

## Appendix 7 Evolution of the Environment without the LDP

SEA Topic	Environmental Issues influenced by the LDP	Evolution of the Environment without the LDP
<p><b>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</b></p>	<p>SIC has an obligation to make sure that the LDP furthers the conservation of biodiversity. It can play a key role in influencing the behaviour of developers towards the issues of biodiversity and the natural heritage. This could be done through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that new development does not affect designated sites or important species. International and national ecological designations will help to prevent or restrict development on the most environmentally sensitive sites;</li> <li>• planning developments to avoid severance and fragmentation;</li> <li>• ensuring that new landscape planting associated with developments can add to local biodiversity.</li> </ul> <p>National strategies for conservation should be supported with particular attention being given to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Shetland.</p>	<p>In the absence of the LDP previous policies would be in operation to provide protection for biodiversity. Other forms of development pressure would still be likely to take place so threats from major renewable energy schemes (such as wind farms) and infrastructure schemes (roads and ferries) could all impact on habitats and species. Other global trends such as climate change and sea-level rise would also be expected to exert an influence on biodiversity. Global warming is already implicated in the decline of some seabird colonies relying on sand eels in the North Sea. The overall trend in the absence of the plan is likely to be adverse.</p>
<p><b>Population and Human Health</b></p>	<p>Development should address and eliminate barriers that all people may experience to accessing essential services and facilities. Public transport should encourage social inclusion, especially in rural areas and should enable access for all. The LDP can protect accessible public open space or green spaces and through the provision of safe accessible routes for walking and cycling in and around settlements should encourage physical activity which in turn will provide health benefits and support general well-being.</p>	<p>SIC can and has addressed many of these issues and can influence developers and contractors through its policies and measures within the LDP. A number of existing policies (particularly supporting policies in the Shetland Structure and Local Plans) address these points and in the absence of the plan it is clear that progress on addressing such issues would continue with the previous plan policies used to guide and determine future development in Shetland. New policies should facilitate improvements in accessibility and the uptake of initiatives such as active travel so the</p>

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	<p>Potential risks to population and health include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• air pollution from transport, although Shetland climate mitigates against this;</li> <li>• nuisance caused by noise, dust and in some cases odour;</li> <li>• community and foot path severance effects e.g. intimidation and safety of road crossings in vicinity of major developments</li> </ul>	<p>overall effect is therefore considered to be slightly adverse in the absence of the LDP.</p>
<b>Soil</b>	<p>Building developments have the potential to impact on important peat resources and cause soil contamination from operational sites (e.g. fuel spillages/leakages during operation) as a well as cause or trigger erosion from extreme weather scenarios, run-off and peat stability/slippage.</p> <p>The LDP should encourage where possible the appropriate use of previously developed vacant or derelict land thus reducing the pressure on 'greenfield' sites. Clearly any contaminated land issues should be taken into consideration.</p>	<p>SIC can influence housing and commercial site developers through its policies and measures within the new LDP (just as it has done in the past through policies within the Structure and Local Plans). It is difficult to predict the effects that not implementing the LDP will have on soil and peat resources. Threats to the soil and peat environment could arise from major developments (e.g. housing), renewable energy schemes (such as wind farms) and infrastructure schemes (such as roads) with consequential adverse impacts, and climate change is thought likely to generate adverse effects on peat in the longer term. The current Structure and Local Plans do not have specific policies that address peat so there will be an opportunity to integrate this into the new LDP. The overall effect is therefore considered to be adverse in the absence of the MIR and LDP.</p>
<b>Water</b>	<p>Shetland has a finite water resource and so this must be carefully managed and protected. The provision of adequate drainage infrastructure to support new development (both in terms of water supply and wastewater treatment) will be a key</p>	<p>SIC can and has addressed many of these issues through the existing policies in the Structure and Local Plans but can influence developers and contractors through further policies and measures within the LDP or through supporting supplementary planning</p>

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	<p>consideration in taking new developments forward and ensuring that there are no adverse effects on the water environment.</p> <p>Maintaining a high marine water quality is also of paramount importance.</p>	<p>documents. Specific policies in the <i>Towards Sustainable Construction and Better Design</i>, IPP address water as a resource and waste water management and so in the absence of the plan and supporting IPPs it is clear that progress on addressing such issues by developers would be slowed down with the potential for consequential effects on the water environment. The overall effect is therefore considered to be slightly adverse in the absence of the LDP.</p>
<b>Air</b>	<p>The Shetland Islands have an outstandingly high quality of air, due to their exposed position. Maintaining this high level of air quality must be a priority as any degradation would have effects on sensitive plant and animal species as well as on the human population.</p> <p>Housing and commercial development has the potential to impact on air quality through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Levels of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> associated with plant, equipment and traffic flows associated with new developments</li> <li>• Noise from plant, equipment and traffic</li> <li>• Increasing traffic flows associated with new developments</li> <li>• Dust from extraction activities (at a localised level)</li> <li>• Possible cumulative impacts from traffic from various developments</li> </ul>	<p>SIC has addressed many of these issues through policies developed previously within the Structure and Local Plans and new supplementary planning guidance (e.g. Minerals IPP). There are also some measures and general pertinent statements within the LDP. In terms of scale, the impact of housing and similar developments on air quality in general terms in Shetland would not be expected to be significant. A number of specific policies within the LDP (in policies retained and to be updated) do nevertheless address some of the above points and in the absence of the plan it is clear that progress on addressing such issues by housing and other developers would be slowed down with consequential localised effects on air quality. The overall effect is therefore considered to be very slightly adverse in the absence of the LDP.</p>
<b>Climatic Factors</b>	<p>The LDP has an important role to play in helping SIC meet its new duty under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Critical targets of 80% reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> (compared with a 1990</p>	<p>In the absence of the LDP, the policies of the existing Structure and Local Plans would be retained and used to guide and determine future development. Whilst many of the energy policies have performed well and</p>

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	<p>background) by 2050 and 42% by 2020 have been established for Scotland. Shetland could make a contribution towards this via a land use strategy that promotes a reduction in the use of fossil fuels and that would contribute towards the uptake of more renewable energy technology.</p> <p>Climate change issues that the LDP can contribute towards would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustaining services and facilities that reduce the need to travel</li> <li>• Siting development that reduces the need for heating and contributes towards energy efficiency</li> <li>• Encouraging the use of sustainable design and construction techniques in all developments and sourcing locally where possible</li> <li>• Promoting energy efficient transport and encouraging modal shift towards more sustainable forms i.e. alternatives to motorised travel</li> <li>• Direct future development away from areas at significant risk of flooding, or where there may be no alternatives identifying the need for improvements to strategic flood defense infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p>will be carried over into the new Plan, it is accepted that a degree of revision may be necessary. The UK Climate Change Programme 2006 together with Scotland's programme Changing Our Ways: Scotland's Climate Change Programme 2006, and the more recent Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 aim to deliver substantial emissions reductions through the application of top-down national policies. There may, therefore, be an overall decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions attributable to Scotland, in line with the Scottish Government's reduction targets, even in the absence of the LDP. On a global scale, however, without substantial and immediate cuts in greenhouse gas emissions it is likely that climate change will continue unabated. SEPA in its State of Scotland's Environment 2006 report states that Scotland needs to "take action to tackle the problem and to prepare itself for the inevitable impacts". Therefore, climate change is likely to continue with or without the LDP, so the overall effect will be adverse.</p>

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<b>Material Assets</b>	<p>Housing, facilities and other forms of development, together with their associated infrastructure have a significant role to play with regard to the use of Shetland's material assets and natural resources. Some clear issues already mentioned and worth highlighting again include the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make use of previously developed land and buildings where possible</li> <li>• Promote sustainable means of waste reduction and management</li> <li>• Promote wise use of existing road and other transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Promote reduction of non-renewable resources</li> <li>• Promote re-use of aggregates and other road materials</li> <li>• Re-use of materials on site</li> <li>• Recycling of construction and demolition wastes</li> <li>• Opportunities to exploit the potential for alternative fuels and renewables</li> <li>• Source locally and reduce the transportation burden</li> </ul>	<p>SIC can and has addressed many of these issues through the existing policies in the Structure and Local Plans but can influence developers and contractors through further policies and measures within the LDP or supporting supplementary policy. The new <i>Towards Sustainable Construction and Better Design</i>, IPP includes a number of policies that address many of the key issues flagged up here. Both the Structure and Local Plans have policies that emphasise the need to consider all opportunities for the re-use of land and buildings.</p> <p>In the absence of the new LDP and supporting planning guidance it is clear that progress on sustainability action in the development and building sector would be slowed down with consequential effects on the environment. The overall effect is therefore considered to be adverse in the absence of the LDP.</p>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	<p>There is a wealth of archaeological resources on the Islands that date back to prehistory and encroachment of housing and commercial development activities could have the potential to threaten the setting or the integrity of such sites if unmitigated. There is however, an opportunity to enhance the setting and potentially the physical form of cultural heritage sites where this is appropriate (and in discussion with Historic Scotland for features of national importance)</p>	<p>In the absence of the LDP, the policies of the existing Structure and Local Plans would be retained and used to guide and determine future development. Many of those policies protecting and promoting the historic environment and cultural heritage are to be retained as the Council regards them as adequately covering current needs.</p> <p>The new <i>Towards Sustainable Construction and Better Design</i>, IPP includes policies that aim to improve the design of new build and how it will integrate with local</p>

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	through sensitive design and mitigation and there could also be an opportunity to improve accessibility to the cultural heritage resource.	character and these will ‘mesh in’ with the new LDP. The LDP can therefore have a positive effect on the evolution of the cultural heritage environment in Shetland so in its absence the overall effect is considered to be slightly adverse.
<b>Landscape and Seascape</b>	Inappropriate or insensitive development could affect the capacity of the landscape to absorb new infrastructure. Construction of new housing and commercial property developments could affect the wider landscape setting of particular sites or sensitive historic landscapes. It could also lead to the gradual erosion of landscape character (cumulative development effects). With the implementation of the MIR and LDP there are opportunities for landscape/seascape enhancements with new and revised infrastructure and landscaping, particularly in areas of lower current landscape and seascape value.	In the absence of the LDP, the policies of the existing Structure and Local Plans would be retained and used to guide and determine future development. Whilst a number of these do address landscape issues there will be opportunities in the LDP and its links to the <i>Towards Sustainable Construction and Better Design</i> , IPP to strengthen this. The overall effect is considered to be neutral to slightly adverse in the absence of the LDP.
<p><b>Summary</b></p> <p>Without the preparation of the new Shetland LDP, the policies of the existing Structure and Local Plans would be retained and used to guide and determine future development. Whilst many of these policies have performed well and will be carried over into the new LDP, it is accepted that a degree of revision is necessary particularly with the desire to factor more sustainability into future planning and new developments as well as to address complex long-term issues and the anticipated challenges posed by global problems such as climate change and the depletion of non-renewable resources.</p> <p>Issues that the new plan will seek to address more fully are likely to include climate change adaptation and flood risk, water use and treatment, biodiversity protection and enhancement and the design quality of new developments and their impact on the Shetland landscape and seascape. In addition, the new Plan will have an important role in helping the Council meet its obligations and duties with regard to Climate Change and Biodiversity. The new LDP with its supplementary planning guidance will also play a key role in guiding the shape of future onshore and coastal renewable energy development in Shetland.</p>		