

**The Highland Council**  
**Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee**  
**17 August 2016**

Agenda Item	8
Report No	PDI 42/16

**2016 Development Plan Newsletter - Update**

**Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure**

**Summary**

In February this year, this Committee approved the publication of the 2016 Development Plans Newsletter, setting out the timescales for preparing and updating the Council's Development Plan documents. This report introduces an update to the 2016 Newsletter taking account of a review of the team Work Programme. The main change proposed in this update is to postpone the next stages of the Highland-wide Local Development review until Area Local Development Plans for Caithness & Sutherland, and West Highland and Islands have been taken to an advanced stage.

Members are asked to approve the updated Development Plans Newsletter as the new Development Plan Scheme for submission to Scottish Ministers and for this to be published on the Council's website and on the Development Plans portal.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Earlier this year, the Highland Council published its annual 'Development Plans Newsletter' which provides communities and stakeholders with an up to date guide on the timescales for preparing and updating Development Plan documents. Since then, a reduction in staff numbers has led to a review of the work programme for the Development Plans Team.
- 1.2 The updated Development Plans Newsletter reflects the outcome of that review. It recommends that the priority for the Council is to focus on taking the two Area Local Development Plans for Caithness & Sutherland, and West Highland and Islands, to an advanced stage before continuing with the review of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. Alongside we will prepare a small number of Supplementary Guidance documents that focus on key topics and places. The priorities for the year ahead are summarised in section 2 below.

## **2. Updates to the 2016 Development Plans Newsletter**

2.1 The updated priorities for the year ahead are as follows:

- we will continue to prepare the Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan) and the West Highland & Islands Local Development Plan (West Plan). In August we will ask Local Committees to approve CaSPlan to be submitted to Scottish Ministers to instruct the final Examination stage, and we ask for the outcome of these meetings to be incorporated into the DPS at **Appendix 1** before we publish. Soon we will also begin to prepare the Proposed West Plan following the Main Issues Report consultation held between April and June this year;
- the Highland-wide Local Development Plan was subject to a Main Issues Report consultation until January this year and we had planned to publish the next stage, known as the Proposed Plan, later this year. We now propose to continue this work only after both the Area Local Development Plans mentioned above have been taken to an advanced stage. However, the comments submitted during the Main Issues Report that will inform the future stages of this review are presented for consideration by members under a separate item of this Committee meeting; and
- while we prepare the two Area Local Development Plans for Caithness & Sutherland, and West Highland & Islands, Supplementary Guidance containing more detailed policy guidance will be progressed including: Onshore Wind Energy, the Inverness City Centre Development Brief and the Inverness East Development Brief.

2.2 Full details of these plans are set out in this Newsletter and the back page shows the timetable for preparing them. The content of the DPS has been updated to track performance against timescales set out in the February 2016 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. Implications**

3.1 Resource

The implications of staff changes in the team are reflected in the project timescales set out in the enclosed Newsletter. Progress towards meeting these project timescales are monitored as part of the existing work programme of the Development Plans team.

3.2 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.

### 3.3 Legal and Risk

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

### 3.4 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.

### 3.5 Gaelic

There are no Gaelic implications arising from this paper.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- approve the update to the 2016 Development Plans Newsletter at **Appendix 1** for publication, subject to any amendments required following relating to the Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan if necessary, prior to publication, to reflect the outcome of the Caithness & Sutherland Local Committees on 30 and 31 August;
- note the implications this will have for the work programme in the Development Plans team; and
- approve the final Development Plans Newsletter as the 2016 Development Plan Scheme for submission to Scottish Ministers and publication on the Council's website.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 29 July 2016

Author: Scott Dalgarno, Development Plans Manager

Background Papers: Appendix 1 - Development Plans Newsletter – 2016 Update,  
July 2016

# Development Plans Newsletter

## Cuairt-litir Phlanaichean Leasachaidh

July 2016

This is a mid-year update of the Highland Council's annual Development Plans Newsletter which provides an overview of the timetable for preparing land use planning documents for the Highland Council area. It lets you know how and when you can get involved in preparing these plans. This Newsletter 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 where and how new building and development can take place across Highland. These documents include 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 assessed against these documents so it's important that people know when and how they can input to them. The best place to view and comment on Development Plans in Highland is the Council's website or the online Development Plans portal:



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

<http://consult.highland.gov.uk/>

## What's happening now and looking ahead

Since the 2016 Newsletter was published in February we have undertaken a review of the work programme which has concluded that the priority for the Council is to focus on our statutory duty to prepare and maintain an up to date Development Plan. We therefore propose to focus on taking the two Area Local Development Plans for Caithness & Sutherland and West Highland and Islands to an advanced stage before continuing with the review of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. Alongside we will prepare a small number of Supplementary Guidance documents that focus on key topics and places. The priorities for the year ahead are summarised below:

- We will continue to prepare the **Caithness & Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan)** and the **West Highland & Islands Local Development Plan (West Plan)**. In August we will ask Local Committees to approve **CaSPlan** to be submitted to Scottish Ministers and soon after we will begin to prepare the **Proposed West Plan** following the Main Issues Report consultation held between April and June this year.
- The **Highland-wide Local Development Plan** was subject to a **Main Issues Report** consultation until January this year and we had planned to publish the next stage, known as the Proposed Plan, later this year. We now propose to continue this work after the Caithness & Sutherland and West Highland and Islands Area Local Development Plans have been taken to an advanced stage. However, the comments submitted during the Main Issues Report will be presented to Committee to inform the next stage of this review.
- While we prepare the two Area Local Development Plans for Caithness & Sutherland and West Highland & Islands, **Supplementary Guidance** containing more detailed policy guidance will be taken to Committee later this year including: **Inverness City Centre Development Brief, the East Inverness Development Brief.**

Full details of these plans are set out in this Newsletter and the back page shows the timetable for preparing them.

## The Highland-wide Local Development Plan

The **Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP)**, was adopted in April 2012, and contains a 20 year vision and spatial strategy for the Highlands, with planning policies and some strategic site allocations to help make decisions on planning applications. We have started the process of reviewing the HwLDP with a **Main Issues Report (MIR)** consultation that ran until January this year. The MIR outlines the proposal to make the HwLDP a policy only document, with all place-based issues covered in the three current and emerging Area Local Development Plans. Over 120 responses were received to the MIR with almost 90% of those being made through the new [online development plans portal](#).

Looking ahead, we now propose to continue with the next stage of the HwLDP only after the two remaining Area Local Development Plans have been taken to an advanced stage. So the next stage of HwLDP is likely to commence in mid to late 2017 and this will take full consideration of the feedback received during the MIR consultation. At that stage we will look into options for moving towards a single Local Development Plan.

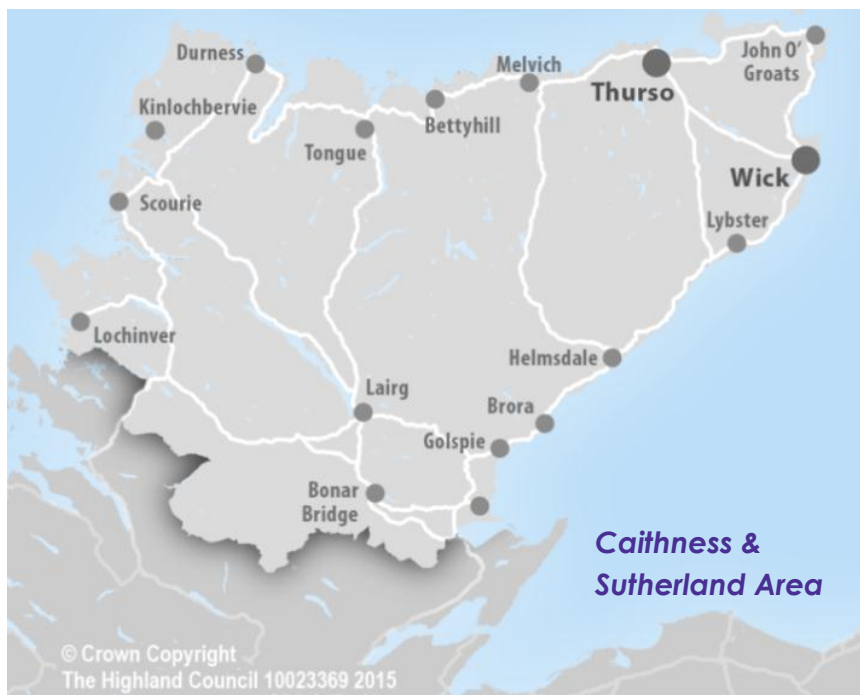
The HwLDP is accompanied by Supplementary Guidance (SG) which provides further detail on various topics. The list below outlines priorities for Supplementary Guidance for the year. In addition, in light of the proposal to amend the timescales for the HwLDP review we may consider reviewing certain items of Supplementary Guidance such as Developer Contributions.

<b>Highland-wide Local Development Plan</b>			
<b>Where we expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>	<b>G R E E N</b>
Proposed Plan to be published summer 2016 following consultation on MIR up to January 2016.	Proposed Plan will now be postponed until around late 2017 after the Area Local Development Plans for Caithness & Sutherland and West Highland & Islands have been taken to an advanced stage.	Submission to Scottish Government in spring 2018. Replacement plan to be adopted by winter 2018/19.	
<b>Topic Based Supplementary Guidance</b>			
<b>Where we expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>	
<b>Onshore Wind Energy</b> Guidance on managing onshore wind energy.			
A final draft SG subject to consultation alongside the HwLDP MIR.	Following consultation on final draft SG the final SG is being considered by Committee for adoption in August 2016.	Submission to Scottish Ministers for approval to adopt by autumn 2016. Landscape studies to be progressed alongside SG.	
<b>Design and Layout</b> Guidance on layout and design of new development.			
Preparation of guidance delayed to align this work with the review of the HwLDP and the Local Transport Strategy.	As proposed – see future stages.	Draft SG to be prepared alongside the HwLDP and the Local Transport Strategy.	

## Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan (CaSPlan)

The CaSPlan will be the second of our Area LDPs. The **Proposed Plan** was subject to public consultation from January to March 2016. It sets out the Council's settled view on the vision, strategy and allocations that should guide future development.

The consultation attracted over 600 comments from 200 individuals, groups or organisations. These are being carefully considered before Members are asked to agree how the Council responds to the issues raised at the Caithness and Sutherland Local Committees in late August. The options will be to submit the Proposed Plan to Ministers to instruct the final Examination stage, or to issue a modified Proposed Plan if any changes to the plan are accepted.



If Local Committees decide to submit the Proposed Plan to Ministers we will meet the target for submission in late summer this year. However, if a modified plan is required then a further consultation will need to be undertaken introducing a further 6 months before we seek Committee approval to submit to Ministers.

The Dounreay Planning Framework 2 has been adopted and we are ensuring that this is carried forward under CaSPlan. The Proposed Plan also indicates the intention to prepare a Thurso West Development Brief as SG.

<b>Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan</b>		
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Plan consultation from January to March 2016.</li> <li>Submission to Scottish Ministers in late summer 2016.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed Plan consultation went ahead as planned.</li> <li>Option 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise Council position at Local Committees in late August, then either: submit to Scottish Ministers late summer 2016; or publish modified Proposed Plan for consultation in Oct/Nov 2016.</li> <li>Examination of outstanding issues from autumn 2016 to spring 2017 or spring 2017 to autumn 2017.</li> <li>Adoption late 2017 or early 2018.</li> </ul>
<b>CaSPlan Area Based Supplementary Guidance</b>		
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>
<b>Dounreay Planning Framework 2</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To carry forward this SG as part of CaSPlan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant reference included in Proposed Plan for DPF2 to be carried forward under CaSPlan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of carry forward to CaSPlan.</li> </ul>
<b>Thurso West Development Brief</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify intention to prepare a brief within the Proposed Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We intend to prepare a brief which has been identified in the Proposed Plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparation of this brief will commence after CaSPlan has been adopted in 2017/2018.</li> </ul>

GREEN

## West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (West Plan)

The West Highland and Islands will be the third and final Area Local Development Plan. As with other plan consultations we will continue to encourage interest and participation in the plan making process through a range of community groups. High Schools in the area were closely involved in the early stages of preparing the plan.

We carried out a consultation on the Main Issues Report between April and June this year. Comments received during the consultation will now be considered in preparing the Proposed Plan which is scheduled to be published for consultation in spring 2017.

We have assisted in preparation of development briefs for Aonach Mor, the Isle of Rum and Mallaig Harbour that will eventually form Supplementary Guidance to this Plan. We will progress other masterplans / briefs as resources allow including for land at Blar Mor, Fort William.

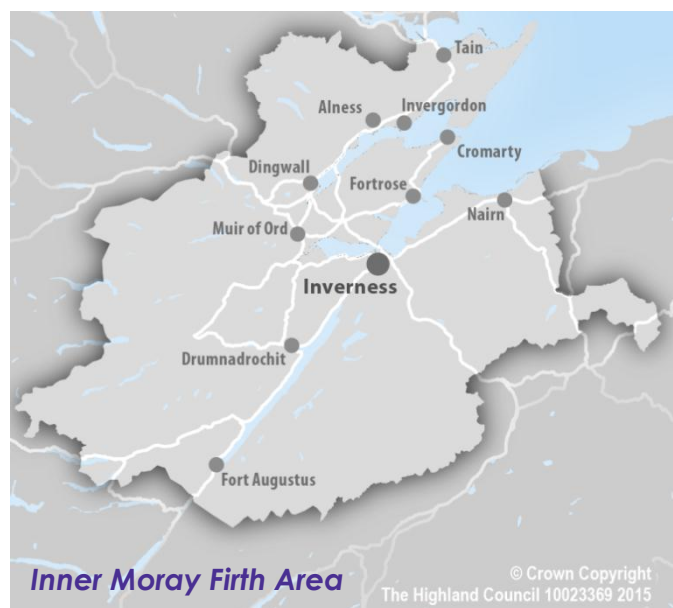


<b>West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan</b>			<b>G R E E N</b>
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>	
MIR to Area Committees in February 2016 and published for consultation in Spring 2016. Proposed Plan to be published 2016/2017.	MIR was subject to consultation April to June 2016. Proposed Plan to be published spring 2017	Submission to Scottish Ministers late 2018.	
<b>West Highland and Islands Area Based Supplementary Guidance</b>			
<b>Where we expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>	
<b>Mallaig Harbour Masterplan</b> Development principles, priorities for investment and regeneration in the harbour area.			
n/a	WHILDP MIR published April 2016 incorporating site for harbour expansion	Adoption of masterplan following adoption of WHILDP late 2018	
<b>Nevis Forest &amp; Mountain Resort Masterplan</b> Development principles, priorities for investment and regeneration on land at Aonach Mor access road.			
n/a	WHILDP MIR published April 2016 incorporating masterplan principles	Adoption of masterplan following adoption of WHILDP late 2018	
<b>Isle of Rum Community Land use Plan</b> Development principles and priorities for growth and development on the Isle of Rum.			
Principles of community plan embodied within WHILDP MIR	WHILDP MIR published April 2016 incorporating community plan principles	Adoption of community plan following adoption of WHILDP late 2018	

## Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (IMFLDP)

The IMFLDP was adopted by The Highland Council on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015 and an accompanying Action Programme was published in October 2015, setting out the actions for delivering the plan. The Plan was the first Area LDP to be adopted alongside the HwLDP and the Action Programme will be reviewed at least every two years.

Later this year we will begin to prepare a Development Brief for East Inverness covering various priorities for the growth of this part of the City, including development of the Ashton Farm area, delivery of transport improvements in the area, and corresponding developer contributions. Separate the Longman Core and Longman Landfill areas. However, this work will need to await the outcome of Transport Scotland's A9/A96 Connections Study. A programme of work for these projects in next year's Development Plans Newsletter.



<b>Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan</b>			
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>	<b>A M B E R</b>
Adoption originally targeted for winter 2014.	IMFLDP Adopted by the Highland Council July 31 <sup>st</sup> 2015. Scottish Ministers extended the period for consideration of IMFLDP documents, from 28 days to 56 days, delaying formal adoption. Action Programme published in October 2015	Action Programme to be published at least every two years.	
<b>IMFLDP Area Based Supplementary Guidance</b>			
<b>Where we Expected to be</b>	<b>Where we are Now</b>	<b>Future Stages</b>	
<b>Inverness City Centre Development Brief</b>			
Development principles, priorities for investment and regeneration in Inverness City Centre.			
To prepare a draft Development Brief for consultation in spring 2016.	The City Committee will consider a draft Development Brief for consultation in September this year.	Feedback gathered through the consultation along with a final Development Brief for adoption will be considered by Area Committee in spring 2017.	
<b>Inverness East Development Brief</b>			
Development principles and requirements for the delivery of development in the area.			
n/a	In autumn 2016 we will begin background research, collaboration with partners and preparation of the initial draft Development Brief.	We will take a draft Development Brief to the City Committee in late 2016 or early 2017.	

## 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 that 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. The community land use for Rum mentioned above is an example of a document that will eventually be Supplementary Guidance to the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan.





## Monitoring and Research

Auditing and monitoring work provides useful evidence for preparing Development Plans. We prepare a range of documents on a variety of topics to help ensure that our Development Plan is based on the most up to date information. The use of online mapping is helping to improve access to and sharing of information.

Our programme of monitoring and research work has also been subject to review and timescales for this work is set out below. This has led to a much stronger focus on the monitoring framework which supports the Development Plans we prepare. The updated timetable is set out below.

<b>Audits and Monitoring</b>			
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Update Schedule</b>	<b>Target Publication month</b>
<b>House Completions</b>	NA	Monthly	NA
<b>Planning Approvals</b>	NA	Weekly	NA
<b>Housing Land Audit</b>	Jan 2016	Annual	August
<b>Employment Land</b>	April 2012	TBA	Dec
<b>Vacant and Derelict Land</b>	Sept 2015	Annual	Sept
<b>Renewables Wind</b>	April 2016	Annual	April
<b>Renewables Hydro</b>	Feb 2017	Annual	Feb
<b>Minerals</b>	Late 2015	Annual	November

The [Housing Land Audit](#) published in October last year, and shown on our [online mapping](#), provides an update on housing land supply. The draft HLA consultation ran from 4<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> July. Alongside this we continue to carry out monitoring of **weekly planning approvals** and **monthly housing completions**.

Our online [Wind Farm Mapping](#) launched in 2015 provides an interactive map of wind turbines across Highland. In the first quarter of 2016 we expanded this to include new applications for wind energy development. In addition to turbines constructed and under construction we now include all applications in-planning, approved and refused. An audit of **Hydro schemes** will also be carried out with results published through the online mapping.

We will investigate methods for accessing information on **Business and Industrial, Retail and Tourism** related development to identify availability and take up of employment land.

A **Minerals Audit** is underway to gather baseline information on the landbank of available mineral resources across Highland. This is aimed at improving the monitoring process for active and dormant mineral assets across the area.

**Monitoring Statements** give a snapshot of the social and economic changes in a Local Development Plan area, and this year the Main Issues Report for the West Highland and Islands will be supported by a Monitoring Statement.

## How to get involved in preparing Development Plans

Involving people who live, work and invest in the Highlands is an essential part 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 above. 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:

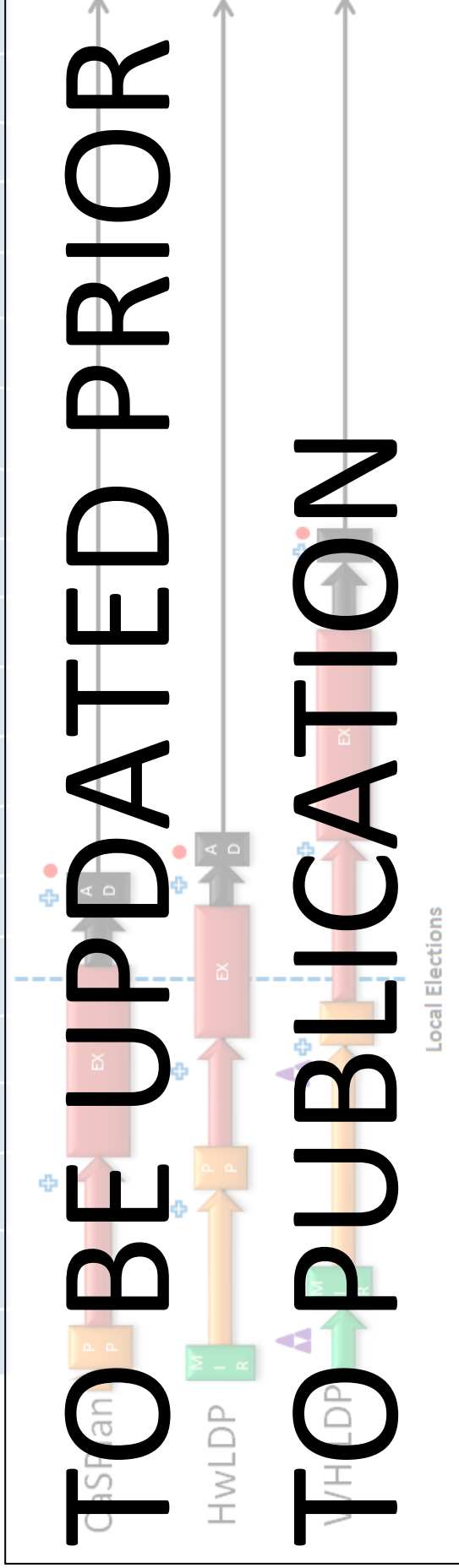
- Produce interactive online documents that are easy to read and comment upon
- Include clear maps and graphics in our documents
- Use a range of media to keep you up to date and let you know how and when you can get involved
- Provide copies of plans in Service Points and/or Libraries
- Work with community groups and stakeholders to encourage them to participate
- Notify the immediate neighbours of potential development sites at both the Main Issues Report and Proposed Plan stages of our Area Local Development Plans
- 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



# Development Plans Programme

2016			2017			2018			2019			2020			
Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Apr - Jun	Jul - Sep	Oct - Dec



## Key Stages



Call for Sites

Main Issues Report

Proposed Plan

Examination

Adoption



Targeted Planning Development and Infrastructure Committee Dates



Targeted Highland Council Committee



Targeted Local Area Committee



Preparation Stages

## Contacts and Updates

If you wish to be kept informed of progress with the preparation of the Development Plan please register online at: [consult.highland.gov.uk](https://consult.highland.gov.uk)

To contact the Development Plans Team:  
[devplans@highland.gov.uk](mailto:devplans@highland.gov.uk) T: 01349 886 608

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