

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
DATE	31 May 2012
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Supplementary Guidance: Householder Development Guide
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/12/109

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. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the outcome of a consultation exercise undertaken in relation to a specific draft Supplementary Guidance document, entitled the Householder Development Guide, and to seek approval of responses to the comments received and adoption of the Supplementary Guidance document.
- 1.2 This report concerns a single draft Supplementary Guidance document, relating to domestic or 'householder' development. The draft Householder Development Guide was subject to an 8-week period of public consultation, which ran from 25th November 2011 until 20th January 2012. That public consultation was agreed by members at the Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure Committee meeting of 15th November 2011.
- 1.3 A total of 4 responses were received in response to the consultation. Following analysis of those representations received, a number of minor alterations to the document are proposed. These are set out in Appendix 1. Taking into account the minor nature of the changes made, and the direct link between those changes and the comments received through consultation, it is concluded that a further period of public consultation will not be necessary. As a result, it is proposed that the Householder Development Guide be adopted as interim planning advice, pending its submission to Scottish Ministers for formal ratification. Unless directed otherwise by the Scottish Government within 28 days of its submission, the document will be adopted as formal Supplementary Guidance in support of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan without further referral to this committee.

1.4 A summary of the representations received during the consultation period, officers' recommended responses to those representations and a list of all other minor amendments made are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

(a) Note the representations received in relation to the draft Householder Development Guide;

(b) Approve officers' responses to representations received on the draft Householder Development Guide; and

(c) Agree the adoption of the Householder Development Guide Supplementary Guidance document pending ratification by the Scottish Government following which it will be formally adopted by the Council.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any future publication costs can be met through existing budgets. Adoption of the Householder Development Guide as Supplementary Guidance is expected to make savings associated with more efficient processing of domestic planning applications and a reduction in staff time spent on routine pre-application enquiries.

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 represents 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 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.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 At a Special Council Meeting on 25th January 2012, members resolved to adopt the plan from 29th February, unless directed otherwise by the Scottish Government. The plan was duly adopted on 29th February 2012.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 The draft Householder Development Guide is an entirely new document, albeit one which incorporates elements of previous topic-based guidance documents. Prior to the adoption of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, planning guidance on domestic development types was 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. It is noted that previous planning guidance in relation to domestic development types was not progressed alongside the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, and so the progression of this new document is a matter of some priority.
- 5.4 The preparation of this Householder Development 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.

5.5 A copy of the Householder Development Guide is attached as Appendix 2 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 draft 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 draft 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) was previously carried out in relation to this draft Supplementary Guidance document. That EHRIA is included as Appendix 3 to this report.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Aberdeen Local Development Plan – Proposed Plan
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
- 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

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Gavin Evans
Senior Planner
GEvans@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522 871