



DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 3

REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise the panel of publication of the National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3).

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the panel notes the content of NPF3.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

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| I Council Values | Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; and working in partnership. |
| II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment) | NPF3 has been prepared by Scottish Government in consultation with stakeholders and replaces NPF2. NPF3 is supported by a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Impact Assessment and Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment. |
| III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers | None. |
| IV Impact on performance and performance indicators | NPF3 sits at the top of the hierarchy of Scottish planning policy documents and sets out the Scottish Government's strategic development priorities over the next 20-30 years, including 'national developments'. Development plans will be required to accord with NPF3. |
| V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement | Outcome 3 - Our economy is diverse and dynamic, and West Lothian is an attractive place for doing business.

Outcome 4 - We live in resilient, cohesive and safe communities.

Outcome 8 - We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our impact on the built and natural environment. |
- (The SOE is itself in the process of being reviewed and will likely give rise to a new series of outcomes in due course).

VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)	There are no known financial, staffing or property implications arising for the council.
VII Consideration at PDSP	The draft NPF3 and the council's proposed consultation response were considered by the Development and Transport PDSP on 13 June 2013.
VIII Other Consultations	Consultation has been carried out with Roads and Transportation and the council's climate change officer.

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D1 Background

In September 2012, the Scottish Government (SG) announced a review of the National Planning Framework for Scotland 2 (NPF2). As part of the review, views were sought from stakeholders on what should be contained within NPF3, together with a call for candidate national developments. The main issues report (draft NPF3) was published in April 2013 and was the subject of consultation.

The approved NPF3 was published on 23 June 2014. NPF3 is the spatial expression of the government's Economic Strategy and sets out its plans for infrastructure investment. It brings together the SG's plans and strategies for economic development, regeneration, energy, environment, climate change, transport and digital infrastructure to provide a coherent vision of how Scotland should evolve over the next 20 to 30 years. NPF3 is reviewed every five years. NPF3 can be viewed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/3539/0> and is also attached as Appendix One.

The council made three submissions to the call for candidate national developments for inclusion in NPF3 which were considered to be of strategic importance and to assist in meeting aims for economic recovery and a low carbon economy. It also made submissions to the draft NPF3.

The submissions focussed on transport infrastructure (M8, M9, A801, A71, A89, Newbridge Roundabout) and the Edinburgh Glasgow Rail Improvement Programme (EGIP), and assistance required to deliver the growth agenda i.e. infrastructure funding. Only EGIP Phase 2 is proposed to be taken forward as a national project in NPF3. With regard to strategic roads projects there is specific reference to the M8 and more detailed reference to assistance being required to deliver infrastructure.

D2 National Planning Framework 3

Together with the Scottish Planning Policy, NPF3 provides a clear national vision of what is expected of the planning system and the outcomes that it must deliver. NPF3 identifies national developments and other strategically important development opportunities in Scotland. It is accompanied by an Action Programme which identifies how the SG expects it to be implemented, by whom, and when. Statutory development plans must have regard to the NPF, and Scottish Ministers expect planning decisions to support its delivery. NPF3 should also be considered by the council through community planning partners when taking forward Single Outcome Agreements.

The vision for Scotland is set out focussed around a successful sustainable place, a low carbon place, a natural resilient place and a connected place and indicates opportunities for growth and regeneration, environmental enhancement and improved connections across Scotland.

These would involve creating a growing and sustainable low carbon economy with fair distribution of opportunities within all communities; becoming more energy efficient, producing less waste; de-carbonising of transport networks; respecting and improving the condition of the environment and natural resources and providing nationwide coverage of high speed fixed and mobile digital infrastructure and more and better strategic transport links which facilitate a growing economy and inclusive society.

NPF2 emphasised the importance of cities and city-regions and the strong support these provide for sustainable economic growth. This remains a key theme in NPF3 alongside maintaining a high quality built and natural environment.

The emphasis in NPF3 is on cities, however, the strategy also considers opportunities for towns and rural areas and aims to link the spatial strategy to other key initiatives such as community planning partnerships, town centre strategies, and the proposed Tourism Development Plan for Scotland. The Scottish Cities Alliance and local authorities are identified to take forward priorities set out in the City Investment Plans and bring these together into a shared investment portfolio brochure.

D3 National Developments

Fourteen national projects are identified to be delivered by a range of public and private sector organisations. However, to support their delivery, priorities identified in NPF3 will be taken into account when future spending programmes are developed or reviewed. The projects are:

1. Ravenscraig
2. Dundee Waterfront
3. **Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) Network and Thermal Generation**
4. **A High Voltage Energy Transmission Network**
5. Pumped storage
6. **Central Scotland Green Network**
7. Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership
8. **A National Long Distance Cycling and Walking Network**
9. **High Speed Rail**
10. **Strategic Airport Enhancements**
11. **Grangemouth Investment Zone**
12. **Freight on the Forth**
13. Aberdeen Harbour
14. A Digital Fibre Network

There are no national projects in West Lothian, however, those highlighted in bold have implications for the area. For example, the Grangemouth proposals which are of direct relevance given the long standing proposal for improvements to the A801 Avon Gorge, protected through current development plans and benefitting from planning approval. Whilst the A801 is not specifically mentioned in NPF3, the proposed Grangemouth Investment Zone does highlight the need for improvements to port, road and rail infrastructure associated with this.

In relation to the Central Scotland Green Network, remediation of derelict land, prioritised action in disadvantaged communities and active travel (walking and cycling) are identified as the priorities for the CSGN Trust and others during the lifetime of NPF3. An aim is to increase the rate of woodland creation to deliver 100,000 hectares of new woodland over the next 10 years. Well-designed green infrastructure is recognised as a means of supporting regeneration efforts within towns and cities, and improved attractiveness and environmental performance can act as a catalyst for economic investment.

D4 Key points and implications for West Lothian

The cities network is identified as a continuing focus for investment. As part of the SESplan area, West Lothian may be in a position to take advantage of this. Focussing on place making could enhance quality of life and lead towards new lower carbon models of urban living. West Lothian core development areas, led through master plans, could be considered to be an example of this.

The SESplan area is projected to have the second largest rate of growth of the four SDPAs – a 20% increase in population and 32% increase in households between 2010 and 2035. A planned approach is required to ensure development needs are met, whilst taking into account existing and future infrastructure capacity. This approach includes addressing infrastructure constraints to help unlock effective housing land. The panel is advised that these requirements are reflected in the Main Issues Report for the West Lothian Local Development Plan. An early priority for the SG is to examine current planning authority approaches to aligning planning and infrastructure investment to inform whether further advice on this is required.

Safeguarding our natural and cultural assets and making innovative and sustainable use of our resources is highlighted. This remains a priority for the council and is reflected in the Main Issues Report for the West Lothian Local Development Plan.

West Lothian's enterprise area at Broxburn and Livingston is recognised alongside others across the country as priority areas for action as an aid to economic growth and investment. NPF3 advises that the SG will work with planning authorities to maintain an up-to-date, easily accessible national protocol for such areas. The SG's target is to increase exports by 50% by 2017 and exposure to international trade will promote productivity and competition within Scottish markets. Key economic initiatives are also recognised at Heartlands, Whitburn. The panel is advised that the Main Issues Report for the West Lothian Local Development Plan provides continued support for Heartlands.

The SG wishes to see a significant increase in house building to ensure housing requirements are met across the country and advises that more ambitious and imaginative planning will be needed to meet requirements for a generous and effective supply of land for housing in a sustainable way. This includes encouraging innovative approaches to affordable housing. The panel is advised that the Main Issues Report for the West Lothian Local Development Plan advises that the land supply in West Lothian is considered by the council to be generous, a key issue, however, is provision of the infrastructure required to deliver requirements.

Changing the way people travel will make a significant contribution towards reducing emissions, and sustainable development patterns. To change the way people travel NPF3 supports decarbonisation of transport networks (for example, promoting low carbon fuels and electric vehicles), substantially increasing active travel networks (10% of all journeys by cycle by 2020) and emphasises the role of planning in supporting behaviour change including through modernisation of infrastructure through developing at least one exemplar walking- and cycling-friendly settlement and also rolling out 20mph zones to more residential and shopping streets and further application of the principles set out in Designing Streets.

Enhancement of the gateway role of Edinburgh Airport will bring economic and connectivity benefits, as will new freight capacity on the Forth. The completion of the Queensferry Crossing, a national development in NPF2, will further strengthen connectivity along Scotland's east coast economic corridor. The panel is advised that West Lothian's strategic location within the central belt may provide opportunities to benefit from these proposals.

NPF3 continues to support the Edinburgh to Glasgow Improvements Programme (EGIP) to improve capacity between Edinburgh and Glasgow with consequent opportunities to reduce journey times even further. Proceeding with EGIP Phase 2 or by constructing a fast rail connection between Edinburgh and Glasgow as the first phase in a longer-term plan for a High Speed Rail connection to the rest of the UK could also improve connectivity and therefore contribute to economic growth. The potential benefits to West Lothian of high speed rail were outlined in a report considered by the D&T PDSP on 21 February 2013.

It is recognised that planning will play a key role in delivering on the commitments set out in Low Carbon Scotland: the Scottish Government's report on proposals and policies (RPP2). Initiatives to reduce energy demand, improve energy efficiency and diversify supply are prominent, recognising that if government targets for renewable energy and heat are to be met then initiatives such as district heating schemes and wind energy have an enhanced role to play. NPF3 advises of targets for reducing total final energy demand by 12% by 2020, meeting at least 30% of overall energy demand from renewables by 2020 and for at least 500 MW of renewable energy to be in community and local ownership by 2020. The council is preparing supplementary guidance on wind energy developments consistent with NPF3. A heat map showing heat demand and supply for the whole of West Lothian has also been developed with input from the council to support the identification and planning of local low-carbon energy projects.

Environmental quality is recognised as being central to health and well-being. Green infrastructure and improved access and education have a key role to play in building stronger communities. In the coming years, SG wish to see a step change in environmental quality, especially in places with long-standing disadvantages arising from a legacy of past industrial activity and is committed to reversing the decline of some habitats and species and regulating environmental pollution.

In terms of transport, the long term ambition is a largely decarbonised transport sector in Scotland, and changes in the way we travel for example, by using alternative fuel sources for trains and vehicles and substantially increasing active travel networks. NPF3 advises that Planning will have a role to play in modernising infrastructure and supporting this change and that development strategies should be complemented by improved connections across all transport modes. It is recognised further improvements to ensure that we get best value from our transport infrastructure. Further improvements are to be made to the motorway network including the M8 and regional transport partnerships have a crucial role to play in improving active travel and transport networks and services within each of the city regions. The SG's Infrastructure Investment Plan includes measures to improve the safety, capacity and performance of the strategic inter-city road network. The potential to develop rail freight is also recognised.

There is no particular reference to fracking in NPF3, however, reference is made to reserves of coal bed methane in the Scottish midland valley (Central Belt) and that these could contribute to secure energy supplies in the medium term and that a framework for this is set out in SPP 2014. The panel is advised that North west West Lothian contains a small area for which the UK Government has issued PEDL (Petroleum Exploration and Development Licences) and there may in the future be proposals for exploration in this area. The licences relate to areas that potentially contain reserves of on-shore gas including Coal Bed Methane (CBM). There is potential to release methane from un-mined coal seams or capture methane accumulated in coal mine workings, subject to appropriate environmental mitigations.

Also recognised is that there is a continuing need to actively address the impacts of past uses of land, including minerals extraction, through restoration and enhancement. The Scottish Mines Restoration Trust has been established to help communities and other stakeholders involved in restoring open-cast coal sites across Scotland to bring together viable restoration plans. The panel is asked to note this.

E. CONCLUSION

Of the proposed national projects identified in NPF3, West Lothian is strategically positioned to benefit from those related to projects such as high speed rail and CSGN. There will likely be spin offs from the proposed Grangemouth Investment Zone and proposed airport enhancements. The West Lothian Enterprise Area will provide greater support to the West Lothian economy. NPF3 will be a material consideration in the assessment of planning proposals.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Report to Council Executive 25 June 2013: Scottish Government Consultation - National Planning Framework 3

Appendices/Attachments: One

Appendix One: National Planning Framework 3

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