

**The Highland Council**  
**Planning, Environment and Development Committee**

**18 February 2015**

Agenda Item	12
Report No	PDI 9/15

**Development Plan Scheme 2015**

**Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure**

**Summary**

This report outlines the content of the annual Development Plan Scheme (DPS) which provides an up-to-date position on progress in preparing and reviewing the Development Plan for Highland, and tells people how and when they can get involved. This year the format of the DPS has been updated and is being presented as a Development Plans Newsletter. This aims to make it more useful and appealing to our communities and stakeholders.

Members are asked to approve the Development Plans Newsletter as the 2015 DPS for submission to Scottish Ministers and publication on the Council's website.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced a requirement for each planning authority to prepare a Development Plan Scheme (DPS) to give certainty to communities and developers as to when each stage of the development planning process will be reached and how people can get involved.
- 1.2 This year the format of the DPS has been updated, and is being presented as a Development Plans Newsletter, **appendix A**, which aims to make it more useful and appealing to our communities and stakeholders. This aims to contribute towards the Community Planning Partnership's outcomes for reducing inequality as set out in the Highland Single Outcome Agreement 3.

**2. The 2015 Development Plans Newsletter**

- 2.1 This year's DPS / Newsletter includes updates on:
  - the final steps for adopting the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP);
  - current and future stages of preparing the Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan) and the commencement of the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (WHILDLP);
  - the early stages of review of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP);
  - the preparation of Supplementary Guidance and other advice; and

- our Participation Statement which explains the steps we will take to involve people in the preparation of our Development Plans.

2.2 The content of the DPS has been updated from previous versions to track performance against timescales set out within the previous DPS, and to provide an indicative 5 year programme, setting milestones to be reached in order to realise the Scottish Government's challenging Development Plan preparation timescales. The Newsletter highlights the Development Plan's role in informing decision making, and the various ways in which people can influence this through each stage of plan preparation.

### **3. Resource Implications**

3.1 It is not anticipated that there will be any direct resource implications for the Council, as preparation of these documents, and their monitoring, is part of the existing work programme of the Development Plans team.

### **4. Implications**

#### 4.1 Equality and Climate Change/Carbon Clever

It is not anticipated that there will be any equality or climate change/carbon clever implications for the Council.

#### 4.2 Legal and Risk

It is not anticipated that there will be any legal or risk implications for the Council.

#### 4.3 Rural

There are no known direct rural implications arising from this report. All communities, including rural, will be consulted with, and given the chance to influence development within their area through making representations to emerging Local Development Plans. All consultation documents are made available on our website with alerts placed on social media to raise awareness and reach out to all communities.

#### 4.4 Gaelic

There are no Gaelic implications arising from this paper.

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to approve the Development Plans Newsletter as the 2015 DPS for submission to Scottish Ministers and publication on the Council's website.

Designation: Director of Planning and Development

Date: 15 January 2015

Author: Peter Wheelan, Planner

Background Papers: Appendix A - Development Plans Newsletter, February 2015

# Development Plans Newsletter

## Cuairt-litir Phlanaichean Leasachaidh

This is Highland Council's first Development Plans Newsletter which provides a timetable for preparing the Council's Development Plans and lets people know how and when they can get involved in preparing them. It also acts as the Council's **Development Plan Scheme** that we submit to Scottish Government.

The Development Plan is a set of documents that guide how and where places can be developed and improved across Highland. The Development Plan includes Local Development Plans (LDPs) that set out policies and site allocations, and Supplementary Guidance (SG) which contain more detailed guidance on specific issues or places. Planning applications for all types of development are determined against the Development Plan. The Council's website is the best place to view and comment on Development Plans in Highland:

[www.highland.gov.uk/developmentplans](http://www.highland.gov.uk/developmentplans)

### What's happening now and looking ahead

At the moment our work is focussed on preparing or reviewing all four LDPs over the next five years. In the next few months we expect to adopt and publish an Area LDP for the Inner Moray Firth after various stages of consultation over the last few years. We have also started to prepare two other Area LDPs that will cover Caithness and Sutherland, and West Highland and Islands. We have also begun the review of the Highland-wide LDP which was published in 2012. Full details of these plans are set out in this Newsletter and the back page shows the timetable for preparing them.

Recently we have worked with community and business representatives in Nairn, Tain and Fort William to draw up Town Centre Action Plans that will shortly be published for consultation. The Draft Supplementary Guidance for the Muirtown and South Kessock areas of Inverness will also be published reflecting community aspirations and development priorities for the future. An Onshore Wind Supplementary Guidance is being prepared to update the policies for assessing applications for wind energy development.



### How to get involved in preparing Development Plans

Involving people who live, work and invest in the Highlands is essential when preparing a Development Plan. We encourage people to get involved from the start of the process and aim to make this as simple as possible.

The 5 key stages of preparing a Local Development Plan are shown in the diagram below. This begins with the Call for Sites and Main Issues Report (MIR) stages (**shown in green**), followed by the Proposed Plan (**amber**). At the final stage an Examination (**red**) is carried out by independent Reporters who may invite further comments from those who commented on the Proposed Plan. When preparing Supplementary Guidance we will always invite comments on a draft and consider these in preparing and adopting a final version.

This Newsletter tells you how and when you can get involved at each stage. Our **Participation Statement** below outlines our commitment to involving you. We will:

- Produce interactive online documents that are easy to read and comment upon
- Include clear maps and graphics in our documents
- Use a range of media to keep you up to date and let you know how and when you can get involved
- Provide copies of plans in Service Points and Libraries
- Work with community groups and stakeholders to encourage them to participate
- Use public meetings and committees to provide regular progress updates
- Maintain our availability so you can speak with the people preparing the plans

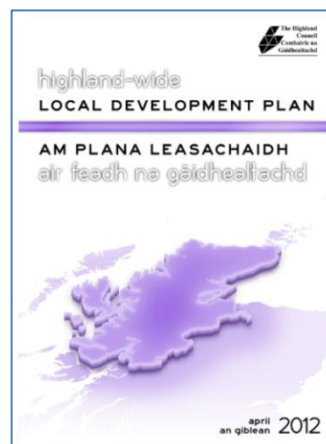
### The five key stages for preparing a Local Development Plan



# The Highland-wide Local Development Plan

The **Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP)**, was adopted in April 2012, and provides an overarching spatial strategy and vision for the Highlands in 20 years time. The plan contains a suite of planning policies and site allocations to help make decisions on planning applications. The HwLDP is accompanied by Supplementary Guidance (SG) which forms part of the Development Plan and provides more detailed information on various topics.

The HwLDP needs to be replaced in the next 2-3 years. We intend for the replacement HwLDP to contain policies only, with any site allocations and maps transferred to the relevant Area LDPs and area based SG.



Policies & Strategy



Topic Based SG

<b>Highland-wide Local Development Plan</b>		G R E E N
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review to commence early 2015.</li> <li>Replacement plan to be adopted by winter 2017.</li> </ul>	
<b>Where we Are Now</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The adopted plan is just under 3 years old.</li> <li>Review of plan commenced late 2014 ahead of schedule.</li> <li>We aim to adopt a replacement plan by winter 2017.</li> </ul>	
<b>Future Stages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MIR to be approved at August or November 2015 Committee.</li> <li>Proposed Plan to be published summer 2016.</li> <li>Submission to Scottish Government in spring 2017.</li> </ul>	

We have started to review the HwLDP by talking to colleagues from the Council and key agencies to review how the current plan is working and what outcomes the new plan should deliver. This will help us to draw up a Monitoring Report which identifies the issues and opportunities that should be addressed through the new plan. We will then ask the Planning Development and Infrastructure (PDI) Committee to approve a **Main Issues Report** in **autumn 2015** to be published for consultation.

During the MIR consultation we will hold a number of public events across the plan area, and will seek to engage community groups, businesses and residents.

The comments we receive during the MIR consultation will help us to prepare the Proposed Plan. Around summer 2016 the Council will be asked to approve this as the settled view on the strategy, vision and policy wording for the HwLDP. It will be published for consultation, and we will encourage the public and other stakeholders to give us their views. By spring 2017 we aim to submit the Proposed Plan to Scottish Government for Examination, at which time we will notify everyone who made representations during the plan's preparation. Following the Examination, adoption of the plan is targeted for winter 2017.

## Topic Based Supplementary Guidance

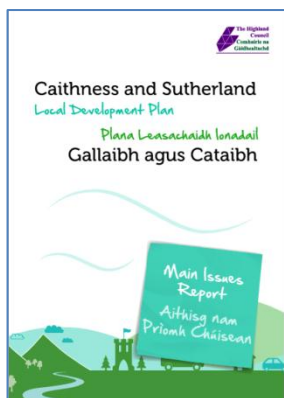
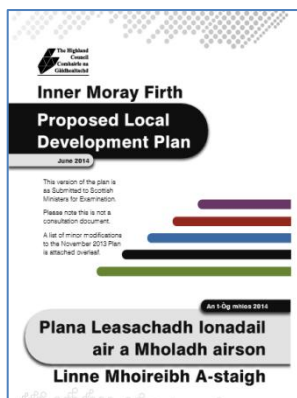
The HwLDP includes a range of SG on topics and areas. As the new HwLDP will cover policies only, we have started to transfer any area based SG (such as Development Briefs) across to the relevant Area LDP. The table overleaf sets out our programme for preparing topic based SG over the year ahead. The programme of work for area based SG is set out against the relevant Area LDP.

We had hoped to prepare topic based SG on Accommodation for an Ageing Population but it is felt appropriate to await the HwLDP review before undertaking this work. Additionally, we intended to prepare SG on Wild Areas, however ongoing work by Scottish Natural Heritage may mean that no work is required by the Council.

## Topic Based SG - Progress Monitoring & Actions For 2015

Where we Expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages
<b>Aquaculture Strategy</b>		
Set a framework to guide development and specify aquaculture planning application requirements.		
Issues & Options consultation was planned for summer 2014.	We have proceeded to prepare a Draft SG which will be considered by PDI Committee in February 2015 for publication for consultation.	Comments on the Draft SG will help us to prepare the final SG to be considered by PDI Committee for adoption in summer 2015.
<b>Highland Historic Environment Strategy (HHES)</b>		
Guidance on managing change to the historic environment.		
Adopted in January 2013. New draft appendix providing guidance on windows & doors to be published for consultation.	Further guidance on particular historic environment matters are being progressed as appendices to the HHES. Draft guidance on windows and doors in historic buildings is scheduled to be published for consultation in spring 2015.	Comments on the draft guidance will be considered and a final version incorporated into the HHES.
<b>Onshore Wind Energy</b>		
Guidance on managing onshore wind energy with content updated to reflect Wild Land areas and cumulative landscape studies.		
Interim SG adopted March 2012 and is being updated.	Revised draft spatial framework maps and strategic capacity study ongoing. February 2015 PDI Committee to consider consultation paper setting out what matters the SG will cover.	A final draft SG will be subject to consultation alongside the HwLDP MIR. Comments received will be considered in preparing a final SG for adoption.
<b>Design and Layout</b>		
Guidance on layout and design of new residential development.		
Draft to August 2014 PDI Committee.	Preparation of guidance was delayed as it was decided to align this work with the review of the HwLDP and the Local Transport Strategy.	Draft SG to be subject to consultation alongside the HwLDP.

# Area Local Development Plans



Area LDPs - Identifying Where Development Can Happen

Area Based SG

The process of preparing Area LDPs is similar to the HwLDP but with a focus on where and how development could be delivered. An additional Call for Sites stage marks the start of the process where people are asked to tell us where development could be located or where land should be protected. We extend this to cover any ideas that people have for the area. At this stage we focus on involving developers, community groups and residents.

As development plans affect everyone in an area we have recently made efforts to contact all home and business addresses<sup>1</sup> within the Caithness and Sutherland LDP (CaSPlan) and West Highland and Islands LDP (WHILDLP) areas to raise awareness and to encourage participation at the Call for Sites and MIR stages.

The task of neighbour notification where we write to all addresses within 30 metres of all preferred, alternative and non-preferred sites set out within the CaSPlan area has also been extended to cover the MIR stage to ensure as many people can get involved as possible. Depending upon resources, this may also be done for the WHILDLP MIR.

## Area Based Supplementary Guidance

Area based SG also forms part of the Development Plan. The existing suite of SG will be reviewed as the Area LDPs are prepared, when any new SGs will also be flagged up.

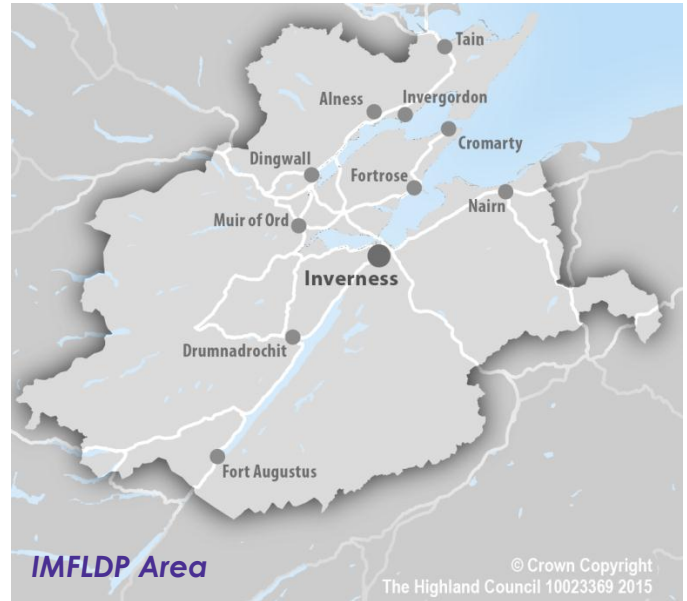
## Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP)

The **Examination** stage of the IMFLDP is nearing conclusion with recommendations from the Examination expected to be received over the next few weeks. The plan is likely to be adopted in May 2015 will be the first Area LDP to be adopted alongside the HwLDP.

IMFLDP - Progress Monitoring & Actions		A M B E R
Where we Expected to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Plan submitted to Scottish Ministers June 2014.</li> <li>Adoption originally targeted for winter 2014 - target missed by 6 months due to delays in using IT software to process and analyse consultation comments at MIR stage.</li> </ul>	
Where we Are Now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Plan submitted to Scottish Government June 2014.</li> <li>Examination nearing completion, feedback anticipated in February/March 2015.</li> </ul>	
Future Stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LDP to be considered for adoption by PDI Committee in May 2015 and Highland Council in June 2015.</li> </ul>	

1 – Subject to Royal Mail delivery service.

Progress in preparing SG relevant to the IMFLDP area is listed overleaf. We had planned to prepare SGs for Developer Contributions in the A96 Corridor, and Development Briefs for the Ashton Farm area and the Longman Core and Longman Landfill areas. However, this work will need to await the outcome of Transport Scotland's A9/A96 Connections Study. We plan prepare a programme of work for these projects in next year's Development Plans Newsletter.



## IMFLDP Area Based SG - Progress Monitoring & Actions For 2015

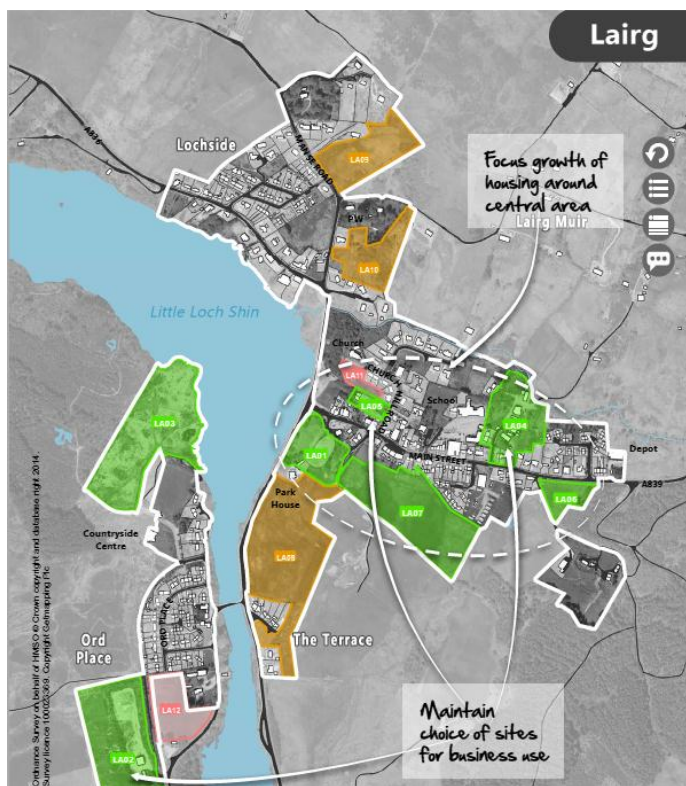
Where we Expected to be	Where we are Now	Future Stages
<b>Muirtown &amp; South Kessock Development Brief</b> A land use framework for regenerating communities and waterfront areas.		
Draft to June 2014 City of Inverness Area Committee.	Draft development brief approved for public consultation at December 2014 City of Inverness Committee. Public Consultation ended February 2015.	Finalised brief by spring 2015 and adoption under the IMFLDP, summer 2015.
<b>Inshes and Raigmore Development Brief</b> Development principles and expectations in the area.		
Draft to June 2014 City of Inverness Area Committee.	Finalised brief agreed by December 2014 City of Inverness Committee. Approval for adoption under HwLDP expected at February 2015 PDI Committee.	Adopted under HwLDP spring 2015.
<b>Inverness City Centre Development Brief</b> Development principles, priorities for investment and regeneration in Inverness City Centre.		
The adopted Development Brief was adopted in March 2013.	We are currently developing a bid for proposals to improve the area around Academy Street, including the connections between the rail and bus station. The outcome of this work will be reflected in a revised Development Brief.	We aim to prepare a draft Development Brief in spring 2015 to be reported to the City of Inverness Area Committee.

# Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan)

The CaSPlan will be the second of our Area LDPs. The plan will contain a spatial strategy and vision for the area, along with Outcomes that describe what the Plan aims to achieve for people and places in the area. Maps will show where development is likely to be supported.

We recently ran a public consultation on the CaSPlan MIR which ended on 6 February 2015.

In preparing the MIR the Council has worked closely with local residents, schools, communities and business representatives. In 2013 local people in Wick and Thurso attended special events known as Charrettes where they drew up their vision for what their towns should be like.



When we published the MIR we sent leaflets to all properties in the plan area to encourage people to give us their views.

The CaSPlan MIR received around 250 comments, the majority of which were made online. We now need to consider all the comments received on the options for future development and the policy issues. We may also need to run an additional consultation if any new sites are considered to be suitable for future development.

Looking ahead the **Proposed Plan** is anticipated to be published in **winter 2015**. When it is agreed by Committee it will become the Council's settled view on the vision, strategy and allocations that should guide future development. The Dounreay Planning Framework will be adopted in the next couple of months and details of other SG to be prepared will be set out in the Proposed Plan.

<b>CaSPlan - Progress Monitoring &amp; Actions</b>	
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MIR published by summer 2014 after Call for Sites and Ideas which ended October 2013.</li> </ul>
<b>Where we Are Now</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MIR published October 2014 - consultation ended on 6 February 2015.</li> <li>Slightly behind schedule due to MIR missing May 2014 committee, resulting in 2 month delay over summer committee recess.</li> </ul>
<b>Future Stages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Plan to Committee in winter 2015 with consultation to follow.</li> <li>Submission to Scottish Ministers in late summer 2016.</li> </ul>

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<b>CaSPlan Area Based SG: Dounreay Planning Framework 2</b>	
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submitted to Scottish Government for adoption by May 2014.</li> </ul>
<b>Where we Are Now</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalised draft agreed at February 2014 Committee. Work on the amendments agreed by Committee and updates required to the Habitats Regulation Appraisal has been delayed due to resources being prioritised to prepare the CaSPlan MIR. These final steps will be actioned over the next few weeks and we aim to adopt the SG by April 2015.</li> </ul>
<b>Future Stages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt under HwLDP April 2015 but carry forward to CaSPlan.</li> </ul>



## West Highlands and Islands Local Development Plan (WHILDP)

The West Highland and Islands will be the third and final Area Local Development Plan to prepare. As with other plan consultations we will continue to encourage interest and participation in the plan making process through a range of community groups.

The **Call for Sites and Ideas** stage for the WHILDP commenced in January 2015 and runs until **27 March 2015**. Comments, suggestions and ideas received will help inform the preparation of the MIR which is likely to be published for consultation in autumn 2015.

From December 2014 to February 2015 we engaged with local high schools to get young people to contribute to the plan making process. Students were led through a series of questions to consider about their future:

- What type of place do you want your home town to be? What type of job do you want to do and could you do it here?
- What new development or facilities are needed?
- What would inspire you to return to live here?
- What could the Development Plan do to help?

Students prepared masterplans for their area to be submitted to the Call for Sites and Ideas consultation. The findings will give a clear steer for what young people living in each community value. These sessions also raised general awareness of planning, and provided an insight into Development Plans and local governance.

<b>WHILDP - Progress Monitoring &amp; Actions</b>	
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan started early 2015.</li> <li>• Call for Sites early 2015.</li> <li>• MIR late 2015.</li> </ul>
<b>Where we are Now</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on Plan started in late 2014 ahead of schedule.</li> <li>• Call for Sites runs until 27 March 2015.</li> </ul>
<b>Future Stages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to take MIR to Area Committees in August 2015 with consultation in autumn.</li> <li>• Proposed Plan to be published for consultation autumn 2016.</li> <li>• Submission to Scottish Ministers spring/summer 2017.</li> </ul>

**GREEN**



## Community Plans

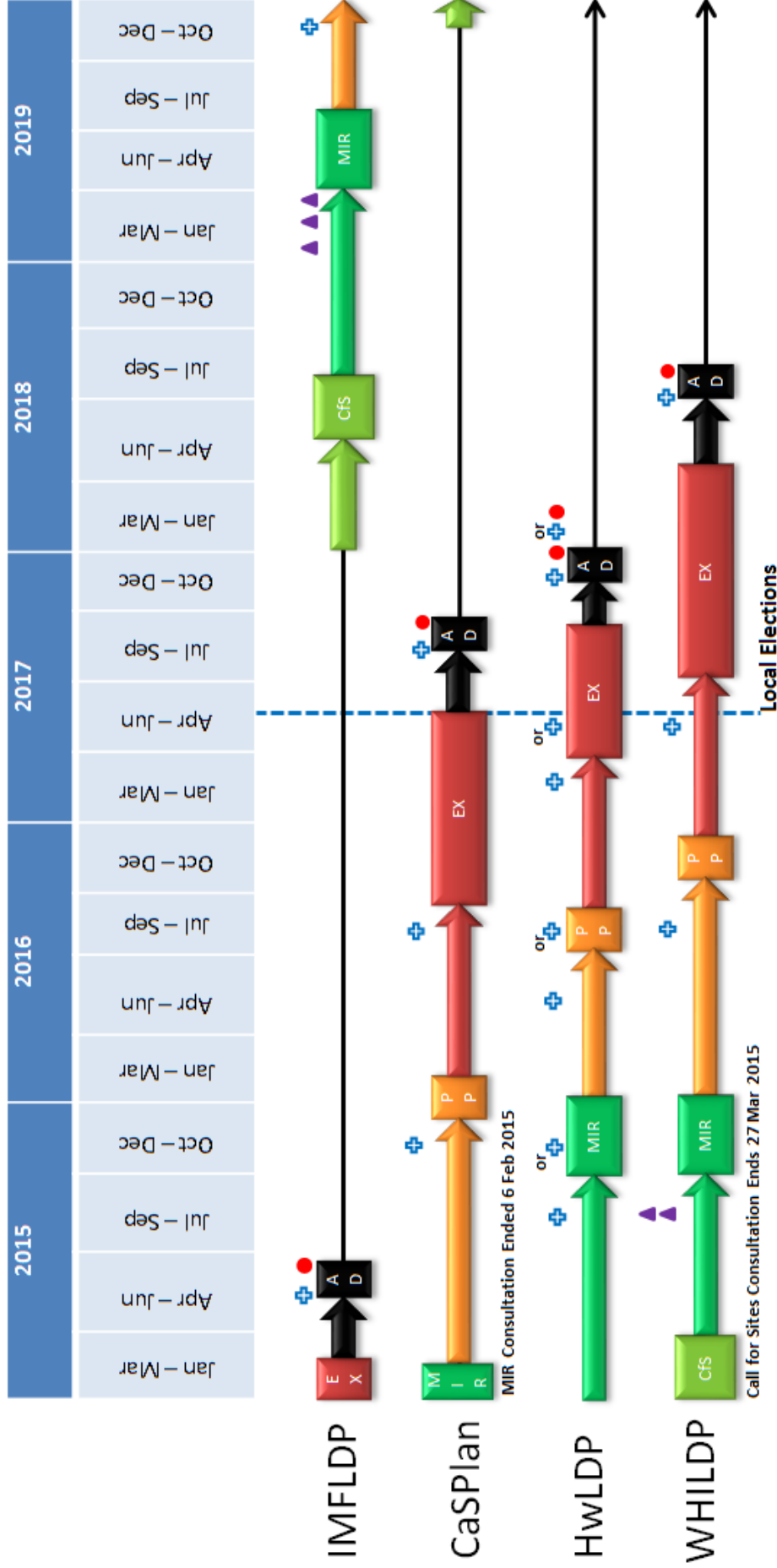
The Community Empowerment Bill is introducing new opportunities for local people to play a greater role in shaping their community. In Highland, we see this is a natural extension to the role local communities play in contributing to the preparation of Development Plans. As new Area LDPs are prepared there will be an opportunity for smaller communities to prepare their own Community Plan to promote sustainable growth in conformity with the Area LDP. We will ask community groups to tell us whether they are interested in such opportunities. For example, we are currently working with communities on the Isle of Rum in developing a plan for their area.

## Other Projects

There are a number of other projects and documents that will be progressed over the next year:

- Draft Town Centre Action Plans for Fort William, Nairn and Tain will be published for comment in March 2015.
- Monitoring and research work provides useful evidence for preparing Development Plans. The draft Housing Land Audit will be published in February 2015, and we aim to publish the Housing Need and Demand Assessment alongside the HwLDP MIR in autumn 2015. Work on the Business and Industrial Land Audit will start later in the year.
- New renewable energy development monitoring and mapping to be released in mid-2015.
- Heat mapping and research to inform replacement HwLDP policies

# Development Plan – Preparation Programme



## Key Stages



+ Targeted Planning Development and Infrastructure Committee Dates

● Targeted Highland Council Committee

▲ Targeted Local Area Committee

→ Preparation Stages

## Contacts and Updates

If you have any questions, wish to be kept informed of progress with the preparation of the Development Plan or require printed copies of this newsletter, please contact the Development Plans Team:

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