

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	15 November 2011
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Supplementary Guidance: Householder Development Guide
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/11/294

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 paragraph 22 (1) states that a planning authority may adopt and issue guidance in connection with a local development plan. Members may recall that 3 separate reports were presented to the 13<sup>th</sup> September meeting of the Enterprise, Planning & infrastructure Committee. At that time, members agreed that 17 supplementary guidance documents be adopted as interim guidance, a further 6 be re-issued for additional consultation following changes made, and 2 entirely new documents be issued for public consultation.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to obtain Committee approval for a further new item of draft Supplementary Guidance, relating to domestic or 'householder' development, to be issued for public consultation. This document has been prepared in support of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (LDP). The public consultation to be undertaken would last 8 weeks, exceeding the statutory 6 weeks in order to take account of the festive period. It is intended that the consultation period would commence on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November, running until 20<sup>th</sup> January 2012. This draft document provides the means of assessing householder development proposals, and seeks to explain the basic principles behind the planning process for the uninitiated reader.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (a) Approve the Householder Development Guide draft Supplementary Guidance document for eight weeks public consultation.
  - (b) Agree that following completion of the relevant consultation, any comments received and subsequent amendments to the draft

Supplementary Guidance be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, other than costs incurred through consultation and publicity related to the proposed guidance. Any such expenses incurred can be met through existing budgets. The implication for the Priority Based Budget is positive. Detailed topic-based advice has value in reducing officer time spent on pre-application discussions, and will therefore prove fruitful in reducing cost. This relates to PBB option EPI PSD02 - Rationalise planning application management.

### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no known legal or equipment implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 As an owner of substantial residential property in the city, proposals for the development of residential property owned by Aberdeen City Council will be subject to assessment in line with the principles and standards set out in the Supplementary Guidance, where applicable.
- 4.3 The progression of this Supplementary Guidance will provide a clear framework for decision making, allowing comprehensive guidance for both applicants and officers, thereby making a significant contribution towards the Council's aim of promoting and achieving sustainable development. The publication of a single document specifically related to householder development is a more straightforward and user-friendly approach, which should result in a reduction in the number of pre-application enquiries of a simple nature. This has value in reducing officer time spent on pre-application discussions.
- 4.4 The proposed Householder Development Guide brings environmental benefits, as it informs applicants and agents of the Council's duties as regards the trees, protected species and the natural environment generally. The document explains where additional supporting information may be required in the presence of such factors, and links to other Supplementary Guidance documents which provide more specific guidance on these issues. By making applicants aware of environmental issues at an early stage, design proposals should be tailored to mitigate any likely impact upon trees, protected species etc.
- 4.5 This new draft Supplementary Guidance will be incorporated when finalising the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) environmental report at the end of the Local Development Plan process.

## 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The Council agreed the content of the Proposed Plan on 18 August 2010. The Proposed Plan was a critical stage in the plan preparation process and was the result of a significant amount of assessment and public consultation.
- 5.2 Various other supplementary guidance documents were reported to members at the 13<sup>th</sup> September meeting of the Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure Committee, at which time some 17 supplementary guidance documents were adopted as interim guidance, a further 6 issued for further consultation following changes, and 2 entirely new documents were issued for consultation. The draft Householder Design Guide has been newly produced and so public consultation is necessary to gain the views of stakeholders on the guidance proposed.
- 5.3 The purpose of this Supplementary Guidance is to provide further information and detail in respect of policies set out in the Local Development Plan, in accordance with the Scottish Government's intention that the Local Development Plan itself focuses on vision, the spatial strategy, overarching and other key policies, and proposals.
- 5.4 The draft Householder Design Guide is an entirely new document, but incorporates elements of previous topic-based guidance documents. Currently, planning guidance on domestic development types is contained in a diverse range of separate supplementary guidance documents on various different topics. The Householder Development Guide is intended to provide clear and concise guidance to householders and agents within a single document, and will be the principal tool for planning officers to use when assessing proposals for domestic development.
- 5.5 The preparation of this Householder Design Guide has involved extensive discussions with officers in order to ascertain which elements of existing guidance were of particular value and identify areas where existing guidance was insufficient or where no appropriate guidance exists. The document has also taken account of the Scottish Government's planned changes to domestic Permitted Development rights.
- 5.6 A copy of the Householder Development Guide is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

## 6. IMPACT

- 6.1 The Local Development Plan continues to support the vision of Aberdeen becoming an even more attractive place to live and in which to do business and will ensure that high quality employment opportunities exist. This process aspires to improve the access that the people of Aberdeen have to high quality services that meet their needs.

The development and refinement of fit for purpose Supplementary Guidance to assist the Aberdeen Local Development Plan is paramount to supporting this vision and achieving the goals that Aberdeen aspires to.

- 6.2 The vision for Aberdeen is to be a city which is vibrant, dynamic and forward looking – an even better place to live and work, where people can expect high-quality services that meet their needs. This means making a visible difference to the quality of the city's urban and natural environment by promoting high quality development and providing an effective infrastructure to make us a world class strategic location.
- 6.3 To do this we must think strategically, facilitate development, engage positively with communities and the business sector and be open and transparent in our decision making. We also have a key role in delivering the vision for the City and Shire as expressed through regional plans and strategies. Planning and Sustainable Development is tasked with seeing that Aberdeen stays at the forefront of planning for the future.
- 6.4 The Supplementary Guidance presented in this report. relates to the following Single Outcome Agreement objectives: 10- We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; 12- We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations; 13- We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity; and 15- Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.
- 6.5 The Supplementary Guidance presented in this report meets the vision of the Community Plan in promoting a strong image of the City and a sense of civic pride.
- 6.6 The Supplementary Guidance presented in this report supports the Council's 5 year Business Plan in terms of protecting and enhancing our high quality natural and built environment, attracting visitors, workers and investment to protect the economic future of the city, and, to facilitate new development projects to improve Aberdeen's living and working environment.
- 6.7 An equalities and human rights impact assessment (EHRIA) has been carried out in relation to the proposed Supplementary Guidance documents, with the results included as Appendix 2 to this report.

## 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Aberdeen Local Development Plan – Proposed Plan  
[http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/ldp/pla\\_aldp\\_document\\_map.asp](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/ldp/pla_aldp_document_map.asp)

- Aberdeen Local Development Plan – Proposed Action Programme  
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=31716&slD=14342>
- Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority:  
Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan  
<http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=423&slD=149>
- Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2006/asp\\_20060017\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2006/asp_20060017_en_1)
- Scottish Planning Series: Planning Circular 1/2009: Development Planning  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/261030/0077887.pdf>
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008  
[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2008/ssi\\_20080426\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2008/ssi_20080426_en_1)

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