significant changes to development planning were made by the 2019 Act which sought to strengthen and simplify local development plans.

4.2 The main aim of the regulations and guidance is to try and refocus plans on the outcomes that they will deliver for people and place, rather than the process of preparing plans.

4.3 Local development plans are required to consider the ambitions and outcomes of the area, looking 20 years ahead, with place based plans that are relevant and accessible to the people with an interest in their place and the future of their places.

5. Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations

5.1 In considering places, this consultation focuses on open spaces, green infrastructure and other outdoor places to play as key components of successful placemaking, assisting in creating great, livable, healthy and resilient communities and 20 minute neighbourhoods.

5.2 In delivering great places, the Scottish Government places new duties on planning authorities to prepare and publish an Open Space Strategy and to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities in the local authority area for children and young people as part of the local development plan process.

6. Overview of Proposed Responses

6.1 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed Council response to all three consultations and agrees that the vision and ambition set out in the consultations is welcomed and sets a positive direction for change in the planning system with the key elements focusing on responding to the climate emergency, placemaking, sustainability and nature-based solutions to improving health and wellbeing and creating great places.

6.2 The detail set out in each of these documents is of particular importance and a great deal of scrutiny has been given to the implications and practicalities of delivering these ambitions. In particular as this approach will refocus the whole of the planning system.

In each consultation reply there has been the request for further clarity, increased, better defined and more robust wording, examples of how certain roles, responsibilities and duties can actually deliver on the ambitions.

- 6.3 Another main element and key theme in response to each of these three consultations is ensuring the alignment of resources and the importance of properly investing in the planning system to allow the successful implementation and delivery of this radical change. Another important factor in successful delivery of change and adequate resourcing is the required programme of upskilling planners and professionals involved in planning, particularly specialist skills and experience which is required to facilitate a culture change.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 The consultations closes on 31 March 2022. Officers will continue to work closely with the Scottish Government in finalising and implementing the framework, regulations and guidance for planning reform.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The extent and details of the additional duties is still to be confirmed.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –

Reshaping our place, our economy, and our future – All three consultation documents in planning reform are key documents in establishing a land use framework, regulations and guidance for supporting, encouraging, and delivering sustainability, climate change adaptation, reaching Net Zero, biodiversity gain and creating great places.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – None.
 9. **Procurement** – None.
 10. **Risk** – None.
 11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
 12. **COSLA Policy Position** - None.
 13. **Climate Risk** – All three consultations set out a vision to enable sustainable development and places, aiming to facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy and adaptation to climate change.
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Appendix 1 – Consultation replies to:

- **Draft National Planning Framework 4;**
 - **Local Development Planning Regulations & Guidance;**
 - **Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments.**
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CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Part 1 - A National Spatial Strategy for Scotland 2045

Sustainable places

Our future net zero places will be more resilient to the impacts of climate change and support recovery of our natural environment.

Q 1: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS APPROACH WILL DELIVER OUR FUTURE NET ZERO PLACES WHICH WILL BE MORE RESILIENT TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUPPORT RECOVERY OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT?

Agree that the approach to every decision requires to contribute to a more sustainable place and consider that the delivery of this and how this can achieve net zero places is a central element.

In ensuring local planning authorities can deliver on these ambitions it is important that there is clarity or examples of what constitutes a well-being or a nature based economy and how nature based solutions can secure these concepts. An enhanced glossary with appendices which provide examples of how this is expected to be delivered at the local level with an aligned delivery programme which highlights the processes, practices and resources to successfully delivery this radical approach is required.

Liveable places

Our future places, homes and neighbourhoods will be better, healthier and more vibrant places to live.

Q 2: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS APPROACH WILL DELIVER OUR FUTURE PLACES, HOMES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS WHICH WILL BE BETTER, HEALTHIER AND MORE VIBRANT PLACES TO LIVE?

Agree with the strategy that good quality homes close to a range of local facilities and services with better use of spaces ensuring the delivery of the 20 minute neighbourhood will assist in not only the recovery and rebuilding resilience from the Covid-19 pandemic but will also ensure that local solutions shaped by local people will be able to protect existing assets and enhance local areas to create great places.

The important consideration is how the planning system and the processes and practices put in place can ensure all communities can equally take part and be empowered to contribute to shaping their area. Local authorities have always assisted in supporting our communities, with this ambitious plan to ensure communities are more resilient, support will continue to be given. The sharing of experience, skills and

resources required to assist all communities is likely to entail significant assistance to those communities with a range of needs.

Productive places

Our future places will attract new investment, build business confidence, stimulate entrepreneurship and facilitate future ways of working – improving economic, social and environmental wellbeing.

Q 3: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS APPROACH WILL DELIVER OUR FUTURE PLACES WHICH WILL ATTRACT NEW INVESTMENT, BUILD BUSINESS CONFIDENCE, STIMULATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND FACILITATE FUTURE WAYS OF WORKING – IMPROVING ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING?

Over the years we have been collectively working towards a more inclusive, sustainable economy. The emphasis again in the proposed approach is to ensure that there is a focus on the long term just transition to net zero which also includes a nature-positive economy. Renfrewshire Council agree that this is the correct approach and appreciate that in implementing this approach there will be the requirement for a significant shift in the mind set of new investors as well as existing businesses to deliver this vision. As a local authority assisting and supporting this approach, it would be useful to get clear guidance, examples, best practice advice from the Scottish Government on how we all achieve the balance of delivering investment and sustaining existing businesses as well as building a wellbeing economy.

Clarity again of what is exactly meant by a ‘wellbeing economy’ and ‘community wealth building’ would also be useful in order that all partners can assist in supporting this approach.

Distinctive places

Our future places will be distinctive, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, welcoming, nature-positive and resource efficient.

Q 4: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS APPROACH WILL DELIVER OUR FUTURE PLACES WHICH WILL BE DISTINCTIVE, SAFE AND PLEASANT, EASY TO MOVE AROUND, WELCOMING, NATURE-POSITIVE AND RESOURCE EFFICIENT?

Agree with this approach and the emphasis on a stronger commitment to place-making in development plans and planning decisions. Renfrewshire has a range of distinctive places and we would support the approach that we build on these great places and that we ensure every new development improves the experience of our places.

A place based approach considering the place principles and local place plans together is certainly the direction Renfrewshire Council is aiming to go in and we welcome this strong theme throughout the entire National Planning Framework.

Q 5: DO YOU AGREE THAT THE SPATIAL STRATEGY WILL DELIVER FUTURE PLACES THAT OVERALL ARE SUSTAINABLE, LIVEABLE, PRODUCTIVE AND DISTINCTIVE?

Agree that with the right resources, guidance, effort and participation from a range of stakeholders, that the spatial strategy set out in the draft National Planning Framework 4 can be implemented successfully.

Spatial principles

Q 6: DO YOU AGREE THAT THESE SPATIAL PRINCIPLES WILL ENABLE THE RIGHT CHOICES TO BE MADE ABOUT WHERE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE LOCATED?

The spatial principles set out in draft NPF4 are supported. It is correct that we all aim to ensure that brownfield along with vacant and derelict land and buildings are used more efficiently. We understand that this may require increasing the density of sites and existing settlements and towns to strengthen sustainability and enhance local living, creating more 20 minute neighbourhoods and that balance must be achieved through planning decisions.

In delivering 'Just Transition' we accept that planning authorities are required to support and assist in this approach and we welcome the recognition that the rapid transformation in meeting the climate ambition is required across all sectors of the economy and society. To achieve this vision and assist in this approach, it would be useful to see how the delivery programme for NPF4 proposes implementation of the overall spatial strategy and how this successful delivery can be resourced to assist all stakeholders in delivering this approach.

Spatial Strategy Action Areas

Q 7: DO YOU AGREE THAT THESE SPATIAL STRATEGY ACTION AREAS PROVIDE A STRONG BASIS TO TAKE FORWARD REGIONAL PRIORITY ACTIONS?

The spatial strategy action areas are definitely a plausible way in considering regional priorities across Scotland. In considering each of the action areas, there are quite distinct places and different challenges within each of these five zones as well as similar challenges and issues which undoubtedly should be considered and tackled by an overall area approach.

It is considered that the five high level priorities outlined for each area are appropriate and that the spatial principles applied in each area can deliver the overall priorities.

The detail of the actual areas, geographies and characteristics of each action area requires to be better refined and it would be beneficial if there was an indication of how these action areas fit with the Regional Spatial Strategies.

It is considered that the 'Central Urban Transformation Action Area', covers an extensive geographical area including Ayrshire, Edinburgh and the Lothians and the Tayside region. The indicative regional spatial strategy for the Glasgow City Region outlines a vision and an approach which specially aims to address the needs, challenges and aspirations specific to the region.

The complexity for local planning authorities will be trying to reflect the national development plan, having regard to the adopted regional spatial strategy and then

reflect this in the local development plan taking account of local aspirations and visions. It is considered that adding the action areas layer into this new development plan process may cause more confusion and complexity than simplifying the system.

North and west coastal innovation

Q 8: DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

Q 9: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THESE STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

Northern revitalisation

Q 10: DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

Q 11: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THESE STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

North east transition

Q 12: DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

Q 13: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THESE STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

Central urban transformation

Q 14: DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

It is considered that the diagram on page 31 highlighting the national developments provides a good characterisation of the amount of activity in the central belt area.

In terms of the opportunities, this area will certainly be able to deliver on the network of 20 minute neighbourhoods, perhaps more so than any other action area.

Revitalising cities and towns of scale is certainly a challenge that the Glasgow City Region has been prioritising for some time.

It is considered that by grouping the cities and large towns together in this action area that this vision and ambition may get clouded and diluted. However there is great

benefit for considering investment in infrastructure at this geography and this would certainly benefit investment plans by infrastructure providers if these areas were grouped together with clear priorities and actions.

Access to quality greenspace, sustainable travel and connections through blue and green corridors are challenges and opportunities that would certainly benefit from the central belt focus as has been achieved through the Central Scotland Green Network programme with the individual projects linking up to have an increased benefit across the area.

Another common theme tackled across this action area is the priority given to urban coasts and waterfronts, a concerted effort across this action area would be preferable as this is central to transforming and pioneering a new era of low carbon urban living and would also assist in tackling the reuse of land and buildings along these areas.

Given the population and densities found in the central area, the focus of significant investment in net zero housing solutions is key particularly for existing stock in this area and this challenge is greatest in this action area.

The contribution that this area makes to the Scottish economy and the potential opportunities for growth requires to be better reflected in this section. In particular, it would be useful if opportunities for growth that exist across all of the action area are identified. Particularly challenging for this central action area will be the growth of the wellbeing economy and the balance of the opportunities through investment and development. This is a transformational approach which will require a different approach from all stakeholders in this action area.

Overall Renfrewshire Council agree that the summary of challenges and opportunities for this action area is outlined in this section of draft NPF4. Detailed comments regarding the Glasgow city region and the wider central urban transformation area are being provided in the response by Clydeplan.

Q 15: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THESE STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

Please see answer to question 14 above.

Southern sustainability

Q 16: DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS SUMMARY OF CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

Q 17: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THESE STRATEGIC ACTIONS FOR THIS ACTION AREA?

No comments.

National Spatial Strategy

Q 18: WHAT ARE YOUR OVERALL VIEWS ON THIS PROPOSED NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY?

The proposed national spatial strategy is ambitious and concentrates on the main key elements that we need deliver on such as the climate emergency, place making, sustainability, nature recovery and health and wellbeing. Renfrewshire Council supports this approach and ambition and will aim to assist in the delivery and implementation of this spatial strategy. Resourcing and upskilling will also be key to supporting this approach and we are keen to see further clarity on this from the Scottish Government.

Delivering this ambitious national spatial strategy will require co-ordinated action at a national, regional, local authority and local level. It is important that NPF4 is clear about the role of NPF4, Regional Spatial Strategies, Local Development Plans and Local Place Plans in delivering the national strategy. In particular further clarification is required in relation to the role of Regional Spatial Strategies and how these will be expected to relate to the Development Plan.

Part 2 - National developments

Q 19: DO YOU THINK THAT ANY OF THE CLASSES OF DEVELOPMENT DESCRIBED IN THE STATEMENTS OF NEED SHOULD BE CHANGED OR ADDITIONAL CLASSES ADDED IN ORDER TO DELIVER THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT DESCRIBED?

In the section title 'National development to deliver sustainable, distinctive places' Clyde Mission, Aberdeen Harbour and Edinburgh and Dundee Waterfronts are all included in this section, however there is no mention of any of the airports which support this area and will continue to play their part in each of these areas. Airports were seen as key national developments in NPF3, but appear not to feature in NPF4.

Q 20: IS THE LEVEL OF INFORMATION IN THE STATEMENTS OF NEED ENOUGH FOR COMMUNITIES, APPLICANTS AND PLANNING AUTHORITIES TO CLEARLY DECIDE WHEN A PROPOSAL SHOULD BE HANDLED AS A NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Yes.

Q 21: DO YOU THINK THERE ARE OTHER DEVELOPMENTS, NOT ALREADY CONSIDERED IN SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS, THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STATUS?

As outlined in question 19.

Part 3 - National Planning Policy

Sustainable Places

We want our places to help us tackle the climate and nature crises and ensure Scotland adapts to thrive within the planet's sustainable limits.

Q 22: DO YOU AGREE THAT ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURE RECOVERY SHOULD BE THE PRIMARY GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ALL OUR PLANS AND PLANNING DECISIONS?

Agree that tackling both the climate emergency and the nature crisis are key elements for all plans and decisions, however it is considered that the primary guiding principles should be climate change and sustainability as this more encompassing and fits better with the universal policies set out in NPF4.

Policy 1: Plan-led approach to sustainable development

Q 23: DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS POLICY APPROACH?

Sustainable development should be plan-led as it therefore promotes the primacy of the development plan. However it should also be key to all plans, policies and decisions made in planning.

Policy 2: Climate emergency

Q 24: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL ENSURE THE PLANNING SYSTEM TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE NEED TO ADDRESS THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY?

It is considered that with reference to question 23 above, climate emergency should also have a plan-led approach and this should not be specific to just development proposals.

In relation to the development proposals for national, major or EIA developments, additional duties and consideration of whole-life assessments of greenhouse gas emissions will require upskilling of planning professionals and additional resources to consider assessments. Whilst we completely agree that this is the correct approach, there requires to be recognition of the additional resources and pressures put on local authorities which requires to be resourced.

Policy 3: Nature crisis

Q 25: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL ENSURE THAT THE PLANNING SYSTEM TAKES ACCOUNT OF THE NEED TO ADDRESS THE NATURE CRISIS?

Agree with the policy emphasis on nature recovery. 3(e) identifies that 'Proposals for local development should only be supported if they include appropriate measures to enhance biodiversity, in proportion to the nature and scale of development.' This approach is welcomed, however, further guidance is relation what 'in proportion' would mean in practice as this could be very subjective.

Policy 4: Human rights and equality

Q 26: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY EFFECTIVELY ADDRESSES THE NEED FOR PLANNING TO RESPECT, PROTECT AND FULFIL HUMAN RIGHTS, SEEK TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTE EQUALITY?

It is considered that planning through the preparation of all plans, strategies and programmes have always aimed to effectively respect, protect and fulfil human rights, it is considered that as this is in line with legislation this also translates to the decisions we make in line with development plans, etc. Having human rights and equality as a policy in NPF4 will highlight this more in the development decision making process,

however clarification and further guidance on how this will work in practice, for example as a reason for refusal and then ultimately decisions subject to appeal, requires to be provided.

Policy 5: Community wealth building

Q 27: DO YOU AGREE THAT PLANNING POLICY SHOULD SUPPORT COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING, AND DOES THIS POLICY DELIVER THIS?

Clarity regarding what is meant by community wealth building is required and how that fits with the development plan and decision on proposals. The idea that plans and proposal should address economic disadvantage and inequality is the correct overall approach but, in some cases, planning authorities and planners cannot achieve this on their own through the promotion of development plans and the way that decision are made. Other stakeholders, partners, investors, key agencies, etc, are also key to delivering and implementing this approach.

Policy 6: Design, quality, and place

Q 28: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL ENABLE THE PLANNING SYSTEM TO PROMOTE DESIGN, QUALITY AND PLACE?

Yes.

Policy 7: Local living

Q 29: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY SUFFICIENTLY ADDRESSES THE NEED TO SUPPORT LOCAL LIVING?

Renfrewshire Council support the emphasis put on 20 Minute Neighbourhoods in draft NPF4. The approach set out in Policy 7 is welcomed. In terms of Policy 7 (b) it is considered that 'affordable housing options' should be changed to 'affordable and accessible housing options' to ensure equality is built into this element. The policy should recognise the scale of the challenge in helping existing areas to transition to 20 Minute Neighbourhoods.

Policy 8: Infrastructure First

Q 30: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY ENSURES THAT WE MAKE BEST USE OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE AND TAKE AN INFRASTRUCTURE-FIRST APPROACH TO PLANNING?

Agree with the infrastructure first approach set out. However this again requires a good partnership approach, greater alignment, understanding and more conversations between infrastructure providers and all other stakeholders involved in the development plan process and decision making.

Greater resourcing of this approach is required to ensure that all parties get better at alignment, sharing of good practice and finding a more streamlined approach to ensuring that development and enhancement happens in the right locations.

Policy 9: Quality homes

Q 31: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY MEETS THE AIMS OF SUPPORTING THE DELIVERY OF HIGH QUALITY, SUSTAINABLE HOMES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES?

Agree and welcome the approach set out in Policy 9. 9(a) identifies that 'Local development plans should identify a housing target for the area it covers, in the form of a Housing Land Requirement.' The potential for confusion by using both terms 'target' and 'Housing Land Requirement' is not necessary. The policy should be clear that Local Development Plans should identify a Housing Land Requirement for their area.

Also welcomed is the 'statement of community benefit' for housing development for more than 50 homes, this relates well to the need for all investors to consider the local area, 20 minute neighbourhoods and the health and wellbeing of our communities when considering proposals.

Policy 10: Sustainable transport

Q 32: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL REDUCE THE NEED TO TRAVEL UNSUSTAINABLY, DECARBONISE OUR TRANSPORT SYSTEM AND PROMOTE ACTIVE TRAVEL CHOICES?

Agree, this replicates the existing approach undertaken in both development plans and development decisions.

As similar to the answer to Policy 8, this approach requires greater resourcing to ensure that all parties get better at alignment, sharing of good practice and finding a more streamlined approach to ensuring that development and enhancement happens in the right locations.

Policy 11: Heat and cooling

Q 33: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL HELP US ACHIEVE ZERO EMISSIONS FROM HEATING AND COOLING OUR BUILDINGS AND ADAPT TO CHANGING TEMPERATURES?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 12: Blue and green infrastructure, play and sport

Q 34: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL HELP TO MAKE OUR PLACES GREENER, HEALTHIER, AND MORE RESILIENT TO CLIMATE CHANGE BY SUPPORTING AND ENHANCING BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROVIDING GOOD QUALITY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY AND SPORT?

Agree and support this approach. The policy should cross-refer or make reference to the Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessment Regulations that is also currently being consulted on as there is good elements coming out of this consultation that should be referred to in this policy approach.

Policy 13: Sustainable flood risk and water management

Q 35: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL HELP TO ENSURE PLACES ARE RESILIENT TO FUTURE FLOOD RISK AND MAKE EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF WATER RESOURCES?

Agree and support this approach.

Policies 14 and 15: Health, wellbeing, and safety

Q 36: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL ENSURE PLACES SUPPORT HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SAFETY, AND STRENGTHEN THE RESILIENCE OF COMMUNITIES.

Agree. Creating plans and supporting proposals that can deliver more active and healthier lifestyles is understood and can be delivered and that in turn can reduce health inequalities, however again planning authorities and planners cannot do this on our own, a partnership / cross sectoral approach is required to successfully deliver this policy. This partnership is particularly key in considering health impact assessments.

Policy 16: Land and premises for business and employment

Q 37: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY ENSURES PLACES SUPPORT NEW AND EXPANDED BUSINESSES AND INVESTMENT, STIMULATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND PROMOTE ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF WORKING IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE A GREEN RECOVERY AND BUILD A WELLBEING ECONOMY?

Agree. As outlined earlier this balanced approach to investment and economic sustainment along with just transition to net zero and a nature positive economy will require a radical change in approach and the requirement for a significant shift in the mind set of new investors as well as existing businesses to deliver this vision. As a local authority assisting and supporting this approach, it would be useful to get clear guidance, examples, best practice advice from the Scottish Government on how we all achieve the balance of delivering investment and sustaining existing businesses as well as building a wellbeing economy.

Renfrewshire Council would also suggest that a 'statement of community benefit' may also be good to include for proposals which are national, major or EIA developments.

Policy 17: Sustainable tourism

Q 38: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL HELP TO INSPIRE PEOPLE TO VISIT SCOTLAND, AND SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE TOURISM WHICH BENEFITS LOCAL PEOPLE AND IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR NET-ZERO AND NATURE COMMITMENTS?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 18: Culture and creativity

Q 39: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY SUPPORTS OUR PLACES TO REFLECT AND FACILITATE ENJOYMENT OF, AND INVESTMENT IN, OUR COLLECTIVE CULTURE AND CREATIVITY?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 19: Green energy

Q 40: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL ENSURE OUR PLACES SUPPORT CONTINUED EXPANSION OF LOW CARBON AND NET-ZERO ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES AS A KEY CONTRIBUTOR TO NET-ZERO EMISSIONS BY 2045?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 20: Zero waste

Q 41: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL HELP OUR PLACES TO BE MORE RESOURCE EFFICIENT, AND TO BE SUPPORTED BY SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT HELP TO ACHIEVE A CIRCULAR ECONOMY?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 21: Aquaculture

Q 42: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL SUPPORT INVESTMENT IN AQUACULTURE AND MINIMISE ITS POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 22: Minerals

Q 43: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL SUPPORT THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES AND MINIMISE THE IMPACTS OF EXTRACTION OF MINERALS ON COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 23: Digital infrastructure

Q 44: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY ENSURES ALL OF OUR PLACES WILL BE DIGITALLY CONNECTED?

Agree and support this approach. Key to this will be a good partnership approach, greater alignment, understanding and more conversations between infrastructure providers and all other stakeholders involved in the development plan process and decision making.

Policies 24 to 27: Distinctive places

Q 45: DO YOU AGREE THAT THESE POLICIES WILL ENSURE SCOTLAND'S PLACES WILL SUPPORT LOW CARBON URBAN LIVING?

Agree and support this approach. Clarity is required on the assessment for development proposals which repurpose, adapt to changing market and circumstances on existing sites which may be edge of town centre, commercial centres or out-of-town centres.

Clarity is also required in what is meant by 'Development proposals which contribute to the number and clustering of some non-retail uses....'

Policy 28: Historic assets and places

Q 46: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL PROTECT AND ENHANCE OUR HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT, AND SUPPORT THE RE-USE OF REDUNDANT OR NEGLECTED HISTORIC BUILDINGS?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 29: Urban edges and the green belt

Q 47: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL INCREASE THE DENSITY OF OUR SETTLEMENTS, RESTORE NATURE AND PROMOTE LOCAL LIVING BY LIMITING URBAN EXPANSION AND USING THE LAND AROUND OUR TOWNS AND CITIES WISELY?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 30: Vacant and derelict land

Q 48: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL HELP TO PROACTIVELY ENABLE THE REUSE OF VACANT AND DERELICT LAND AND BUILDINGS?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 31: Rural places

Q 49: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL ENSURE THAT RURAL PLACES CAN BE VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 32: Natural places

Q 50: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL PROTECT AND RESTORE NATURAL PLACES?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 33: Peat and carbon rich soils

Q 51: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY PROTECTS CARBON RICH SOILS AND SUPPORTS THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF PEATLANDS?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 34: Trees, woodland, and forestry

Q 52: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL EXPAND WOODLAND COVER AND PROTECT EXISTING WOODLAND?

Agree and support this approach.

Policy 35: Coasts

Q 53: DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS POLICY WILL HELP OUR COASTAL AREAS ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUPPORT THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF COASTAL COMMUNITIES?

No comment.

Part 4 - Delivery

Delivering our spatial strategy

Q 54: DO YOU AGREE WITH OUR PROPOSED PRIORITIES FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE SPATIAL STRATEGY?

Agree with the proposed priorities and in this response, areas highlighted where the aligning of resources, the need to fully resource the planning system, the need to assist in upskilling and providing guidance, clarity and best practice is required to assist planning authorities to support the delivery and implementation of the spatial strategy as well as the principles, vision and ambition set out in draft NPF4.

A clear and transparent delivery programme is required. This will allow timescales to be set out, partnerships, cross-sectoral working confirmed and the expectations of all parties in delivering the spatial strategy.

More detail is required in implementing the infrastructure first approach and the alignment joined up approach to proposed to successfully delivering this at a national level.

As outlined earlier, further clarity in the role of Regional Spatial Strategies, relationship to Action Areas and how this is all translated to the local level to ensure this is a streamlined approach with enhanced clarity for our communities so that they can better engage and understand planning. This is also crucial for getting communities involved in shaping their area through local place plans.

As set out above, the direction of policies set out in the draft is supported, however, the wording of policies could be strengthened to reflect the role of NPF4 as part of the Development plan.

The policies should provide certainty to all stakeholders in the planning process when reflecting national policies in Local development Plans and in assessing planning applications. Flexible policies are welcomed, however, the policies would be strengthened by replacing terms such as 'should seek' with 'requires to'.

Q 55: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS ON THE DELIVERY OF THE SPATIAL STRATEGY?

No further comments.

Part 5 - Annexes

Annex A

Q 56: DO YOU AGREE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT MEASURES IDENTIFIED WILL CONTRIBUTE TO EACH OF THE OUTCOMES IDENTIFIED IN SECTION 3A(3)(c) OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997?

Agree.

Annex B

Q 57: DO YOU AGREE WITH THE MINIMUM ALL-TENURE HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENT (MHATLR) NUMBERS?

Renfrewshire Council as one of the eight authorities that contributes to the Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership approached the response to the minimum all-tenure housing land requirement (MHATLR) consultation in a co-ordinated way, through a partnership approach at the City Region considering and assessing the Scottish Government's initial outputs and the preparation of a housing need and demand assessment (HNDA) covering the Glasgow City Region area to provide a robust and credible evidence base for housing land requirements moving forward.

As part of the consultation and engagement process there were meetings between the Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership and the Scottish Government on the MHATLR approach and how the preparation of a City Region HNDA that would inform the MHATLR. The Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership submitted an initial conditional response on behalf of all Heads of Planning and Housing from the 8 authorities on the 17 June 2021, setting out that work was ongoing on the region's HNDA. The Glasgow City Region Housing Market Partnership submitted a supplementary response on the 30 September 2021, again this response was conditional on the basis that the HNDA was still being finalised.

Renfrewshire Council understands that the MHATLR is the starting position for a minimum housing land requirement set out nationally. It is intended that the additional work at the City Region level through the HNDA and then a local needs assessment at the Renfrewshire level will be undertaken to provide a robust and credible local estimate which will be considered early on in the preparation of the next local development plans through the new gate check process.

Annex C

Q 58: DO YOU AGREE WITH THE DEFINITIONS SET OUT IN THE GLOSSARY? ARE THERE ANY OTHER TERMS IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO INCLUDE IN THE GLOSSARY?

Agree with the definitions set out in the glossary. However there are key phrases used throughout the document that require to go in the glossary such as well-being economy, nature based solutions, nature positive processes, greener living, nature recovery, whole life assessments of greenhouse gas emissions, community wealth building,

INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Environmental Report

Q 59: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE ACCURACY AND SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE SET OUT IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT?

No comments.

Q 60: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE PREDICTED ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE DRAFT NPF4 AS SET OUT IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT? PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF ANY ADDITIONAL RELEVANT SOURCES.

No comments.

Q 61: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE POTENTIAL HEALTH EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSED NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS AS SET OUT IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT?

No comments.

Q 62: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE ASSESSMENT OF ALTERNATIVES AS SET OUT IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT?

No comments.

Q 63: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE PROPOSALS FOR MITIGATION, ENHANCEMENT AND MONITORING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS SET OUT IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT?

No comments.

Society and Equalities Impact Assessment

Q 64: WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION TO INFORM THE SOCIETY AND EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

No comments.

Q 65: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE FINDINGS OF THE EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

No comments.

Q 66: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE FINDINGS OF THE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

No comments.

Q 67: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY AND THE DRAFT NPF4?

No comments.

Q 68: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE DRAFT NPF4?

No comments.

Q 69: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE ISLANDS IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

No comments.

Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment

Q 70: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE PARTIAL BUSINESS AND REGULATORY IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

No comments.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

PART A – Introduction

Q1: Do you agree with the principle that regulations be kept to the minimum necessary and that more detail be provided in guidance and kept updated?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Agree with the principle that the regulations should be kept to a minimum with much of the detail in relation to implementing the Act contained in guidance which can be updated learning from experience in implementing the new system. While this approach allows for flexibility, it is important that the regulations can provide certainty for all stakeholders in delivering new style plans. The regulations should clearly set out the new procedures in the plan making process including the scope of the gate check process and how this will relate to the final examination of the plan.

Q2: i) Do you have any views on the content of the interim assessments?

Yes / No Please explain your views.

The interim assessments prepared are comprehensive and provide a strong basis for informing and considering the impact of the regulations.

ii) Do you have, or can you direct us to any information that would assist in finalising these assessments?

Yes / No Please explain your views.

No additional comments.

Q3: i) Do you have any views on the Fairer Scotland Duty and Strategic Environmental Assessment screening documents?

Yes / No.

Please explain your views.

No comments.

ii) If you consider that full assessments are required, please suggest any information sources that could help inform these assessments.

Agree that full assessments are not required

PART B – Proposals for Development Planning Regulations

Q4: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to the form and content of LDPs?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Support the principle of moving to more map-based plans which focus on delivery and local issues. Agree that new regulations are not required and the Act provides local authorities with flexibility to determine the content of their Local Development Plan.

Further clarification is required in relation to how Local Development Plans will address local housing need and demand. The 2019 Act at (15) (1A) sets out that ‘The local development plan must also include targets for meeting the housing needs of people living in the part of the district to which it relates.’ The draft National Planning Framework 4 requires Local Development Plans to provide a supply of housing land to meet the Minimum All Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR).

From the regulations and guidance consultation it is not clear how the requirement to include ‘targets’ will relate to the MATHLR and how this should be addressed in the Evidence Report. Paragraph 259 of the guidance states that statutory targets should be expressed as a Housing Land Requirement (HLR). Using the terms ‘target’ and ‘requirement’ will ultimately lead to confusion regarding the implementation of the Act. It needs to be made explicitly clear in the regulations and guidance that the Housing Land Requirement and housing targets are the same thing if this is the intention.

Q5: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to the preparation and monitoring of LDPs?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Agree with the changes to the regulations in relation to Regional Spatial Strategies and consolidating the requirements of the Hazardous Substances Regulations.

In relation to the matters to be considered in the preparation of Local Development Plans it is considered important to include any climate change adaptation plan which has been prepared to address the climate emergency.

Q6: Do you have views on additional information and considerations to have regard to when preparing and monitoring LDPs?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain your views.

Agree that Local Development Plans should have regard to climate change, community planning and health.

Further guidance would be required in relation to the health impact of plans and how this would be considered in preparing and monitoring Local Development Plans.

Q7: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to the Evidence Report?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

It is important that the regulations provide certainty for all stakeholders in the plan making process. While it is accepted that the 2019 Act provides a comprehensive list of matters to be addressed in the Evidence Report it also allows for other matters to be considered. This flexibility is welcomed as it allows the evidence report to reflect local circumstances however it is important that the regulations set out the minimum evidence requirements and to what extent matters considered in the Evidence Report can be reconsidered during the examination of the proposed Local Development Plan.

This is particularly important given the new requirement for local authorities to meet the expense incurred by the Scottish Ministers or appointed person at both the gate check and examination stage of the plan making process. If the regulations do not provide additional certainty, the concern would be that the Evidence Report and gate check stage will add to the examination of the Local Development Plan rather than the original intention of streamlining the examination process, the certainty is also required to ensure that resources are allocated accordingly.

Q8: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to the preparation and publication of the LDP?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Agree, no significant changes required in relation to the preparation and publication of the Local Development Plan.

Q9: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to the examination of the LDP?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Please see response to Question 7. Agree with the proposed regulations, however, additional detail is required in relation to both the scope of the gate check and the examination and to what extent matters considered in the Evidence Report can be reconsidered during the examination of the proposed Local Development Plan.

Q10: Are there matters you wish to highlight relating to amendment of the LDP which may have bearing on the proposals for regulations being consulted on in this document?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain your view.

Future regulations on this matter must clearly set out the circumstances in which Local Development Plans can be amended. The process in relation to amending a Local Development Plan and the associated consultation and examination must be streamlined to ensure plans can quickly respond to a material change in the evidence base or content during the 10-year plan period.

Q11: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to Development Plan Schemes?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Welcome the proposal for Development Plan Schemes to include timetabling for when the Local Development Plan is expected to be adopted, together with tracking of any changes to the original timescales and for an explanation to be provided for any changes. This will lead to increased transparency in the plan making process and will monitor the reasons for any change including timescales of the examination stage.

Q12: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to Delivery Programmes?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Agree with the minimal changes to the 2008 regulations which already clearly set out the requirements in relation to the preparation, content and review of Delivery Programmes.

Q13: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to the meaning of 'key agency'?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes

Q14: Do you agree with the proposals for regulations relating to transitional provisions?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Agree with the proposals for transitional arrangements in relation to Local Development Plans and Supplementary Guidance.

It is noted that during a period of up to 24 months after the development plan regulations come into force, planning authorities will be able to adopt supplementary guidance associated with existing Local Development Plans adopted under the 2006 Act. Transitional provisions should provide further detail with regards to when this may be appropriate given the policies in National Planning Framework 4, once adopted, will provide the most up to date development plan policy position.

PART C – Draft Guidance on Local Development Planning

Q15: Do you agree with the general guidance on Local Development Plans?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, the guidance clearly sets out the expectations and process for producing delivery focused, place based and people centered Local Development Plans.

Further clarification is required in relation to the status and role of Regional Spatial Strategies which will be key documents in addressing planning issues that cross local authority boundaries. The guidance sets out that local authorities should 'have regard' to Regional Spatial Strategies while other plans such as 'Local Place Plans' should be 'taken into account' when preparing their Local Development Plan. The guidance should be clear what this distinction means in practice to avoid any confusion during the plan making process.

As set out in the response to question 6, if Local Development Plans are to consider health outcomes, further guidance will be required in relation to the health impact of plans and how this would be considered in preparing and monitoring Local Development Plans.

The guidance sets out that Local Development Plans can include some policies. This is welcomed as it allows Local Development Plans to reflect local circumstances, however, additional guidance would be useful to give examples of policy areas where local policies may be appropriate and what would be required to support local policies that address the same topic area as national policies set out in National Planning Framework 4.

Q16: Do you agree with the guidance on Development Plan Schemes? Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, welcome the guidance which recognises the importance of the Development Plan Scheme in preparing and monitoring the Local Development Plan and as a tool to bring stakeholders together in the development planning process.

Q17: Do you agree with the guidance on the Delivery Programme?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes. Support the increased focus on delivery rather than simply monitoring the progress of actions in the Local Development Plan. The move to help ensure Local Development Plans are aligned with the corporate priorities of local authorities is supported.

Q18: Do you agree with the guidance on Local Place Plans?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, support the general guidance and the approach to empower local communities and ensure that they can have a positive influence on the future planning of their area.

As the new regulations are enacted and local communities and local authorities learn from the experience of the preparation of local place plans it is important that the guidance is updated regularly to learn from that experience.

It is noted that planning authorities are required to publish information about how Local Place Plans are to be prepared and by when, so that they can be taken into account in the preparation of the Local Development Plan (section 15A(b)(i)). In practice, this may give local communities a relatively short period of time to prepare a place plan to ensure it is taken into account in preparing the Local Development Plan. It will also place significant resources pressure on planning authorities if they are to support and assist multiple communities to prepare place plans across the local authority area at the same time early in the Local Development Plan preparation process.

Planning authorities are also required to 'validate' a Local Place Plan before it is registered. It would be useful if additional guidance is provided in relation to the expectations of the validation process.

Q19: Do you agree with the guidance on the Evidence Report?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, the guidance is comprehensive and the example of the Evidence Report structure is useful in clarifying the scope and level of detail that will be required. While the preparation of the Evidence Report is the responsibility of the planning authority, a number of the areas of evidence will require significant input from key agencies and other stakeholders, particularly with regards to the capacity of infrastructure. It is important to recognise the additional resource implications for planning authorities, key agencies, and other stakeholders throughout the plan preparation process.

The link to monitoring the adopted Local Development Plan is welcomed and should ensure that we can learn and adapt from the experience of implementing the previous plan when preparing a new plan.

In line with the response to Q7, it would be useful if the guidance set out the minimum evidence requirements which must be included in the Evidence Report.

Q20: Do you agree with the guidance on the Gate Check?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes. While it is welcomed that the guidance suggests that it should not be necessary for the issues addressed in the Evidence Report to be revisited at the Examination, it is important that the guidance is clear regarding the role of the appointed person at the gate check and to what extent matters considered in the Evidence Report can be reconsidered during the examination of the proposed Local Development Plan.

Importantly it would be useful if the guidance provided examples of circumstances when this may be appropriate i.e. if there is a delay in the plan preparation timescales or a material change in the evidence base which has been considered at the gate check.

Q21: Do you agree with the guidance on the Proposed Plan?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, agree with the guidance which sets out a collaborative approach to support the transition towards delivery focused and place-based plans with any policy focused on local issues.

Paragraph 160 of the proposed guidance identifies that where stakeholders are promoting alternatives to the content of the Proposed Plan, they should provide information on community opinion as part of their representation. Further guidance is required to explain how this would work in practice and what steps a stakeholder would be required to take to explain how 'community opinion' has been gathered.

The Planning Act 2019 identifies that Section 56 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (arrangements for discharge of functions by local authorities) does not apply to the function of approving the Evidence Report, Proposed Plan and Delivery Programme. It would be useful if the guidance could provide additional information in relation to this and why approval of these documents by Full Council will add to the planning preparation process and the corporate alignment of Local Development Plans.

22: Do you agree with the guidance on Local Development Plan Examinations?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, however, it is unclear from the guidance whether the additional gate check stage early in the plan preparation will streamline the examination process. As set out in the response to Q20 it is important that the guidance is clear regarding the role of the appointed person at the gate check stage and to what extent matters considered in the Evidence Report can be reconsidered during the examination of the proposed Local Development Plan.

As we move towards the new system of Local Development Plans there will be potential for a number of plans to reach the gate check and examination stage at the same time. This will place significant pressure on the DPEA and could impact on the timescales for the delivery of new plans. It is important that the full plan preparation process is resourced to ensure local authorities and stakeholders can empower local communities and deliver the new style plan which is envisaged by the Planning Act 2019.

Q23: Do you agree with the guidance on Adoption and Delivery?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, as set out in the response to previous questions the increased focus on delivery and the enhanced role of the Delivery Programme is welcomed particularly as we move to 10-year Local Development Plans.

Q24: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Evidence Report in relation to the section on Sustainable Places (paragraphs 240 – 247)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, will provide a good basis to prepare a proposed plan. Reference should be made to environmental baseline/Strategic Environmental Assessment scoping report.

The ability of planning authorities to determine whether additional information is required to support their plan is welcomed, however, the amount of information available will vary between local authorities. While moves to ensure the Evidence Report isn't a 'tick box' exercise is supported it is considered that additional guidance should be included to set out the minimum requirements of the Evidence Report.

Q25: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Evidence Report in relation to the section on Liveable Places (paragraphs 248 – 283)? Yes / No No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Agree, the proposed guidance is welcomed and it is noted that there will be a requirement for a comprehensive evidence base in relation to Liveable Places.

The guidance requires significant evidence and analysis in relation to 20-minute neighbourhoods and infrastructure while other strategies such as an Open Space Strategy and Play Area Sufficiency Assessment will require to be prepared or updated to inform the Local Development Plan.

While the provided Evidence Report template is clear that the report is to provide a summary of this evidence base, it is important that there is a recognition that the proposed approach will place a strain on the resources of planning authorities and Key Agencies early in the plan preparation process at a time when planning teams will be engaging with and supporting local communities to prepare Local Place Plans. A well-resourced planning system will be key in delivering the ambitious proposals for Development Planning.

Q26: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Evidence Report in relation to the section on Productive Places (paragraphs 284 – 296)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Agree, although the proposed guidance is comprehensive, it would be useful to set out areas where cross boundary working may be appropriate, for example in relation to minerals.

Q27: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Evidence Report in relation to the section on Distinctive Places (paragraphs 297 – 310)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, the guidance is welcomed, and it is anticipated that local authorities will tailor the evidence base to support their own distinctive places and local circumstances.

Paragraph 301 of the guidance identifies that a green belt review of any existing or potential green belt should be carried out as part of the evidence report to inform plan-making. Annex C – Local Development Plan Process sets out that any ‘Call for Ideas’ should be undertaken after the gate check to inform the preparation of the Proposed Plan. It is considered that the guidance should identify that the ‘call for ideas’ is undertaken to inform the Evidence Report and any green belt review, otherwise it is highly likely that the findings of the green belt review will be re-examined at the Proposed Plan examination stage.

Q28: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Proposed Plan in relation to the section on Sustainable Places (paragraphs 317 – 328)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, figure 11 clearly sets out what approach Local Development Plans should take to deliver sustainable places. It is important that plans can reflect local circumstances and priorities.

Identifying areas where development is unlikely to be supported due to the predicted effects of climate change is considered to be an important step in a plan led approach to sustainable development and tackling the climate emergency.

Q29: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Proposed Plan in relation to the section on Liveable Places (paragraphs 329 – 400)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, figure 12 clearly sets out the approach Local Development Plans should take in delivering liveable places where people can live better, healthier lives.

Integrating the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods into Local Development Plans is welcomed as a key step in delivering safe, walkable, liveable and thriving places.

The proposal to identify areas not currently well served by 20-minute communities is also welcomed as this recognises the importance of supporting the needs of existing communities rather than Local Development Plans being overly focused on new development.

The infrastructure first approach is welcomed and will be dependent on close collaboration with infrastructure providers early in the plan making process to ensure that the Delivery Programme can set out how and when the infrastructure requirements will be funded and delivered.

Q30: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Proposed Plan in relation to the section on Productive Places (paragraphs 401 – 424)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, figure 13 clearly sets out the approach Local Development Plans should take in delivering productive places which can support greener, fairer and more inclusive economy.

Welcome the recognition of the role that Local Development Plans will play to support green economic recovery and address the climate emergency and the significant job growth and economic potential in green energy, circular economy and nature-based sectors.

Q31: Do you agree with the proposed guidance on the Proposed Plan in relation to the section on Distinctive Places (paragraphs 425 – 466)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes, figure 14 clearly sets out the approach Local Development Plans should take in delivering distinctive places.

Support the clear position in the guidance that green belts continue to have an important role to play to help protect and enhance the character and landscape setting of existing settlements as well as providing access to multifunctional open space and help address climate change adaption and mitigation.

Support the strategic approach to nature in which wildlife sites, corridors, landscape features, watercourses, and green and blue spaces come together to form integrated nature networks. This will assist in protecting and restoring biodiversity and allows ecosystems and natural processes to adapt and respond to climate change.

It is welcomed that Local Development Plans should set out the circumstances in which developer contributions to enhancing biodiversity may be required. This can be a positive step to address the nature crisis, however, the guidance should set out examples of when a contribution might be appropriate and the method for calculating the contribution.

Q32: Do you agree with the proposed thematic guidance on the Delivery Programme (paragraphs 467 – 482)?

Yes / No / No View.

Please explain why you agree or disagree.

Yes. Support the principle that the Delivery Programme should set out the key infrastructure requirements to deliver the Local Development Plan including the indicative costs.

It is noted that the guidance sets out that the delivery programme should address the indicative infrastructure cost for every allocation in the plan and reference how viability has been factored into the funding approach. It is considered that this would be extremely resource intensive for planning teams and relies on detailed information being available for all allocations in the plan.

While this may be possible in relation to new sites proposed through a 'call for ideas' process it will be more difficult in relation to some existing allocations which the planning authority may hold limited information in relation to on-site infrastructure costs. These sites could be vacant and derelict sites within settlements that are key in delivering the spatial strategy of the Local Development Plan. It is important that land allocations are not lost because on-site infrastructure costs are not known during the plan preparation process.

Open Space Strategies Regulations

Question 1

- a. Do you agree with the idea of promoting an outcomes-based approach through the OSS Regulations?**

Yes. Utilising an outcomes based approach is welcomed as this moves away from simply an audit of open spaces and helps focus on what needs to be delivered through the Open Space Strategy to help deliver greener, healthier places in line with the draft National Planning Framework 4.

- b. Do you agree with the suggested outcomes?**

Yes, the suggested outcomes are comprehensive although it is important that local authorities can add to or tailor the outcomes to reflect local issues and priorities. Also support the proposal for an Open Space Strategy to include a statement setting out how the strategy will contribute to each outcome. This will help ensure strategies are focused on delivery and will ensure actions within the strategy can be monitored and updated if required.

Question 2

Do you agree with the proposed definition of:

- a. open space - Yes
- b. green space – Yes
- c. green infrastructure – Yes
- d. green networks - Yes
- e. ecosystem services – Yes
- f.

The definitions have been amended through the process of preparing the legislation and guidance and have taken into account the comments from stakeholders. The clear definitions are welcomed and will ensure that they can be reflected in Local Development Plans and other relevant plans/strategies.

Question 3

Do you agree with proposed thresholds for open space audits in Draft Regulation 4(2)?

Yes, agree with the 0.2 ha threshold for open space within and on the edge of settlements and welcome the inclusion of any other smaller space that a Local Authority would wish to include within the audit as there can be small but important areas of open space within a settlement.

Question 4

- a. Do you agree with suggested information to include about each open space (location, size and type)?**

Yes, agree that similar to the current guidance in PAN 65 information should be collected on the location, size and type of area of open space within or on the edge of a settlement.

We welcome that an updated list which also reflects the Ordnance Survey list of types will be published in the finalised guidance and this will cover both green, blue (linked to water) and grey (man-made civic) spaces.

b. Do you agree with Regulation 4(5) on the other information planning authorities may include in the audit?

Yes, this provides local authorities the flexibility to prioritise the collection of data to reflect local priorities including accessibility to the public, functions of open space, the extent to which open spaces deliver those functions, the presence of play opportunities and condition.

Question 5

a. Do you agree with suggested approach to require locality level place based information?

Yes – setting the context is an important step in an Open Space Strategy and provides important information about local demographics and how this relates to open space provision. Across one local authority area there may be different definitions of 'locality' depending on whether the settlement is urban or rural and we welcome the flexibility that regulation 4(11) provides to define localities to match their own established localities which may match those used in the community plan.

b. Do you agree with the three high level aspects that should be covered in these statements 'accessibility', 'quantity' and 'quality'?

Yes – as has been highlight from the Interim Equalities Impact Assessment people's situations and perceptions influence how they perceive open space provision. Considering accessibility, quantity and quality will allow local authorities to develop Open Space Strategies that provide access to open space for a wide range of residents and groups.

Question 6

Do you agree with the list of consultees for the open space audit?

Yes – agree with the of list of Statutory Consultees and with consulting Central Scotland Green Network. Meaningful engagement is key to creating open space strategies that support the 20 minute neighbourhood principle and provide open space and play areas that are accessible to all.

Additional guidance and best practice examples on how local authorities engage with children and young people and older and disabled people as defined in the Act would be welcomed.

It is noted that the Government intend to explore how digital tools could be developed to support local authorities with the required engagement with a range of key groups.

Question 7

a. Do you agree with the Assessment of Current and Future Requirements should have regard to how open spaces and green networks in their area are contributing to the outcomes?

b.

Yes – Assessing current and future requirements against the outcomes will help show how well the open space resource meets the needs of the community. Doing this on a locality basis should help identify specific local needs which then can be reflected in policies and proposals.

c. Do you agree with the proposed provisions for the Assessment of Current and Future Requirements for the assessment to be informed by engagement with the groups set out?

Yes – engagement with the highlighted groups is an essential part of the preparation and consultation of the Open Space Strategy. Understanding what all users need and want from areas of open space and play areas will help guide the development of policies and proposals.

Question 8

a. Do you agree Open Space Strategies should include a statement setting out how they contribute to the outcomes?

Yes

b. Do you agree Open Space Strategies should identify strategic green networks?

Yes – Strategic Green Networks are already identified in Local Development Plans. Will ensure alignment between the Open Space Strategy and Local Development Plan.

c. Do you agree Open Space Strategies should identify how green networks may be enhanced?

Yes – this will help link work already undertaken on more strategic Green Network Strategies with the Open Space Strategy.

Question 9

Do you agree with the proposed consultation requirements on draft Open Space Strategies?

Yes – the draft regulations propose a 12 week consultation period. To undertake detailed and meaningful engagement requires time especially if local authorities are engaging with different consultation techniques for example school or youth groups.

Question 10

Do you agree with the proposed publication requirements for the OSS?

Yes – the draft regulations allow the Local Authority to modify the draft Open Space Strategy following the consultation process taking account representations and other issues that may have arisen during the consultation process.

Question 11

Do you agree the Regulations should set a 10 year minimum review period for updating open space audits and strategies?

Yes – this links to the 10 year cycle for Local Development Plans and will provide the opportunity for both preparation processes to influence each other.

Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations

Question 12

Do you agree with the proposed definitions?

Yes, having a clear definition set out means that there can be a consistent approach in Local Development Plans, play sufficiency assessment and open space strategies.

Question 13

Do you agree planning authorities should map the locations of the two categories of play spaces, and how they are described in Draft Regulations 3(2)(a) and (b)?

Yes – It will be useful to map play spaces in two categories, those that are specifically designed as spaces to play and areas of open space where the primary function is not play.

Most areas of open space will offer some form of opportunity for play and it is therefore important that there is close alignment between the open space strategy and play sufficiency assessment. Proposals not to include play opportunities that may exist in the public realm within the Play Sufficiency Assessment is supported.

Question 14

Do you agree with the proposed requirement to assess play opportunities in respect of their suitability by age groups?

Yes – Agree that it is important to assess the play opportunities in respect to its suitability for all age groups. The indicative tool is a useful guide for assessing each site by types of play and ways to play, however, it may be useful to use more general terms such as babies/ pre-school, primary age, secondary/ young adults as groups rather than specific age brackets.

Question 15

a. Do you agree to the proposed three aspects of assessment - 'accessibility', 'quantity' and 'quality'?

Yes – Utilising 3 different components to assess the sufficiency of the play space is a useful approach. Quantity and accessibility are assessments that can be undertaken relatively easily. Additional guidance is required in relation to assessing the quality of a play space as this could be very subjective.

We note that it is proposed that a satisfaction survey or evidence in popularity through frequency of visits may be helpful in quantifying 'quality', however, this would be very labour intensive and it would not be possible for this to be completed across each play space.

b. to provide them in written statements in respect of the totality of the local authority area and at each locality level?

Yes agree with this approach

Question 16

a. Do you agree with the requirement to consult as part of the process of carrying out the play sufficiency assessment?

Yes.

b. Do you agree with the proposed list of consultees on play sufficiency assessment?

Yes – agree with the requirement to consult children, parents and carers, community councils, and the general public.

Question 17

Do you agree with the publication requirement for play sufficiency assessments?

Yes.

Impact Assessments

Question 18

Do you have or can you direct us to any additional information that would assist in finalising these assessments (BRIA, EQIA, CRWIA, ICIA)?

No comment.

Question 19

Please give us your views on the content of these assessments and how they have informed the draft provisions, or if you think changes are needed to the Regulations to further respond to the issues.

The EQIA and CRWIA have played an important role in drafting the guidance and have highlighted the importance of engaging with all users of open space and play spaces.

Question 20

Do you agree with the Fairer Scotland Duty screening and our conclusion that full assessment is not required?

Agree

Question 21

Do you agree with the Strategic Environmental Assessment pre-screenings, that the Open Space Strategies and Play Sufficiency Assessments Regulations are exempt from the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, as the environmental effects are likely to be minimal?

Agree