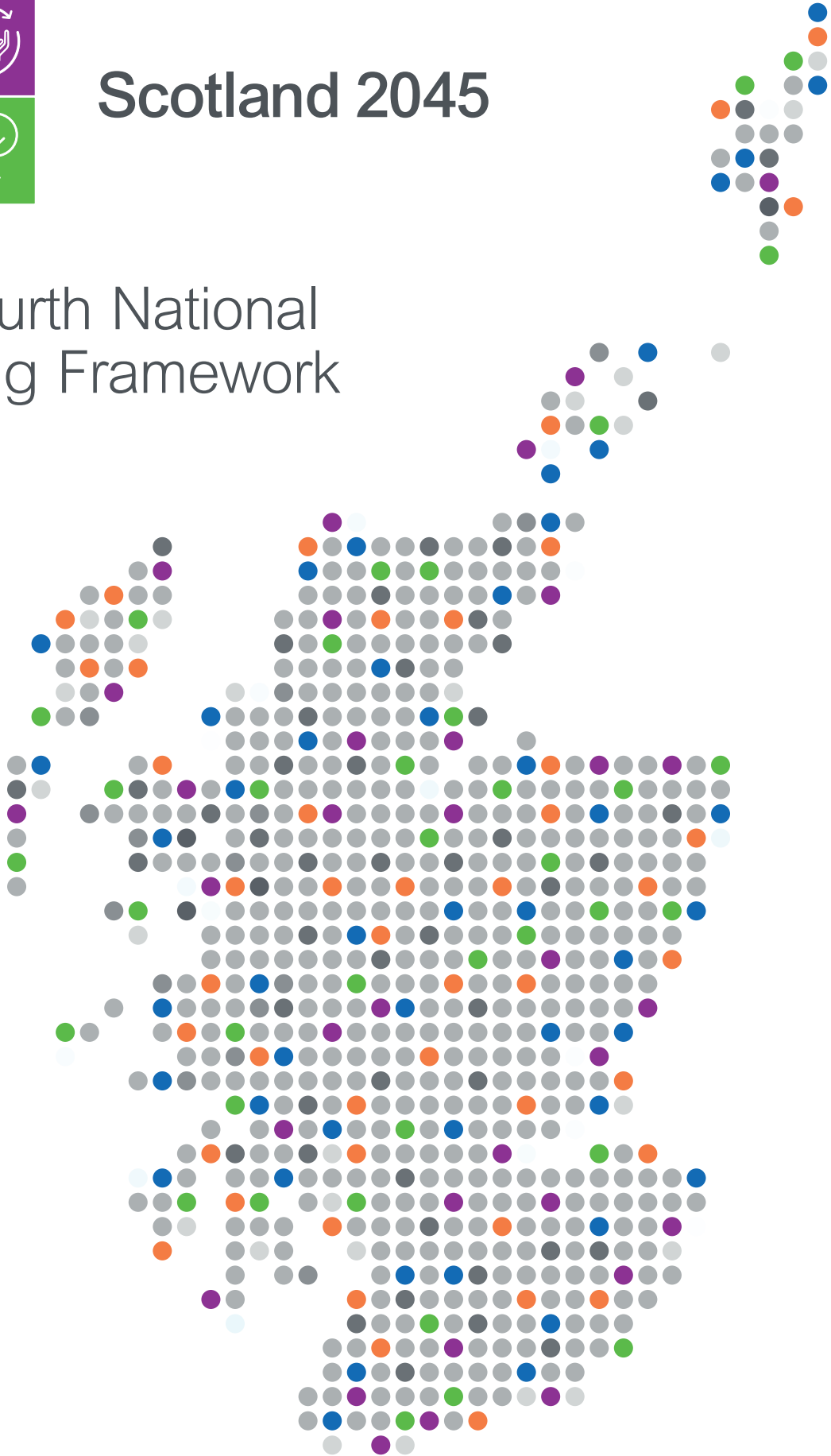




# Scotland 2045

## Our Fourth National Planning Framework

Draft



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

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## How to use this document

This is a consultation draft document and comments are invited from all stakeholders. Further details about how to get involved along with additional supporting materials, including an Integrated Impact Assessment, can be found at [www.transformingplanning.scot](http://www.transformingplanning.scot).

Once approved by the Scottish Parliament and adopted by the Scottish Ministers (expected during 2022), this plan will become part of the statutory development plan and will directly influence planning decisions.

The amended Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 directs that the National Planning Framework must contribute to a series of six outcomes: improving the health and wellbeing of our people; increasing the population of rural areas; meeting housing needs; improving equality and eliminating discrimination; meeting targets for emissions of greenhouse gases; and securing positive effects for biodiversity. A draft statement of the outcomes and how this draft has contributed to them is set out in Annex A.

Part 1 – sets out an overarching spatial strategy for Scotland in the future. This includes priorities, spatial principles and action areas. This should be used to guide the preparation of regional spatial strategies, local development plans and local place plans. The strategy will also be relevant to wider policies and strategies relating to land use.

Part 2 – sets out proposed national developments that support the spatial strategy.

Part 3 – sets out policies for the development and use of land which are to be applied in the preparation of local development plans; local place plans; masterplans and briefs; and for determining the range of planning consents. This part should be taken as a whole, and all relevant policies should be applied to each application.

Part 4 – provides an outline of how we will deliver this strategy. This will be developed into a standalone, live delivery programme once NPF4 has been approved and adopted.

# Ministerial Foreword



**Tom Arthur MSP**

Minister for Public Finance,  
Planning and Community Wealth

This, our fourth National Planning Framework, sets out how our approach to planning and development will help to achieve a net zero, sustainable Scotland by 2045.

The challenges that we are facing today demand a change in the way we plan our places for tomorrow. As we recover from the pandemic we have an opportunity to work towards net zero in a way which also tackles longstanding challenges and inequalities. We will need to future-proof places, be more innovative, and involve a wider range of people in planning. A shared spatial strategy can enable the investment and development that we will need, but we must do this in a way that benefits business and communities, our health and wellbeing and the environment. This will require us all to work collectively to ensure that decisions we make today are in the long-term public interest.

This draft National Planning Framework sets out a vision for how our places will change in the future. It reflects priorities across Scottish Government portfolios and brings together a wide range of plans, programmes and policies. It explains how we will work together to build sustainable, liveable, productive and distinctive places. Once adopted, we will support its delivery collectively.

I am very grateful for the thoughts and ideas that we have received from a wide range of stakeholders over the past two years to inform this new draft strategy. We began early engagement in 2020 and whilst the preparation was paused for a time during the pandemic, we have still been able to work collaboratively. We received many well-informed and constructive responses to the Position Statement which we published in November 2020. This input has informed both the strategy and a comprehensive and radical review of our national planning policies.

Our Position Statement engagement showed broad support for the priorities for National Planning Framework and we are now ready to take forward those early conversations and to discuss how we can achieve these outcomes in more detail. I am open to having a wide ranging debate on this – the Scottish Parliament will scrutinise this draft version and set out its views at the end of a period of up to 120 days. Alongside this, we will be consulting widely with stakeholders and the public and I want to see as many, and as wide a range of people as possible, involved in a rich debate about the future of our places. Our Participation Statement sets out opportunities for getting involved and I would encourage everyone to share their views on planning Scotland's future in response to this consultation draft National Planning Framework.

# Part 1 – A National Spatial Strategy For Scotland 2045

**The purpose of planning is to manage the development and use of land in the long-term public interest. The decisions we make today will have implications for future generations. Scotland in 2045 will be different. We must embrace and deliver radical change so we can tackle and adapt to climate change, restore biodiversity loss, improve health and wellbeing, build a wellbeing economy and create great places.**

We have set a target of net zero emissions by 2045, and must make significant progress towards this by 2030. This will require new development and infrastructure across Scotland. We will also have to adapt to the impacts of climate change that are already locked in, including increased flood risk, water scarcity, environmental change, coastal erosion, impacts on forestry and agriculture, extreme weather events, and risks to health, food security and safety. These impacts will not be equal and are likely to particularly affect communities who already face disadvantage. A concerted effort will be needed, with people and places working together to plan for a just transition, so our journey to a net zero society and nature recovery involves, and is fair to, everyone. Just Transition sector plans, co-designed and co-delivered with those impacted, will play an important role in delivering this ambition.

Our approach to planning and development will also play a critical role in supporting nature restoration and recovery. Global declines in biodiversity are mirrored here in Scotland with urbanisation recognised as a key pressure. We will need to invest in nature-based solutions to mitigate climate change whilst also addressing biodiversity loss, so we can safeguard the natural systems on which our economy, health and wellbeing depend. Scotland's natural environment, and the natural capital it supports, underpins our economy and is fundamental to our health and wellbeing. It provides the essentials we all need to survive – including healthier food and clean air and water. A new Scottish biodiversity strategy will set 2030 targets and will respond to a new global framework. Planning will play a critical role in supporting its delivery.

We will plan the place we want Scotland to be carefully. The way we live, learn, work and play in the future will need to be consistent with our ambition to achieve net zero emissions and nature recovery.

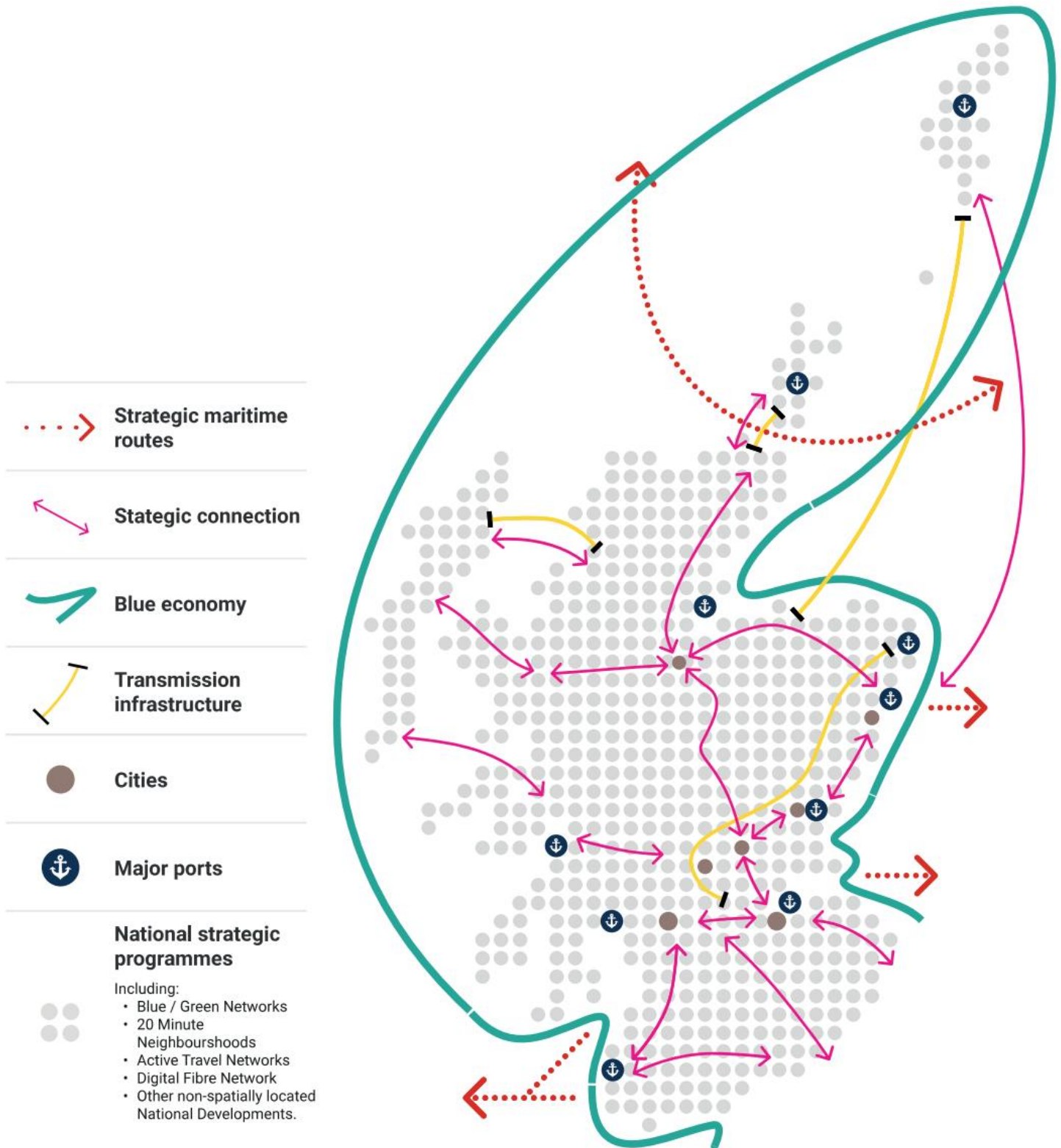
Our spatial strategy is a shared vision that will guide future development in a way which reflects our overarching spatial principles. Each part of Scotland can contribute to realising this shared vision. Our rural areas will have vibrant communities and their natural assets are a significant opportunity for long-term carbon sequestration and a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy. Cities and towns will be models of healthier and greener living, and a focus for investment in the wellbeing economy. And our islands and coasts will support climate innovation and the blue economy. Physical gateways and virtual connections will bring our places together and maintain our links with the rest of the world.

Each part of Scotland can be planned and developed to create: **sustainable places**, where we reduce emissions and restore and better connect biodiversity; **liveable places**, where we can live better, healthier lives; **productive places**, where we have a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy; and **distinctive places**, where we recognise and work with our assets.





# National Spatial Strategy



## Sustainable places

**Our future net zero, nature-positive places will be more resilient to the impacts of climate change and support the recovery and restoration of our natural environment.**

This will help Scotland's places to thrive within the planet's sustainable limits and will maximise the new economic and wellbeing opportunities from a just transition to a net zero, nature-positive economy.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has made clear the very real threat and heightened risk the climate emergency poses to the planet; and the health of the planet's ecosystems is declining faster than at any point in human history. Scotland must play its full role in tackling these crises and invest in reducing carbon emissions and restoring the richness and resilience of our natural environment.

Our strategy is to transform the way we use our land and buildings so that every decision we make contributes to making Scotland a more sustainable place. In particular, we want to encourage low- and zero-carbon design and energy efficiency, reduce the need to travel unsustainably, and diversify and expand renewable energy generation. We will secure positive effects for biodiversity, creating and strengthening nature networks and investing in nature-based solutions to support nature recovery and create multiple benefits for our natural capital, health, wellbeing, resilience and jobs. And we will encourage sustainable design and use of resources, including circular economy approaches to construction and development.

**Q1: Do you agree that this approach will deliver our future net zero places which will be more resilient to the impacts of climate change and support recovery of our natural environment?**



## Liveable places

**Our future places, homes and neighbourhoods will be better, healthier and more vibrant places to live.**

This will ensure that we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe. It will also help us to be healthy and active, creative and diverse, so that people grow up loved, safe and respected, and realise their full potential.

The COVID-19 pandemic has left a social legacy that requires urgent action, and longer term restructuring. Although these are unprecedented challenges, they also create an opportunity to significantly improve our places, address longstanding inequality and eliminate

discrimination, helping to transform our country for the better. We will need better places to create the conditions for lifelong health and wellbeing for all, restore biodiversity and strengthen our future resilience.

Our strategy is to change the way we live in the future – transformative social and economic change will be needed. We will create places with good-quality homes close to local facilities and services by applying the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods. We want to make better use of our spaces to support physical activity, relaxation and play, to bring people together and to celebrate our culture, diversity and heritage. We hope to empower more people to shape their places.

**Q2: Do you agree that this approach will deliver our future places, homes and neighbourhoods which will be better, healthier and more vibrant places to live?**

## Productive places

**Our future places will attract new investment, build business confidence, stimulate entrepreneurship and facilitate future ways of working – improving economic, social and environmental wellbeing.**

This will help us to have a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy, with thriving and innovative businesses, quality jobs and fair work for everyone.

A new National Strategy for Economic Transformation will set out how we can work together to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and build a sustainable economy in the longer term. By helping to deliver this, planning will contribute to our short-term recovery, as well as our long term just transition to a net zero, nature-positive economy.

Our strategy is to build a wellbeing economy that benefits everyone, and every place, in Scotland. The transformations needed to tackle the climate and nature crises, together with the impact of the pandemic, means that green investment is a key priority for the coming years. The way we work is changing, and we will need to be flexible to facilitate future business and employment that benefits communities and improves places. We will play to the economic strengths and opportunities of each part of Scotland. We want to encourage development that supports the prosperity of key sectors, builds community wealth and creates fair work and good green jobs where they are most needed. We will need to support, and be supported by, businesses and communities across Scotland.

**Q3: Do you agree that this approach will deliver our future places which will attract new investment, build business confidence, stimulate entrepreneurship and facilitate future ways of working – improving economic, social and environmental wellbeing?**

## Distinctive places

**Our future places will be distinctive, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, welcoming, nature-positive and resource efficient.**

This will ensure that people value, enjoy, protect and enhance their environment.

Scotland has a rich and high quality natural and historic environment. We must also tackle challenges in some parts of the country. This may mean changes at local, regional and national scales, for example where there has been past decline, where the pandemic has exacerbated inequalities, or where there is a need to make more efficient and equitable use of our assets. To respond to the global biodiversity crisis, nature recovery and connected blue and green infrastructure must be at the heart of all our future places.

Our strategy is to value, enhance, conserve and celebrate our best places and to build better places for future generations. A stronger commitment to place-making, through a designed approach and a focus on quality, will ensure every new development improves the experience of our places. We will reshape future city and town centres, reuse vacant and derelict land and buildings, enhance our natural and cultural heritage, and create new rural opportunities. We will restore the richness of Scotland's natural environment, protect and enhance our historic environment, and safeguard our shared heritage for future generations. We will work together to ensure that development onshore aligns with national and regional marine plans so that we can protect and enhance the marine environment and unlock the potential of our coastal assets.

**Q4: Do you agree that this approach will deliver our future places which will be distinctive, safe and pleasant, easy to move around, welcoming, nature-positive and resource efficient?**

**Q5: Do you agree that the spatial strategy will deliver future places that overall are sustainable, liveable, productive and distinctive?**

## Spatial principles for Scotland 2045

As a nation, we will need to make the right choices about where development should be located. No single policy or development on its own will deliver sustainable, liveable, productive and distinctive places. To build a climate-conscious and nature-positive future, our strategy and the policies that support its delivery are based on six overarching principles:

- a) **Compact growth.** We will limit urban expansion where brownfield, vacant and derelict land and buildings can be used more efficiently. This will safeguard land to provide the services and resources we will need in the future, including carbon storage, flood risk management, green infrastructure and biodiversity. By increasing the density of settlements we will reduce the need to travel unsustainably and strengthen local living.
- b) **Local living.** We will create networks of 20 minute neighbourhoods to support local liveability, reduce the need to travel unsustainably, promote and facilitate walking and cycling, improve access to services, decentralise energy networks and build local circular economies. As an integral part of this, cleaner, safer and greener places and improved open spaces will build resilience and provide wider benefits for people, health and biodiversity, in a balanced way. Virtual connectivity and active travel links will also be important.
- c) **Balanced development.** We want to support development across Scotland so people have more choice about where they live, learn and work. This will create opportunities for communities in areas of decline, and manage development more sustainably in areas of high demand. In particular, we wish to enable more people to live and remain in rural and island areas, and to actively transform areas of past decline so that we can make best use of our assets.
- d) **Conserving and recycling assets.** Scotland has many strengths and each place should be planned in a way that works with its distinctive character and identity. We will protect and enhance the assets of each of our places, leaving a positive legacy for future generations. Our focus is on making productive use of existing buildings, places, infrastructure and services, locking in embedded carbon and minimising waste, and supporting Scotland's transition to a circular economy. This includes nationally significant sites for investment which are well served by existing infrastructure and sustainable travel modes, and excellent propositions for redevelopment across urban and rural Scotland and the islands.
- e) **Urban and rural synergy.** Scotland's urban and rural and island areas, and all of the places in between, can work together and share learning and innovation to achieve better places. Our strategy is for Scotland as a whole, bringing together the contributions of our cities, towns, villages and countryside areas to achieve shared objectives. As part of this, we will improve green infrastructure to bring nature into our towns and cities, connecting people with nature, building resilience and helping our biodiversity to recover and flourish.
- f) **Just transition.** Meeting our climate ambition will require a rapid transformation across all sectors of our economy and society. We must ensure that, as we reduce our emissions and respond to a changing climate, that [journey is fair and creates a better future for everyone](#) – regardless of where they live, what they do, and who they are. The pandemic has demonstrated the capacity of our communities to work together and find their own local solutions to shared challenges. Our strategy builds on this, to ensure local people are more able to shape their places and transition to net zero and environmentally sustainable ways of living.

**Q6: Do you agree that these spatial principles will enable the right choices to be made about where development should be located?**

## Action areas for Scotland 2045

Each part of Scotland can make a unique contribution to building a better future. Our shared spatial strategy will be taken forward in five action areas. Each area can support all spatial principles, and the following section sets out priorities for each of the action areas.

### North and west coastal innovation

Making sustainable use of our coasts and islands to sustain communities and pioneer investment in the blue economy

### Northern revitalisation

Growing low-carbon rural communities, capitalising on digital innovation and making the most of exceptional natural and cultural heritage

### North east transition

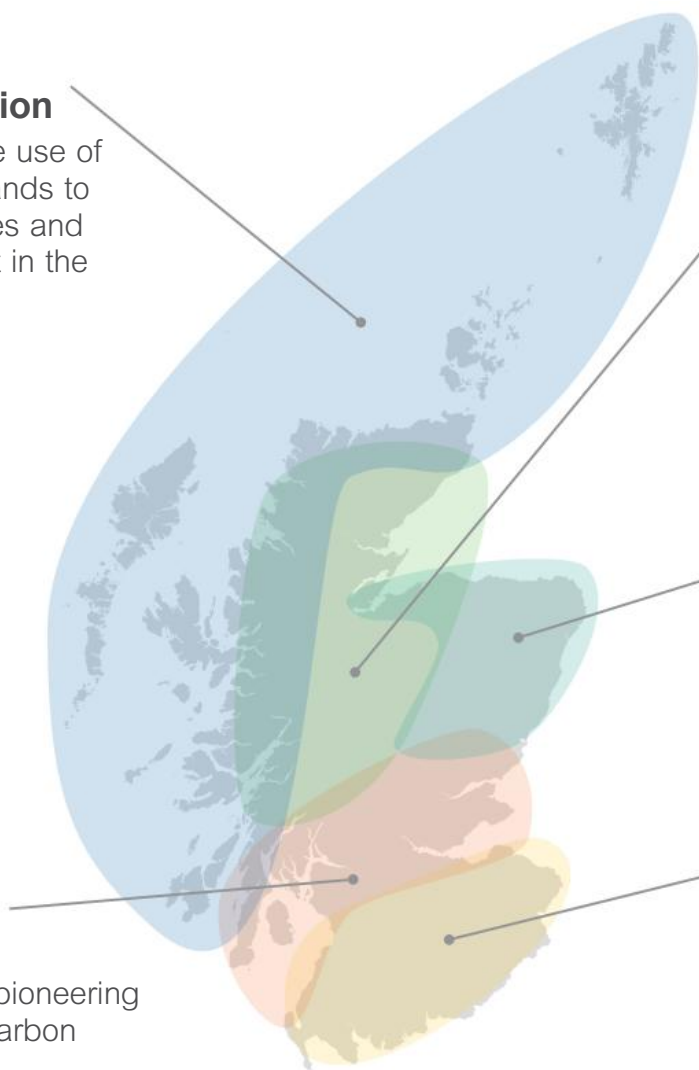
Actively planning a just transition from oil and gas to a net zero future

### Central urban transformation

Transforming and pioneering a new era of low carbon urban living

### Southern sustainability

Creating connected, liveable places which benefit from further investment and innovation



**Q7: Do you agree that these spatial strategy action areas provide a strong basis to take forward regional priority actions?**

## North and west coastal innovation

**Innovate** Revitalise Transition Transform Sustain

*This area broadly comprises the island communities of Shetland, Orkney, the Western Isles, and parts of Highland and Argyll and Bute including the north and west mainland coastline.*

Scotland's north and west coast and islands will be at the forefront of our efforts to reach net zero emissions by 2045. This is a diverse area, from Shetland and Orkney in the north, to the Outer and Inner Hebrides and the coastal areas of Highland and Argyll and Bute. Coastal innovation is not unique to this area, but as one of the most renewable energy rich localities in Europe with significant natural resources, there is a real opportunity for this part of Scotland to support our shared national outcomes.

The area benefits from an exceptional environment with coastal and island landscapes that are an important part of Scotland's national identity. It is rich in biodiversity, sustaining many internationally significant ecological sites and species including some of the best remaining temperate rainforest sites in Europe. The islands vary in character. Each has a rich history and distinctive cultural heritage including the St Kilda and the Heart of Neolithic Orkney UNESCO World Heritage Sites. These assets require careful and sustainable management. The relatively high levels of community land ownership and strong ties with the land and sea reflect this area's strong sense of place and local resilience. Scotland's National Islands Plan<sup>1</sup> aims to grow the population and economy, improve transport and housing, and ensure island communities are served by the facilities, jobs, education and services they need to flourish. Environmental wellbeing, clean and affordable energy, strong communities, culture and identity are also priorities.

Key centres where lifeline links provide access to the islands include Lerwick, Kirkwall, Stromness, Stornoway, Wick and Thurso, Ullapool, Mallaig and Oban, whilst Tarbert, Lochgilphead and Campbeltown are important hubs towards the south of the area. These centres provide important services to their wider hinterlands. Local projects are ongoing, including the

regeneration of Stromness, the Stornoway Deep Water Port development, the linked Islands Growth Deal Outer Hebrides Energy Hub project in Stornoway, and the Islands Growth Deal Knab Redevelopment project in Shetland.

There will be significant climate challenges for this part of Scotland. Island and coastal ecosystems, and the communities they support, are naturally more vulnerable to the effects of climate change, sea level rise and extreme events. Of particular concern are the impacts on vulnerable low-lying coastal zones and infrastructure, with potentially wide-ranging effects from biodiversity loss to sea level rise, coastal erosion, flooding and landslips. If we do not take action to plan and build their resilience, including investment in nature-based solutions, island and coastal communities could suffer disproportionately from the impacts of climate change.

A climate and nature conscious approach to development of this area can help to tackle wider challenges. Around 94 of our 900 islands are permanently inhabited, and the size and composition of each population has changed over the years. An ageing population will mean that we need to do more to reverse past patterns of population decline and sustain local facilities and services that support rural and dispersed communities.



<sup>1</sup> Introduced as a result of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018

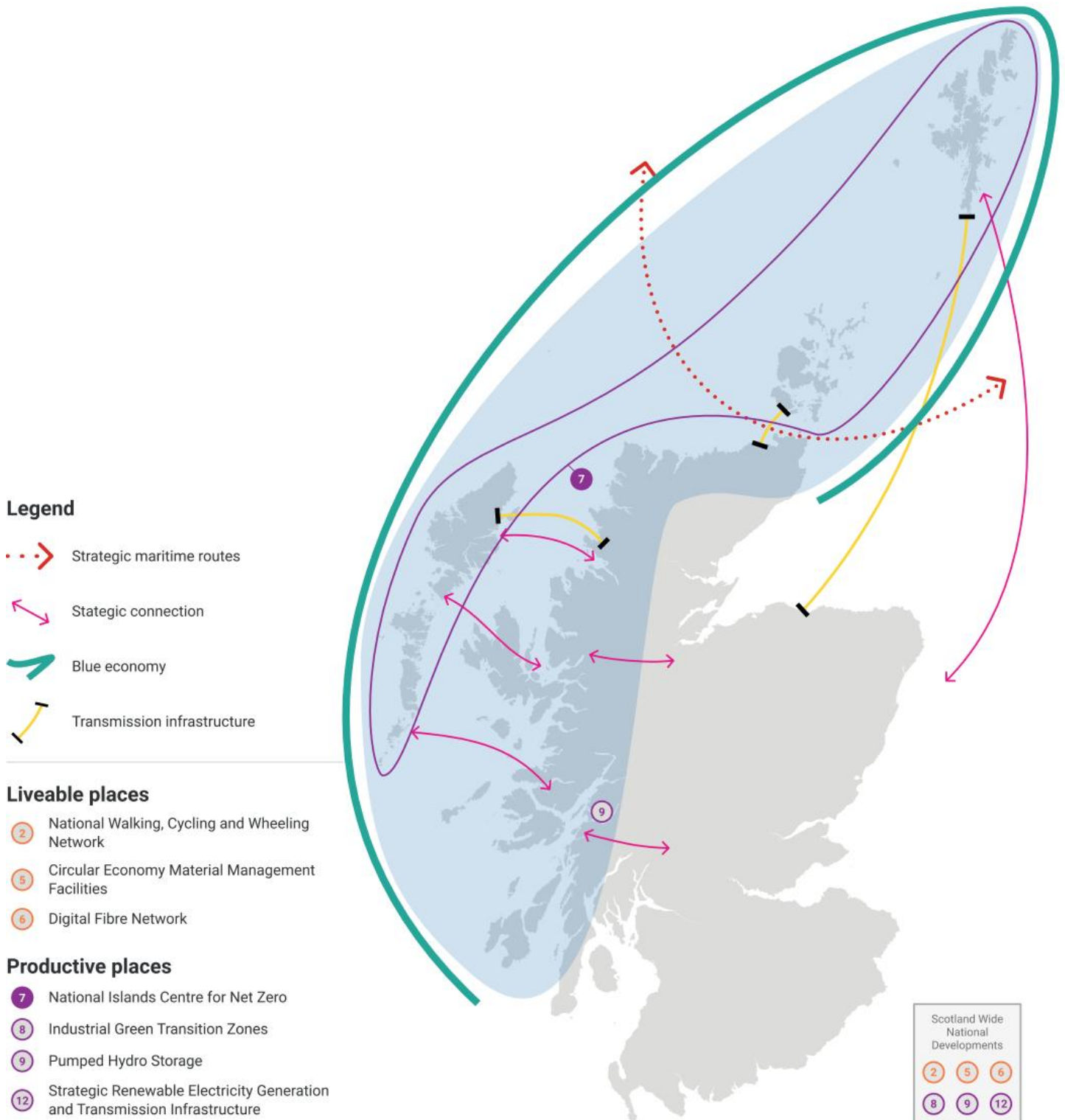
Housing and public service provision, transport, energy consumption and fuel poverty will continue to be significant challenges. Employment varies across the area, and can tend to rely on the public sector, tourism and lower wage sectors, limiting the scope and choice of skilled jobs in some locations. Where skilled jobs exist it can be difficult to attract and retain a local workforce, underlining the importance of building skills to support future investment. There are challenges arising from the end of free movement and changing markets, and the agriculture and fishing industries will need support to ensure the long term sustainability of communities.

Alongside Scotland's marine planning authorities, we can work with the area's exceptional assets and natural resources to build a more resilient future for Scotland's island and coastal communities. In this area we will:

- create carbon-neutral coastal and island communities;
- support the blue and wellbeing economies;
- protect and enhance blue and green infrastructure; and
- strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity.



# North and west coastal innovation



# Actions

## 1. Create carbon neutral coastal and island communities

Future-proofing local liveability will benefit people as well as the planet. Island and coastal communities will need a bespoke and flexible approach to the concept of 20 minute neighbourhoods, for example by identifying service hubs in key locations with good public transport links. This can build long-term resilience and self-reliance whilst sustaining dispersed communities and rural patterns of development.

Increased coastal flooding and erosion arising from future climate change will need to be considered along with impacts on associated infrastructure such as bridges and transport networks. The majority of island populations live in coastal locations and there is a need for a proactive and innovative approach that works with local communities to address this issue.

Regionally and locally driven plans and strategies will identify areas for future development that reflect these principles – for example, planned population growth on the Western Seaboard of Argyll and in a growth corridor from Tobermory to Oban and on to Dalmally. Community hubs, where people can easily access a variety of services, will need to evolve and grow to support communities and sustain a range of functions. Ports and harbours can be a focal point for electric vehicle charging as well as employment. Sustainable and fair access to affordable healthier food will support future resilience and broader objectives including reduced child poverty and improved health outcomes. Innovative and equitable service provision, including digital solutions, will be needed to support dispersed communities in a low carbon way.

Communities will need greater choice and more flexible and affordable homes to support varying needs. This can be achieved to an extent by refurbishing the existing building stock to reduce the release of embedded carbon, as well as by delivering more affordable, energy efficient new homes. The additional costs of island homebuilding and development generally is a challenge that needs to be factored into a planned approach.

There is a clear need for affordable housing provision across the region to improve choice and access to homes, and in some areas to help offset the impact of second home ownership and short term lets on the market. Local solutions may include key worker housing, temporary homes for workers in remote areas, self-provided homes, including self-build and custom build. Continued innovation of holistic place based solutions, such as the Rural Housing Initiative, will be required to create homes that meet diverse community needs, including homes for an ageing population and to help young people to stay in or return to their communities. Greater efforts to ensure young people have more influence in decisions that affect their future places could support this, as well as helping more people access land and crofts and the reuse of abandoned sites where appropriate.

To reverse past depopulation, planning can help to sustain communities in more peripheral and fragile areas in a way that is compatible with our low carbon agenda and resilient to climate change impacts. Further action should be taken where appropriate to reintroduce people to previously inhabited areas where it can be achieved in line with our climate commitments and wider aspirations to create sustainable places that incorporate principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods and active travel networks. Our coasts will continue to evolve, and development will be needed to sustain and grow communities in a sustainable way. Collaboration and strong alignment of terrestrial and marine planning, at all levels, will also be needed.

## 2. Support the Blue and Wellbeing Economies

This area has significant opportunities for investment that capitalise on its natural assets and further strengthen the synergies between people, land and sea. This will require strong collaboration and alignment of terrestrial and marine planning, especially as further development of related blue economy activities in the terrestrial environment may increase competition for marine space and resources offshore. To significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions more renewable energy generation will be needed, bringing unprecedented opportunities to strengthen local economies, build community wealth and secure long-term sustainability. The island authorities have set targets for creating green jobs and for rolling out clean and efficient energy systems to build local resilience. We expect to see continued innovation to unlock the infrastructure and business opportunities arising from a blue and green prosperity agenda.

As a result of its natural advantages, the area is growing its research excellence, and innovation centres are emerging on Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides, as part of the Islands Growth Deal, that will form a planned joint Islands Hub for Net Zero. Oban is developing as a university town, and the European Marine Science Park is a key opportunity to build the local economy and provide education locally. The Outer Hebrides Energy Hub will build on the region's formidable renewable energy resource by establishing the initial infrastructure necessary to support the production of low carbon hydrogen from renewable energy. The lessons we have learned from the pandemic about remote working could also help to grow communities by extending the range of high quality jobs available locally.

Sea ports are a focus for investment in the blue economy and further diversification of activities could generate additional employment across the area. Potential for business development ranges from long-distance freight to supporting the cruise and marine leisure sectors and decommissioning opportunities. New infrastructure and repurposing of land will

help to shift industrial activity towards supporting the offshore renewables sector. Key strategic sites for industrial investment and associated port infrastructure and facilities include plans for: Dales Voe and Scapa Flow as part of the Islands Growth Deal; Cullivoe; Arnish in Stornoway; Wick; Scrabster; Gills Bay; Kishorn; Oban and Hatston, Kirkwall. Other key nodes on the ferries network, including Ullapool, Uig and Mallaig, will continue to act as important hubs to support communities, investors and visitors.

Proposed space ports, which make use of the area's relatively remote location and free airspace, could support our national ambitions to grow this sector. This includes plans for a Shetland Space Innovation Campus and Outer Hebrides Spaceport 1 in Scolpaig, North Uist as part of the Islands Growth Deal, and space ports at Machrihanish and Benbecula.

Food and drink is a key sector, with aquaculture, distilleries, commercial fishing, and seaweed farming providing a crucial and growing source of employment for many local communities. This sector is of national significance, with whisky generating an estimated £5 billion to the UK economy and salmon accounting for more than 40% of total food exports. By improving the resilience of existing infrastructure we will ensure continued access to international markets. There are significant opportunities to build on experience and expertise through associated research and development. A development hub at Machrihanish to support aquaculture research in association with Stirling University could open up wider opportunities to expand onshore aquaculture at sites across Scotland.

Targeted investment in tourism infrastructure will ensure the coast and islands can capitalise on their rich natural assets, heritage and culture to support better quality and more stable jobs in the sector whilst providing a positive experience for visitors and residents. This sector has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and a short-term focus on recovery can be underpinned by efforts to secure longer-term sustainability. Planning can help to ensure that the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund is targeted

to places where the pressure is most significant. Priorities include visitor management of the area's World Heritage Sites. Plans are in place for the Orkney World Heritage Site Gateway that will manage and disperse visitors to the Heart of Neolithic Orkney UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Outer Hebrides Destination Development Project will support the strategic development of tourism infrastructure, bringing together key assets including St Kilda World Heritage Site, the Iolaire Centre, the Hebridean Way, Food and Drinks trail and the Callanish standing stones. Other ongoing projects, including long-distance routes such as the Kintyre Way and the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail and Crinan Canal can help to expand a high-quality offer of exceptional marine tourism across the area as a whole.

Regionally and locally there is a need for smaller scale investment across the area to put in place low maintenance, carefully designed facilities which better support and manage the impact of informal tourism including camping, campervans and day trips. This should reflect the scale and nature of operators including community trusts. Efforts to provide access to education and build skills locally will also support this, with key projects including plans for the redevelopment of the Shetland Campus.

### **3. Protect and enhance blue and green infrastructure**

The coast and islands' natural and cultural assets will require careful planning and management so that their special qualities can continue to form a strong foundation for future development and investment. There are opportunities for local projects across this area to come together and create an enhanced nature network which benefits quality of life and contributes to biodiversity recovery and restoration as well as carbon sequestration.

Significant peatland restoration and woodland creation and restoration, along with blue carbon opportunities will secure wider biodiversity benefits and be a focus for investment to offset carbon and secure existing natural carbon stores. The Lewis Peatlands are internationally recognised as accounting for a significant

proportion of the world's blanket bog habitat and there are opportunities to protect and expand Scotland's temperate rainforest, including some of the best remaining rainforest sites in Europe. Access to the outdoors, as well as active travel, can benefit from continued investment in long-distance walking and cycling routes with a range of projects emerging at a regional scale.

### **4. Strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity**

Communities will need resilient transport connectivity to maintain accessibility and lifeline links and further innovation will be required to help modernise connections and decarbonise transport systems. A net zero islands air network and decarbonisation of ferry services will help to secure the viability and service stability of island and remote coastal communities. Communities are keen to explore long term ambitions for fixed links for example across the Sound of Harris and Sound of Barra, and potentially to connect the Outer Hebrides to mainland Scotland. An Islands Connectivity Plan will consider the role of ferries, fixed links and low carbon aviation in securing lifeline links and marine access for both leisure and freight. In addition to the investment potential of the area's ports and harbours, the strategic location of the Northern Isles as a hub for future shipping using long-distance trade routes has significant potential for investment and growth over the longer term. There is also potential to consider decarbonisation of fishing fleets and the aquaculture industry in the future.

Electric vehicle ownership is already high in some parts of the area and continued expansion of charging networks will support further decarbonisation. Key routes and hubs are emerging – examples include the aspiration for an electric spinal route that extends across the Outer Hebrides. This should be viewed as one part of a wider system response to net zero that also strengthens active travel across the area.

Improved digital connectivity is a priority to sustain current businesses and create 'smart' communities. We are committed to investment in ultrafast broadband to ensure every property is connected and to improve mobile coverage.

This will unlock opportunities for rural businesses and remote working, and make future community growth more feasible. Full benefits will be realised by actively tackling the digital divide by building skills, literacy and learning and addressing the financial barriers to internet access. Key projects include the Outer Hebrides Giga Fibre Network and the North Isles Fibre Project.

Resilience and a growing green economy will depend on delivery of improved grid connections, including high voltage grid cables connecting the three island groups to the mainland. This will be complemented by the innovation in low- and zero-carbon fuels and the roll out of locally distributed energy systems to reduce emissions from heating buildings, address significant fuel poverty and secure longer-term resilience.

**Q8: Do you agree with this summary of challenges and opportunities for this action area?**

**Q9: What are your views on these strategic actions for this action area?**



## Northern revitalisation

Innovate **Revitalise** Transition Transform Sustain

*This area broadly includes Highland with parts of Argyll and Bute, Moray and much of the national parks. There are links west and north to the island communities.*

The Highlands of Scotland, together with Moray and parts of mainland Argyll, are world renowned for their stunning landscapes, rich biodiversity and cultural heritage. In some places settlements are dispersed or take the form of low density crofting townships, whilst in others communities come together in key centres. Cairngorms National Park is a national asset with internationally significant habitats and landscapes and there is currently a proposal to make the Flow Country a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Emissions here are partly offset by the climate sequestration arising from land use and forestry so that the area acts as a net carbon sink overall, and there are few sources of significant industrial emissions. Climate change risks include changing levels of rainfall, increased storm events, temperature rise, flood risk, rising sea levels and associated erosion. Tailored measures will be required to assist communities in adapting to climate change and transitioning to net zero.

This rural heartland is much more than a place of beauty and isolation. Many thriving communities live here, and they depend on local jobs and learning to support their quality of life. Some communities have experienced outmigration, particularly the loss of younger people, especially outwith Inverness. Further population decline is a future risk, particularly for the west and north. Many communities depend on the car and more limited access to services creates disadvantage, despite the quality of life and good health that many people living here enjoy. An ageing population will put pressures on some services.

Parts of the area have recently experienced acceleration of the increase in house prices. Emerging evidence suggests this is a result of the pandemic and a more mobile remote workforce, with some attracted to the area from elsewhere to take up such a work-life style. Without intervention, access to affordable homes,

jobs and services that enable local people to stay in their communities could become more challenging. Fuel and transport poverty is a particular challenge towards the north and west and there are significant areas which do not currently benefit from good-quality digital connectivity.

The area's environmental quality, landscape and wildlife sustain key economic sectors including tourism, food and drink, distilling and clean energy. Extensive areas of woodland and peatland act as a carbon sink, contributing significantly to our national sustainability. The area has a strong economy with growing income and low unemployment overall, but there remain pockets of deprivation both in urban areas and in more remote areas where there is a need for low skilled and low paid jobs.

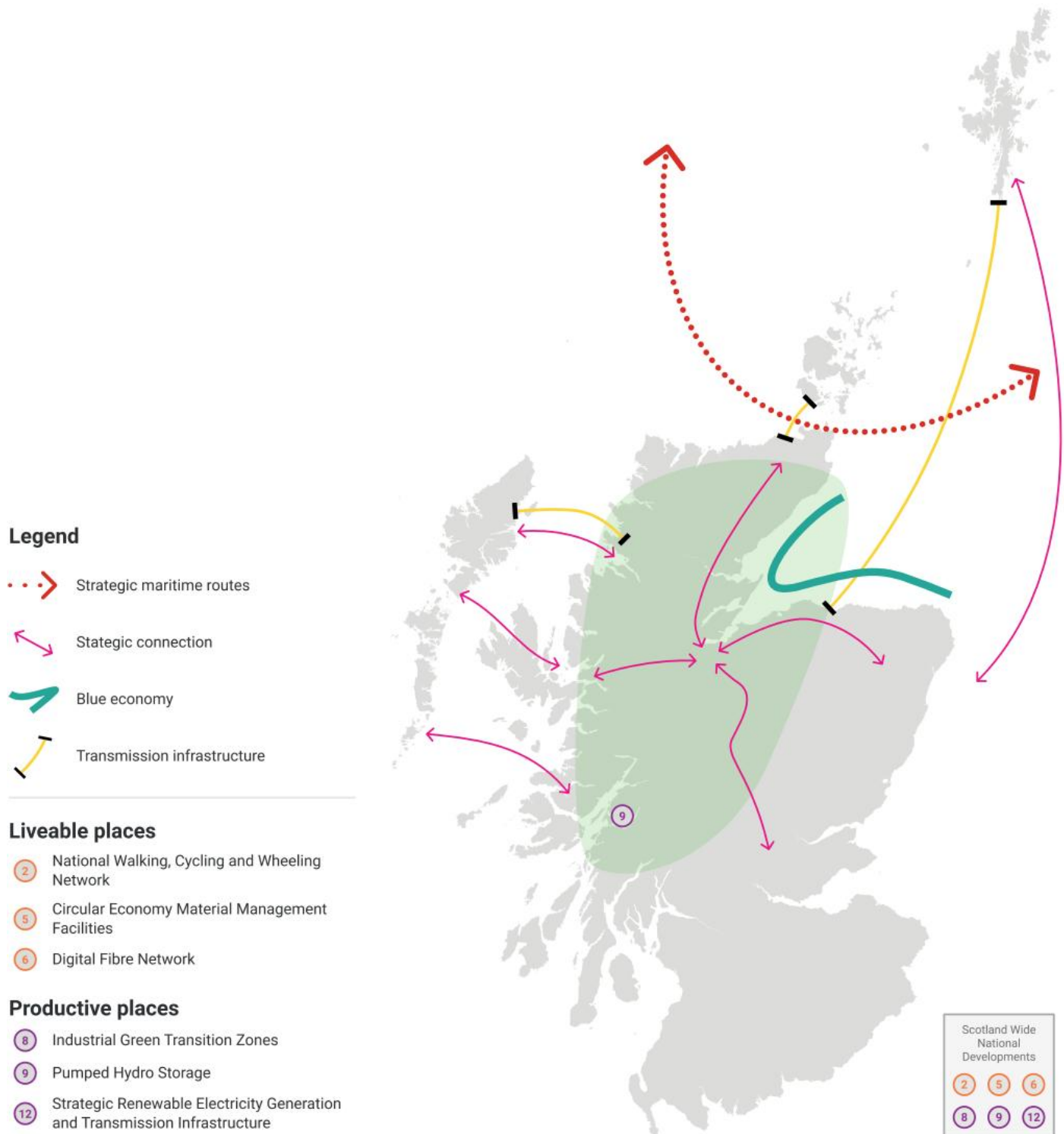
This part of Scotland can make a strong contribution towards meeting our ambition for a net zero and nature positive country by demonstrating how natural assets can be managed and used to secure a more sustainable future.

In this area we will:

- strengthen networks of resilient communities;
- stimulate green prosperity;
- nurture nature-based solutions; and
- strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity.



# Northern revitalisation





# Actions

## 5. Strengthen networks of resilient communities

We will do all we can to help reverse depopulation across rural Scotland. Here, as with other more rural areas of Scotland, 20 minute neighbourhoods can be tailored to work with both larger towns and more dispersed settlement patterns.

Inverness plays a vital role as a regional centre for services, health, justice, employment, education, culture and tourism and has seen significant expansion in recent years. Key sites for its growth are located primarily to the east along the Moray coast. A sustainable and adaptive growth strategy will continue to be supported by planned investment in education and health and social care services as well as employment uses. The new railway station serving Inverness Airport will help connect local communities with growing employment opportunities in the wider area. Inverness Castle, as part of the Inverness and Highland City Region Deal, will be redeveloped and opened up to the public, attracting national and international tourists and encouraging visits to the wider Highlands and Islands.

Fort William, Grantown-on-Spey and Aviemore are key settlements, and the area has strong relationships with adjacent more coastal settlements such as Mallaig, Oban, Wick and Thurso. The area also has a strong network of towns including Forres, Elgin and Nairn. In more remote communities there is a need to reverse population decline. Innovation will be required to achieve this in a sustainable way. A place based approach (as demonstrated by Fort William 2040), including work to improve town centres and reuse redundant buildings, will support recovery in a way which responds to the strong character and identity of each of the area's towns and villages. Such an approach is evident in Growth Deal projects such as Moray's Cultural Quarter proposal. A positive approach to rural development should work within a network of hubs, and future service provision will require imaginative solutions so that places can

be resilient and self-supporting. Investment in strategic health, justice and education facilities is already planned. In the longer term digital solutions, including mobile and remote health services and virtual education, will play an increasingly important role.

As with the coastal and island areas, homes will be needed to retain local people and attract new residents of all ages. Many communities have taken ownership of their land and this could form the foundations for future development by unlocking further development sites. Refurbishment of existing rural buildings and halting the loss of crofts could help to repopulate the area, and new homes should align with infrastructure and service provision. They should also be located and designed to minimise emissions and to complement the distinctive character of existing settlements and wider landscapes. As climate change continues to impact, water supplies and drainage will need to be secured and maintained. Flood risk management and changing ecosystems will need to be factored into future plans to ensure nature-based adaptation solutions complement local living. Fuel poverty will require greater energy efficiency and affordable, low-carbon, distributed heat and electricity networks, with a model for increased local generation, bringing particular benefits. Maintaining connectivity will be essential, particularly through public transport that includes rail access and other active travel networks.

## 6. Stimulate green prosperity

Natural assets and environmental quality underpin the area's main economic sectors and must therefore be protected, restored and used sustainably. A flexible approach to planning will help to attract investment, grow and diversify businesses and enable local entrepreneurship, micro enterprises, self-employment and social enterprises to flourish. Remote working can be capitalised on to build economically active local communities. This will require the continued roll out of high quality digital infrastructure and maintenance and decarbonisation of transport routes to wider markets. Food miles can be reduced over time with the help of

local community-led food growing networks, by supporting locally driven public procurement and, from a land use perspective, protecting higher quality agricultural land.

Ideas are emerging for the area to secure a low carbon future for tourism. Assets such as the North Coast 500 and more recently the Kintyre 66 in the adjacent coastal area, as well as the area's high quality environment and associated food and drink products, attract visitors. However, they also require improvements to infrastructure to support local communities and visitors. This will maintain the quality of the experience and the environment, facilitate lower carbon transport, promote 'leave no footprint' and encourage longer stays. This could involve extending the availability of transport services. There are also many regionally significant opportunities to create jobs by growing support services for outdoor activities such as mountain biking, climbing, walking and angling and in support of the country's winter sport and recreation sector that is primarily focussed in this area.

This area also makes an important contribution to our climate change targets by supporting renewable energy generation. Repowering and extending existing wind farms will optimise their productivity and capitalise on the area's significant natural energy resources, and there is potential to increase offshore wind energy capacity. A carefully planned approach can reduce environmental or other impacts and retain more benefits locally. Community ownership of renewable energy projects at all scales could play a key role in improving resilience, empowering local people to take control of their own assets and helping tackle fuel poverty. Pumped hydroelectric storage at Cruachan and other sites such as Coire Glas can support the energy network, as well as providing tourism and recreation opportunities, and we expect to see a growth in solar power. As technologies continue to develop, storage and other forms of generation will grow. The electricity distribution and transmission network will require upgrading to support the large increase in on and offshore electricity

generation as well as new demand from heat and transport required to achieve net zero. There will also be a need for more community-scale energy generation to serve the needs of local communities directly and build resilience.

Investment in research and development, business opportunities and local centres of expertise will help to retain benefits locally and broaden the range of skilled jobs. There will also be opportunities to build on and repurpose existing assets to create greener jobs, such as the former nuclear installation at Dounreay and development at Fort William associated with the Lochaber Smelter.

The area's coastline contributes to the beauty and experience of the area and is also a hub for economic activity including fishing, the cruise and marine leisure sectors and the offshore renewable energy sector. Key ports include the Cromarty Firth (including Port of Cromarty, Nigg and Highland Deephaven), Corpach, Ardersier, Gills Bay, Inverness, Kishorn and Buckie. Through Opportunity Cromarty Firth and other projects, new facilities and infrastructure will help ports to adapt, unlocking their potential to support the transition from fossil fuels through oil and gas decommissioning, renewable energy and low carbon hydrogen production and storage, and the expansion of supply chain and services. This will in turn benefit communities by providing employment and income for local businesses.

## **7. Nurture nature-based solutions**

The area's natural capital will play a vital role in locking in carbon and building our resilience by providing valuable ecosystem services. This includes sustainable flood risk management, biodiversity, access and education.

Land and sea assets will play an internationally significant role in renewable energy generation and carbon sequestration. The area can act as a strategic carbon and ecological 'mitigation bank' that can make a major contribution to our national climate change commitments. A programme of investment in forestry, woodland creation, native woodlands and peatland restoration will play a key role in reducing our national emissions, providing investment

opportunities, supporting ecosystems and biodiversity and benefiting current and future generations. There are also opportunities to explore the decarbonisation of the forestry sector and the transport of timber, and to build community wealth through new businesses, such as a nationally important tree nursery in Moray.

Wider but closely related priorities include continuing conservation at a landscape-scale, to develop resilient nature networks, deer and moorland management, visitor management and recreation, rural housing, community empowerment and economic development. This will provide good quality local employment, strengthen and diversify local economies and help to secure a sustainable future for local people. The area's rivers are also strategic assets that will continue to benefit from aligned land use, climate adaptation and biodiversity enhancement.

Cairngorms National Park is bringing together conservation, the visitor experience and rural development to provide benefits that extend well beyond the park boundary. Landscape-scale solutions to build resilience to climate change, to manage sustainable tourism and outdoor access, and a commitment to reversing biodiversity decline and increasing woodland expansion and peatland restoration, are all key priorities. Demand for development, including in pressured areas, will require a planned response to minimise the impact of second homes on local communities and ensure new housing is affordable and meets local needs.

## **8. Strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity**

We will continue to support further investment in digital connectivity but will need to go further to adapt to climate change and make use of emerging technologies. Priorities include satellite and mobile solutions to address 'not spots', and to support local living by reducing the need to travel unsustainably. To complement existing physical connections, smart solutions, local hubs, demand responsive transport and active travel networks will help people to access services and employment and make low-carbon local living a more viable option.

The transport system as a whole will need to be planned to support a shift to more sustainable transport whilst maintaining access to markets and facilities. In line with the transport sustainable investment hierarchy, development should first be focused on locations which make the best use of existing infrastructure and services before building new infrastructure or providing new services. Improvements to the Highland Main Line through electrification and delivery of new stations including at Inverness Airport, will create a sustainable commuter network for Inverness and open up more rural areas to lower carbon development. Our rolling programme of efficient electrification is also a key enabler for growth in rail freight, creating improved connectivity and providing additional capacity with faster journey times, better use of track capacity and lower unit costs. A continued modal shift to rail for both passengers and freight will bring significant environmental benefits over time.

Roads will continue to be arteries upon which local communities and businesses depend. There will be a need to adapt key routes due to the impacts of climate change alongside creating a strong network of charging points, including improvements to the A96 to improve safety and to the A9 to maintain a resilient road link from Thurso and Inverness to the central belt. Remote and rural areas including islands are dependent on reliable accessibility by road including connecting to ferries and ports, facilitating reliable public transport by road, access to essential services and transporting of goods. There is an urgent need for improvements to the A83 to ensure the resilience of the economy and communities of wider Argyll. Continued investment in the national long-distance walking and cycling network provides an opportunity to assist in decarbonising tourism and recreation across the area, whilst also providing, and acting as a spine for, sustainable active travel connections for everyday travel in the vicinity of towns and villages.

Inverness airport is a hub for air connections to dispersed communities and Wick John O'Groats and Broadford Airstrip on Skye are key connections. Oban Airport is also an opportunity

for investment in compliance operations and future drone technology. The Highlands and Islands are aiming to become the world's first net zero aviation region by 2040 by pioneering new approaches including electric aircraft. Investment in technology and facilities will be required to achieve this. The Moray Aerospace Advanced Technology and Innovation Campus (MAATIC) at Lossiemouth is an opportunity to develop skilled work in the aviation sector, in collaboration with the Royal Air Force and Boeing.

Planning permission has been granted for a spaceport at Melness in Sutherland, making use of its location away from populated areas to provide a vertical launch facility that could link with wider opportunities for manufacturing, research and development across Scotland.

**Q10: Do you agree with this summary of challenges and opportunities for this action area?**

**Q11: What are your views on these strategic actions for this action area?**

## North east transition

Innovate Revitalise **Transition** Transform Sustain

*This area broadly includes Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire with links through Moray towards Inverness, and south towards the Tay estuary.*

The north east is a centre for the skills and expertise we will need to meet our climate change commitments. This area will evolve, through a just transition, to move industry and business away from the oil and gas sector towards a cleaner, greener future. We can build on the area's experience to find innovative solutions to climate change.

Emissions generated from this area arise mainly from transport, industrial and commercial activity and domestic properties, with land use and forestry providing carbon sequestration. Car ownership is particularly high in Aberdeenshire. Significant parts of the coast will be vulnerable to future climate impacts.

This area is amongst the most prosperous parts of Scotland, but has experienced significant economic challenges in recent years and has pockets of deprivation. The area comprises a mix of rural and urban communities, with the city of Aberdeen and a surrounding network of towns including Elgin, Huntly, Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Ellon, Inverurie and Stonehaven, and significant rural areas including more accessible countryside around Aberdeen city. Whilst parts of the area have experienced population decline, several settlements around Aberdeen have grown.

Affordability and choice of homes remains a challenge, contributing to a housing driven disadvantage within Aberdeen. Projections show that the population of retired people living in Aberdeenshire could grow by around 43% by 2043. There are lower levels of educational attainment and limited access to services for communities along the Aberdeenshire and Moray coast. Many of these places will benefit from further regeneration that builds on their identity and natural assets.

The excellent quality of the built environment, natural assets and cultural heritage already contribute to health and wellbeing in the area and can form the basis of a transition to net zero. Some of our highest quality agricultural land is concentrated here, and the economy benefits from a strong fishing industry, alongside its globally significant energy sector. The dominance of these sectors, together with wider changes including from the pandemic, EU Exit and global markets, means that economic diversification and repurposing of buildings and infrastructure are likely to be key priorities.

In this area we will:





- transition to net zero;
- improve local liveability;
- regenerate coastal communities; and
- decarbonise connectivity.








# North east transition

## Legend

-  Strategic maritime routes
-  Strategic connection
-  Blue economy
-  Transmission infrastructure

## Liveable places

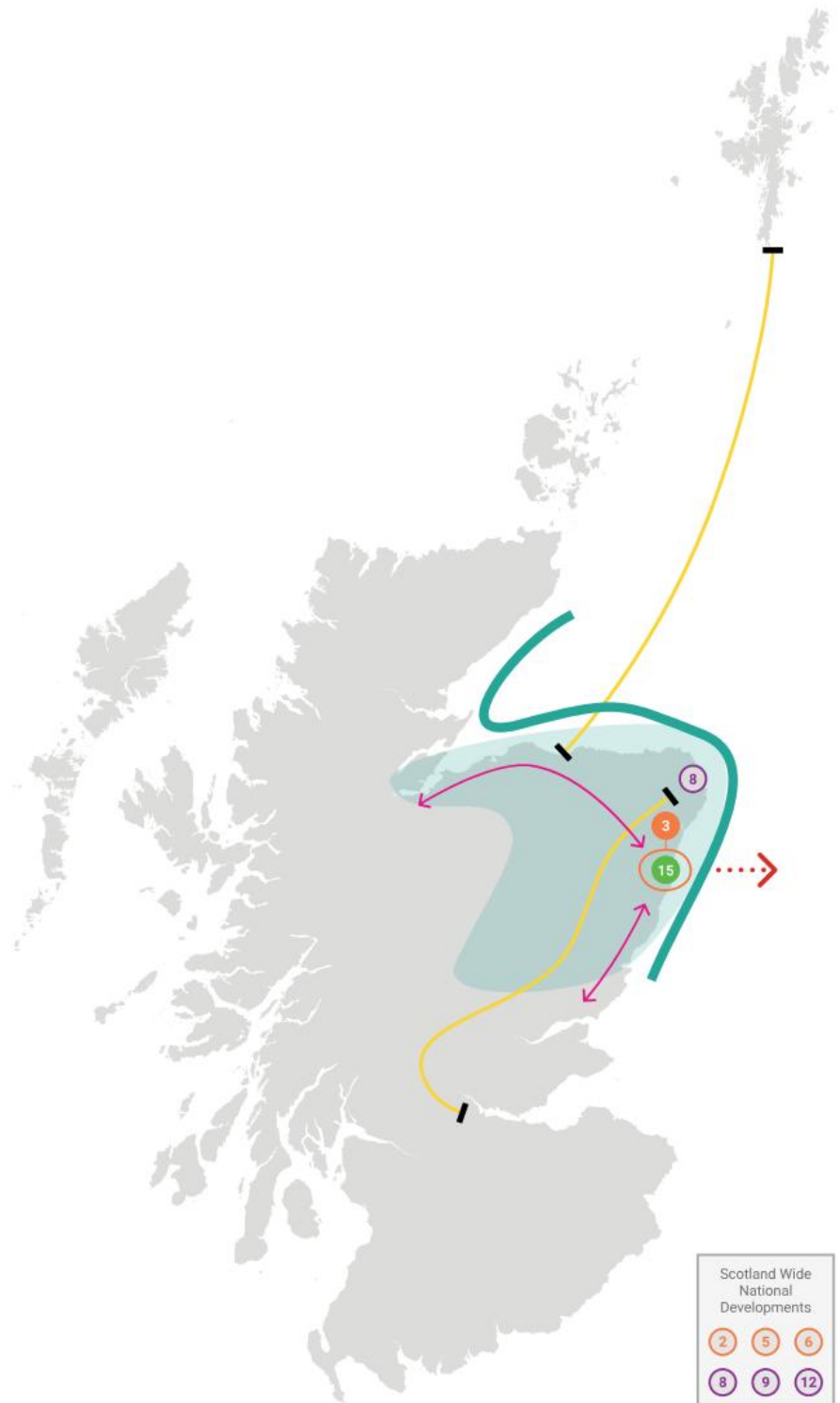
-  National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
-  Urban Mass / Rapid Transit Networks  
Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow
-  Circular Economy Material Management Facilities
-  Digital Fibre Network

## Productive places

-  Industrial Green Transition Zones
-  Pumped Hydro Storage
-  Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure

## Distinctive places

-  Aberdeen Harbour



## Actions

### 9. Transition to net zero

Action is required to tackle industrial emissions and transition towards a greener future that benefits existing communities and attracts further investment. Rich in natural assets, this area, along with the wider Moray and Cromarty Firths, has built on its oil and gas experience to pioneer new technologies. This makes it a uniquely investable proposition that could benefit Scotland as a whole.

Greener energy choices, including hydrogen and offshore renewables, have a natural home here and will be at the heart of the area's future wellbeing economy. Investment opportunities focus on the green and blue economy and energy innovation. Significant infrastructure will be required to deliver a hydrogen network for Scotland, including repurposing of existing facilities and the creation of new capacity. £62 million in the Energy Transition Fund is supporting four projects to protect existing jobs and create new jobs in the North East, and across Scotland, by opening up opportunities through energy transition and harnessing private sector funding. This funding aligns with the Aberdeen City Region Deal and continuing support for retraining and skills development. Ports and harbours throughout the area are key assets in the blue economy. As offshore renewables are an important part of Scotland's energy transition, there will be a need to align terrestrial and marine development so as to maximise the potential of this sector.

The relocation of some activity at Aberdeen Harbour to the south harbour has been an important element in planning for the future. Further investment will help to realise its full potential as a low-carbon hub and gateway. This is also a significant opportunity to improve urban liveability by unlocking waterfront sites for mixed use development close to the city centre. Local people will need to be involved in deciding how potentially significant industrial and business activity can be accommodated alongside regenerating a vibrant, redesigned city centre in the coming years.

It is essential that environmental impacts arising from relocation of the harbour and new construction are carefully managed in a way that recognises the location's natural assets and sensitivities. We expect the local development plan and development management decisions, informed by the required impact assessments, to play a crucial role in guiding future development and mitigating any environmental effects to an acceptable level.

### 10. Improve local liveability

A new focus on local living could help to address the high levels of car ownership and respond to the area's dispersed settlement pattern. Growth corridors extending from the city to Peterhead, Huntly and Laurencekirk will be a focus for future development, and strategic sites include new communities at Chapelon, Grandhome and Countesswells. There is significant potential to promote more compact growth by making better use of brownfield sites and increasing density.

There will be benefits for people of all ages arising from an increase in local living and a shift towards 20 minute neighbourhoods. The area's towns contribute to its sense of place and further town centre regeneration will help communities to adapt to current challenges and future change. Service provision also needs to reflect the area's character. Several new or extended primary and secondary schools and community facilities are planned and the area will support wider rural communities by hosting a new centre of excellence for rural and remote medicine and social care. Access to good-quality open space and opportunities for local food growing, including allotments and community orchards, can benefit health and wellbeing and tackle inequalities as an integral part of placemaking.

The area's growth strategy includes a commitment to building with nature by creating multifunctional blue and green networks and improving green spaces in and around settlements, connecting with the national long-distance cycling and walking network and facilitating active travel. Community-led climate action projects will help to provide locally-driven solutions. A new water supply and waste-water systems will play an important role in building long-term resilience.



## 11. Regenerate coastal communities

The area benefits from a productive coastline that will be a focus for future economic activity and investment associated with offshore renewable energy and the blue economy. The coast is home to communities who will benefit from continued regeneration and a move towards 20 minute neighbourhoods that reduces the need to travel. Key regional priorities include the regeneration of Banff, Macduff, Fraserburgh and Peterhead. Future coastal vulnerability to erosion, sea level rise and flood risk will need to be factored into development strategies. The fishing industry will continue to contribute to the area's strong sense of place and shared heritage, communities and economy, with some ports and harbours also having opportunities in the cruise and marine leisure sectors.

## 12. Decarbonise connectivity

Aberdeen is a key transport hub providing vital connections internationally, as well as lifeline services to Orkney and Shetland. Congestion will be reduced as a result of the construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, and the A92/A96 Haudagain Improvement project. In the city work is ongoing to lock in the benefits and prioritise sustainable transport, including Aberdeen Rapid Transit. More widely the Aberdeen to Central Belt Rail Improvements will bring benefits to both passengers and freight.

The area can lead the way in promoting low emissions vehicles, active travel and public transport connectivity as part of its contribution to net zero. Links south to the central belt and west towards Inverness remain vital. Work is progressing on the £200m investment being made to improve journey times and capacity between Aberdeen and the Central Belt for passengers and freight. Continuing improvements to digital connectivity and active travel will reduce the need to travel by unsustainable modes and facilitate further remote, home or hub-based working.

**Q12: Do you agree with this summary of challenges and opportunities for this action area?**

**Q13: What are your views on these strategic actions for this action area?**

## Central urban transformation

Innovate Revitalise Transition **Transform** Sustain

*This area broadly covers central Scotland from the Glasgow city region and the Ayrshires in the west to Edinburgh city region in the east, including the Tay cities, the Forth Valley and Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park.*

We will only meet our climate change commitments if we make significant changes to the densely populated central belt of Scotland. Our most urban communities hold the key to reducing emissions from the way we live our lives. We need to work together to decarbonise buildings and transport and tackle congestion, make more efficient use of existing land and buildings, connect to renewable electricity and heat networks and create more inclusive, greener and sustainable places that will stand the test of time.

Many of our largest emitters of greenhouse gas emissions are located in this area, including Grangemouth where industrial activity is concentrated, providing high value manufacturing, maintaining our resilience and providing employment. Other key sources include industrial, manufacturing and waste management sites and facilities. Overall emissions from domestic properties and transport are high as a result of the area's population density and the scale of daily movement within and between city regions. The growing risk of flooding could in the future have significant impacts, as many key settlements and economic assets are located on the Clyde, Forth and Tay estuaries.

Glasgow is Scotland's largest metropolitan area and Edinburgh is a world renowned historic capital city. There are differences between and within these city regions – at a broad scale there are relatively high concentrations of poor health, economic disadvantage and population decline in parts of the Glasgow city region contrasting with strong demand and expected population growth in parts of the Edinburgh city region. The area has a similar pattern of children living in poverty, with strong contrasts between the Glasgow and Edinburgh city regions. Household projections show there will be a continuing demand for more homes. There has been a strong market, high levels of housebuilding and pressure on infrastructure in some 'hot spots'

including the Edinburgh city region, Stirling and Falkirk, and Perth. In contrast, despite good connections and infrastructure capacity, it can be more challenging to encourage the market to deliver new homes towards the west of the central belt where unemployment is also higher.

There are also inequalities within each of the city regions, with local concentrations of economic deprivation. Overall, economic performance is higher in the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow and lower in surrounding areas including Inverclyde, Ayrshire, along parts of the Clyde Coast and Lanarkshire. The diverse business base reflects nationally important sectors including financial services, business administration, life sciences, distribution and transport, retail and commercial, and manufacturing and production. Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth and Stirling city centres are experiencing significant challenges, caused or accelerated by the pandemic, but each retain a strong character and distinctive identity, offering opportunities for new business, homes, and services. Similar issues apply to the towns across this area.

Beyond the cities and towns there are many high quality environments, from historic burghs and conservation areas to protected biodiversity sites, ancient woodlands and areas of high landscape quality, including the coastline, country and national parks, and canals. This



brings opportunities for outdoor recreation within a short distance of the majority of Scotland's population. We have made progress in restoring and reusing areas which were historically a focus for heavy industry and mining, and which left a legacy of disused sites and areas blighted by dereliction. The coast is an integral part of the area's identity, combining natural and cultural heritage and acting as a focus for investment and regeneration.

A coherent strategy that focuses on climate change and responds to the challenges of the pandemic will drive forward change to tackle inequalities and build a new, greener, future for this part of the country.

In this area we will:

- pioneer low-carbon, resilient urban living;
- reinvent and future-proof city centres;
- accelerate urban greening;
- rediscover urban coasts and waterfronts;
- reuse land and buildings;
- invest in net zero housing solutions;
- grow a wellbeing economy;
- reimagine development on the urban fringe; and
- improve urban accessibility.

# Central urban transformation

## Legend

...> Strategic maritime routes

↔ Strategic connection

➔ Blue economy

## Liveable places

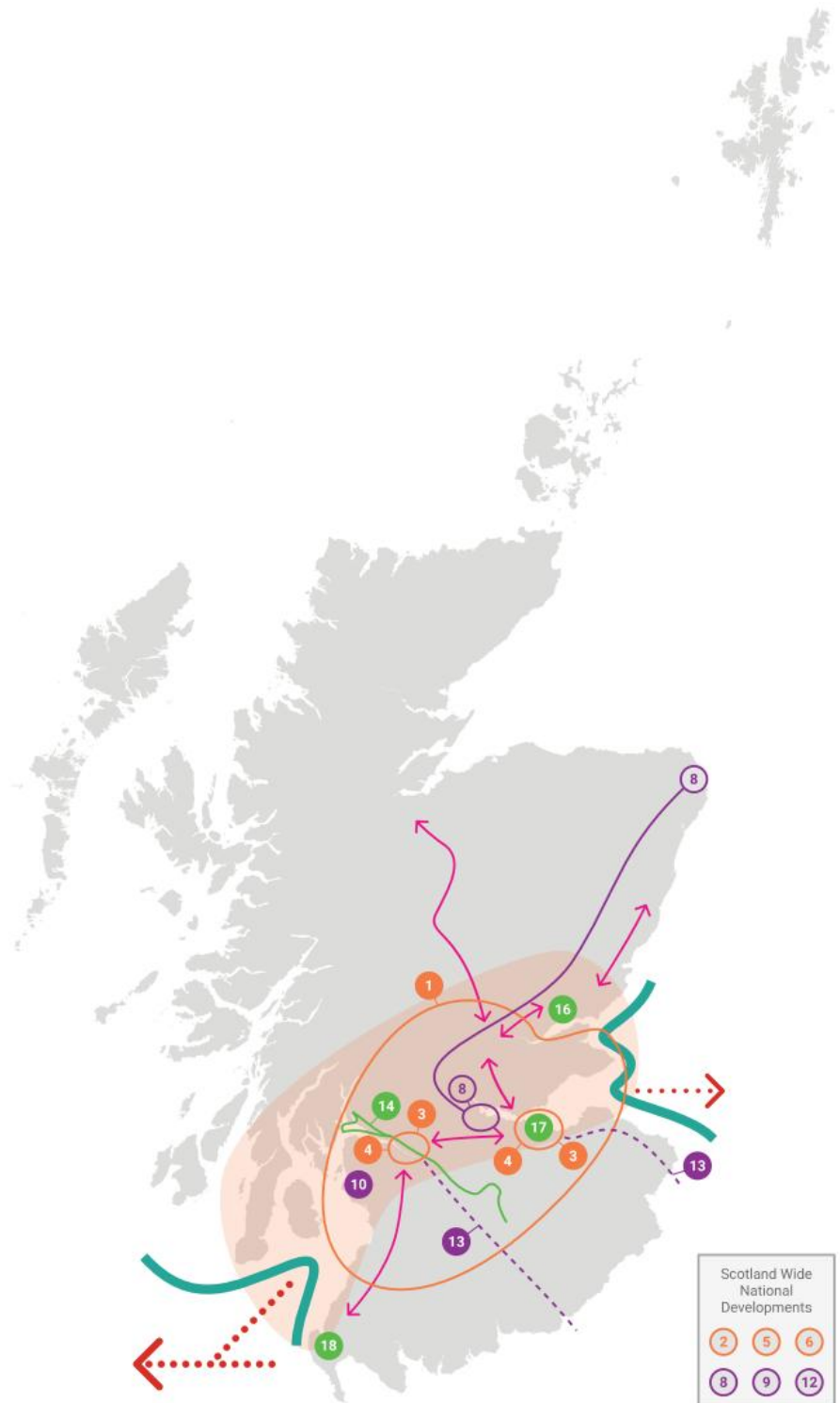
- 1 Central Scotland Green Network
- 2 National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
- 3 Urban Mass / Rapid Transit Networks  
Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow
- 4 Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions  
Edinburgh and Glasgow
- 5 Circular Economy Material Management Facilities
- 6 Digital Fibre Network

## Productive places

- 8 Industrial Green Transition Zones
- 9 Pumped Hydro Storage
- 10 Hunterston Strategic Asset
- 12 Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure
- 13 High Speed Rail

## Distinctive places

- 14 Clyde Mission
- 16 Dundee Waterfront
- 17 Edinburgh Waterfront
- 18 Stranraer Gateway



## Actions

### 13. Pioneer low-carbon, resilient urban living

This area will require concerted effort to develop a network of 20 minute neighbourhoods, and clusters of communities with fair access to a range of services that support sustainable living. Planning should focus on revitalising cities and towns at scale, supporting a finer grained approach to placemaking, and a more intricate mix of land uses and density. This should incorporate networks of natural spaces and blue and green infrastructure, to create health and wellbeing benefits, increase resilience to climate change and support the growth of green job opportunities.

The car-based design of some of our places, including many suburban areas and new towns, mean that a significant shift to a more people centred approach will be required. Planning can help retrofit facilities and services into areas where they are scarce, such as predominantly residential areas, to enable better integrated mixed use areas. City, town and neighbourhood centres can be at the heart of this if they are planned to strengthen self-sufficiency and bring services and jobs closer to homes. The recommendations of the recent town centre review can be delivered by supporting a wider range of uses and making the most of their assets.

Accessibility will be a key part of the transition and will involve investment in infrastructure and services in line with the sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, to improve fair access and reduce carbon emissions. Active travel networks will need to expand to make walking, wheeling and cycling an attractive, convenient, safe, and sustainable choice for everyday travel. There are significant opportunities for investment in heat networks, energy storage and the circular economy to create more sustainable neighbourhoods.

As a nation we have a particular obligation to do more to tackle the concentration of poor health outcomes in west central Scotland. Action is needed to reduce inequality and improve health and wellbeing so that everyone

is able to thrive. Better places can do more to support lifelong health and wellbeing by providing more affordable, warmer homes that are connected to services. Access to quality greenspace and nature-based solutions can help to mitigate health inequalities and improve physical and mental health, by providing opportunities for play, socialising, relaxation and physical activity. We also need to reduce urban car use to help tackle emissions and air pollution. Local and affordable access to health and social care facilities will need to be built into our future places and can benefit from continuing investment in digital infrastructure and innovation.

### 14. Reinvent and future proof city centres

Scotland's city centres are socially and culturally important, supporting our productivity and stimulating innovation and investment. The pandemic has generated severe impacts and longer-term challenges for our city centres. The City Centre Recovery Taskforce is developing a shared vision for their future and the City Centre Recovery Fund will support their recovery and repurposing. This is a nationally significant opportunity to contribute to Scotland's economic recovery and to achieve a wellbeing economy.

The Glasgow city region is reimagining its future to build in climate resilience, develop a wellbeing economy, improve health and wellbeing and support environmental regeneration. The city centre, an exceptional asset and a primary location and cultural destination, has been significantly impacted by unprecedented changes in working patterns, service provision and the retail sector. Whilst these changes may not be sustained in the long term, now is the time to accelerate work to diversify the city centre and invest in maintaining and re-using existing buildings so that it can evolve to be a more carbon conscious place. Existing connections mean the centre could sustain many more homes, revitalising places and creating a 24 hour city that is safe and open to everyone. Significant investment in schools, community services and greenspace will be needed to achieve this and more creative use of the public realm and a low emission zone will help to make this a safer and healthier environment for



people of all ages. Innovative solutions, such as retrofitting energy efficiency measures to social housing across the city, could be extended to help improve the built fabric of the city centre's commercial properties.

Edinburgh has similar challenges and opportunities for positive change. High interest in investment and associated demand for new homes means that planning will need to help deliver sustainable development that supports the quality of life of existing and future residents. As a capital city with a World Heritage Site at its core, it will be crucial that future development takes into account the capacity of the city itself and its surrounding communities and makes the most of its exceptional heritage assets, places and cultural wealth. The City Centre Transformation Plan supports a move away from a car-based city centre to create a more liveable and attractive place to live, work and visit. The Forth Bridge is also an inscribed UNESCO World Heritage Site, and our rich industrial and cultural heritage remains apparent across the area.

Dundee is well on the way towards reinventing itself through regeneration of the waterfront, unlocking strategic sites for new homes and new opportunities for innovation and economic development arising such as the Eden Project, the Michelin Scotland Innovation Park and at the port. Continued regeneration in this area, building on the city's rich culture, sense of place and appetite to innovate will also contribute to the overall aims for this part of Scotland. The V&A will continue to be a focal point for this, evolving to become a National Centre for Design within this UNESCO City of Design. Perth is managing housing development in strategic development areas and transport infrastructure investment and the creation of a bus and rail interchange to support modal shift and establish a new gateway to the city. Stirling is bringing forward new opportunities for innovation and investment, building on the city's strong heritage and supported by the area's educational institutions.

## 15. Accelerate urban greening

The greening of the built environment, including former industrial areas, is a long-held ambition that we now need to expedite to significantly reduce emissions, adapt to the future impacts of climate change and tackle biodiversity loss. Investment in green infrastructure will support urban sustainability, help to restore biodiversity, contribute to our overall targets for reducing emissions and improve health and wellbeing. By weaving blue and green infrastructure across our urban fabric we can ensure that nature and the outdoors are accessible to everyone, supporting lifelong health and wellbeing and creating places that are more resilient to flooding.

There is much that we have already learned from past work, for example initiatives to naturalise former mining features, reclaiming canals as a cultural heritage and natural asset, and extensive woodland creation. Wider woodland expansion across more urban areas could make a significant contribution to improving air quality and quality of life by reducing pollution, managing water and cooling urban environments. Blue and green networks can help to deliver compact and liveable cities.

Many initiatives will come together to achieve urban greening:

- The Central Scotland Green Network will continue to bring together environmental enhancement projects. Initiatives such as the John Muir Pollinator Way demonstrate how nature networks can help restore and better connect biodiversity and enhance green infrastructure at a landscape scale.
- The Glasgow City Region Green Network, a long-term transformational programme of environmental action, can achieve a step change in the quality and benefits of green places across west central Scotland and bring enhanced biodiversity closer to communities. As part of this, the Clyde Climate Forest is proposing natural solutions at scale across the Glasgow city region.
- The Inner Forth Futures Partnership is tackling the effects of climate change and providing recreation benefits through projects such as peatland restoration and woodland expansion.

- The River Leven Project in Fife is a holistic place based approach to development. Blue and green infrastructure will support investment and provide environmental, health and wellbeing benefits for communities.
- The Tayside strategic green and active travel network also aims to create regionally significant assets that contribute to the quality of the area.
- There is a particular opportunity to build on the successful regeneration of our canals to provide an invaluable strategic greenspace that connects communities across the area as a whole, contributes to its strong post-industrial heritage and provides wider functions such as water management to support future resilience to climate change. The potential of a canal asset should be recognised as a shared priority.

## 16. Rediscover urban coasts and waterfronts

The region's coasts and firths define the area's history and shapes its sense of place. There is potential to unlock the strategic importance of coasts, estuary and river corridors for climate mitigation, resilience and positive environmental change. Coastal change will need to be managed to build long term resilience and future-proof our waterfronts. Progress has been made to create long-distance walking and cycling routes and to open up access to waterfront spaces and reclaim them as a resource for people as well as industry. There will be a need to tackle coastal erosion, flood risk and storm surges, and to build in natural solutions which work with the unique biodiversity and landscape character of these important places.

These coasts are rich in cultural and natural heritage. Along the Inner Forth various projects provide multiple benefits, including flood management, cultural landscape enhancement, habitat creation, access and tourism. Edinburgh's waterfront regeneration is ongoing with Granton benefiting from an ambitious masterplan, the tram extension to Leith progressing and potential development at Seafield helping to redefine the city's relationship with its coastline, reusing existing assets and helping Edinburgh to become a more liveable

city. A masterplanned approach to regenerating the Edinburgh Waterfront can take into account opportunities for the Port of Leith to service the offshore energy sector.

The successful regeneration of Dundee Waterfront has demonstrated the potential to make sustainable use of our urban coasts, and ongoing proposals include the creation of a marina at Victoria Dock and further development of central waterfront sites.

A national collaboration to support the Clyde Mission also has significant potential to accelerate change, attract investment and achieve wider benefits for communities. This ambitious project will reuse extensive areas of vacant and derelict land in accessible locations. The wider Clyde Coast, an iconic area rich in cultural heritage and natural assets, can be reimaged through collective efforts on regeneration in coastal communities such as Dunoon and Rothesay. The area's accessibility by train and water means that it is an ideal location for low-carbon tourism and leisure.

Key ports in this area can play a central role in supporting the expansion of renewable energy, in particular offshore wind energy. It will also be important to make use of the infrastructure to reduce road haulage and secure a more sustainable freight sector which directly links to international markets. There are opportunities for enhanced cruise facilities for the Forth as well as the Clyde where Greenock Ocean Terminal, supported by the Glasgow City Region Deal, can act as a key gateway. There may be opportunities to make use of harbour facilities to support the marine leisure industry.

As the highest single source of industrial emissions in Scotland, and a key part of our future resilience and manufacturing base, continued investment at Grangemouth, and the strategic sites it includes, will be required. Plans are emerging for innovative industry in the Falkirk/Grangemouth Investment Zone, building on the area's strengths in chemicals and making the most of strategic assets including the port and rail connection. There is great potential, not only to reduce emissions at the Grangemouth complex, but also to grow the cluster into a hub



of low-carbon manufacturing that can help unlock wider decarbonisation across the country, with its strategic location, infrastructure, assets and skills base. Opportunities include renewable energy innovation, bioenergy hydrogen production with carbon capture and storage, and repurposing of existing strategic and critical infrastructure such as pipelines. The skills, knowledge and experience that is currently situated there for the petrochemicals sector is a prime resource for the transition to net zero. This can form a focal point in a wider masterplan for Forth Valley that brings together opportunities for energy with the circular economy to support wider investment in green economic opportunities.

Hunterston is a strategic asset with deepwater access, where there are plans for new economic development and employment uses. Coastal sites formerly used for baseload power generation – specifically Longannet and Cockenzie – benefit from existing assets and infrastructure that can be repurposed to form the basis of new proposals. At Cockenzie work is ongoing to develop an opportunity for a Climate Evolution Zone to generate employment and provide essential infrastructure for net zero, linked with a new sustainable settlement at Greater Blindwells. There is scope to build on the strategic location and rail connectivity of Longannet to benefit local communities around this part of the Forth. There are further opportunities for a range of economic activities and investment in ports associated with a green economy at Montrose, Dundee, Rosyth, Burntisland, and Methil. The Levenmouth rail link will reconnect Leven to the mainline rail network with new stations at Leven and Cameron Bridge by 2024 subject to consenting processes. This will enhance the communities it serves and contribute positively to the lives of people who live there by unlocking access to social, cultural, employment and educational opportunity.

Development of ports on the east coast will also need to take account of the potential for a substantial increase in freight and passenger traffic between Scotland and continental Europe linked to the Scottish Government's objective that Scotland should accede to the European Union as an independent Member State at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **17. Reuse land and buildings**

A more liveable Central Belt means that we will need to do more to reuse empty buildings and vacant and derelict land, particularly spaces which have not been used for decades and can be accessed by sustainable modes. This will reduce further urban sprawl and improve local environments. Around 40% of Scotland's vacant and derelict land is concentrated in the Glasgow city region and its redevelopment is a key priority. Edinburgh has committed to building a significant share of future housing development on brownfield sites and progress is being made in Dundee to repurpose disused sites including the creation of a new innovation park on the former Michelin site.

A combination of incentives, investment and policy support for productively reusing brownfield land and buildings at risk will be required to steer development away from greenfield locations. Public sector-led development can shape future markets and deliver development in places where change is needed the most and can deliver multiple benefits. Redevelopment should include, but not be limited to, housing development. By de-risking sites and taking an infrastructure-first approach, this land can help to achieve a better distribution of new homes to meet our future needs. This will also reduce pressure in places where growth is no longer sustainable. Key projects include the Dundee Eden Project and redevelopment of Ravenscraig, a longstanding post-industrial site where new development can bring new models of low-carbon living at scale.

## **18. Invest in net zero housing solutions**

As well as building new homes to net zero standards, more will need to be done to upgrade the existing housing stock to reduce emissions and adapt to future climate impacts. Energy efficiency, sustainable accessibility, zero emissions heating solutions and water management will be key challenges. Areas which are largely residential and car-based could be diversified by supporting local businesses to provide services including leisure, active living, hospitality and retail.

There is a particular pressure for affordable housing solutions in the south east of Scotland and there is also an opportunity for future housing development to help reduce emissions. Edinburgh has committed to building affordable homes at scale, and will need to work with the region to accommodate wider need and demand in a strategic way. Seven strategic sites, supported through the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal, could accommodate up to 45,000 homes and associated economic and employment benefits including: Blindwells, Calderwood, Dunfermline, Edinburgh Waterfront, Shawfair, Tweedbank and Winchburgh. The need for proposals to be supported by low carbon transport solutions, in line with the Infrastructure Investment Plan and National Transport Strategy investment hierarchies and infrastructure first approach, will be critical to their success. The Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Deal identifies infrastructure investment and includes a commitment from partners to put in place a regional developer contributions framework building on work undertaken to look at cross boundary transport challenges. These interventions and commitments, taken with the additional transport investment made through the Deal, will ensure the city region continues to grow and flourish. Regionally significant services including healthcare and social care facilities and investment in the learning estate is also planned to support future growth and sustain the wellbeing of existing, new and expanding communities.

Emissions from our homes need to be very substantially reduced – by 2030, they must fall by 68% from 2020 levels. There are opportunities to address the impact of climate change on communities whilst also generating renewable heat and facilitating urban cooling from our rivers. Mine water, solar and onshore support for offshore renewables, including development that makes use of existing infrastructure at strategic hubs, all provide opportunities for decarbonisation.

There is a continuing need to invest in renewing and improving the capacity of flooding, water and drainage infrastructure to build the resilience of communities. A catchment-scale approach, using nature-based solutions, can also provide benefits for the health and quality of life of Scotland's urban communities particularly where solutions seek to deliver multiple benefits, including biodiversity gain and active travel routes. This approach can also be more cost-effective than hard engineering solutions and create lasting jobs. For example, the Glasgow city region recognises the challenges for future adaptation and is identifying sustainable solutions to sea level rise, urban overheating, and water management.

Engineered solutions to adapt our water and drainage infrastructure will be required in some circumstances, but should support more natural benefits as far as possible. There is scope to continue, and extend, the lessons from the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Plan to future proof infrastructure in support of the long term growth and development of Edinburgh. The Lothian Drainage Partnership is taking this forward with projects emerging within Edinburgh and at the ClimatEvolution Zone in East Lothian. At a local scale there is significant potential to expand raingardens and sustainable urban drainage systems to help manage surface water as part of blue and green infrastructure for our future cities and towns.

## **19. Grow a wellbeing economy**

This area has a diverse business base and is a key engine of growth for Scotland as a whole. There are many clusters of sites and businesses which form the basis of regional propositions for investment. In line with our aspirations to build a wellbeing economy, opportunities for investment and development should be designed to maximise economic, social and environmental wellbeing, rather than focusing on growth alone. A planned approach can help to target future development in areas of significant economic disadvantage so that new and better jobs are more fairly distributed to help address national, regional and more localised inequality.

The pandemic has brought obvious challenges but has also unlocked opportunities to take forward new models of working that could better support our wellbeing and improve our places in the longer term. The continued growth of remote and local working and the creation of hubs within groups of settlements could significantly reduce the need to travel, whilst also helping to grow local businesses and communities. Existing offices have the potential to be repurposed to achieve higher density mixed use neighbourhoods with a lower carbon footprint and require careful planning to ensure future communities are properly supported by appropriate services.

Many business and investment sites are located along key transport corridors and new approaches may be required as investment transitions away from locations that can only be reached by car towards more accessible areas that are connected by low-carbon and active travel options.

A number of clear investment propositions are supported:

- The Clyde Mission will stimulate investment in sites along the Clyde to build a wellbeing economy and achieve a step-change in the quality of the environment for communities. Key sites extend from Greenock Ocean Terminal to Queens Quay, Tradeston, the Broomielaw and Glasgow City Centre, to Clyde Gateway – a longstanding regeneration project which has made exceptional progress in transforming communities and overcoming inequality.
- Aligning with the Clyde Mission, the Ayrshire Councils are working together through their Ayrshire Growth Deal and Community Wealth Building programme to build economic resilience and address unemployment, poverty and inequality across their area, with town centres at the heart of communities. This includes proposals for advanced manufacturing and aerospace engineering which will make use of the existing infrastructure and investment opportunities available at Glasgow and Prestwick airports. Glasgow is already a centre of expertise for

manufacturing satellites and will benefit from the associated development of a network of spaceports across the country, whilst supporting wider industry and employment. The Ardeer peninsula is also a significant site for redevelopment of the wider Ayrshire area.

- The Edinburgh City region supports investment in significant clusters including the Bioquarter, Mid Fife, Dunfermline, Guardbridge St. Andrews, Galashiels, Cockenzie, Midlothian and the M8 corridor. A strategy for West Edinburgh is emerging which guides a wide range of uses to create a sustainable extension to the city, with added benefit from associated improvements to the quality of place of existing communities. Proposals focus on locating development on and around existing transport corridors and work is ongoing to improve accessibility including the Edinburgh tram extension. Further investment should take into account the impact of new development on potentially compounding existing capacity constraints and congestion, and prioritise sustainable choices.
- The Tay Cities Region has a strong regional proposal for developing clusters of investment in research and innovation supporting a range of sectors in both urban and rural areas including life sciences, energy, digital, and food production.

A wellbeing economy goes beyond strategic investment sites to link more closely with the wellbeing of communities and their local environments. It will be critical to recognise the importance of anchor institutions who can support local investment in our places and natural and historic assets, provide education, employment and other services, and act as community hubs. Communities can drive forward community-led housing initiatives to help meet the needs of local people. Significant investment in our health and social care, justice and learning estates will continue to provide important sources of employment and income for smaller scale local businesses. Town centres throughout this area will also play a critical role in driving a new economic future. The recent town centre review highlights opportunities to

expand the range of services and facilities they offer, reuse redundant buildings and provide new homes for a wide range of people. This in turn will ensure their crucial role in defining our sense of place is protected and enhanced, future-proofing a key asset for Scotland as a whole.

## **20. Reimagine development on the urban fringe**

Whilst predominantly urban, this part of Scotland benefits from a rich and diverse rural area and there are many areas where town meets countryside. These green areas and natural spaces are key assets, sustaining communities that could become better places to live if we can achieve this in a way that is compatible with our wider aims for climate change, nature restoration and 20 minute neighbourhoods. The pandemic has demonstrated that many people are looking for more space at home and in their communities. It will be important to plan positively and imaginatively to make sustainable use of the countryside around our cities and towns.

These areas have important functions – providing vital ecosystem services and spaces for local food growing, outdoor access and recreation. They support carbon sequestration, including through peatland restoration, woodland creation and conserving natural habitats and there is scope for innovation in key sectors including sustainable food production. Digital connectivity is key to realising the potential for smaller-scale rural development more widely, for example in Ayrshire and South Lanarkshire. We can make use of the area's assets to grow tourism and leisure close to where people live. Within Forth Valley a National Tartan Centre, the Canal corridor, the Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Antonine Wall World Heritage Site, Ochil Hills and Whisky Trail create a unique heritage offering which will support local employment and strengthen the area's sense of place. Tourism is a key theme in the emerging regional economic strategy for the Forth Valley and both the Falkirk Growth Deal and Stirling and Clackmannanshire City Region Deal.

There are landscape-scale opportunities within Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park to restore and enhance nature and respond to climate change, including through woodland creation and peatland restoration, as well as natural flood risk management. The National Park will continue to support the quality of life and health of the urban population and its future priorities include new infrastructure provision to provide a quality visitor experience and support people to connect with nature, as well as a greener tourism sector supported by innovative low carbon transport solutions. Long-distance active travel and rail routes have untapped potential to provide sustainable tourism solutions. The area's communities can adapt to support more localised living and working opportunities, with improved digital connectivity and affordable housing. More integrated planning and land management offers opportunities to support land use change and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The approach also links with and relates to the action area to the north.

## **21. Improve urban accessibility**

A focus on community wealth building, together with growing opportunities for longer term remote working, could address the high levels of transport movement by private car and challenges of congestion and air pollution across the area. Local living, including 20 minute neighbourhoods, will help to minimise future commuting and ensure jobs and income can be spread more evenly across the area. Accessibility and transport affordability can support more resilience which benefits communities who are less connected.

By putting in place mass transit systems for Edinburgh through plans to extend the tram network, and for Glasgow including the Glasgow Metro and multi-modal connectivity, we have an opportunity to substantially reduce levels of car-based commuting, congestion and emissions from transport at scale.

Connections to the rest of the UK will be strengthened in the longer term through high speed rail connectivity, with stations expected in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Decarbonisation of freight will require the construction of new hubs and associated facilities to support logistics. This will also support growing interest in express logistics from rail operators that would see passenger Electrical Multiple Units converted to carry small freight, targeting the UK parcel market. Ports on the Clyde, Forth and Tay coasts will also play a key role in this transition.

Digital connectivity will facilitate remote working, supporting the growth of towns and villages outwith the larger cities and potentially leading to a renaissance in more rural living. It will be crucial to address digital inequality, whether through cost, infrastructure or skills development, as virtual service provision continues to grow.

**Q14: Do you agree with this summary of challenges and opportunities for this action area?**

**Q15: What are your views on these strategic actions for this action area?**



## Southern sustainability

Innovate Revitalise Transition Transform **Sustain**

*This area broadly includes Dumfries and Galloway and The Scottish Borders, with links to the Ayrshires and Glasgow city region in the west and to the Edinburgh city region in the east.*

The South of Scotland is strategically important with a strong sense of identity centred on networks of towns and villages, supported by distinctive landscapes and coasts. This is a place with a rich cultural heritage and exceptional environmental assets and natural resources. This area is ambitious for positive change in the coming years, and the immediate work to recover from the pandemic will form the basis of a longer term plan to respond to the challenges of climate change and support nature restoration and recovery.

Emissions in this area are moderate, with transport and industry emissions being partly offset by land use. The area has significant areas of woodland and peatland which act as a carbon sink and form the basis for future investment opportunities. The few sites that are significant sources of greenhouse gas emissions include industrial and commercial activities, including some food and drink processing facilities. Coastal erosion and flood risk is expected to be a significant challenge in the future, particularly where there is a risk of impacting on key transport corridors or settlements.

Finding a new way of rural living that is consistent with climate change will be a challenge for this part of Scotland, given the relatively high levels of dependence on the car and the dispersed population. It is predominantly rural in character with small settlements and many rural homes, farms and smallholdings. Despite having high levels of wellbeing and quality of life, population decline is projected to continue in the west of the area, with fewer younger people and more retired people living there in the area in the future. The area's economy depends on low wage and public sector employment and this presents challenges for building a wellbeing economy.

Our strategy aims to ensure that this part of Scotland is recognised as a good place to live and work, and features more strongly as a destination in its own right.

In this area we will:

- create a low carbon network of towns;
- support sustainable development;
- innovate to sustain and enhance natural capital; and
- strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity.





# Southern sustainability

## Legend

...> Strategic maritime routes

↔ Strategic connection

➤ Blue economy

## Liveable places

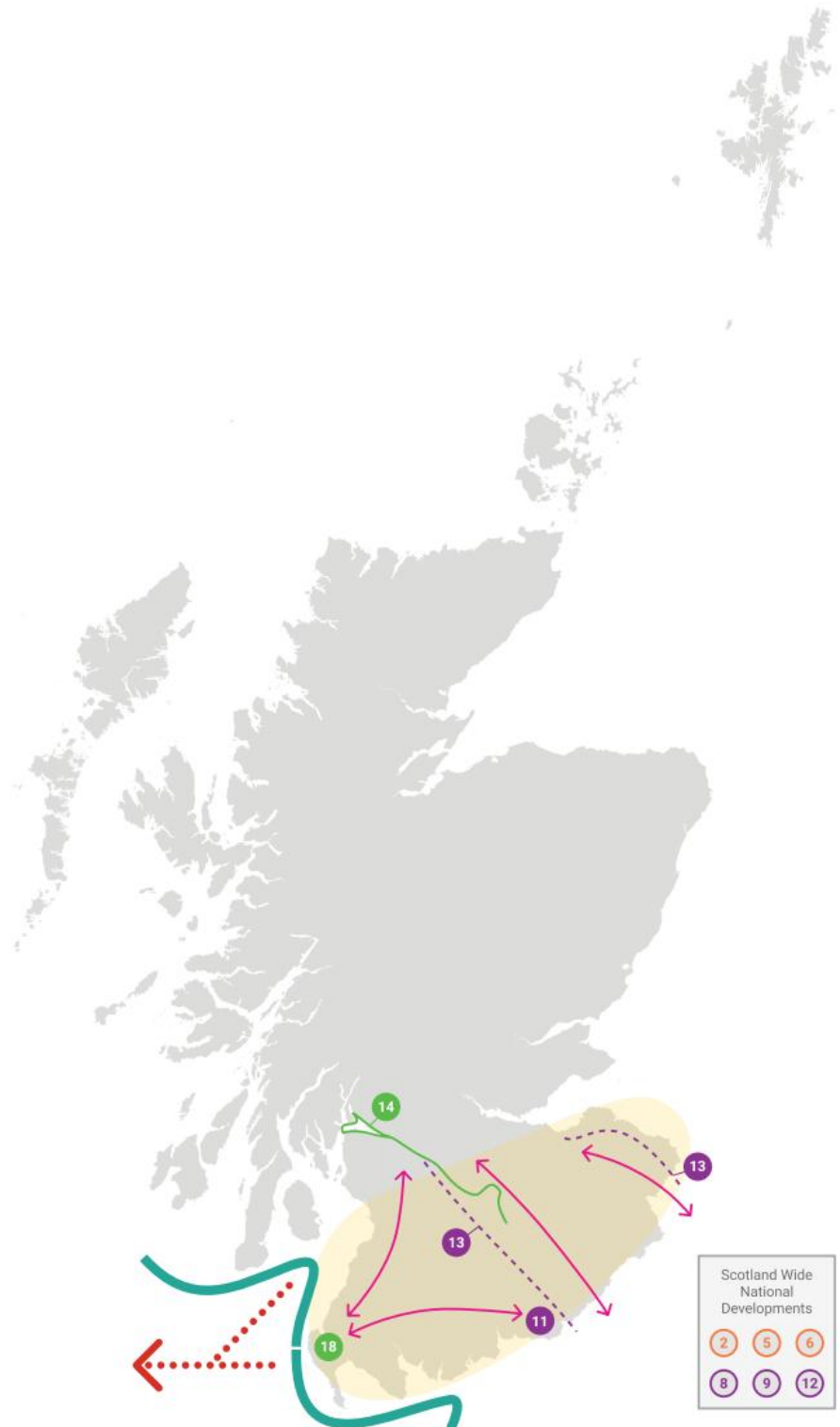
- ② National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
- ⑤ Circular Economy Material Management Facilities
- ⑥ Digital Fibre Network

## Productive places

- ⑧ Industrial Green Transition Zones
- ⑨ Pumped Hydro Storage
- ⑪ Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment
- ⑬ High Speed Rail
- ⑫ Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure

## Distinctive places

- ⑭ Clyde Mission
- ⑱ Stranraer Gateway



## Actions

### 22. Create a low-carbon network of towns

Settlements across this area provide services to the surrounding rural communities. The towns are well placed to be models of sustainable living with many undergoing regeneration including Stranraer, Jedburgh, Galashiels, Hawick and Eyemouth. Quality of life for people living in the area will depend on this network in the future and it should form the basis of a tailored response to the 20 minute neighbourhood concept. Town centres can be strengthened as they recover from the pandemic. New measures to build resilience to climate change will be required including flood risk management in key settlements.

The area is already investing in regenerating and future-proofing its towns and wider communities. The Stranraer Gateway Project is an opportunity to consolidate and bring new impetus to regenerate this strategically located settlement. Plans include expansion of the marina, supported by the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal, and low carbon heating can be incorporated as part of the transformation of the wider town. Nearby Cairnryan is a crucial gateway to Scotland, with a need to make best use of existing connections.

The future growth of the area aims to consolidate existing settlements, capitalise on the strong sense of place of its towns and ensure accessibility by locating new development close to the Borders Rail Line. The Borderlands Place Programme, future Regional Land Use Partnerships and other strategic initiatives can support an integrated approach to protecting and restoring the area's natural assets, enhancing the built environment and achieving a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy across the area.

### 23. Support sustainable development.

The future sustainability of the area will depend on the creation of high-quality and green jobs for local people. The local economy will need to diversify to sustain a wider range of businesses and jobs. An emphasis on community wealth building will help to reduce dependence on public sector employment and a relatively

low-wage economy associated with rural and primary sectors. The current approach to investment focuses on strategic growth corridors linking economic hubs with transport routes. Whilst the strategic road network is an asset and contributes to the area's connections north and south, a long term strategy will require innovation and fresh thinking to ensure that future growth reflects our commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing inequality.

Employment opportunities can support population growth, help to retain more young people and transition the area away from its current dependence on low wage sectors. New ways of working including remote working could attract more people to live here, supporting the economy and sustaining local services and facilities. This will also benefit from continued support for local skills development and centres of further and higher education including the Galashiels campus of Heriot Watt University and Glasgow University at the Crichton Campus, Dumfries.

Significant investment sites include the former nuclear power station at Chapelcross which benefits from existing grid connections and is an opportunity to repurpose the land by establishing a green energy park which contributes to national ambitions and innovation. Low carbon accessibility will be a key challenge, as the site is remote from Annan and not served by public transport. Providing access to wider markets, the port at Cairnryan could create further strategic growth opportunities. The expansion of Tweedbank and an inclusive approach to economic development in the Central Borders and Tweeddale are also strategic opportunities.

The area has aspirations to become a prime outdoor recreation and green tourism destination. Key projects include the South West Coastal Path, and projects supported by the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal; the Mountain Biking Innovation Centre at Innerleithen, updating the cycling experience and facilities at some of the 7stanes sites and Destination Tweed which will deliver a multi-user path and cycle route from Moffat to Eyemouth. More could be made of the area's border location and attractions to ensure visitors make better use of local services and support the economy and communities.

## 24. Innovate to sustain and enhance natural capital

This area's forests and woodland are a nationally significant asset and its extensive peatland will need to support carbon storage and sequestration. The Borderlands Natural Capital Programme will develop trials and sector strategies to restore biodiversity, build resilience and make the most of the area's natural assets to support climate change mitigation and adaptation. This will build on the successes of a range of nature restoration projects in the area, such as the Carrifran Wildwoods project.

The South of Scotland Regional Land Use Pilot is providing significant opportunity to work with landowners, landed interests and others to look at the multi-benefits from land use and to maximise natural capital opportunities.

The South of Scotland is also an important centre for renewable energy generation. Proposals for consolidating and extending existing wind farms and associated grid improvements and supply chain opportunities will require a carefully planned approach. The Solway Firth has significant potential for renewable energy generation in the future, but development will require careful planning given the sensitivity of the environment and its international importance for nature conservation. Decarbonisation of existing homes will be required, as well as a strategic approach to rolling out electric vehicle charging.

## 25. Strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity

The west of the area has a close relationship, and strategic connection to, Northern Ireland and Ireland via Cairnryan, as well as across

the English border to Carlisle and onwards to European markets. The connection to Northern Ireland and Ireland is already a focus for freight movements as a result of EU Exit.

In the east, the Scottish Borders has a role to play as part of the Edinburgh City Region, with the Borders Railway opening up new sites for sustainable development towards the north, and the south sustaining rural industries and connections to Northumberland.

The area's low-carbon future will depend on supporting modal shift and reducing car use, given current dependence on the car and need to improve access to services, education and employment. Low emissions vehicles will only go some of the way towards addressing future challenges. Further work is required to build the case for improvements to public transport routes. Public transport, including the bus network, will play an important role in decarbonisation and developing innovative solutions and linkages to the rail system. Active travel should be supported with wheeling, walking and cycling within and between towns and other communities linked to strategic routes for residents and visitors. This is important not only for local sustainability but also as a strategic attraction to take advantage of major outdoor recreation opportunities.

There is also a need to secure better digital connectivity to unlock the potential of rural living and home or hub working. The Borderlands Digital Infrastructure Programme will play a key role in supporting connectivity and responding to future technology and innovation.

**Q16: Do you agree with this summary of challenges and opportunities for this action area?**

**Q17: What are your views on these strategic actions for this action area?**

**Q18: What are your overall views on this proposed national spatial strategy?**

# Part 2 – National Developments

## **National developments are significant developments of national importance that will help to deliver our spatial strategy.**

Eighteen national developments are proposed to support the delivery of our spatial strategy. These national developments range from single large scale projects or collections and networks of several smaller scale proposals. They are also intended to act as exemplars of the place principle and placemaking approaches.

In taking forward national developments we expect delivery partners to:

- design and progress their developments in a way which supports community wealth building;
- manage known and predicted climate risks arising from the development and its location;
- improve biodiversity and restore habitats as far as possible;
- consider how the development interacts with the provision of heat for the surrounding area, potentially in connection with a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and emerging plans for the heat sector in the longer term;
- ensure alignment with Scotland's National Marine Plan, as well as any relevant sectoral and regional marine plans; and
- ensure that associated transport interventions to facilitate access to or from the locations are in line with sustainable transport and sustainable investment hierarchies. Strategic

transport interventions for Government will be identified in the second Strategic Transport Projects Review and Islands Connectivity Plan, and some recommendations may require working with partners for their delivery.

Where more than one national development applies to a development proposal, this simply serves to confirm that national development handling procedures should be applied.

This designation means that the principle of the development does not need to be agreed in later consenting processes, providing more certainty for communities, business and investors. Appropriate consents and associated impact assessments will still be undertaken in line with statutory obligations. Further information about national developments can be found at [www.transformingplanning.scot](https://www.transformingplanning.scot).

An assessment of the likely impact of each proposed national development's lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets<sup>2</sup> (with the meaning given in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009) has been included. This is a strategic level assessment and it follows that there is considerable uncertainty as to the detailed scale and location of development that may occur and around the implementation of new technologies. The assessment is based on the detail provided at the time of the assessment, and the conclusion may alter depending on the nature and detail of the projects taken forward.

<sup>2</sup> Research project: Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions of NPF4 Proposed National Developments Assessment Findings (LUC 2021) available online at <https://www.transformingplanning.scot/national-planning-framework/>

# National Developments

## Liveable places

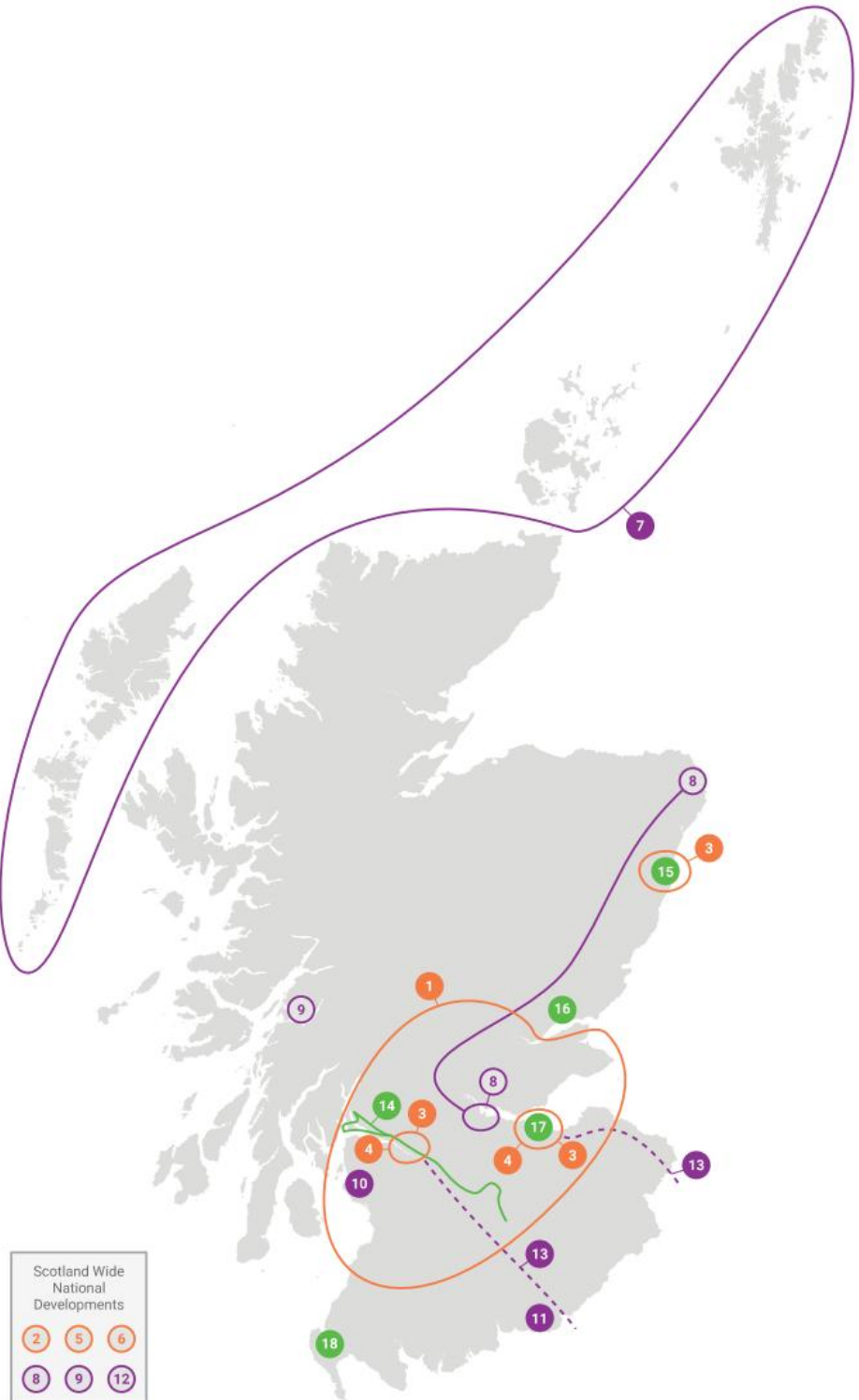
- 1 Central Scotland Green Network
- 2 National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network
- 3 Urban Mass / Rapid Transit Networks  
Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow
- 4 Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions  
Edinburgh and Glasgow
- 5 Circular Economy Material Management Facilities
- 6 Digital Fibre Network

## Productive places

- 7 Islands Hub for Net Zero
- 8 Industrial Green Transition Zones
- 9 Pumped Hydro Storage
- 10 Hunterston Strategic Asset
- 11 Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment
- 12 Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure
- 13 High Speed Rail

## Distinctive places

- 14 Clyde Mission
- 15 Aberdeen Harbour
- 16 Dundee Waterfront
- 17 Edinburgh Waterfront
- 18 Stranraer Gateway





# National developments to deliver sustainable, liveable places

## 1. Central Scotland Green Network

This national development is one of Europe's largest and most ambitious green infrastructure projects. It will play a key role in tackling the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss including by building and strengthening nature networks. A greener approach to development will improve placemaking, can contribute to the roll-out of 20 minute neighbourhoods and will benefit biodiversity connectivity. This has particular relevance in the more urban parts of Scotland where there is pressure for development as well as significant areas requiring regeneration to address past decline and disadvantage. Regeneration, repurposing and reuse of vacant and derelict land should be a priority.

Priorities include enhancement to provide multifunctional green infrastructure that provides greatest environmental, lifelong physical and mental health, social wellbeing and economic benefits. It focuses on those areas where greening and development can be mutually supportive, helping to improve equity of access to quality green space, and supporting communities where improving wellbeing and resilience is most needed, including to help people adapt to future climate risks.

Nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation and mitigation may include woodland expansion and peatland restoration as a priority. The connectivity of biodiversity rich areas may be enhanced through nature networks, including corridors and stepping stones to provide enhanced natural capital and improved ecosystem services.

### Location

Central Scotland local authorities within a boundary identified by the Green Action Trust.

### Need

This national development is needed to improve quality of place and create new opportunities for investment. This will support delivery of our spatial strategy which highlights the importance of accelerating urban greening in this most densely populated part of Scotland.

### Designation and classes of development

A development within the Central Scotland Green Network area and within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Land for new and/or extensions to areas for multi-functional green infrastructure including for: emissions sequestration; adaptation to climate change; biodiversity enhancement;
- b) Reuse of vacant and derelict land and buildings for greening and nature-based solutions;
- c) New and/or upgraded sustainable surface water management and drainage systems and the creation of blue space;
- d) Use of land for allotments or community food growing; and
- e) Routes for active travel and or recreation.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.



## 2. National Walking, Cycling and Wheeling Network

This national development facilitates the shift from vehicles to walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday journeys contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport and is highly beneficial for health and wellbeing.

The upgrading and provision of additional active travel infrastructure will be fundamental to the development of a sustainable travel network providing access to settlements, key services and amenities, employment and multi-modal hubs. Infrastructure investment should be prioritised for locations where it will achieve our National Transport Strategy 2 priorities and outcomes, to reduce inequalities, take climate action, help deliver a wellbeing economy and to improve health and wellbeing. This will help to deliver great places to live and work.

### Location

All Scotland.

### Need

Reducing the need to travel unsustainably is the highest priority in the sustainable transport investment hierarchy. This national development will significantly support modal shift and deliver multiple outcomes including our commitment to a 20% reduction in car kilometres, associated emissions reduction, health and air quality improvement. This will support the delivery of our spatial strategy by creating a more sustainable distribution of access across Scotland as a whole.

### Designation and classes of development

A development within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#) is designated a national development:

- a) New/and or upgraded routes suitable for a range of users for walking, cycling and wheeling that help create a national network that facilitates short and longer distance journeys and linkages to multi-modal hubs.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

### 3. Urban Mass/Rapid Transit Networks

This national development supports low-carbon mass/rapid transit projects for Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

To reduce transport emissions at scale, we will require low-carbon transport solutions for these three major cities that can support transformational reduction in private car use.

Phase 1 of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) recommended the development of the Glasgow 'Metro' and Edinburgh Mass Transit in these cities and their associated regions. In Aberdeen, the North East Bus Alliance has been awarded funding through Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership to develop the Aberdeen Rapid Transit system identified in the Regional Transport Strategy and being considered in the STPR2.

This will support placemaking and deliver improved transport equity across the most densely populated parts of Scotland, improving access to employment and supporting sustainable investment in the longer term.

The type of interventions will be determined through the ongoing development of business cases and studies but could include the provision of new systems or extensions to existing sustainable and public transport networks.



#### Location

Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh city regions.

#### Need

This national development will help reduce transport related emissions overall, improve air quality, reduce the demand for private vehicle use, support the roll out of 20 minute neighbourhoods and improve transport equity.

#### Designation and classes of development

A development within one or more of the Classes of Development below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#) is designated a national development. This relates to development supported by the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 consisting of new or upgraded:

- a) Track or road infrastructure;
- b) Fuelling or power infrastructure;
- c) Passenger facilities; and
- d) Depots servicing the networks.

#### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 4. Urban Sustainable, Blue and Green Drainage Solutions

This national development aims to build on the benefits of the Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership, to continue investment and extend the approach to the Edinburgh city region.

Our biggest cities and their regions will require improved infrastructure to ensure they are more resilient to climate change. A strategic, catchment scale approach to adaptation through surface water and drainage infrastructure investment will reduce impacts and risks for our urban population and is an example of an infrastructure-first approach. Nature-based solutions which may include blue and green infrastructure should be prioritised, with use of built engineered structures minimised and optimised as far as possible. Delivery of multiple climate, wellbeing and economic benefits should form the basis of the approach. Whilst this national development focuses on Edinburgh and Glasgow other cities and towns may benefit from similar approaches.



### Location

City and wider catchment areas of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

### Need

A large proportion of our population lives in our largest cities. The management of surface water drainage at scale across these city regions will help us to adapt to extreme weather events that will become more frequent as a result of climate change. Whilst focused on drainage, a nature-based approach to surface water management has the potential to deliver multiple health, wellbeing, economic and climate adaptation and emissions reduction benefits. It will also free up sewer capacity for connections to new development.

### Designation and classes of development

A development in the Glasgow and Edinburgh city regions within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#) is designated a national development:

- a) Spaces, infrastructure, works, structures, buildings, pipelines and nature-based approaches for surface water management and drainage systems.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 5. Circular Economy Materials Management Facilities

This national development supports the development of facilities required to achieve a circular economy. This sector will provide a range of business, skills and employment opportunities as part of a just transition to a net zero economy.

The range and scale of facilities required to manage secondary materials and their reprocessing back out into the economy is not yet clear. However, it is clear that sites and facilities will be needed to retain the resource value of materials so that we can maximise the use of materials in the economy and minimise the use of virgin materials in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is particularly significant for the construction and demolition industries and decommissioning industry.

Careful assessment of specific proposals will be required to ensure they provide sustainable low carbon solutions, include appropriate controls, manage any emissions and mitigate localised impacts including on neighbouring communities and the wider environment.

### Location

All Scotland.

### Need

This national development helps maximise Scotland's potential to retain the energy and emissions values within materials already in the economy.

### Designation and classes of development

A development within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#) is designated a national development:

- a) Facilities for managing secondary materials;
- b) Repurposing facilities;
- c) Reprocessing facilities; and
- d) Recycling facilities.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 6. Digital Fibre Network

This national development supports the continued roll-out of world class broadband across Scotland.

Our strategy requires enhanced digital connectivity to provide high speed broadband or equivalent mobile services, prioritising those areas with weaker networks as part of the R100 programme and Project Gigabit, including urban, island specific and rural enhancements. This is a significant utility including 4G and 5G mobile infrastructure facilitating home based working, renewable energy development, rural repopulation and access to services. The data transmission network can also support the availability and use of 'big data'. Digital capability is a feature of a number of City Region and Growth Deals.

Opportunities should be taken to deliver the infrastructure as part of other infrastructure upgrades or installation works such as energy transmission, transportation, and travel networks where appropriate.

### Location

All Scotland.

### Need

This is a fundamentally important utility, required to support development, community wellbeing, equal access to goods and services, and emissions reduction from reduced demand for travel. This will help to deliver our spatial strategy by complementing a new emphasis of living locally, and by helping to sustain and grow rural and island communities.

## Designation and classes of development

A development within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Installation of new and/or upgraded broadband cabling on land and sub-sea for fixed line and mobile networks; and
- b) Green data centres.

## Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall negligible impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

# National developments to deliver sustainable, productive places

## 7. Islands Hub for Net Zero

### Description

This national development supports proposed developments in the Western Isles, Shetland and Orkney island groups, for renewable energy generation, renewable hydrogen production, infrastructure and shipping, and associated opportunities in the supply chain for fabrication, research and development, in particular at the proposed Orkney Research and Innovation Campus. Any strategy for deployment of these technologies must enable decarbonisation at pace and cannot be used to justify unsustainable levels of fossil fuel extraction or impede Scotland's just transition to net zero.

This is aligned with low carbon energy projects within the Islands Growth Deal and encompasses other projects that can facilitate net zero aims.

The use of low and zero emission fuels will play a crucial role in decarbonising island and mainland energy use, shipping, strengthening energy security overall and creating a low carbon energy economy for the islands and the islanders. The developments will add value where they link into national and international energy, learning and research and development networks. There may also be opportunity for ports in the islands to establish themselves as near-Arctic marine transport and logistics hubs, including for transshipment operations.

### Location

Western Isles, Shetland, Orkney and surrounding waters.

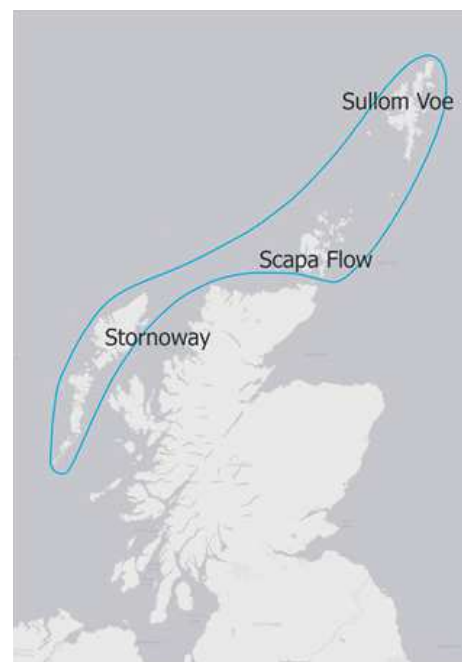
### Need

These classes of development support the potential of the three island authorities to exemplify a transition to a net zero society. This will support delivery of our spatial strategy by helping to sustain communities in rural and island areas by stimulating employment and innovation.

### Designation and classes of development

A development in the location within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Buildings, land and structures for development providing employment related to delivering the Islands Hub for net-zero;
- b) New or updated on and/or offshore infrastructure for energy generation from renewables of or exceeding 50 megawatts capacity;
- c) Electricity transmission cables and converter stations on and offshore of or exceeding 132kv;
- d) Infrastructure for the production, storage and transportation of low and zero-carbon fuels (that are not electricity or heat) including renewable hydrogen; and hydrogen production related chemicals including ammonia with appropriate carbon capture linked to transport and storage infrastructure;





- e) Improved oil storage infrastructure for Stornoway, with appropriate emissions abatement;
- f) Quay to service marine energy, energy transportation, energy decommissioning, fabrication or freight handling, including new or enhanced associated laydown or operational area at Arnish, Scapa Flow, and Kirkwall;
- g) Quay and handling facilities for ultra large container ships in Scapa Flow; and
- h) Oil terminal modifications at Scapa Flow and Shetland to maintain asset use moving towards net zero emissions.

### **Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment**

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 8. Industrial Green Transition Zones

To secure a just transition to a net zero economy, the decarbonisation of nationally important industrial sites in a way that ensures continued jobs, investment and prosperity for these areas and the communities that depend on them is essential. Industrial Green Transition Zones (IGTZ) will support the generation of significant economic opportunities while minimising carbon emissions. Technologies that will help Scotland transition to net zero will be supported at these locations, with a particular focus on low carbon and zero emissions technologies including renewables and the generation, storage and distribution of low carbon hydrogen.

The deployment of hydrogen and Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage at these locations must demonstrate decarbonisation at pace and cannot be used to justify unsustainable levels of fossil fuel extraction or impede Scotland's just transition to Net Zero. Hydrogen and CCUS are emerging industries, both government and industry in Scotland wish to accelerate and maximise the deployment of green hydrogen. For projects that utilise carbon capture and storage, we want to ensure the highest possible capture rates in the deployment of these technologies. While there are examples internationally where CCS projects have been associated with offshore Enhanced Oil Recovery, we understand there to be no plans for offshore Enhanced Oil Recovery as part of the Scottish Cluster. However, if any IGTZ is found to be incompatible with Scotland's transition to net zero, Scottish Government policy will change accordingly. Further detail will be set out in the forthcoming Energy Strategy.

The role of upstream emissions as part of the consideration of the acceptability of development proposals and the role of thermal generation will therefore be considered and this will inform the finalised version of the National Planning Framework 4.

Industrial Green Transition Zones are:

- **The Scottish Cluster** encompasses a Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS) projects network and is a key strategic vehicle for industrial decarbonisation, energy generation, and the transportation and storage of captured carbon. The designation relates to projects that form a Scottish Cluster in the first instance specifically Peterhead, St Fergus and Grangemouth, as well as further industrial transition sites that are expected to emerge in the longer term. This national development will support the generation of significant economic opportunities for low-carbon industry as well as minimising carbon emissions at scale, and will play a vital part in maintaining the security and operability of Scotland's electricity supply and network. The creation of hydrogen and deployment of negative emissions technologies, utilising CCS, at commercial scale will establish the opportunities to decarbonise industry, transport and heat, as well as other sectors, and pave the way for the transportation and storage infrastructure to support the growing hydrogen economy in Scotland.
- **Grangemouth Investment Zone** currently hosts strategic and critical infrastructure, high value employment and manufacturing of materials that are currently vital for everyday life. This role will continue in the long term but must seek to decarbonise given the significant contribution of the industrial activities to Scotland's emissions. It is a key location in the Scottish Cluster for carbon capture and storage, and hydrogen deployment. The Grangemouth Investment Zone will be a focus for transitioning the petrochemicals industry and associated activities into a leading exemplar of industrial decarbonisation, significantly helped through the coordination activities of the Scottish Government's Grangemouth Future Industry Board. Decarbonisation could include opportunities for: renewable energy innovation; bioenergy; hydrogen production with carbon capture and storage; and repurposing of existing strategic and critical infrastructure such as pipelines.

## Location

St Fergus, Peterhead, and Grangemouth.

## Need

This national development is required to meet our targets for emissions reduction. It also supports a just transition by creating new jobs in emerging technologies and significant economic opportunities for lower carbon industry. It will help to decarbonise other sectors, sites and regions, paving the way for increasing demand to be complemented by the production of further hydrogen in the future. This will also help to deliver our spatial strategy by supporting investment in the North East and the Central Belt where there has been a relatively high level of output from fossil fuel industries.

## Designation and classes of development

A development in the location within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as ‘major’ by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#) is designated a national development.

Hydrogen and CCUS are emerging industries, both government and industry in Scotland wish to attain the highest technologically possible capture rates in the deployment of these technologies. While there are examples internationally where CCS projects have been associated with offshore Enhanced Oil Recovery, we understand there to be no plans for offshore Enhanced Oil Recovery as part of the Scottish Cluster.

- a) Carbon capture with high capture rates and negative emission technologies, transportation and storage of captured carbon forming part of or helping to create an expandable national network;
- b) Pipeline for transportation and storage of captured carbon;
- c) Onshore infrastructure including compression equipment, supporting pipeline transportation and shipping transportation of captured carbon and/or hydrogen;
- d) Offshore storage of captured carbon;

- e) New and/or upgraded buildings and facilities for the utilisation of captured carbon;
- f) Infrastructure for the production of hydrogen;
- g) On or near-shore geological storage of hydrogen;
- h) Port facilities for the transport and handling of hydrogen and carbon dioxide;
- i) The application of Carbon Capture and Storage technology to existing or replacement thermal power generation;
- j) Production, storage and transportation with appropriate emissions abatement of: bioenergy; hydrogen production related chemicals including ammonia;
- k) New and/or upgraded buildings for industrial, manufacturing, business, and educational or research uses related to the industrial transition;
- l) Town centre regeneration at Grangemouth;
- m) Grangemouth flood protection scheme;
- n) New and/or upgraded green and blue infrastructure;
- o) New and/or upgraded utilities and/or local energy network; and
- p) New and or upgraded facilities at the port for inter-modal freight handling and passenger facilities at Grangemouth.

## Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 9. Pumped Hydro Storage

This national development will play a significant role in balancing and optimising electricity generation and maintaining the operability of the electricity system as part of our transition to net zero. This is necessary as we continue to move towards a decarbonised system with much more renewable generation, the output from which is defined by weather conditions.

This national development supports additional capacity at existing sites as well as new sites. Cruachan in Argyll is a nationally important example of a pumped storage facility with significant potential for enhanced capacity that could create significant jobs in a rural location.

### Location

All Scotland, with an initial focus on Cruachan.

### Need

This national development supports pumped hydro storage capacity within the electricity network through significant new or expanded sites. This supports the transition to a net zero economy through the ability of pumped hydro storage schemes to optimise electricity generated from renewables by storing and releasing it when it is required.

### Designation and classes of development

A development within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by '[The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009](#)', is designated a national development:

- a) New and/or expanded and/or upgraded water holding reservoir and dam;
- b) New and/or upgraded electricity generating plant structures or buildings;
- c) New and/or upgraded pump plant structures or buildings;
- d) New and/or expanded and/or upgraded water inlet and outlet pipework;



- e) New and/or upgraded substations and/or transformers directly required for the pumped hydro scheme; and
- f) New and/or replacement transmission cables directly linked to the pumped hydro scheme.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 10. Hunterston Strategic Asset

This national development supports the repurposing of Hunterston port as well as the adjacent former nuclear power station site. Hunterston has long been recognised as a strategic location for the port and energy sectors given its deepwater access and existing infrastructure.

The location and infrastructure offers potential for electricity generation from renewables, and a variety of commercial uses including port, research and development, aquaculture, the circular economy.

New development will need to work with the capacity of the transport network, include active travel links and be compatible with a location adjacent to sites with nuclear power uses. Designated biodiversity sites will require protection and enhancement where possible, and sustainable flood risk management solutions will be required. Aligned with the Ayrshire Growth Deal, investment in this location will support a wellbeing economy by opening up opportunities for employment and training for local people. A community wealth building approach is expected to form a part of future development proposals to ensure the benefits are retained locally as far as possible.

### Location

Hunterston Port and Hunterston A power station site.

### Need

These classes of development support the redevelopment and reuse of existing strategic assets and land contributing to a net zero economy. It also supports delivery of our spatial strategy by stimulating investment in the west of Scotland, potentially contributing to the wider aim of tackling inequalities.

### Designation and classes of development

A development in the location within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Infrastructure to support a multi-modal deep water harbour;
- b) Land and buildings for bulk handling, storage, processing and distribution.
- c) Facilities for marine energy generation technology fabrication and decommissioning;



- d) Facilities for marine energy servicing;
- e) Land and buildings for industrial, commercial, research and development, and training uses;
- f) Infrastructure for the capture, transportation and long term storage of greenhouse gas emissions, where transportation may be by pipe or vehicular means;
- g) Infrastructure for the production, storage and transportation of low carbon and renewable hydrogen; and hydrogen production related chemicals including ammonia; and
- h) Infrastructure for the generation and storage of electricity from renewables of or exceeding 50 megawatts.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.



## 11. Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment

This national development supports the redevelopment of Chapelcross, a former nuclear power station site of significant scale regionally and nationally, and our strategy supports the reuse of the site to help deliver on net zero and provide opportunities for communities in the South of Scotland.

Final uses for the site remain to be agreed, but the site has locational advantage to act as an energy hub with opportunities including: business development with a particular focus on energy and energy supply chain; energy generation from solar; electricity storage; generation of heat; production and storage of low carbon and renewable hydrogen. This could link to ambitions for low-carbon heat and vehicle fuel at Stranraer.

The proposal aims to create new job opportunities, including high value employment. A community wealth building approach will ensure that benefits are retained locally as far as possible, and this in turn will help to sustain and grow the local population. We also support opportunities to reduce the fuel costs for local communities to tackle fuel poverty. Sustainable access to the site for workers and commercial vehicles will be required.

### Location

Site of the former Chapelcross power station.

### Need

This national development supports the reuse of a significant area of brownfield land in a rural area with economically fragile communities. It will also support the just transition to net zero.

### Designation and classes of development

A development within the former Chapelcross power station site within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Commercial, industrial, manufacturing, and office related development occurring on the Chapelcross development site.



- b) Generation of electricity from renewables of exceeding 50 megawatts capacity;
- c) Production of low carbon and renewable hydrogen and related chemicals (including ammonia), its transmission, transportation and storage, with carbon capture as necessary; and
- d) Active and sustainable travel connection to the site.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.



## 12. Strategic Renewable Electricity Generation and Transmission Infrastructure

This national development supports renewable electricity generation, repowering, and expansion of the electricity grid.

A large increase in electricity generation from renewable sources will be essential for Scotland to meet its net zero emissions targets. Certain types of renewable electricity generation will also be required, alongside developments and increases in storage technology and capacity, to provide the vital services, including flexible response, that a zero carbon network will require. Generation is for consumption domestically as well as for export to the UK and beyond, with new capacity helping to decarbonise heat, transport and industrial energy demand. This has the potential to support jobs and business investment, with wider economic benefits.

The electricity transmission grid will need substantial reinforcement including the addition of new infrastructure to connect and transmit the output from new on and offshore capacity to consumers in Scotland, the rest of the UK and beyond. Delivery of this national development will be informed by market, policy and regulatory developments and decisions.

### Location

All Scotland.

### Need

Additional electricity generation from renewables and electricity transmission capacity of scale is fundamental to achieving a net zero economy and supports improved network resilience in rural and island areas. Island transmission connections in particular can facilitate capturing the significant renewable energy potential in those areas as well as delivering significant social and economic benefits.

## Designation and classes of development

A development within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Electricity generation, including electricity storage, from renewables of or exceeding 50 megawatts capacity;
- b) New and/or replacement high voltage electricity lines and interconnectors of 132kv or more; and
- c) New and/or upgraded infrastructure directly supporting high voltage electricity lines and interconnectors including converter stations, switching stations and substations.

## Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

### 13. High Speed Rail

This national development supports the implementation of increased infrastructure to improve rail capacity and connectivity on the main cross-border routes, the east and west coast mainlines.

Rail connectivity that can effectively compete with air and road based transport between the major towns and cities in Scotland, England and onward to Europe is an essential part of reducing transport emissions, making best use of the rail network and providing greater connectivity opportunities. There can be significant emissions savings of approximately 75% to be made when freight is transported by rail instead of road.

Enhancement would be in addition to and in conjunction with High Speed 2 (HS2) and other enhancements identified by the UK Government.

Scottish Ministers have an agreement with the UK Government to develop infrastructure enhancements 'North of HS2' and Scottish Ministers continue to press the UK Government on the imperative that all nations and regions of Britain benefit from the prosperity that HS2 will deliver both in its construction and its implementation. The Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 is appraising and will provide the strategic case for investment in the rail network in Scotland, over and above the commitments within HS2.

#### Location

Central and southern Scotland to the Border with England.

#### Need

This national development aims to ensure a low emissions air-competitive journey time to cities in the UK as well as connectivity with European cities and benefits to freight. This will support Scotland's ability to attract and compete for investment.

### Designation and classes of development

A development within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that is of a scale or type that would otherwise have been classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#), is designated a national development:

- a) New and/or upgraded railway track and electrification solution (overhead cabling and pylons or on track);
- b) New and/or upgraded multi-modal railway stations to service high-speed lines; and
- c) Depot facilities for high speed trains and/or related to the construction and onward maintenance of the UK high-speed rail infrastructure.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

# National developments to deliver sustainable, distinctive places

## 14. Clyde Mission

This national development is a national, place-based Mission to make the Clyde an engine of economic success for Glasgow, the city region and Scotland.

The Clyde Mission is focused on the River Clyde and the riverside from South Lanarkshire in the east to Inverclyde and Argyll and Bute in the west and focusing on an area up to around 500 metres from the river edge. This footprint includes the parts of the Clyde Gateway, River Clyde Waterfront, North Clyde River Bank and River Clyde Corridor frameworks.



Across this area significant land assets are under-utilised, and longstanding inequality, in relation to poor environment and health outcomes require to be tackled as a national priority. An ambitious redevelopment programme is being taken forward under [Five Missions](#). It is a collective, cross-sector effort and partnership working will help bring forward assets and sites that are ready for redevelopment to sustain a range of uses. This will repurpose and reinvigorate vacant and derelict land and supporting local living as well as adapting the area to the impacts of climate change, where nature-based solutions would be particularly supported.

### Location

The river and land immediately next to it (up to around 500 metres from the river) along its length.

### Need

These classes of development revitalise a major waterfront asset which is currently under-utilised. This will support the delivery of our spatial strategy by attracting investment and reuse of vacant and derelict land in west central Scotland where there is a particular need to improve quality of place, generate employment and support disadvantaged communities. It will also support adaptation to climate risks.

### Designation and classes of development

A development within the Clyde Mission area and within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Mixed use, including residential, redevelopment of vacant and derelict land;

- b) New, reused and/or upgraded buildings and facilities for residential, commercial, business and industrial uses;
- c) Upgrade of existing port and harbour assets for servicing marine functions including freight and cruise uses and associated landside commercial and/or industrial land for supporting services;
- d) New and/or upgraded active and sustainable travel and recreation routes and infrastructure; and
- e) New and/or upgraded infrastructure for climate adaptation, including nature-based, green and blue solutions.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net negative impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 15. Aberdeen Harbour

This national development supports the continued and repurposing of Aberdeen Harbour. The harbour is a strategically important asset supporting the economy of the north east of Scotland.

The south harbour can act as a cluster of port accessible offshore renewable energy research, manufacturing and support services. The facilities are also important for international connections.

At the south harbour the focus should be on regenerating existing industrial land and reorganising land use around the harbour in line with the spatial strategy of the local development plan. By focusing future port activity here, parts of the existing harbour in the city centre will become available for mixed use development, opening up development land to help reinvigorate in Aberdeen city centre.

This can help provide significant economic opportunities, in line with the objectives of the Aberdeen City Region Deal. Environmental benefits, for example to enhance access and improve the quality of green space and active travel options should be designed in to help offset any potential impacts on the amenity of local communities with relevant projects addressing environmental sensitivities through careful planning, assessment and implementation. As part of the consenting process, consideration through all relevant statutory assessment regimes such as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) will be required, where applicable at project level.

The extent to which this should include additional business and industrial development outwith the existing north and south harbours is a matter to be determined in the relevant local development plan, and is outwith the scope of this national development.

### Location

Aberdeen Harbour, Aberdeen South Harbour.

### Need

This national development supports the optimisation of Aberdeen Harbour to support net zero and stimulate economic investment. It is also a significant opportunity to support better placemaking including city centre transformation, and regeneration of existing land by optimising the use of new and existing assets. This will deliver our spatial strategy by helping the north east of Scotland to achieve a just transition from a high-carbon economy whilst improving quality of place.



### Designation and classes of development

A development in the location within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#) is designated a national development:

- Mixed use development reusing land at the existing (north) Aberdeen Harbour;
- Upgraded port facilities at Aberdeen Harbour and completion of South Harbour;
- New and/or upgraded green infrastructure;

- d) Buildings and facilities for commercial, manufacturing and industrial uses;
- e) Infrastructure for renewable hydrogen production and hydrogen production related chemicals including ammonia; and
- f) Transport infrastructure, including for sustainable and active travel, for the South Harbour as supported by the Aberdeen City Region Deal.

### **Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment**

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.



## 16. Dundee Waterfront

This national development supports the redevelopment of the Dundee Waterfront zones including: the Central Waterfront, Seabraes, City Quay, Dundee Port, Riverside Business Area and Nature Park, and the Michelin Scotland Innovation Parc.

Continued delivery of the waterfront transformation is crucial to securing the role of the city as a location for investment in the net zero economy. Supporting population growth alongside economic opportunities, and skills and career development, is important in continuing to demonstrate the sustainability of urban living in Scotland and a just transition to the net zero economy.

Further projects associated with this include: the Michelin Scotland Innovation Parc which will become an innovation hub for net zero emission mobility; the Eden Project; and an expansion to Dundee Port. This national development includes reusing land on and around the Dundee Waterfront to support the lifelong health and wellbeing of communities, deliver innovation and attract investment. As the development progresses it will be important to support sustainable and active transport options and to build in adaptation to future climate risks.

### Location

Dundee Waterfront zones: Central Waterfront, Seabraes, City Quay, Dundee Port, Riverside Business Area and Riverside Park; Michelin Scotland Innovation Parc.

### Need

This national development supports the continued revitalisation of Dundee waterfront, expanded to include Michelin Scotland Innovation Parc in support of the Tay Cities Regional Economic Strategy and its continued use for economic purposes. Waterfront locations may be particularly vulnerable to climate change and so development requires to be carefully designed to manage likely risks.

### Designation and classes of development

A development in the location within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#) is designated a national development:

a) New and/or upgraded buildings for mixed use and/or residential development;

- b) New and/or upgraded buildings for commercial, industrial, business, storage, distribution, research, educational, tourism use;
- c) New and/or upgraded utilities;
- d) New and/or upgraded active and sustainable travel routes;
- e) Land reclamation for port expansion;
- f) New and/or upgraded port facilities for vessel berthing and related landside activities including for lay-down, freight handling and marine sector services; and
- g) New and/or upgraded green and blue infrastructure.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.



## 17. Edinburgh Waterfront

This national development supports the regeneration of strategic sites along the Forth Waterfront in Edinburgh.

The waterfront is a strategic asset that contributes to the city's character and sense of place and includes significant opportunities for a wide range of future developments.

Development will include high quality mixed-use proposals that optimise the use of the strategic asset for residential, community, commercial and industrial purposes, including support for off-shore energy relating to port uses. Further cruise activity should take into account the need to manage impacts on transport infrastructure.

This will help maintain and grow Edinburgh's position as a capital city and commercial centre with a high quality and accessible living environment. Development locations and design will need to address future resilience to the risks from climate change, impact on health inequalities, and the potential to incorporate green and blue infrastructure.

### Location

Edinburgh, initial focus on Leith to Granton.

### Need

Waterfronts in our largest urban areas are frequently under-utilised and contain significant areas of vacant and derelict land as well as existing infrastructure assets. Their location may be particularly vulnerable to climate change and likely risks will require careful management. This will support delivery of our spatial strategy, which recognises the importance of our urban coastline in supporting our sense of place, economy and wellbeing.

### Designation and classes of development

A development in the location within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by [‘The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009’](#), is designated a national development:

- a) New and/or upgraded buildings for mixed use and/or residential development;
- b) New and/or upgraded buildings for commercial, industrial, business use;
- c) New and/or upgraded utilities;



- d) New and/or upgraded green and blue infrastructure;
- e) New and/or upgraded active and sustainable travel routes;
- f) New and/or upgraded port facilities for vessel berthing and related landside activities including for lay-down, and marine sector services.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

## 18. Stranraer Gateway

This national development supports the regeneration of Stranraer.

Stranraer is a gateway town. It is located close to Cairnryan, a key port connecting Scotland to Northern Ireland, Ireland and beyond to wider markets.

High quality place-based regeneration will help address socio-economic inequalities in Stranraer and to support the wider population of south west Scotland by acting as a hub and providing a platform for future investment. This will be supported by any strategic transport interventions that emerge from the second Strategic Transport Projects Review which embeds the National Transport Strategy's sustainable travel and investment hierarchies.

### Location

Stranraer and associated transport routes.



### Need

Loch Ryan and Stranraer act as a gateway to Scotland. Reusing the assets in this location will support the wellbeing, economy and community in line with the regional growth deal. It will help to deliver our spatial strategy by driving forward regeneration of a key hub.

### Designation and classes of development

A development in the location within one or more of the Classes of Development described below and that would otherwise have been of a scale or type that is classified as 'major' by ['The Town and Country Planning \(Hierarchy of Developments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2009'](#), is designated a national development:

- a) Development contributing to Stranraer Waterfront regeneration;
- b) Marina expansion;
- c) Redevelopment of Stranraer harbour east pier;
- d) Sustainable road, rail and freight infrastructure for access to Stranraer and/or Cairnryan;
- e) New and/or upgraded infrastructure for transportation and use of low carbon fuels; and
- f) Reuse of vacant and derelict land and buildings, including regeneration of Blackparks industrial estate.

### Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment

Depending on the nature of the projects taken forward and considering both direct and indirect effects, the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions assessment concludes this development will likely have an overall net positive impact on achieving national greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets.

**Q19: Do you think that any of the classes of development described in the Statements of Need should be changed or additional classes added in order to deliver the national development described?**

**Q20: Is the level of information in the Statements of Need enough for communities, applicants and planning authorities to clearly decide when a proposal should be handled as a national development?**

**Q21: Do you think there are other developments, not already considered in supporting documents, that should be considered for national development status?**

# Part 3 – National Planning Policy



## Sustainable Places (Universal Policies)

To achieve a net zero, nature-positive Scotland, we must rebalance our planning system so that climate change and nature recovery are the primary guiding principles for all our plans and all our decisions. That includes emissions reduction and the adaptations we need to make in order to be resilient to the risks created by a warmer climate. It also means ensuring that our approach to planning is designed to help Scotland's biodiversity and better connect our biodiversity rich areas, and to invest in nature-based solutions, benefiting people and nature.

A place based approach is at the heart of creating a more sustainable and fair Scotland. The planning system should apply the [Place Principle](#) which commits us to take a collaborative place-based approach to future development. This must involve working with stakeholders and local communities to create liveable, healthier and sustainable places that improve lives, builds economic prosperity and contribute to net zero and environmental ambitions.

The following Universal Policies should apply to all planning decisions.

**We want our places to help us tackle the climate and nature crises and ensure Scotland adapts to thrive within the planet's sustainable limits.**

**Q22: Do you agree that addressing climate change and nature recovery should be the primary guiding principles for all our plans and planning decisions?**

### **Policy 1: Plan-led approach to sustainable development**

**All local development plans should manage the use and development of land in the long term public interest.** This means that new local development plans should seek to achieve Scotland's national outcomes (within the meaning of Part 1 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Policy 1: Plan-led approach to sustainable development**

**Q23: Do you agree with this policy approach?**



## Policy 2: Climate emergency

- a) When considering all development proposals **significant weight should be given to the Global Climate Emergency**.
- b) All development should be **designed to minimise emissions** over its lifecycle in line with the decarbonisation pathways set out nationally.
- c) **Development proposals that will generate significant emissions**, on their own or when combined with other proposals or when considered in combination with other proposals, allocations or consented development, should not be supported unless the applicant provides evidence that this level of emissions is the minimum that can be achieved for the development to be viable and it is also demonstrated that the proposed development is in the long-term public interest.

Development proposals for national, major or EIA development should be accompanied by a whole-life assessment of greenhouse gas emissions from the development. In decision making the scale of the contribution of development proposals to emissions in relation to **emissions reduction targets** should be taken into account. Where significant emissions are likely (even as minimised) in relation to national decarbonisation pathways but the planning authority is minded to grant consent, emissions off-setting measures may be considered including nature-based solutions. Such measures should take place on-site as an integral part of the overall development, or off-site where on-site provision is not possible or insufficient.

- d) Development proposals for **new, or alterations to, buildings, infrastructure and spaces** should be designed to be **adaptable to the future impacts of climate change**. Proposals to sensitively incorporate climate adaptation and mitigation measures for existing buildings, infrastructure and spaces, should generally be supported.

## Policy 2: Climate emergency

**Q24: Do you agree that this policy will ensure the planning system takes account of the need to address the climate emergency?**

## Policy 3: Nature crisis

- a) Development plans should **facilitate biodiversity enhancement**, nature recovery and nature restoration across the development plan area, including by: facilitating the creation of nature networks and strengthening connections between them to support improved ecological connectivity; through the creation of new or restoration of degraded habitats; and, through measures to increase populations of priority species. Nature networks, which connect biodiversity rich areas, may include international, national and locally protected sites, and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation measures (OECMs).
- b) Development proposals should **contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity**, including restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them.
- c) Any potential adverse **impacts of development proposals on biodiversity, nature networks and the natural environment should be minimised** through careful planning and design. Design should take into account the need to reverse biodiversity loss, safeguard the services that the natural environment provides and build the resilience of nature by enhancing nature networks and maximising the potential for restoration.
- d) Development proposals for national, major and of EIA development or development for which an Appropriate Assessment is required should only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will **conserve and enhance biodiversity**, including nature networks within and adjacent to the site, so that they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention, including

through future management. Applications for farmed fish or shellfish development are excluded from this requirement. To inform this, proposals should:

- be based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of any irreplaceable habitats;
  - wherever feasible, integrate and make best use of nature-based solutions, demonstrating how this has been achieved;
  - be supported by an assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements;
  - provide significant biodiversity enhancements, in addition to any proposed mitigation. Biodiversity enhancements should include supporting nature networks, linking to and strengthening habitat connectivity within and beyond the development. Biodiversity enhancements should be secured within a reasonable timescale and with reasonable certainty. They should include management arrangements for their long term retention and monitoring, wherever appropriate.
- e) Proposals for local development should only be supported if they include appropriate measures to **enhance biodiversity**, in proportion to the nature and scale of development. Applications for individual householder development, farmed fish or shellfish development, or which fall within scope of the policy above, are excluded from this requirement. Development proposals which integrate nature-based solutions and deliver positive effects for biodiversity should be supported.

### Policy 3: Nature crisis

**Q25: Do you agree that this policy will ensure that the planning system takes account of the need to address the nature crisis?**

### Policy 4: Human rights and equality

- a) Planning should **respect, protect and fulfil human rights, seek to eliminate discrimination and promote equality**.
- b) Planning authorities, applicants, key agencies and communities have a responsibility to **consult and engage others collaboratively, meaningfully and proportionately**. Throughout the planning system, opportunities are available for everyone to engage in local development planning and the development decisions which affect them. Such engagement, undertaken in line with statutory requirements, should be early, collaborative, meaningful and proportionate. Support or concern expressed on matters material to planning should be given careful consideration in developing and in considering development proposals.

### Policy 4: Human rights and equality

**Q26: Do you agree that this policy effectively addresses the need for planning to respect, protect and fulfil human rights, seek to eliminate discrimination and promote equality?**

## Policy 5: Community wealth building

- a) Development plans should address **community wealth building** priorities by reflecting a people-centred approach to local economic development. Spatial strategies should support community wealth building; address economic disadvantage and inequality; and provide added social value.
- b) Proposals for development within the categories of national developments and major developments should **contribute to community wealth building objectives**.

### Policy 5: Community wealth building

**Q27: Do you agree that planning policy should support community wealth building, and does this policy deliver this?**

## Policy 6: Design, quality and place

- a) Development proposals should be **designed to a high quality** so that the scale and nature of the development contributes positively to the character and sense of place of the area in which they are to be located.
- b) Development proposals should **incorporate the key principles of Designing Streets, Creating Places, New Design in Historic Settings and any design guidance adopted by planning authorities and statutory consultees**. Where relevant and appropriate, development proposals should also demonstrate through design tools, such as a Design Framework, Place Standard Tools, Development Brief, Masterplan, Design Guide, Design Code, Design Statement or Design and Access Statement, that an inclusive and design-led approach has been taken to development.
- c) Development proposals should be able to **demonstrate how the six qualities of successful places have been incorporated** into the design of the development so that it contributes positively to the character and quality of the area and the way it functions.
- d) Development proposals that are **poorly designed**, including those that are not consistent with the six qualities of successful places, should not be supported.
- e) Proposals that are **detrimental to the character or appearance of the surrounding area** taking into account effects on daylight, sunlight, noise, air quality and privacy should not be supported, in order to protect amenity.

### Policy 6: Design, quality and place

**Q28: Do you agree that this policy will enable the planning system to promote design, quality and place?**

## The Six Qualities of Successful Places

**1. Designed for lifelong health and wellbeing:** supporting safety and improving mental and physical health.

By encouraging active lifestyles, through walkable neighbourhoods, as well as ensuring equitable access for everyone (regardless of gender, age, ability and culture) to well-designed buildings and a nature-rich local environment, including quality blue/green spaces that are cared for and well maintained.

**2. Safe and pleasant:** supporting safe, pleasant and welcoming natural and built spaces.

By designing, or retrofitting, spaces of all sizes and purposes to bring a sense of 'joy' and allowing people (whether individuals, families and groups) to meet safely, feel at ease, be included and feel positive towards being playful. Including climatic adaptation, shading, shelter – good use of blue and green infrastructure and wellbeing-promoting natural spaces, tackling vacant and derelict land, air quality and known environmental hazards.

**3. Well connected and easy to move around:** supporting networks of all scales.

Maximising connectivity (including digital), easy to move around and reducing car dependency – by designing places for everyone for walking and wheeling, providing for active travel, step free transitions between public and private spaces, simple transitions from one form of transport to another and good public transport routes.

**4. Distinctive:** supporting attention to local architectural styles and natural landscapes.

To be interpreted, literally or creatively, into designs to reinforce identity – by drawing on historic environment assets, cultural heritage, stories and communities for inspiration as well as examining building types, colours, materials, skylines and landscapes, and acknowledging the sense of place and identity that people feel for their heritage and history.

**5 Sustainable:** supporting net zero, nature-positive, and climate-resilient places.

With resource-efficient, regenerative design and a sustainable environmental footprint, including through: energy efficiency; integration of nature-based solutions; and resilient, confident, future-proof planning of resources, to create healthier, attractive, sustainable places to live, invest, work and play.

Supporting the just transition to a net zero, nature-positive Scotland which makes best use of natural assets for communities and supports their right to a healthy environment.

**6 Adaptable:** supporting commitment to investing in the long-term value of buildings, streets and spaces.

By building in flexibility in line with circular economy principles, so that they can quickly be changed to accommodate different uses as well as maintained over time. By recognising the need to change and cope with social, economic and environmental pressures as well as accepting the critical role of ongoing maintenance to ensure resilience and community wellbeing over time. Reusing and repurposing existing buildings and assets can also support our net zero ambitions and the circular economy.



## Liveable Places

### 20 minute neighbourhoods

#### We want our places to support local living.

20 Minute Neighbourhoods are a method of achieving connected and compact neighbourhoods designed in such a way that all people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable walk, wheel or cycle (within approx. 800m) of their home. The principle can be adjusted to include varying geographical scales from cities and urban environments, to rural and island communities. Housing would be planned together with local infrastructure including schools, community centres, local shops, greenspaces and health and social care to significantly reduce the need to use unsustainable modes of travel, to prioritise quality of life, reduce inequalities, increase levels of health and wellbeing and respond to the climate emergency. This can also include providing digital services where appropriate.

We urgently need to reduce the need to travel unsustainably and to encourage people to live more locally. This can be achieved by building on the Place Principle in the creation of 20 minute neighbourhoods where the accessibility credentials and the quality of our places support our health and wellbeing, reduce inequalities and respond to the requirements for the creation of resilient places to cope with and tackle climate change. The planning system should support development that will contribute to the creation of walkable, liveable and thriving places that provide and encourage sustainable travel options, provide communities with local access to the wide range of facilities, services, work and opportunities for socialising, leisure and play activities that they need to support a healthier and flourishing community.

This concept will apply differently in urban and rural areas and should be guided by the Place Principle and place-based working that informs

the local development plan. Communities will be well-placed to inform the approach to their own areas. Dense urban areas will more easily be able to benefit from a network of 20 minute neighbourhoods and the focus should be on maintaining mixed uses and improving the quality and diversity of local areas, particularly for communities who face more disadvantage. Retrofitting facilities in areas which are predominantly residential should also help to reduce the need to travel.

The application of the 20 Minute Neighbourhood will vary across the country and will need to be adjusted to suit local circumstances particularly in rural areas where the delivery of services and extent of local infrastructure may not necessarily be supported by the surrounding density of population. 20 Minute Neighbourhoods are however an opportunity to rethink how housing, service provision, city, town or village centres could be re-configured to support new ways of working, homeworking and community hubs in line with localism objectives and reducing demand for motorised travel.

#### Policy 7: Local living

Decision makers can determine what facilities can reasonably be expected to be accessible from homes, taking into account local circumstances, as well as the role of digital connectivity in providing some services remotely.

- a) Local development plans should **support the principle of 20 minute neighbourhoods**, including through the spatial strategy, development proposals, associated site briefs and masterplans. The approach should take into account the local context for the plan and reflect the particular characteristics of the area. It should set out proposals to support the development and network of 20 minute neighbourhood by bringing together relevant policies in this NPF to promote development



that will contribute to the creation of safe, walkable, liveable and thriving places that provide and encourage sustainable travel options, provide communities with local access to the wide range of facilities, services, work, natural spaces and opportunities for socialising, leisure and play activities that they need to support a healthier and flourishing and climate resilient community.

b) Development proposals that are **consistent with the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods should be supported**. To inform this, relevant development proposals, including those for homes, should be safe, take into account the infrastructure of a place and be accessed easily by walking, wheeling and cycling from homes. Consideration should be given to:

- local public transport and safe walking, wheeling and cycling networks;
- local employment opportunities, good connections to public transport, jobs and services within the region;
- local shopping areas;
- local health and social care facilities and services;
- local childcare, schools and lifelong learning opportunities;
- local playgrounds and informal play opportunities, parks, green streets and spaces, community gardens, sport and recreation facilities;
- safe streets and spaces;
- affordable housing options, ability to age in place, housing diversity;
- the level of interconnectivity with the surrounding neighbourhood. Proposals should demonstrate how the development will relate to, and enhance, the local area.

### Policy 7: Local living

**Q29: Do you agree that this policy sufficiently addresses the need to support local living?**

## Infrastructure first

### We want an infrastructure-first approach to be embedded in Scotland's planning system.

An infrastructure-first approach to planning means putting infrastructure considerations at the heart of place making. It is based on:

- early engagement and collaboration between relevant stakeholders to better inform land use and investment decisions;
- having an evidence based understanding of potential impacts on infrastructure and infrastructure needs from early in the development planning process;
- providing clarity over infrastructure requirements and their planned delivery to meet the needs of communities; and
- ensuring infrastructure considerations are integral to planning decision making.

Taking an infrastructure first approach will support the provision of the infrastructure, services and facilities that are necessary to create liveable and sustainable places. It can also support our drive towards a more sustainable use of infrastructure, making better use of existing assets and prioritising low-carbon infrastructure, supporting Scotland's transition to net zero.

### Policy 8: Infrastructure First

- a) Local Development Plans and delivery programmes should be based on an **infrastructure-first approach**. They should:
- align with relevant infrastructure plans and policies; including the Infrastructure Investment Plan (investment hierarchy) and National Transport Strategy (sustainable travel and investment hierarchies), the Strategic Transport Projects Review, and the National Marine Plan;
  - be informed by evidence on infrastructure capacity, condition, needs and deliverability;
  - set out the infrastructure requirements of the spatial strategy, informed by the evidence base, and how and by whom this will be delivered; and

- indicate the type, level and location of the contributions (financial or in kind) that development will be required to make.
- b) Where a development proposal **creates an infrastructure need**, it should demonstrate how account has been taken of the Scottish Government Investment Hierarchy, including the utilisation of existing infrastructure.
- c) Development proposals which **provide (or contribute to) infrastructure that is identified as necessary in Local Development Plans and their delivery programmes** should be supported.
- d) Development proposals should **mitigate their impacts on infrastructure**. Development proposals should not be supported unless provision is made to mitigate those impacts. Where planning conditions, planning obligations or other legal agreements are to be used, the relevant tests should be met.

#### Policy 8: Infrastructure First

**Q30: Do you agree that this policy ensures that we make best use of existing infrastructure and take an infrastructure-first approach to planning?**

## Quality homes

**We want to support the delivery of high quality, sustainable homes that meet the needs of people throughout their lives.**

Good quality homes should be at the heart of great places and contribute to strengthening the health and wellbeing of Scotland's communities. To help tackle climate change, we will need more energy efficient, net zero emissions homes. This can also support a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy and has the potential to help build community wealth. The planning system should support the delivery of more and better homes, in the right locations, providing choice across tenures that meet the diverse housing needs of people and communities across Scotland.

### Policy 9: Quality homes

- a) Local development plans should **identify a housing target for the area it covers, in the form of a Housing Land Requirement**. Representing how much land is required, it should at least meet the 10 year Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) set out in Annex B.
- b) **A deliverable housing land pipeline should be established for the Housing Land Requirement**. Representing when land will be brought forward, it should set out short, medium- and long-term sites which can be supported by the infrastructure requirements of the spatial strategy. Locations that may be suitable for new homes beyond the plan period can also be identified. Where sites in the deliverable housing land pipeline do not progress to delivery as programmed and alternative delivery mechanisms are not possible, longer term deliverable sites should be brought forward. Site de-allocation should be considered where they are no longer deliverable. The Delivery Programme and Housing Land Audit should be used to manage the development pipeline.
- c) **Land should be allocated to meet the Housing Land Requirement** in sustainable locations that create quality places for people to live. The location of where new homes are allocated should be consistent with the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods and an infrastructure-first approach. In rural and island areas, authorities are encouraged to set out tailored approaches to housing which reflect locally specific market circumstances and delivery approaches. Diverse needs and delivery models should be taken into account across all areas, as well as allocating land to ensure provision of accommodation for Gypsy/Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- d) Development proposals for **homes should be of a high quality and contribute to making great places**. Their design should reflect the six qualities of successful places. Homes should be adaptable to changing and diverse needs and lifestyles.
- e) Development proposals for more than 50 dwellings should be accompanied by a **statement of community benefit**. Planning authorities may wish to extend this to smaller proposals, for example in rural areas. Planning authorities should take this information into account when assessing proposals. The statement should explain the contribution of the proposal to:
  - meeting local housing requirements, including affordable homes;
  - providing or enhancing local infrastructure, facilities and services; and
  - improving the residential amenity of the surrounding area.
- f) Proposals for new **homes that improve affordability and choice** should be supported. An equalities led approach to addressing identified gaps in provision should be taken, informed by the Evidence Report or Local Housing Strategy, whichever is latest. This could include: self-provided homes; accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes; build to rent; affordable homes; a range of size of homes such as those for larger families; homes for older people; people undertaking further and higher education; and other specialist groups.

- g) Proposals for public or private, permanent or temporary, **Gypsy/Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites** on land not identified for this use in the development plan should be supported where a need is identified unless:
- the proposed site relates to protected land or features and that the design of the proposal does not mitigate against any unacceptable impacts; or
  - the proposed site cannot be adequately accessed and serviced; or
  - there would be an unacceptable impact on the character, appearance or amenity of the area. Judgements should focus on the acceptability of the development being proposed.
- h) Development proposals that make provision for **affordable homes in areas where there is an identified requirement** should be supported. Proposals for market homes should generally only be supported where a contribution to the provision of affordable homes on a site is at least 25% of the total number of homes. A higher contribution than this benchmark may be sought where justified by evidence of need. The contribution should generally be for serviced land within a site to be made available for affordable housing. Local authorities can also determine in local development plans the locations or circumstances where a lower contribution may be appropriate. This could include, for example, where there is evidence of impact on viability, small-scale developments or where a planning authority wishes to incentivise particular types of homes to diversify the supply, for example self-build, accessible or build-to-rent homes.
- i) New homes on **land not identified for housebuilding** in the local development plan should not be supported. Exceptions should be limited to circumstances where the planning authority determines that:
- overall progress in the build-out of sites included in the housing land pipeline is exceeding delivery timelines set out in the most up-to-date delivery programme for the plan; and
  - the proposal is supported by an agreed timescale for build-out; and
  - the proposal is otherwise consistent with the plan spatial strategy and other relevant policies including on 20 minute neighbourhoods, rural places and infrastructure;
- or
- the proposal is consistent with policy on rural places;
- or
- the proposal is for a new home or homes on a small site within an existing residential area;
- or
- the proposal is for the delivery of affordable homes of less than 50 units as part of a local authority supported affordable housing plan.
- j) **Householder development** proposals should be supported where they:
- do not have a detrimental impact on the character or environmental quality of the house and the surrounding area by virtue of size, design and materials; and
  - do not have a detrimental effect on the neighbouring properties in terms of physical impact, overshadowing or overlooking; and
  - are to provide adaptations relating to people with health conditions that lead to particular accommodation needs that will allow them to live in a home or be cared for there; and
  - are to provide adaptations in response to risks from a changing climate.

### Policy 9: Quality homes

**Q31: Do you agree that this policy meets the aims of supporting the delivery of high quality, sustainable homes that meet the needs of people throughout their lives?**

## Sustainable travel and transport

**We want to reduce the need to travel unsustainably, decarbonise our transport system and promote active travel choices.**

Scotland's transport system should contribute to the creation of great places through prioritising the need to reduce inequalities; taking climate action; helping to deliver a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy. The planning system should support development that minimises the need to travel unsustainably and prioritises walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people. The planning system should ensure that the [National Transport Strategy 2](#) Sustainable Travel and Investment Hierarchies are integrated into the appraisal and assessment of development proposals and decisions in order to make best use of existing infrastructure, and reduce unsustainable travel and transport of goods.

### Policy 10: Sustainable transport

- a) **Local development plans should aim to reduce the need to travel unsustainably by prioritising locations for future development** that can be accessed by sustainable modes. A Plan's spatial strategy should be informed by evidence of the area's existing and committed transport infrastructure capacity.
- b) **Local development plans should be informed by an appropriate and effective transport appraisal undertaken in line with [Development Planning Transport Appraisal Guidance](#) (DPMTAG).** Plans should be informed by evidence of the area's transport infrastructure capacity, and by an appraisal of the plan's spatial strategy, and reasonable alternatives to it, on the transport network. This should identify any potential cumulative transport impacts and mitigation proposed to inform the infrastructure-first approach. The spatial strategy should reflect the sustainable travel hierarchy and transport investment hierarchy by making best use of existing infrastructure and services and also help to deliver 20 minute neighbourhoods. Where there is likely to be an impact on the trunk road or rail network, early engagement with Transport Scotland is required.
- c) Where a new development or a change of use is likely to **generate a significant increase in the number of person trips**, a transport assessment should be carried out. This should identify any potential cumulative effects which need to be addressed. It should set out measures required to address the transport impact of the development, and improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel (in line with the Sustainable Travel and Investment Hierarchies).
- d) Development proposals for **significant travel generating uses**, or smaller-scale developments where it is considered important to monitor travel patterns resulting from development, will only be supported if they are accompanied by a Travel Plan with supporting planning conditions/obligations. Travel Plans should set out clear arrangements for delivering mode share targets, monitoring and evaluation.
- e) Development proposals that have the potential to affect the **operation and safety of the strategic transport network** need to be fully assessed to determine their impact. Where it has been demonstrated that existing infrastructure has the capacity to accommodate a development without adverse impacts on safety or unacceptable impacts on operational performance, further investment in the network is not likely to be required. Where such investment is required in line with the sustainable investment hierarchy, the cost of the mitigation measures required to ensure the continued safe and effective operation of the network should be met by the developer.
- f) While **new junctions on trunk roads** are not normally acceptable, the case for a new junction will only be considered where significant prosperity or regeneration benefits can be demonstrated. New junctions will only be considered if they are designed in accordance with [Design Manual for Roads and Bridges](#) and where there would be no adverse impact on road safety or operational performance.



- g) Development proposals should put people and place before **unsustainable travel** where appropriate, and respond to characteristics of the location of the proposal. Effective design can reduce the number and speed of vehicles and provide safe crossings on local roads. Design of new transport infrastructure can be a valuable opportunity to incorporate blue and green infrastructure and nature rich habitats (such as natural planting or water systems) where possible.
- h) Planning applications for significant travel generating uses should not be supported at locations which would **increase reliance on the private car**, and where:
- direct, easy, segregated and safe links to local facilities via walking, wheeling and cycling networks are not available or cannot be made available before occupation;
  - access to local facilities via public transport networks would involve walking or wheeling more than 400m;
  - the Transport Assessment does not identify satisfactory ways of meeting sustainable transport requirements in line with the NTS2 hierarchies.
- i) Development proposals should demonstrate:
- how the development will provide for and prioritise transport in line with the **sustainable travel and investment hierarchies**;
  - consideration of the need to **integrate transport modes**;
  - the need to as far as possible facilitate **access by reliable public transport**, ideally supporting the use of existing services or new services that do not require on-going public sector funding.
  - the provision of **electric, hydrogen, and other low or zero-emission vehicle and cycle charging points** that are provided in safe and convenient locations.
- j) Proposals to improve, enhance or provide **active travel infrastructure or public transport and multimodal hubs** should be supported where they can be demonstrated to be deliverable and will be effective in relation to delivering mode share targets.
- k) Proposals for new and upgraded transport infrastructure must consider the **needs of users of all ages and abilities**, including in line with relevant equalities legislation.
- l) Development proposals should consider the need to supply safe and convenient cycle parking to serve the development, sheltered where possible, unless it can be demonstrated that existing nearby provision is sufficient. **Cycle parking** should, be more conveniently located than car parking serving the development. Flatted residential development should give consideration to the need to provide secure and convenient storage for range of cycle types and sizes, depending on the type, location and accessibility of the development and the likely needs of the users.
- m) Development proposals which are ambitious in terms of **low/no car parking** have a role to play in very accessible urban locations, well-served by sustainable transport modes. In such circumstances, consideration should be given to the type, mix and use of development, car ownership levels, the surrounding uses, and the accessibility of the development by sustainable modes.

### Policy 10: Sustainable transport

**Q32: Do you agree that this policy will reduce the need to travel unsustainably, decarbonise our transport system and promote active travel choices?**

## Heat and cooling

**We want our places to help us achieve zero emissions from heating and cooling our buildings and adapt to changing temperatures.**

Heat networks can help contribute to Scotland's net zero ambitions by using and storing heat from low or zero emissions sources, such as surplus or waste heat, heat from large scale heat pumps, particularly in conjunction with geothermal systems or bodies of water or hydrogen to provide zero emissions heat to homes. Examples of potential sources of waste heat include data centres, hydrogen production, the waste water system and industrial processes.

### Policy 11: Heat and cooling

- a) **Local development plans should take into account the area's Local Heat & Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) and areas of heat network potential and any designated heat network zones (HNZ) when allocating land.**
- b) Development proposals, including retrofit where appropriate, should be supported where they **connect to existing heat networks**. In particular, development proposals within or adjacent to a Heat Network Zone should be designed and constructed to connect to the existing heat network.
- c) Development proposals in locations **where a heat network is planned** but not yet in place should only be supported where they are designed to allow for the cost-effective connection at a later date. This may include, for example, allocating space in plant rooms for heat exchangers and thermal stores, safeguarding suitable routes for pipework from the site boundary and making provision for connections to the future network at the site boundary.
- d) Development proposals with **no demonstrable effective solution to connecting to a heat network** should provide an alternative low or zero emissions heating system.
- e) National and major development with **waste or surplus heat** should be co-located in areas of heat demand and are expected to be supported by a heat and power plan which clearly demonstrates how energy recovered from the development would be used to produce electricity and heat. Pipe runs should be safeguarded to enable later development of heat networks, including connection and pipework to the curtilage of development.
- f) Development proposals for **energy infrastructure** should take into account heat maps and zoning for heat and energy efficiency. They should be supported where they repurpose former fossil fuel infrastructure for the production of low carbon energy, are either within or adjacent to a Heat Network Zone and can be cost-effectively linked to an existing or planned heat network.
- g) **Domestic biomass energy systems** should not be supported where networked systems are available. Where no alternatives are available, applications for flues can be supported provided that the impact on local air quality and of smoke on neighbouring properties has been considered; and the associated biomass burner is a type formally approved for use in smoke control areas.
- h) Applications should be supported where they seek to **repurpose former fossil fuel infrastructure** for the production and handling of low carbon energy. Where the repurposed infrastructure will generate surplus heat, planning applications should be supported where they are either within or adjacent to a Heat Network Zone and can be cost-effectively linked to an existing or planned heat network.
- i) To reduce overheating and reliance on **air conditioning systems** as far as possible, development proposals for buildings that will be occupied by people should be designed to promote sustainable temperature management, where possible prioritising natural or passive solutions.

### Policy 11: Heat and cooling

**Q33: Do you agree that this policy will help us achieve zero emissions from heating and cooling our buildings and adapt to changing temperatures?**

## Blue and green infrastructure, play and sport

**We want our places to be greener, healthier, and more resilient to climate change by supporting and enhancing blue and green infrastructure and providing good quality local opportunities for play and sport.**

Networks of blue and green infrastructure are an integral part of successful places. Blue and green infrastructure (such as green spaces, sustainable urban drainage systems, urban trees and green roofs and walls) can offer a wide range of benefits. They can support lifelong health and wellbeing, climate resilience, flood risk management, temperature regulation in urban areas, reduction of air and noise pollution, biodiversity and nature networks, while also supporting good, green jobs. Accessible, high quality natural and civic spaces can be used by communities for many activities: exercise and recreation, play, sport and connecting with nature. The planning system should support development that expands and strengthens networks of blue and green infrastructure, to help us respond to our climate change and biodiversity goals, and support our placemaking ambitions.

Outdoor spaces for play, sport and recreation can make a significant contribution towards creating more liveable and healthier places. Children experience a range of health, wellbeing and educational benefits from outdoor play, and learning in, and connecting with nature. Providing quality opportunities for children of all ages to play will benefit their physical and cognitive development, and uphold their right to engage in play and recreational activities. The planning system should support development that expands opportunities for play in the public realm and in a range of different types of open and green spaces, and which addresses unequal access to play spaces and facilities.

## Policy 12: Blue and green infrastructure, play and sport

- a) **Local development plans should identify and protect blue and green infrastructure**, safeguarding existing assets. Plans should also identify opportunities to enhance and expand provision and access to blue and green infrastructure (at strategic and local scales). Development allocations should be chosen taking account of the areas that can best contribute to enhancing and delivering key green networks and priorities.
- b) Local development plans should **identify new, enhanced provision or improved access to play opportunities for children** as part of enhancing and expanding blue and green infrastructure. Blue and green infrastructure should provide opportunities for play and recognise the need for, and provide publicly accessible, outdoor opportunities for formal, informal and incidental play. These facilities should be good quality, accessible and suitable for different ages and abilities, to satisfy current and likely future needs and demand in the community.
- c) Development proposals that result in **fragmentation or net loss of existing blue and green infrastructure** should not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the overall integrity of the network of blue and green infrastructure will be maintained.
- d) Development proposals in **regional and country parks** should only be supported where they are compatible with the uses, natural habitats and character of the park.
- e) Development proposals should not be supported where they result in the loss of **outdoor sports facilities**, unless the proposal:
  - is ancillary to the principal use of the site as an outdoor sports facility; or
  - involves only a minor part of the facility and would not affect its use; or
  - meets a requirement to replace the facility which would be lost, either by a new facility or by upgrading an existing facility to provide a better quality facility. The location should be convenient for users and the overall playing capacity of the area should be maintained; or

- can demonstrate, in consultation with sportscotland where appropriate, that there is a clear excess of provision to meet current and anticipated demand in the area, and that the site would be developed without detriment to the overall quality of provision.
- f) Development proposals that result in the quantitative and/or qualitative **loss of children's outdoor play provision** should not be supported, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no ongoing or future demand or it is replaced by a newly created, better-quality or more appropriate provision within the development proposal.
- g) Development proposals for **temporary or permanent open space, green space or play space on unused or under-used land** should be supported.
- h) Development proposals should **incorporate and enhance blue and green infrastructure** wherever possible. They should be designed to be multifunctional and consistent with the six qualities of successful places. This means paying particular attention to, for example: ensuring that the needs of all potential users are met; connections with wider green networks for people and wildlife; responding to local character and distinctiveness; building in resilience; and maximising use throughout the year. Designs should take account of existing provision and identified requirements, to ensure the proposed blue green infrastructure is of an appropriate type(s), quantity, quality and accessibility.
- i) Major development proposals for new homes, and other major development likely to be used by children and young people should incorporate well-designed, **good-quality provision for play, recreation and relaxation**.
- j) Development proposals that include **new streets and public realm** should incorporate the principles of Designing Streets and inclusive design to enable children and young people to play and move around safely and independently; maximising the opportunities for informal and incidental play in the neighbourhood.
- k) **New, replacement or improved play provision** should, as far as possible and as appropriate:
- provide stimulating environments;
  - be inclusive;
  - be suitable for different ages of children and young people;
  - be easily and safely accessible by children and young people independently; including those with a disability;
  - incorporate trees and/or other forms of greenery;
  - form an integral part of the surrounding neighbourhood;
  - be well overlooked for passive surveillance;
  - be linked directly to other open spaces and play areas.
- l) The long-term stewardship of blue and green infrastructure should be addressed to maintain its quality and integrity. Development proposals should provide **effective management and maintenance plans** wherever this is necessary. Developers must provide details of the functions of the blue and green infrastructure, the maintenance requirements, together with the party responsible for these, and demonstrate funding arrangements for their long-term delivery to the satisfaction of the local authority before construction starts.

### Policy 12: Blue and green infrastructure, play and sport

**Q34: Do you agree that this policy will help to make our places greener, healthier, and more resilient to climate change by supporting and enhancing blue and green infrastructure and providing good quality local opportunities for play and sport?**



## Sustainable flood risk and water management

**We want our places to be resilient to future flood risk and to make efficient and sustainable use of water resources.**

The frequency, pattern and severity of flooding is expected to increase as a result of climate change leaving some places in Scotland more vulnerable to the impacts of flooding. The planning system should strengthen future resilience to flood risk by reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding. It should also encourage the use of natural flood risk management to provide wider benefits for people and nature.

### Policy 13: Flooding

- a) Local development plans should strengthen **community resilience to the current and future impacts of climate change**, including identifying opportunities to implement natural flood risk management and blue green infrastructure. Plans should take into account the probability of flooding from all sources. New development proposals in flood risk areas, or which can impact on flood risk areas, should be avoided. A cautious approach should be taken, regarding the calculated probability of flooding as a best estimate, not a precise forecast.
- b) Development proposals should not be supported within the **Future Functional Floodplain** unless they are for:
  - **essential infrastructure** where the location is required for operational reasons;
  - **water compatible uses**;
  - redevelopment of an **existing building or site** within a built-up area for an equal or less vulnerable use;
  - the site is within a built up area and has protection from an existing or committed **flood protection scheme**.

Any of the above exceptions must meet the following criteria:

  - all risks have been fully assessed and understood;
- any first occupied /utilised floor of a development is above the future flood level, plus an allowance for freeboard;
- there is no reduction in floodplain capacity, increased risk for others, or a need for future flood protection schemes;
- safe operation and access/egress can be achieved during the design flood event; and
- flood-resistant and resilient materials and construction methods are used; and
- the ability to make future adaptations to accommodate the effects of climate change can be demonstrated.
- c) **Small scale extensions and alterations to existing buildings** are outwith the scope of this policy, provided that they would not have a significant effect on the storage capacity of the functional floodplain or local flooding problems.
- d) Development proposals for Most Vulnerable and Civil Infrastructure uses in **areas outwith the functional floodplain** should incorporate additional measures to ensure that they remain safe and operational during more extreme events up to and including the 0.1% design flood.
- e) Development proposals should not be supported:
  - within areas at **risk of surface water flooding** unless the risk can be successfully mitigated;
  - where the design for surface water drainage and ground water drainage increases **discharge to the public sewer network**;
  - where the proposed drainage solution has a negative impact on the **overall catchment**; unless adequate land is set aside for blue and green infrastructure and the design and construction permits safe operation and function of the proposal in a storm event and that managed water flow is not impeded.



- f) To **avoid increased surface water flooding** development proposals should only be supported if they:
- minimise the area of impermeable surface; and
  - provide adequate drainage of surface water wherever practicable by blue and green infrastructure (such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) including raingardens).
- g) Development proposals should only be supported if they can be connected to the **public water mains**. If connection is not feasible, connection to a wholesome supply of drinking water that is resilient to periods of water scarcity can be supported in exceptional circumstances.
- h) Development proposals which create, expand or enhance opportunities for **natural flood risk management and blue-green infrastructure** should be supported.

### **Policy 13: Sustainable flood risk and water management**

**Q35: Do you agree that this policy will help to ensure places are resilient to future flood risk and make efficient and sustainable use of water resources?**

## Lifelong health, wellbeing and safety

**We want places to support health, wellbeing and safety for all, and to strengthen the resilience of communities.**

Places are important for physical and mental health and overall wellbeing. The places where children and young people grow up shape the opportunities that they have and influence the course of their life. The planning system should support development that reduces health inequalities and creates an environment that promotes active and healthier lifestyles.

### Policy 14: Health and wellbeing

- a) Local development plans should aim to create **vibrant, healthier and safe places** and should seek to **tackle health inequalities** particularly in places which are experiencing the most disadvantage. The provision of health and social care facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs of the community should be a key consideration.
- b) Development proposals should not be supported where **significant adverse health effects** are likely to occur. A health impact assessment will be required for all proposed development that is considered likely to generate significant health effects or is within the categories of national developments, or major developments or is EIA development.
- c) Development proposals that would have a significant adverse effect **on air quality** should not be supported.
- d) Development proposals that would result in unacceptable levels of **noise** will not be supported. A noise impact assessment will be required where significant exposure to noise is likely to arise from the proposed development.
- e) Development proposals for, or including, space or facilities for local community food growing and allotments should be supported.

### Policy 15: Safety

Development proposals in the vicinity of major-accident hazard sites should take into account the potential impacts on the proposal and the major-accident hazard site of being located in proximity to one another. Applications regarding the presence of hazardous substances should take account of the potential impacts on surrounding populations and the environment. Decisions should be informed by, amongst other things, the Health and Safety Executive's planning applications advice (including on hazardous substances consent), and, in relevant cases, that of the Office of Nuclear Regulation. Similar considerations apply in respect of development proposals either for or near licensed explosive sites (including military explosive storage sites).

### Policies 14 and 15: Health, wellbeing and safety

**Q36: Do you agree that this policy will ensure places support health, wellbeing and safety, and strengthen the resilience of communities?**



## Productive Places

### Land and premises for business and employment

**We want our places to support new and expanded businesses and investment, stimulate entrepreneurship and promote alternative ways of working in order to achieve a green recovery and build a wellbeing economy.**

Scotland's recovery from COVID-19 provides an opportunity to consider the sort of economy we want to have and to focus efforts on supporting good, green jobs, businesses and industries for the future. Our green economic recovery will support our ambitions to build a wellbeing economy that maximises economic, social and environmental wellbeing for everyone. Planning has a central role to play in achieving these ambitions, and in supporting business, industry and innovation. Economic success will be sustainable and inclusive and support the health and wellbeing of our communities and environment. We want to enable investment that supports the just transition to a net zero, nature-positive economy. As part of this, community wealth building initiatives will help us to strengthen the social and environmental value of future business investment.

#### Policy 16: Business and Employment

a) Local development plans should set out proposals to meet requirements for **employment land, infrastructure and investment in a way which supports a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy.**

- b) Development proposals for **business and employment uses in sites allocated for those uses in the local development plan** should be supported, provided that environmental impacts have been assessed and considered acceptable. Net economic benefit should be taken into account, in the context of Scotland's ambitions for a wellbeing economy.
- c) Development proposals for **home-working, live-work units and micro-businesses** should be supported where it can be demonstrated that the scale and nature of the proposed business will be compatible with the surrounding area and there will be no unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses.
- d) Development proposals for **business, general industrial and storage and distribution uses** should be compatible with the primary business function of the area. Other employment uses should be supported where they will not prejudice the primary business function of the area, are compatible with the business/industrial character of the area, and comply with other plan policies.
- e) Conditions for **site restoration** at the end of the period of commercial use should be considered in appropriate instances.
- f) Development proposals for **business, general industrial and storage and distribution uses outwith areas identified for those uses in the local development plan** should be supported where the nature and scale of the activity will be compatible with the surrounding area and there will be no unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses and the natural environment.

- g) Development proposals for business and industrial uses must take into account:
- surrounding **residential amenity** and sensitive uses;
  - population **health and wellbeing**, including **inequalities**;
  - **environmental quality and historic environment assets**;
  - **access, parking and traffic generation and air quality**.

**Policy 16: Land and premises for business and employment**

**Q37: Do you agree that this policy ensures places support new and expanded businesses and investment, stimulate entrepreneurship and promote alternative ways of working in order to achieve a green recovery and build a wellbeing economy?**

## Sustainable tourism

**We want our places to inspire people to visit Scotland, and to support sustainable tourism which benefits local people and is consistent with our net zero and nature commitments.**

Tourism can bring a wealth of economic, social and cultural benefits to our communities, cities and regions, supporting resilience and stimulating job creation but it is facing a number of challenges including the recovery from COVID-19. The planning system should support the recovery of the tourism sector, ensuring that communities have a share in tourism benefits and that tourism uses are sustainable and safeguard our environmental, cultural and community assets.

### Policy 17: Tourism

- a) Local development plans should support the **resilience of the tourism sector**, including by identifying proposals for tourism development which reflect sector driven tourism strategies.
- b) Development proposals for **new or extended tourist facilities or accommodation**, including caravan and camping sites, should be supported in locations that can contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of the local economy.
- c) Development proposals **in areas where existing tourism provision is having adverse impacts on the environment or the quality of life and health and wellbeing of local communities** should only be supported if satisfactory measures are proposed to alleviate existing pressures and prevent further adverse impacts.
- d) Proposals for **huts** will be supported where the nature and scale of the activity will be compatible with the surrounding area and the proposal complies with relevant good practice guidance.<sup>3</sup>

- e) Development proposals for the reuse of existing buildings for **short term holiday letting** should not be supported if it would result in:
  - an unacceptable impact on the local amenity or character of a neighbourhood or area; or
  - the loss of residential accommodation where such loss is not outweighed by local economic benefits.
- f) Development proposals that involve the **change of use of a tourism-related facility** should only be supported if it can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable and that there is no requirement for alternative tourist facilities in the area.
- g) Development proposals for tourist facilities should take into account:
  - the contribution made by the development to **economic prosperity, local employment and community wealth building**;
  - **compatibility with the surrounding area** in terms of the nature and scale of the activity and impacts of increased visitors;
  - **impacts on communities**, for example by hindering the provision of homes and services for local people;
  - **access, parking and traffic generation.**

### Policy 17: Sustainable tourism

**Q38: Do you agree that this policy will help to inspire people to visit Scotland, and support sustainable tourism which benefits local people and is consistent with our net-zero and nature commitments?**

<sup>3</sup> New hutting developments: good practice guidance on the planning, development and management of huts and hut sites.



## Culture and creativity

**We want our places to reflect and facilitate enjoyment of, and investment in, our collective culture and creativity.**

Culture and the creative industries are central to Scotland's health and wellbeing and cultural, social, economic and environmental prosperity and can also be an important catalyst for regeneration and town centre vibrancy that strengthens the sense of place. The planning system should support the expansion of Scotland's creative industries and ensure that there are equitable opportunities available for local communities to participate in artistic and cultural activities.

### Policy 18: Culture and creativity

- a) Local development plans should recognise and support **opportunities for jobs and investment in the creative sector, culture, heritage and the arts.**
- b) Development proposals should seek to make provision **for public art** where they involve a significant change to, or the creation of new, public open spaces.
- c) Development proposals for **creative workspaces or other cultural uses that** will utilise the temporary use of vacant spaces or property should be supported.
- d) Development proposals should not be supported where they would result in the **loss of an arts or cultural venue** unless:
  - there is no longer a sustainable demand for the venue and after marketing the site through relevant local and national agents and online platforms at a reasonable rate for at least 12 months there has been no viable interest from potential operators; or
  - the venue, as evidenced by consultation, no longer meets the needs of users and cannot be adapted; or

- alternative provision of equal or greater standard is made available at a suitable location within the local area; and
- the loss of the venue doesn't result in loss or damage to assets or objects of significant cultural value.

Development proposals within the vicinity of existing arts venues should fully reflect the **agent of change principle**. They should only be supported where they can demonstrate that measures can be put in place to ensure that existing noise and disturbance impacts on the proposed development would be acceptable and that existing venues and facilities can continue without additional restrictions being placed on them as a result of the proposed new development.

### Policy 18: Culture and creativity

**Q39: Do you agree that this policy supports our places to reflect and facilitate enjoyment of, and investment in, our collective culture and creativity?**

## Green energy

**We want our places to support continued expansion of low-carbon and net zero energy technologies as a key contributor to net zero emissions by 2045.**

Scotland's energy sector has a significant role to play in reducing carbon emissions and contributing to a green, fair and resilient economic recovery. A wide range of renewable technologies are capable of delivering these benefits, although it is likely that the onshore wind sector will play the greatest role in the coming years. The planning system should support all forms of renewable energy development and energy storage, together with new and replacement transmission and distribution infrastructure. It should also support new and emerging technology including hydrogen and carbon capture utilisation and storage (CCUS).

### Policy 19: Green Energy

- a) Local development plans should seek to ensure that an **area's full potential for electricity and heat from renewable sources is achieved**. Opportunities for new development, extensions and repowering of existing renewable energy developments should be supported.
- b) Development proposals for **all forms of renewable energy and low-carbon fuels**, together with enabling works such as transmission and distribution infrastructure, and energy storage such as battery storage, should be supported in principle.
- c) Development proposals for **wind farms in National Parks and National Scenic Areas** should not be supported.
- d) **Outwith National Parks and National Scenic Areas**, and recognising the sensitivity of any other national or international designations, development proposals for new wind farms should be supported unless the impacts identified (including cumulative effects), are unacceptable. To inform this, site specific assessments including where applicable Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) are required.
- e) Development proposals to **repower, extend and expand existing wind farms** and for the extension of life to existing windfarms should be supported unless the impacts identified (including cumulative effects) are unacceptable.
- f) Development proposals for **small scale renewable energy generation technology** should be supported.
- g) **Areas identified for wind farms should be suitable for use in perpetuity**. Consents may be time-limited but wind farms should nevertheless be sited and designed to ensure impacts are minimised and to protect an acceptable level of amenity for adjacent communities.
- h) Major applications for energy generation from low carbon sources, for manufacturing or industrial developments should be accompanied by a **decarbonisation strategy** to demonstrate how greenhouse gas emissions from the process are appropriately abated. That strategy may include carbon capture and storage.
- i) Proposals for **negative emissions technologies** and carbon capture should be supported in principle.
- j) Development proposals for **solar arrays** should be supported where the planning authority is satisfied that the arrays would not adversely affect (including the effect of glint and glare) residential amenity, road safety, historic environment assets, or aviation interests. Ground mounted arrays should be installed using pile driven or screw foundations rather than trench foundations to facilitate restoration of the site.
- k) Specific considerations will vary relative to the scale of the proposal and area characteristics but development proposals for renewable energy developments must take into account:
  - net economic impact, including local and community socio-economic benefits such as employment, associated business and supply chain opportunities;
  - the scale of contribution to renewable energy generation targets;

- effect on greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets;
- cumulative impacts – taking into account the cumulative impact of existing and consented energy development;
- impacts on communities and individual dwellings, including visual impact, residential amenity, noise and shadow flicker;
- landscape and visual impacts, including effects on wild land;
- effects on the natural heritage, including birds;
- impacts on carbon rich soils;
- public access, including impact on long-distance walking and cycling routes and scenic routes;
- impacts on historic environment assets, including scheduled monuments, listed buildings and their settings;
- impacts on tourism and recreation;
- impacts on aviation and defence interests including seismological recording;
- impacts on telecommunications and broadcasting installations, particularly ensuring that transmission links are not compromised;
- impacts on road traffic and on adjacent trunk roads;
- effects on hydrology, the water environment and flood risk;
- the need for conditions relating to the decommissioning of developments, including ancillary infrastructure, and site restoration, opportunities for energy storage; and
- the need for a robust planning obligation to ensure that operators achieve site restoration.

### **Policy 19: Green energy**

**Q40: Do you agree that this policy will ensure our places support continued expansion of low-carbon and net zero energy technologies as a key contributor to net zero emissions by 2045?**

## Zero waste

**We want our places to be more resource efficient, and supported by services and facilities that help to achieve a circular economy.**

The circular economy is a significant economic and environmental opportunity to manage waste and resources in a way that contributes to Scotland's net zero and sustainability ambitions and green recovery. The planning system should support development which reflects the waste hierarchy, prioritising the reduction and reuse of materials, and facilitate the delivery of new infrastructure required to achieve this.

The Scottish Government has commissioned an independent review of the role that incineration plays in Scotland's waste hierarchy. Any emerging outcomes will be taken into account in the finalised version of National Planning Framework 4.

### Policy 20: Zero Waste

- a) Local development plans should identify **appropriate locations for new infrastructure** to support the circular economy and meet identified needs in a way that moves waste as high up the waste hierarchy as possible.
- b) Development proposals should aim to **reduce, reuse, or recycle materials in line with the waste hierarchy**. All developments should aim to use materials with the lowest forms of embodied emissions. Materials should be suitable for reuse with minimal reprocessing. The use of previously used, sustainable, local, recycled and natural construction materials that also store carbon, such as timber, is encouraged. Construction and demolition methods should minimise emissions as far as possible.
- c) Development proposals within the categories of national and major developments should take into account **circular economy principles** and aim to reduce, reuse or recycle waste in line with the waste hierarchy. Where appropriate, they should:
  - reuse existing buildings and infrastructure;
  - minimise demolition and salvage materials for reuse;
  - use design and construction measures to minimise waste, reduce pressure on virgin resources and enable building materials, components and products to be disassembled, and reused at the end of their useful life;
  - support maintenance, longevity, adaptability and flexibility;
  - identify how much waste the proposal is expected to generate and how and where the waste will be managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy, including demonstrating the management of as much waste as possible on site;
  - make provision for adequate and accessible storage space and collection systems when the development is operational to support the waste hierarchy, including reuse and recycling;
  - set out how performance will be monitored and reported.
- d) **Development proposals that are likely to generate waste** when operational, including residential, commercial and industrial properties, should include provision to maximise waste reduction and waste separation at source, and minimise the cross-contamination of materials, through:
  - appropriate segregation and storage of waste;
  - appropriate convenient access for the collection of waste; and
  - appropriate recycling and localised waste management facilities.
- e) Development proposals for **waste infrastructure and facilities** (except landfill and energy from waste) should be supported where:
  - there are no unacceptable impacts (including cumulative) on the residential amenity of nearby dwellings, local communities and historic environment assets;
  - environmental (including cumulative) impacts relating to noise, dust, smells, pest control and pollution of land, air and water are acceptable;
  - any greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the processing and transportation of wastes to and from the facility are minimised and offset;

- an adequate buffer zone between sites and settlements is provided taking account of the various environmental effects likely to arise;
  - a restoration and aftercare scheme (including appropriate financial mechanisms) is provided and agreed to ensure the site is restored in the event of operator failure.
- f) Development proposals for **new waste infrastructure (except landfill and energy from waste/incineration) should be supported if the proposal is located within an established area** suitable for business (class 4), general industrial (class 5) or storage (class 6) and provided they are in line with Scottish Government objectives on waste management to maximise the value of secondary resources to the economy and move waste as high up the waste hierarchy as possible. Consideration should also be given to co-location with end users of outputs to support the establishment of associated industries and businesses to maximise the value of secondary resources where appropriate. Outwith those areas only small scale facilities needing a location accessible to the public will be supported (e.g. bottle banks and deposit return scheme return points).
- g) Development proposals for **new or extended landfill** sites should only be supported where:
- there is a demonstrable need for additional landfill capacity taking into account Scottish Government [objectives](#) on waste management; and
  - waste heat and/or electricity generation is included. Where this is considered impractical, evidence and justification must be provided.
- h) Proposals for the capture, distribution or use of gases captured from landfill sites or waste water treatment plant should be supported.
- i) Development proposals which involve the **recovery of energy from waste** should only be supported where the proposal:
- is in a location identified or supported by the local development plan; and,
  - is consistent with climate change mitigation targets and in line with circular economy principles; and,
  - can demonstrate that a functional heat network can be created and provided within the site for appropriate infrastructure to allow a heat network to be developed and that wherever possible, potential local consumers have been identified; and
  - is supported by a heat and power plan, which demonstrates how energy recovered from the development would be used to provide electricity and heat, including the scope to efficiently distribute heat to sites which have a long-term high heat demand and where consideration is given to methods to improve the sustainability of the facility, such as carbon capture and storage. The accompanying information should account for future and current annual figures of waste infrastructure capacity needs for a variety of technologies (e.g. those produced by SEPA) including thermal treatment infrastructure and that options for alternative technologies that retain the value of materials have been exhausted. It should also account for potential changes in waste composition and demonstrate that it will not prevent waste being moved further up the waste hierarchy; and
  - comply with the Thermal Treatment of Waste Guidelines published by SEPA; and
  - should supply a decarbonisation strategy aligned with Scottish Government decarbonisation goals and be refused where the strategy is insufficient; and
  - deliver demonstrable community benefits if the energy from waste proposal would treat waste from an area wider than the local authority.
- Development proposals should not be supported if they would, either directly or indirectly, **limit the operation of existing or proposed waste management facilities.**

### Policy 20: Zero waste

**Q41: Do you agree that this policy will help our places to be more resource efficient, and to be supported by services and facilities that help to achieve a circular economy?**



## Sustainable aquaculture

**We want to support investment in aquaculture and minimise its potential impacts on the environment.**

Aquaculture is an increasingly important industry for Scotland, helping to sustain economic success in the rural and coastal communities of the north and west. The planning and licensing system should support the prosperity of the finfish, shellfish and seaweed sectors, including by guiding new development to locations that reflect industry needs and take into account wider marine planning.

### Policy 21: Aquaculture

- a) Local development plans should guide new aquaculture development to locations that **reflect industry needs and take account of environmental impact, including cumulative impacts that arise from other existing and planned aquaculture developments in the area, and wider marine planning.**
- b) In order to **safeguard migratory fish species** further salmon and trout open pen fish farm developments on the north and east coasts of mainland Scotland should not be supported.
- c) Development proposals for aquaculture should be supported where they **comply with the local development plan, the National Marine Plan and, where relevant, the appropriate Regional Marine Plan.**
- d) Development **proposals for fish farm developments** should demonstrate that:
  - operational impacts (including from noise, acoustic deterrent devices (where applicable) light, access, containment, deposition, waste emissions and sea lice, aquaculture litter and odour) are acceptable and comply with the relevant regulatory framework; and that significant cumulative impacts are appropriately managed;
  - the siting and design of cages, lines and associated facilities are appropriate for the location; and,
  - the siting and design of any land based facilities are appropriate for the location.

### Policy 21: Aquaculture

**Q42: Do you agree that this policy will support investment in aquaculture and minimise its potential impacts on the environment?**

## Minerals

**We want to support the sustainable management of resources and to minimise the impacts of extraction of minerals on communities and the environment.**

The extraction and use of minerals makes an essential contribution to the Scottish economy by providing important raw materials for manufacturing, construction, agriculture and other industries. The planning system should safeguard important mineral resources and ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet the demands of industry in a way that minimises the impacts of extraction on the environment and local communities.

### Policy 22: Minerals

- a) **Local development plans should support the 10-year landbank** at all times in the relevant market areas, whilst promoting sustainable resource management, safeguarding important workable mineral resources, which are of economic or conservation value, and take steps to ensure these are not sterilised by other types of development.
- b) Planning applications that seek to explore, develop and produce **fossil fuels** (excluding unconventional oil and gas) will not be supported other than in exceptional circumstances. Any such exceptions would need to demonstrate that the proposal is consistent with national policy on energy and targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- c) The Scottish Government does not support the development of **unconventional oil and gas in Scotland**. This means development connected to the onshore exploration, appraisal or production of coal bed methane or shale oil or shale gas using unconventional oil and gas extraction techniques, including hydraulic fracturing and dewatering for coal bed methane.
- d) Extraction criteria: Development proposals for the sustainable **extraction of aggregates** should be supported where they:
  - will not result in adverse impacts on biodiversity and the natural environment, sensitive habitats and the historic environment, as well as landscape and visual impacts;
  - provide an adequate buffer zone between sites and settlements taking account of the specific circumstances of individual proposals, including size, duration, location, method of working, topography, and the characteristics of the various environmental effects likely to arise;
  - demonstrate acceptable impacts (including cumulative impact) on any nearby homes, local communities and known sensitive receptors and designations;
  - demonstrate acceptable levels (including cumulative impact) of noise, dust, vibration and potential pollution of land, air and water;
  - minimise transport impacts through the number and length of lorry trips and by using rail or water transport wherever practical;
  - have appropriate mitigation plans in place for any adverse impacts;
  - include schemes for a high standard of restoration and aftercare and commitment that such work is undertaken at the earliest opportunity. As a further safeguard a range of [financial guarantee options](#) are available and the most effective solution should be considered and agreed on a site-by-site basis. Solutions should provide assurance and clarity over the amount and period of the guarantee and in particular, where it is a bond, the risks covered (including operator failure) and the triggers for calling in a bond, including payment terms.
- e) Development proposals for **borrow pits** should be supported where:
  - the proposal is tied to a specific project and is time-limited;
  - the operator is required to comply with the mineral extraction criteria; and
  - appropriate restoration proposals are enforceable.

### Policy 22: Minerals

**Q43: Do you agree that this policy will support the sustainable management of resources and minimise the impacts of extraction of minerals on communities and the environment?**

## Digital infrastructure

**We want our all of our places to be digitally connected.**

Digital connectivity has a central role to play in unlocking the potential of our places and the economy and in opening up more remote parts of Scotland for investment and population growth. This will play an increasingly important role in supporting essential services including healthcare and education. We want to ensure that no areas are left behind by closing the digital divide. The planning system should continue to support the roll-out of digital infrastructure across all of Scotland, ensuring that policies recognise the importance of future-proofing infrastructure provision whilst addressing impacts on local communities and the environment.

### Policy 23: Digital Infrastructure

- a) Local development plans should support the **delivery of digital infrastructure**, particularly in areas with gaps in connectivity and barriers to digital access.
- b) Development proposals should incorporate **appropriate, universal and futureproofed digital infrastructure**. This should be done in consultation with service providers.
- c) Development proposals that deliver **new digital services or provide technological improvements**, particularly in areas with no or low connectivity capacity, should be supported. Planning authorities should not question the need for the service to be provided where proposals are clearly aligned with fulfilling the delivery of local or national policy objectives which support the roll-out of digital infrastructure in areas with no or low connectivity where there are benefits of this connectivity for communities and the local economy.

- d) Development **proposals for telecommunications development** should be supported where:
  - the visual and amenity impact of the proposed development has been minimised through careful siting, design and where appropriate landscaping;
  - it has been demonstrated that all practicable options and alternative sites have been considered, including the possibility of using existing masts, structures and buildings and/or site sharing;
  - there is no physical obstruction to aerodrome operations, technical sites or existing transmitter/receiver facilities.
- e) Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect on the **operation of existing digital infrastructure** or on the delivery of strategic roll-out plans should not be supported unless appropriate mitigation measures can be provided.

### Policy 23: Digital infrastructure

**Q44: Do you agree that this policy ensures all of our places will be digitally connected?**



## Distinctive Places

### City, town, commercial and local centres

**We want our places to support low carbon, healthier urban living.**

Our cities and towns are a national asset and their centres bring together a wide range of functions and land uses. As a result of long term change, exacerbated by COVID-19, our city, town and local centres are facing significant and serious economic, environmental and societal challenges. The planning system should help them adapt and be vibrant, healthier, creative, enterprising, accessible and resilient places for people to live, learn, work, enjoy and visit and should identify opportunities to enhance town centres. To do this their role at the heart of place based strategies and in supporting 20 minute neighbourhoods must be recognised and supported. Planning should direct development to the most sustainable locations, that are accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes and provide communities with easy access to the goods and services they need.

#### Policy 24: Centres

- a) Local development plans should support **sustainable futures for city, town and local centres and identify a network of centres**. This should reflect the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods and the town centre vision, and take into account how they are connected by public transport and walking, wheeling and cycling.
- b) Development proposals that improve the **vitality and viability of city, town and local centres**, including by extending the mix of types of development, should be supported.

#### Policy 25: Retail

- a) Development proposals for **retail development which will generate significant footfall** in:
  - town centre sites should be supported;
  - edge-of-town centre or commercial centres, should not be supported unless they are explicitly supported by the development plan;
  - out-of-town locations should not be supported.
- b) Retail developments (whether new development, expansions or changes of use) should be of an appropriate scale and should have an **acceptable impact on the character and amenity of the area**. Consideration should be given to the location and design of retail stores, or click-and-collect locker pick up points, to best channel footfall and activity to benefit the place as a whole.
- c) Development proposals should not be supported if they contribute to the number and **clustering of some non-retail uses**, such as hot food takeaways, including permanently sited vans, betting offices and high interest moneylending premises, if the further provision of particular activities would undermine the character and amenity of centres or the health and wellbeing of centres and their communities, particularly in disadvantaged areas.
- d) When considering proposals for **neighbourhood shopping** planning authorities, developers, owners and occupiers should be flexible and realistic in applying the sequential approach, recognising the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods. Consideration should be given to where a retail proposal will alleviate a lack of convenience goods/fresh healthier food and drink provision, especially in disadvantaged or remoter areas.

- e) **In islands and rural areas, shops ancillary to other uses, such as farm shops that will help meet demand for fresh produce, craft shops and shops linked to petrol/service/charging stations** should be supported. They can serve a useful role, by providing new sources of jobs and services. The lack of public transport in some rural areas should not preclude small scale retail or service developments, where this would serve local needs. In assessing such proposals planning authorities should take account of the potential impact on nearby town and commercial centres or village/local shops; desirability of providing a service throughout the year; and likely impact of traffic generated and access and parking arrangements.

### Policy 26: Town centre first assessment

- a) Development proposals for other **uses which will generate significant footfall** (or in the case of drive-throughs, a significant number of visitors) including commercial leisure uses, offices, community and cultural facilities and, where appropriate, other public buildings such as libraries, education and healthcare facilities and public spaces where people can gather, should only be considered acceptable in out-of-centre locations if a town-centre first assessment demonstrates that:
- all town centre, edge of town centre and other commercial centre options have been sequentially assessed and discounted as unsuitable or unavailable;
  - the scale of development proposed is appropriate, and that the proposal cannot reasonably be altered or reduced in scale to allow it to be accommodated in a city, town or local centre;
- the impacts on existing town centres have been thoroughly assessed and there will be no significant adverse effect on the vitality and viability of existing town centres; and
  - the proposal will not adversely impact on action to tackle climate change by generating significant levels of additional journeys with reliance on the private car and the proposal fully complies with the transport policy on significant travel-generating uses.
- b) The town centre-first assessment should identify the potential **relationship of the proposed development with the network of centres** identified in the development plan. Where possible, developers should agree the data required with the planning authority and present information on areas of dispute in a succinct and comparable form. This should demonstrate the potential economic impact of development and any possible displacement effects including the net impact on jobs. It should also consider supply chains and whether local suppliers and workers will be a viable option and the environmental impact of transporting goods and of staff and visitors travelling to the location.
- c) To support the role of town centres in a 20 minute neighbourhood, the town centre first assessment and associated requirements should be applied flexibly and realistically for **community, education, health and social care and sport and leisure facilities** so that they are easily accessible to the communities that they are intended to serve. Consideration should be given to making more space available for walking, wheeling and cycling as an integral part of this.



## Policy 27: Town Centre Living

- a) **Town centre living should be encouraged and supported.** Planning authorities should seek to provide a proportion of their housing land requirements in city and town centres and be proactive in identifying opportunities.
- b) Development proposals for **new residential development within city/town centres** should be supported. If the development is for the reuse of a vacant building it should be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer viable.
- c) Development proposals for the **conversion, or reuse of vacant upper floors for residential use** should be supported.
- d) Development proposals for **residential use at ground floor level** should be supported where the planning authority is satisfied the proposal will:
- retain an attractive and appropriate frontage;
  - not adversely affect the vitality and viability of a shopping area or the wider town centre; and
  - not result in an undesirable concentration of uses, or ‘dead frontages’.

- e) Development proposals for city or town centre living should **ensure suitable residential amenity can be achieved.** This will require careful consideration if the proposed development is in the same built structure as:

- a hot food shop, amusement centre, amusement arcade, casino or licensed premises (with the exception of hotels, restaurants, cafés or off licences); and/or
- there is a common or shared access with licenced premises or other use likely to be detrimental to residential amenity;

If putting forward proposals for new homes in such cases, the onus will be on the developer to clearly demonstrate that suitable residential amenity can be achieved.

### Policies 24 to 27: Distinctive places

**Q45: Do you agree that these policies will ensure Scotland’s places will support low-carbon urban living?**

## Historic assets and places

**We want to protect and enhance our historic environment, and to support the reuse of redundant or neglected historic buildings.**

Our historic environment is important to many aspects of life, from defining the character of the places where we live and work, promoting a sense of belonging and cultural identity and encouraging civic participation to supporting the tourist economy. The planning system should protect and enhance historic environment assets and places and recognise their cultural heritage benefits and associated social, environmental and economic value to our national, regional and local economies, cultural identity, and for their potential to support health and wellbeing, the circular economy, and climate change adaptation.

### Policy 28: Historic Assets and Places

- a) **Local development plans and their spatial strategies should identify, protect and enhance locally, regionally, nationally and internationally valued historic assets and places.**
- b) In considering development proposals and projects with a potentially significant impact on **historic assets or places**, planning authorities should consider whether further and more detailed assessment is required to establish a shared understanding of the cultural significance of historic assets and places. This should then provide a sound basis for understanding the impact of any proposals for change. Development proposals should also be informed by Managing Change Guidance Notes published by Historic Environment Scotland.
- c) Development proposals for the **demolition of listed buildings or other works that adversely affect the special interest of a building or its setting** should not be supported. This should only be accepted in exceptional circumstances and where it has been adequately demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to retain, reuse and/or adapt the listed building.
- d) Development proposals for the **reuse, alteration or extension of a listed building** should only be supported where its character, special architectural or historic interest and setting are not adversely affected. Development proposals affecting the setting of a listed building should also not adversely affect its character, special architectural or historic interest.
- e) Development proposals should **preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas and their settings** by means of use, scale and massing, context, high quality design, suitable materials, careful layout and siting. Proposals should have regard to the character of the area as identified in the relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal/Management Plan (if available) and should respect the density, built form and layout and the architectural and historic character of the area.
- f) The **demolition of buildings in a conservation area** which make a positive contribution to its character should not be supported. Before demolition is considered, reasonable efforts should be made to retain, repair and reuse the building. In some cases, demolition may be considered acceptable, for example, if the building is of little townscape value, if its structural condition rules out its retention at reasonable cost, or if its form or location makes its reuse extremely difficult. In instances where demolition is to be followed by re-development within a conservation area, the consent to demolish should only be considered when there is an acceptable design and materials for the new building.
- g) Development proposals should ensure that **existing natural and built features which contribute to the character of the conservation area and/or its setting** are retained especially structures, boundary walls, railings, trees and hedges.
- h) **Scheduled monuments** are designated to secure their long-term protection in the national interest, in situ and as far as possible in the form they have come down to us. This helps to ensure their long-term

protection wherever possible. Development proposals which affect scheduled monuments should only be supported where they avoid direct impacts on scheduled monuments and any adverse impacts upon their setting, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. Where it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that there are exceptional circumstances, impacts on the monument or its setting should be minimised and mitigated as far as possible. Scheduled Monuments are designated by Historic Environment Scotland (HES) and regulated through their Scheduled Monument Consent process. Development management decisions should also be informed by HES's Scheduled Monument Consents Policy.

- i) Development proposals affecting sites within the **Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes** should only be supported where they protect, preserve and enhance such places and do not impact adversely upon the cultural significance, character and integrity of the site; nor upon important views to, from and within them; nor upon the setting of component features which contribute to their historical, architectural, archaeological, artistic, scenic, horticultural and nature conservation interest.
- j) Development proposals affecting sites within the **Inventory of Historic Battlefields** should protect and, where appropriate, enhance a battlefield's cultural significance, key landscape characteristics, physical remains and special qualities.
- k) Development proposals that extend offshore should not significantly hinder the preservation objectives of **Historic Marine Protected Areas**.
- l) Development proposals that affect a **World Heritage Site** or its setting should only be supported where their Outstanding Universal Value is protected and preserved.
- m) Development proposals that sensitively repair, **enhance and bring back into beneficial use historic environment assets identified as being at risk** should be supported. The Buildings At Risk Register (BARR) should be

used to inform and guide decision making and investment within the historic environment and other placemaking activities. Planning authorities with the support of Historic Environment Scotland are encouraged to use the BARR as a focus and catalyst for heritage regeneration, as well as an aid for greater understanding and appreciation of a place's historic environment.

- n) **Enabling development for historic assets or places that would otherwise be unacceptable**, should only be supported where it can be demonstrated that development will secure the future of a historic place or asset at risk of serious deterioration or loss and what is being proposed is the minimum necessary to secure its restoration, adaptation and long term future. The beneficial outcomes for the asset or place should be secured early in the phasing of the development and will be secured through conditions and/or legal agreements.
- o) Development proposals should avoid **adverse impacts on non-designated historic environment assets, areas and their setting**. Where impacts cannot be avoided they should be minimised and mitigated as far as possible. Planning authorities should protect and preserve these resources in situ wherever feasible. Where it has been demonstrated that retention is not possible, excavation, recording, analysis, archiving and publication may be required through the use of conditions or legal obligations.
- p) When **archaeological discoveries** are made in the course of development works, they should be reported to the planning authority to enable discussion on appropriate inspection, recording and mitigation measures.

#### **Policy 28: Historic assets and places**

**Q46: Do you agree that this policy will protect and enhance our historic environment, and support the reuse of redundant or neglected historic buildings?**

## Urban edges and the green belt

**We want to increase the density of our settlements, restore nature and promote local living by limiting urban expansion and using the land around our towns and cities wisely.**

Green belts can be used as a settlement management tool around Scotland's towns and cities to help to direct growth to the most appropriate, sustainable locations. Green belts can have a role in protecting and enhancing the character, landscape and natural setting and identity of settlements, providing outdoor access to green networks which link urban and rural areas and supporting nature networks. A green belt will not be necessary for most settlements, as other policies can provide an appropriate basis for directing development to the right locations, and protecting nature, landscapes and green networks.

### Policy 29: Urban edges

a) **Local development plans should consider using green belts where appropriate in some of the most accessible or pressured rural or peri-urban areas**, where there is significant danger of unsustainable growth in car-based commuting or suburbanisation of the countryside. In such circumstances green belts can provide a more restrictive approach to development, to benefit quality of life and environment in our cities and towns, increase urban density and minimise the need to travel using unsustainable modes. Green belts should be identified or reviewed when preparing plans with detailed boundaries clearly identified.

b) Development **proposals within a green belt designated within the local development plan should not be supported** unless for:

- development associated with agriculture, woodland creation, forestry and existing woodland (including community woodlands); residential accommodation required and designed for a worker in a primary industry within the immediate

vicinity of their place of employment where the presence of a worker is essential to the operation of the enterprise, or retired workers where there is no suitable alternative accommodation available;

- horticulture, including market gardening and directly connected retailing, as well as community growing;
- recreation, outdoor sport, leisure and tourism uses that are compatible with a countryside or natural setting; and developments that provide opportunities for access to the open countryside (including routes for active travel);
- flood risk management (such as development of blue and green infrastructure within a 'drainage catchment' to manage/mitigate flood risk and/or drainage issues);
- development meeting a national requirement or established need, if no other suitable site is available;
- essential infrastructure (such as digital communications infrastructure, telecoms infrastructure, electricity grid connections, transport proposals and travel networks identified in the local development plan, or new cemetery provision), where these cannot be accommodated anywhere other than the green belt;
- minerals operations and renewable energy developments (where located within an identified area of search);
- intensification of established uses, including extensions to an existing building where that is ancillary to the main use;
- the reuse, rehabilitation and conversion of historic environment assets; and
- one-for-one replacements of existing permanent houses currently in occupation.

- c) Development proposals in such cases will be required to provide a statement identifying the search area and the site options assessed, where applicable the details of the existing or proposed activity to which the proposal relates, and the **reasons as to why a green belt location is essential**. The primary consideration will be whether the development could instead be located on an alternative site outwith the green belt. Proposals should also support the qualities of successful places and safeguard historic environment assets and green and blue infrastructure. In particular all such applications should ensure the development:
- does not undermine the purpose of the green belt at that location;
  - is fully compatible with the surrounding established countryside and landscape character;
  - is of a scale, massing, external appearance, and uses materials that contribute to harmony with the visual character of the green belt;
  - has no unacceptable long-term impacts on the environmental quality of the green belt.
- d) Proposals on sites in the green belt for other types of development should not be supported.

### **Policy 29: Urban edges and the green belt**

**Q47: Do you agree that this policy will increase the density of our settlements, restore nature and promote local living by limiting urban expansion and using the land around our towns and cities wisely?**



## Vacant and derelict land and empty buildings

### We want to proactively enable the reuse of vacant and derelict land and buildings.

The reuse of vacant and derelict land and properties can contribute to climate change targets and support biodiversity, health and wellbeing improvements and resilient communities by providing much needed greenspace, growing spaces and other community benefits. Redevelopment for housing or businesses can also turn an under-utilised and latent asset into productive use and limit the need for urban expansion. The planning system should prioritise the use of vacant and derelict land and properties including supporting appropriate temporary uses where proposals for permanent development are unlikely to be imminent.

### Policy 30: Vacant and Derelict Land

- a) **Local development plans should seek to reuse vacant and derelict land and redundant buildings as a priority including in proposals to creatively and sustainably repurpose buildings and structures.**
- b) Planning applications for proposals that result in the **permanent or temporary reuse of vacant or derelict land and buildings** should be supported in principle.
- c) Proposals on **greenfield sites** should not be supported unless the site has been allocated for development or the proposal is explicitly supported by policies in the development plan, and there are no suitable brownfield alternatives.
- d) Where land is known or suspected to be **unstable or contaminated**, development proposals must be able to demonstrate that the land is, or can be made, safe and suitable for the proposed new use.
- e) Development proposals for the **reuse of existing buildings** should be supported, taking into account their suitability for conversion to other uses. Demolition should be regarded as the least preferred option.

### Policy 30: Vacant and derelict land

**Q48: Do you agree that this policy will help to proactively enable the reuse of vacant and derelict land and buildings?**

## Rural places

### We want our rural places to be vibrant and sustainable.

Scotland's diverse rural places provide valuable natural resources for key economic sectors, especially food and drink, but also energy, tourism, creative industries and life science whilst each area will face unique locational challenges often centred around depopulation and service provision. The planning system should encourage development that helps to support, sustain and grow rural areas and stimulate a greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy whilst safeguarding and growing the natural assets that underpin businesses and jobs. Rural economic activity, innovation, and diversification should be encouraged, while ensuring that the distinctive character of the rural area, the service function of small towns and natural assets and cultural heritage are safeguarded and enhanced.

### Policy 31: Rural places

- a) **Local development plans should set out proposals to support the sustainability and prosperity of rural communities and economies.** Plans should identify accessible, intermediate and remote areas across the mainland and islands. The spatial strategy should set out an appropriate approach to development in areas of pressure and decline, including proposals for future population growth. It should also be informed by an understanding of population change over time.
- b) Development proposals that support the **resettlement of previously inhabited areas** should be supported where the proposal is consistent with climate change mitigation targets.
- c) Development proposals in **rural areas** should be supported where the development will:
  - reflect the development pressures, environmental assets, and economic needs of the area;
  - address issues of need for a rural location and are suitably scaled, sited and designed to be in keeping with the rural character of the area;
  - reuse a redundant or under used building;
  - provide an appropriate use of a historic environment asset or is appropriate enabling development to secure the future of historic environment assets; or
  - reuse vacant and derelict land or brownfield where a return to a natural state is not likely; or
  - provide affordable housing on a small site that may not normally be used for housing where it can be shown that there is a significant unmet local need for affordable housing; or
  - contribute towards sustainable settlements and 20 minute neighbourhoods.
- d) Development proposals that contribute to the **viability, sustainability and diversity of the local economy** should be supported, including:
  - diversification of farms, crofts or other land use businesses, where use of good quality land for development is minimised and businesses viability is not adversely affected;
  - diversification of existing business;
  - production and processing facilities for local produce and materials, for example sawmills, or local food production;
  - essential community services;
  - critical infrastructure required to support transport or digital connectivity;
  - small scale developments that support new ways of working such as remote working, homeworking and community hubs;
  - improvement or restoration of the natural environment.

- e) Other than in accessible areas, or areas of pressure identified in local development plans, proposals for **new homes in rural areas outwith existing rural settlements** should be supported, where the proposal:
- is demonstrated to be necessary to support the sustainable management of a viable rural business or croft, and there is an essential need for a worker (including those taking majority control of a farm business), to live permanently at or near their place of work;
  - is a single home for the retirement succession of a viable farm holding;
  - would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling;
  - would represent the appropriate use of a cultural heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of historic environment assets;
  - would reuse redundant or disused buildings or reinstate a former dwelling house; or
  - involves redevelopment of derelict land or a brownfield where a return to a natural state is not likely.
- f) Development proposals in **accessible or pressured rural areas** should only be supported where they are consistent with the spatial strategy set out in the local development plan and do not lead to the unsustainable growth in long-distance car-based commuting or suburbanisation of the countryside.
- g) Development proposals in **remote rural areas**, where new development can often help to sustain fragile communities, should be supported where they:
- encourage sustainable development that will provide employment;
  - support and sustain fragile and dispersed communities for example through provision of new housing, and digital infrastructure;
  - include provision for small-scale housing and other development, taking account of environmental protection policies and addressing issues of location, access, siting, design and environmental impact.
- h) Development proposals on **prime agricultural land**, or land of lesser quality that is culturally or locally important for primary use, should not be supported except where it is essential:
- to meet an established need, for example for essential infrastructure, where no other suitable site is available; or
  - for small-scale development directly linked to a rural business, farm or croft; or essential worker for the rural business be able to live onsite; or
  - for the development of production and processing facilities, associated with the land produce, where no other local site is suitable; or
  - for the generation of energy from a renewable source or the extraction of minerals where this accords with other policy objectives and there is secure provision for restoration to return the land to its former status; and
  - can demonstrate that the layout and design of the proposal minimises the amount of good quality land that is required as far as possible.

### Policy 31: Rural places

**Q49: Do you agree that this policy will ensure that rural places can be vibrant and sustainable?**

## Natural places

### We want to protect and restore natural places.

Scotland's natural environment underpins our economy, health and wellbeing, biodiversity and climate resilience. We have a shared responsibility to manage our natural assets in a sustainable, regenerative way so they can continue to provide the essential benefits and services upon which people and businesses rely. The planning system should protect, restore and enhance Scotland's natural assets; make best use of nature-based solutions; and actively support our national commitment to reverse biodiversity loss, including by delivering positive effects for biodiversity from new developments and by securing and growing nature networks.

### Policy 32: Natural Places

- a) **Local development plans should identify and protect locally, regionally, nationally and internationally valued natural assets, landscapes, species and habitats.** These assets and areas should be safeguarded in the spatial strategy in a way which corresponds with the level of their statutory status. Spatial strategies should also be designed to better connect nature rich areas through establishing and growing nature networks to help protect and restore the biodiversity, ecosystems and natural processes in their area.
- b) Development proposals that would have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment including biodiversity objectives should not be supported.
- c) Development proposals likely to have a significant effect on an existing or proposed **European site** (designated as a Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) which is not directly connected with or necessary to their conservation management must be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of the implications for the conservation objectives. The relevant tests for such developments are set out in legislation.
- d) Development proposals that will affect a **National Park, National Scenic Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest or a National Nature Reserve** should only be supported where the objectives of designation and the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised; or any significant adverse effects on the qualities for which the area has been designated are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance. Planning decisions for development within National Parks must be consistent with the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000. All Ramsar sites are also European sites and/or Sites of Special Scientific Interest and are extended protection under the relevant statutory regimes.
- e) Development proposals that would be likely to have an adverse effect on a **protected species** should not be supported unless it meets the relevant statutory tests. If there is evidence to suggest that a protected species is present on site or may be affected by a proposed development, steps must be taken to establish their presence. The level of protection afforded by legislation must be factored into the planning and design of the development and any impacts must be fully considered prior to the determination of the application.
- f) Where non-native species are present on a site, or where planting is planned as part of a development, developers should take into account legislation on non-native species.
- g) Development proposals that affect a site designated as a **Local Nature Conservation Site or a Local Landscape Area** should be supported where development will not have significant adverse effects on the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been identified; or any such effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of local importance.

- h) Planning authorities should apply the **precautionary principle** where the impacts of a proposed development on nationally or internationally significant landscape or natural heritage assets are uncertain but there is sound evidence indicating that damage could occur. If there is any likelihood of damage, modifications to the proposal to eliminate the risk of such damage should be considered and implemented. If there is uncertainty, research, surveys or assessments to remove or reduce uncertainty should be undertaken.
- i) Development proposals for development in areas identified as **wild land** (per [Nature Scot Wild Land Areas map 2014](#)) should only be supported where:
- the proposed development cannot be reasonably located outside of the wild land area; or,
  - it is for small scale development directly linked to a rural business, croft or required to support a fragile population in a rural area; and,
  - a site based assessment of any significant effects on the qualities of the areas is undertaken, and use of siting, design or other mitigation minimises adverse impacts.

### Policy 32: Natural places

**Q50: Do you agree that this policy will protect and restore natural places?**



## Peat and carbon rich soils

### We want to protect carbon rich soils and preserve and restore peat.

Peat and carbon rich soils have a critical role to play in helping to achieve net zero by 2045 through sequestering and storing carbon. They also provide essential ecosystem services for nature, people and our economy and will play a key role in helping us to adapt to future climate change.

#### Policy 33: Soils

- a) **Local development plans should protect locally, regionally, nationally and internationally valued soils.**
- b) Development proposals should only be supported if they are designed in a way that minimises the amount of **disturbance to soils** on undeveloped land and protects them from damage including erosion or compaction.
- c) Development on **peatland, carbon rich soils and priority peatland habitat** should not be supported unless essential for:
  - essential infrastructure, where there is a locational need and no other site is suitable; or
  - the generation of energy from a renewable source, where the proposal supports a zero carbon electricity system and will maximise the function of the peatland during its operational life and in decommissioning; or
  - small scale development directly linked to a rural business, farm or croft; or
  - supporting a fragile population in a rural or island area; or
  - restoration of peatland.

A detailed site specific assessment will be required to identify depth, quality and stability of soil and the effects of the development on peatland, including the likely effects of development on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This should inform careful project design and ensure that adverse impacts, including emissions release, can be avoided and minimised through siting, design and appropriate mitigation.

Where an assessment identifies peat onsite, a peatland management plan will be required to demonstrate that any unnecessary disturbance, degradation or erosion has been avoided or minimised, including appropriate mitigation measures. Where peatland / peatland vegetation is displaced this must be reintegrated into a functional peatland system, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy and relevant biodiversity policies.

- d) Development proposals for **new commercial peat extraction, including extensions to existing sites**, should not be supported, unless:
  - the extracted peat is supporting an industry of national importance to Scotland, and
  - there is no reasonable substitute; and
  - the area of extraction is the minimum necessary and the proposal aims to retain a residual depth of peat of no less than one metre across the whole site; and
  - the time period for extraction is the minimum necessary; and the proposal is supported by a comprehensive site restoration plan which will return the area of extraction back to its original environmental status.

#### Policy 33: Peat and carbon rich soils

**Q51: Do you agree that this policy protects carbon rich soils and supports the preservation and restoration of peatlands?**

## Trees, woodland and forestry

### We want to expand woodland cover and protect existing woodland.

Trees and woodland have a critical role to play in helping to achieve net zero by 2045 through sequestering and storing carbon. They also provide essential ecosystem services for nature, people and our economy and will play a key role in helping us to adapt to future climate change and reversing biodiversity loss. Existing woodlands should be protected wherever possible.

#### Policy 34: Trees, Woodland and Forestry

- a) **Local development plans should identify and protect existing woodland and potential for its enhancement or expansion** to avoid habitat fragmentation and improve ecological connectivity, helping to support nature networks. The spatial strategy should identify and set out proposals for the development of forestry and woodlands in their area, in associated Forestry and Woodland Strategies, including their development, protection and enhancement, resilience to climate change, and the expansion of woodlands of a range of types to provide multiple benefits to the physical, cultural, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area, in accordance with The Right Tree in the Right Place guidance.
- b) Development proposals should not be supported where they would result in:
- any loss of **ancient woodlands**, ancient and veteran trees, or adverse impact on their ecological condition;
  - adverse impacts on **native woodlands, hedgerows and individual trees** of high biodiversity value or identified for protection in the Forestry and Woodland Strategy;
  - fragmenting or severing **woodland habitats**, unless mitigation measures are identified and implemented;
  - conflict with **Restocking Direction, Remedial Notice or Registered Notice to Comply** issued by the Scottish Government Forestry Regulator, Scottish Forestry.
- c) Development proposals involving **woodland removal** should only be permitted where it would achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits. Where woodland is removed in association with development, developers will generally be expected to provide compensatory planting.
- d) Where a planning application is proposed which includes an area **of existing woodland or land identified as being suitable for woodland creation** (under the FWS), opportunities to enhance and expand woodland onsite and integrate it into design, or create new woodlands in accordance with the Forestry and Woodland Strategy in association with development, should be considered.
- e) **Sustainably managed woodland** can bring a range of benefits and planning applications should be supported where they enhance, expand and improve woodland to deliver benefits such as carbon sequestration, improving air quality; enhancing energy efficiency and providing shelter and shade, providing opportunities for woodland play and recreation; improving biodiversity; helping prevent flooding; and other ecosystem services.

#### Policy 34: Trees, woodland and forestry

**Q52: Do you agree that this policy will expand woodland cover and protect existing woodland?**

## Coasts

**We want to help our coastal areas adapt to climate change and to support the sustainable development of coastal communities.**

Scotland's coastal areas and their communities support important economic sectors like tourism, outdoor recreation and food and drink but there is a need to address the long-term resilience of some communities against the impacts of climate change. The planning system should consider the long term impacts of climate change and provide a framework for protecting coastal communities and assets, including the potential for using nature-based solutions to support resilience.

### Policy 35: Coasts

- a) **Local development plan spatial strategies should consider how to adapt coastlines to the impacts of climate change.** Plans should recognise that rising sea levels and more extreme weather events resulting from climate change will potentially have a significant impact on coastal and islands areas, and that a precautionary approach to flood risk including by inundation should be taken. An appropriate strategy for development should be set out that reflects the diversity of coastal areas and communities. This should take account of opportunities to use nature-based solutions to improve the resilience of coastal communities and assets.
- b) Development proposals that require a **coastal location** should be supported in areas of developed shoreline where the proposal does not result in the need for further coastal protection measures and does not increase the risk to people of coastal flooding or coastal erosion and is anticipated to be supportable in the long term.
- c) Development proposals in **undeveloped coastal areas** should only be supported if the proposal is necessary to support the blue economy, net zero emissions or if it would contribute to the economic regeneration or wellbeing of communities whose livelihood depend on marine or coastal activities.

Proposals should not result in the need for further coastal protection measures, taking into account future sea level change or increase the risk to people of coastal flooding or coastal erosion, including through the loss of natural coastal defences including dune systems. Any such developments should also be designed to have a very short lifespan or be in a location that will remain supportable in the long term.

- d) Development proposals for **coastal defence measures** should be supported if:
  - the proposal is consistent with any relevant coastal or marine plans including the National Marine Plan and any Regional Marine Plans, Dynamic Coast maps or local coastal change adaptation plans (shoreline management plans) if available;
  - nature-based solutions are utilised and permit managed future coastal change wherever practical;
  - any in-perpetuity hard defense measures can be demonstrated to be necessary to protect essential assets.
- e) Where a design statement is submitted with any planning application that may impact on the coast it should address any appropriate issues regarding **long term coastal vulnerability and resilience**.

### Policy 35: Coasts

**Q53: Do you agree that this policy will help our coastal areas adapt to climate change and support the sustainable development of coastal communities?**

# Part 4 – Delivering Our Spatial Strategy

**Delivering our strategy and realising our collective ambitions requires collaborative action from the public and private sectors and wider communities. Actions will range across different scales and include a mix of strategic and project investments. It will be important to focus implementation and monitoring on delivering strategic actions and key developments.**

As we refine and work towards a final NPF4 we will work with a range of key partners including Scottish Government portfolios, the Infrastructure Delivery Group, the Scottish Futures Trust, local authorities, the key agencies and others to work up a detailed delivery programme to accompany the final NPF4. Our engagement programme will include a series of workshops to explore delivery in more detail.

We expect that our approach to delivery will draw on the following key delivery mechanisms:

## Aligning Resources

A collaborative approach that aligns interests will play a central role in delivering the spatial strategy. We will work with multiple parties to explore opportunities to align existing or planned public sector investment funding to support the delivery of the spatial strategy. We will apply the Place Principle that promotes better joined up actions to deliver improved outcomes for our places. Principally this will be through ‘anchor’ national programmes and projects outlined in our infrastructure investment plan (IIP) pipeline or those generated through strategic processes such as the second Strategic Transport Projects

Review 2 and the City Region Growth Deals. We will also strengthen the approach to targeting investment to the places where it will have the greatest impact and through our place based investment programme. Further information about which strategies and programmes our themes will align with and a list of potential funding programmes is available on our website at [www.transformingplanning.scot](http://www.transformingplanning.scot) and will be refined as we work on a delivery programme to accompany the final NPF4.

## Infrastructure First

A key element of planning reform centres around the need to implement an infrastructure first approach through the planning system. This began with recommendations from the independent review of the planning system (2016) which recognised the need for planning to ‘regain confidence’ in the delivery of infrastructure, with the need for greater co-ordination and collaboration in infrastructure investment decisions.

We have already made progress towards this by publishing this draft NPF4, which embeds the infrastructure first policy principle into national policy, which will be applied across land use decisions. This policy and forthcoming regulation and guidance will promote the infrastructure first approach through the preparation of local development plans and their associated delivery programmes, which will also implement the changes introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019. Together, these actions will help strengthen the link between the planning and delivery of infrastructure.



Once these key parts of the new system are in place, further work will be taken forward to support an infrastructure-first approach to the planning system. The Scottish Government will produce new guidance to support innovation to build a more delivery-focused approach to planning. We will also work with partners, including the Scottish Futures Trust and members of the Infrastructure Delivery Group, to identify how planning authorities can be better supported to take full account of infrastructure considerations to inform future development plan spatial strategies.

Once adopted, National Planning Framework 4 will also inform the next iteration of Scotland's Infrastructure Investment Plan, with the spatial priorities guiding future public sector investment.

## Delivery of National Developments

Our draft list of national developments have been selected on the basis of their potential to support delivery of the priorities sets out in our national spatial strategy. Many of these projects will be delivered by bringing together public and private sector investors. We will collectively work with key partners to ensure that our final approved list of designated national developments are supported and delivered. Further information about each national development is contained in Part 2.

## Development Plan Policy and Regional Spatial Strategies

Scotland's regions, working together, will play a key role in taking forward this strategy. Throughout Scotland places are coming together to develop Regional Economic Strategies underpinning City Region Growth Deals, Regional Economic Partnerships, Regional Land Use Partnerships, and to provide regional input to the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2. Building on this, and by guiding future Regional Spatial Strategies, we will take forward:

Our package of national planning policies (Part 3) which once adopted will be part of the statutory development plan will also help support our strategy. This will improve the predictability

and consistency of the Scottish planning system and set a clear direction for planning decisions that will aid delivery of our strategy.

Local development plans and new regional spatial strategies will also play a vital role in delivering the national strategy at a regional and local level. Planning authorities in particular have a pivotal role to play in enabling future investment and transforming our local places to meet our shared national strategic objectives.

New regional spatial strategies can identify areas for future population growth, align with regional economic strategies and identify key sectors and clusters for future development and investment. We expect them to set out a clear place-based spatial strategy that guides future development across different areas of Scotland. This will include identification of networks of regionally significant centres, growth and investment areas and ensuring that future development and infrastructure works with each area's assets and whilst conserving and enhancing nationally and regionally recognised natural and historic areas and assets.

In line with our national planning policies, local development plans have a key role to play, alongside local housing strategies, in taking forward the Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement for their area to confirm the amount and location of deliverable land for future housing development. This should be informed by an infrastructure first approach and supported by the accompanying local development plan delivery programme setting out who will be responsible for delivering what infrastructure and how it will be funded. Local development plans will also identify proposals for business development and investment as part of the spatial strategy and support a place based approach to future development. Key aspects include identifying networks of centres, protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and highlighting opportunities for the redevelopment of vacant and derelict land and supporting coastal communities. New guidance on local development plans will bridge the gap between our national strategy and implementation at a local level.



A range of other delivery mechanisms can help to support delivery. These include:

- **Local Place Plans.** Communities can play an active role in informing the local development plan by identifying their needs, preferences and proposals for new development in their area which supports liveable places. Communities may wish to consider the contribution of local places to economic success, and in particular opportunities for community wealth building. They may also wish to consider the contribution of local place to future development which reflects the strengths, assets and challenges of the community and its local environment. New regulations and guidance on local place plans have been brought forward as a priority as part of our planning reform programme to implement the provisions of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.
- **Planning obligations.** Planning obligations have a key role to play in mitigating the impacts of development and ensuring proposals are acceptable in planning terms – where the [relevant tests](#) are met, this can include contributions to, or provision of, infrastructure. We are taking forward a review of developer contributions to evaluate the effectiveness of existing mechanisms, which will inform our consideration of new approaches, taking into account the powers introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 to introduce an infrastructure levy of Scotland.
- **Land assembly.** Taking a positive and proactive approach to land assembly, including the use of [compulsory purchase powers](#), can help to achieve planning and placemaking objectives by supporting the delivery of a range of development, infrastructure and regeneration projects in the public interest.
- **Masterplan Consent Areas.** We will implement the provisions of the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 to introduce new regulations for Masterplan

consent areas. Partners will be able propose Masterplan Consent Areas that essentially secure up-front planning permission for development which accords with a detailed scheme. This can be used to support future investment in priority areas. We will consider how the Scottish Government can support the roll-out of masterplan areas in our future work programmes.

- **Investing in the planning service.** We recognise that our economic recovery will benefit from a better resourced planning service, and that the recent decline in the capacity of planning authorities needs to be addressed. As a first step, we will bring forward regulations for revised planning fees to help planning authorities to move towards full cost recovery and introduce proportionate, but realistic charging for additional services. We will continue to ensure that additional resources for authorities are linked with performance monitoring and improvement.

## Monitoring

The finalised and approved NPF4 will be accompanied by an effective monitoring process. As we work towards an adopted NPF4, we will work with a range of stakeholders to develop an appropriate monitoring programme for NPF4 that allows us to assess progress and take action where required. Monitoring will be required at both a national and local level and needs to be proportionate and effective.

An agreed monitoring programme will need to complement, and potentially combine, wider planning performance work including Planning Performance Frameworks and RTP1 work on monitoring outcomes, as well as reflecting national outcomes set out in the National Performance Framework. We will also consider the extent to which monitoring of NPF4 can be linked to the role of the National Planning Improvement Co-Ordinator.

**Q54: Do you agree with our proposed priorities for the delivery of the spatial strategy?**

**Q55: Do you have any other comments on the delivery of the spatial strategy?**

# Part 5 – Annexes

## Annex A – NPF4 Outcomes statement

This statement sets out how the Scottish Ministers consider that development will contribute to each of the outcomes identified in Section 3A(3)(c) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

### **(a) meeting the housing needs of people living in Scotland including, in particular, the housing needs for older people and disabled people**

Scottish Ministers consider that development of land supported by the policies and proposals in the NPF will contribute to this outcome by inclusion of a policy on Quality Homes that supports the delivery of high-quality, sustainable homes that meet the needs of people throughout their lives.

In particular, Policy 9 (c) notes that diverse needs should be taken into account across all areas and Policy 9 (f) states that proposals for new homes that improve affordability and choice should be supported and that an equalities led approach to addressing identified gaps in provision should be taken, which could include: accessible, adaptable and wheelchair accessible homes; a range of size of homes such as those for homes for older people; and other specialist groups.

Furthermore, Policy 7: Local Living states that development proposals that are consistent with the principles of 20 minute neighbourhoods should be supported. As part of this, consideration should be given to: affordable housing options, ability to age in place, housing diversity.

### **(b) improving the health and wellbeing of people living in Scotland**

Scottish Ministers consider that development of land supported by the policies and proposals in the NPF will contribute to this outcome by including policies that recognise that the natural environment is fundamental to our health and wellbeing from food growing, clean air and water, to the health and wellbeing benefits we get from being in nature.

Policy 14 notes the importance of Health and Wellbeing.

Built environment policies that support active and healthier lifestyles and encourage better health and wellbeing for everyone include active travel, green infrastructure, and 20 minute neighbourhoods. A policy has been introduced on lifelong health, wellbeing and safety that directs LDPs to tackle health inequalities and set out policies for air quality, noise and community food growing.

### **(c) increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland**

Scottish Ministers consider that development of land supported by the policies and proposals in the NPF will contribute to this outcome by requiring LDP's to set out an appropriate approach to development in areas of pressure and decline and include proposals for future population growth, informed by an understanding of population change over time.

In addition, rural policies support resettling and encourage development that will help to sustain and grow fragile communities providing employment and providing new housing. Development proposals that contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of rural economies are supported.

Specifically, Policy 31: Rural Places supports development proposals in rural areas and also makes reference to the importance of digital connectivity. This is reinforced by Policy 23: Digital Infrastructure which will support the delivery of digital infrastructure to support investment and population growth in rural areas.

### **(d) improving equality and eliminating discrimination**

Scottish Ministers consider that development of land supported by the policies and proposals in the NPF will contribute to this outcome by an overarching Policy 4: Human rights and equality which notes that development plans and planning decisions should seek to eliminate discrimination and promote equality and reduce disadvantage.

Further measures identified throughout the draft require action to address equality and discrimination along with a responsibility to consult and engage collaboratively and meaningfully to ensure everyone can engage in local development planning and the development decisions which affect them. A further example, Policy 5: Community wealth building, identifies a need to address economic disadvantage and inequality.

### **(e) meeting any targets relating to the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, within the meaning of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, contained in or set by virtue of that Act**

Scottish Ministers consider that development of land supported by the policies and proposals in the NPF will contribute to this outcome by placing the global climate emergency at the heart of our strategy which addresses both emissions reduction and adaptation. Policy 2: Climate emergency states that when considering all development proposals significant weight should be given to the Global Climate Emergency.

More generally, on emissions reduction our policies address: localisation and digital infrastructure to reduce the need to travel unsustainably; infrastructure first, energy efficiency and the circular economy to influence building related emissions; reuse of existing buildings, nature-based approaches and negative emissions technologies to support emissions capture and sequestration; electricity generation from renewable sources and support for appropriately emissions abated low carbon fuels to support emissions reduction from the energy needed for business, homes and communities. Our approach supports the green sectors and investment in communities and areas that would most benefit from it in support of a just transition to net zero.

**(f) securing positive effects for biodiversity.**

Scottish Ministers consider that development of land supported by the policies and proposals in the NPF will contribute to this outcome by ensuring that development secures positive effects for biodiversity, and that our approach to planning is designed to help halt and reverse biodiversity loss and to invest in nature-based solutions, benefiting people and nature.

Policy 3: Nature Crisis states that development plans and proposals that contribute to the enhancement of nature networks should be supported in principle. It also notes that adverse impacts of development proposals on the natural environment should be minimised through careful planning and design and that this should consider the need to reverse biodiversity loss.

The policy position makes clear that proposals for local development should only be supported if they include appropriate measures to enhance biodiversity and that development proposals that would have an unacceptable impact on the natural environment including biodiversity objectives should not be supported.

The aim of securing positive effects for biodiversity is also evident in policies on Blue and Green Infrastructure (Policy 12); Natural Places (Policy 32); and, Trees, Woodland and Forestry (Policy 34).

**Q56: Do you agree that the development measures identified will contribute to each of the outcomes identified in Section 3A(3)(c) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997?**

## Annex B – Housing numbers

This Annex sets out the Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) for each planning authority in Scotland. This is to meet the requirement of Section 3A(3)(d) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

Local, City Region and National Park Authority	Proposed MATHLR
Aberdeen City	7,000
Aberdeenshire	7,550
<b>Aberdeen City Region</b>	<b>14,550</b>
Angus	2,550
Fife (North)	1,700
Dundee City	4,200
Perth & Kinross	8,500
<b>Dundee City Region</b>	<b>16,950</b>
City of Edinburgh	41,300
East Lothian	6,400
Fife (Central and South)	5,650
Midlothian	8,050
West Lothian	9,600
Scottish Borders	4,800
<b>Edinburgh City Region</b>	<b>75,800</b>
East Dunbartonshire	2,500
East Renfrewshire	2,800
Glasgow City	21,350
Inverclyde	1,500
North Lanarkshire	7,350
Renfrewshire	4,900
South Lanarkshire	7,850
West Dunbartonshire	2,100
<b>Glasgow City Region</b>	<b>50,350</b>
Argyll & Bute	2,150
Clackmannanshire	1,500
Dumfries & Galloway	4,550
East Ayrshire	4,050
Eilean Siar	192
Falkirk	5,250




Local, City Region and National Park Authority	Proposed MATHLR
Highland	9,500
Moray	3,450
North Ayrshire	2,950
Orkney	1,600
Shetland	850
South Ayrshire	2,000
Stirling	3,500
Cairngorms National Park	850
Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park	300
<i>All Fife</i>	<i>7,350</i>

**Q57: Do you agree with the Minimum All-Tenure Housing Land Requirement (MATHLR) numbers identified above?**

## Annex C – Glossary of definitions

<b>20 minute neighbourhood</b>	A method of achieving connected and often compact neighbourhoods designed in such a way that people can meet the majority of their daily needs within a reasonable walk, wheel or cycle (within approx. 800m) of their home. The principle can be adjusted to include varying geographical scales from cities and urban environments, to rural and island communities. Housing would be planned together with local infrastructure including schools, community centres, local shops and health and social care to significantly reduce the need to use unsustainable methods of travel, to prioritise quality of life, help tackle inequalities, increase levels of health and wellbeing and respond to the climate emergency.
<b>Affordable home/affordable housing</b>	Housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on low incomes. This can include social rented, mid-market rented, shared-ownership, shared-equity, housing sold at discount (including plots for self-build), self-build plots and low-cost housing without subsidy.
<b>Agent of change principle</b>	Where an application is made for a residential development which is likely to be affected by noise from existing development such as, but not limited to, music venues, manufacturing or industrial sites, large retail outlets, etc, the applicant is required to demonstrate that they have assessed the potential impact on residents of the proposed residential development and that the proposed design incorporates appropriate measures to mitigate this impact.
<b>Appropriate Assessment</b>	Regulation 48 of The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, as amended, requires an authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for certain plans or projects likely to have a significant effect on a European site in Great Britain (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) to make an ‘appropriate assessment’ of the implications for the site in view of that site’s conservation objectives.
<b>Article 4 Direction</b>	Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992 gives the Scottish Government and planning authorities the power to remove permitted development rights by issuing a direction.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The variability in living organisms and the ecological complexes of which they are part. This includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems (UN Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992).
<b>Blue economy</b>	The Blue Economy is sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, while preserving the health of marine and coastal ecosystems.
<b>Blue infrastructure</b>	Water environment features within the natural and built environments that provide a range of ecosystem services. Blue features include rivers, lochs, wetlands, canals, other water courses, ponds, coastal and marine areas including beaches, porous paving, sustainable urban drainage systems and raingardens.

<b>Brownfield</b>	Land which has previously been developed. The term may cover vacant or derelict land, land occupied by redundant or unused buildings and developed land within the settlement boundary where further intensification of use is considered acceptable.
<b>Buildings at Risk Register</b>	The Buildings at Risk Register (BARR) for Scotland ( <a href="http://buildingsatrisk.org.uk">buildingsatrisk.org.uk</a> ) has been in operation since 1990 and highlights properties of architectural or historic merit that are considered to be at risk. Buildings at risk are not necessarily in poor condition, they may simply be standing empty with no clear future use or be threatened with demolition.
<b>Carbon sequestration</b>	The long-term removal, capture, or sequestration of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to slow or reverse atmospheric CO2 pollution and to mitigate or reverse climate change.
<b>Circular economy</b>	<p>A circular economy is one that is designed to reduce the demand for raw material in products; to encourage reuse, repair and manufacture by designing products and materials to last as long as possible in line with the waste hierarchy.</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Waste Hierarchy</p>
<b>Commercial centre</b>	Centres which have a more specific focus on retailing and/or leisure uses, such as shopping centres, commercial leisure developments, mixed retail and leisure developments, retail parks and factory outlet centres.
<b>Community</b>	A body of people. A community can be based on location (for example people who live or work in or use an area), common identity (for example a shared ethnicity, language, age) or common interest (for example the business community, amenity, sports, social or heritage groups).
<b>Conservation Area</b>	Conservation areas are areas which have special architectural or historic interest that are considered worthy of protection. To be designated as a conservation area it must meet the criteria of 'special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance', as set out in Section 61 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (Scotland) Act 1997.
<b>Community Hub</b>	A community hub is a <b>multipurpose centre</b> , such as a community centre, medical centre or school, that provides a range of high quality and cost effective services to the local community, with the potential to develop new services in response to changing community needs.
<b>Community facilities</b>	Buildings or services used by the community, including community halls, recreation centres, libraries, etc.

<b>Cultural significance</b>	Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance can be embodied in a place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.
<b>Cumulative impact</b>	Impact in combination with other development. That includes existing developments as appropriate, those which have permission, and valid applications which have not been determined. The weight attached to undetermined applications should reflect their position in the application process.
<b>Cumulative effects (in the context of the strategic transport network)</b>	The effect on the operational performance of transport networks of a number of developments in combination, recognising that the effects of a group of sites, or development over an area may need different mitigation when considered together than when considered individually.
<b>Custom-build housing</b>	Where a person tasks a house builder to tailor a home to their preferences before it is built.
<b>Decarbonisation</b>	Reducing the amount of gaseous carbon compounds released by buildings, activities or operations.
<b>Deliverable land</b>	Land that is free from constraints or there is a commitment to overcome constraints, and development is able to be delivered within the pipeline period identified for the site.
<b>Design Flood</b>	Magnitude of the flood adopted for the design of a site, usually defined in relation to the severity of the flood in terms of its return period.
<b>Ecosystem services</b>	The benefits people obtain from ecosystems.
<b>Egress (safe, flood free pedestrian access and egress)</b>	A route for the movement of people (not vehicles) of all abilities (on foot or with mobility assistance) between the development and a place of safety outwith the design flood level.
<b>Enabling development</b>	Enabling development is development that would not be in compliance with local and/or national planning policies, and not normally be permitted, except for the fact that it would secure the future conservation of a historic environment asset and the wider benefits outweigh the impacts of not adhering to those policies.
<b>Essential infrastructure (in a flood risk area for operational reasons)</b>	Essential transport infrastructure and essential utility infrastructure which may have to be located in a flood risk area for operational reasons. This includes electricity generating stations, power stations and grid and primary sub stations, water treatments works and sewage treatment works and wind turbines.
<b>Evidence report</b>	A supporting document to the Local Development Plan. An evidence report summarises the evidence base for those proposals and policies set out in the development plan and demonstrates that appropriate consultation has been undertaken and regard given to the views of the community.

<b>Flood</b>	The temporary covering by water from any source of land not normally covered by water, but not including the overflow of a sewage system.
<b>Flood plain</b>	The generally flat areas adjacent to a watercourse or the sea where water flows in time of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood prevention measures. The limits of a flood plain are defined by the peak water level of an appropriate return period event. See also Future functional flood plain.
<b>Flood risk</b>	The combination of the probability of a flood and the potential adverse consequences associated with a flood, for human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity.
<b>Forestry and Woodland Strategy</b>	A strategy prepared by a planning authority either singly or in collaboration with other planning authorities, which sets out policies and proposals for the development of forestry and woodlands in their area, according to the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019.
<b>Freeboard</b>	Freeboard is the difference between the design flood level and either the finished floor levels, solum level, or deck level of a specific development. It is a safety margin designed to allow for the uncertainties involved in flood estimation and physical factors that cannot be assessed and vary between sites e.g. post-construction settlement and wave action. In many cases an adequate freeboard allowance is 600mm above the design flood level <sup>4</sup> (in some situations a more detailed assessment of appropriate freeboard will need to be carried out).
<b>Future functional flood plain</b>	The areas of land where water flows in times of flood which should be safeguarded from further development because of their function as flood water storage areas. For planning purposes the future functional floodplain will generally have a greater than 0.5% (1:200) probability of flooding by 2080 <a href="https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps/FloodRisk">https://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmaps/FloodRisk</a>
<b>Gardens and designed landscapes</b>	The Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes recognises sites where garden grounds and landscapes have been intentionally laid out for artistic effect which are of national importance. The inventory is maintained by Historic Environment Scotland.
<b>Green infrastructure</b>	Features or spaces within the natural and built environments that provide a range of ecosystem services.
<b>Green networks</b>	Connected areas of green infrastructure and open space, that together form an integrated and multi-functional network.
<b>Green space</b>	Space which provides a recreational function, an amenity function, or aesthetic value to the public such as areas of: (a) grass, (b) trees, (c) other vegetation, (d) water, but not including agricultural or horticultural land.

<sup>4</sup> In line with CIRIA Guidance C624 Development and Flood Risk – Guidance for the Construction Industry 2004.



<b>Historic Battlefields</b>	The Inventory of Historic Battlefields recognises sites where a nationally important battle took place, soldiers fought and died, and where significant military activities happened. Their selection, assessment and designation is carried out by Historic Environment Scotland.
<b>Historic Environment</b>	The historic environment is ‘the physical evidence for human activity that connects people with place, linked with the associations we can see, feel and understand’.
<b>Historic Environment Asset</b>	An asset (or ‘historic asset’ or ‘heritage asset’) is a physical element of the historic environment – a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having cultural significance.
<b>Historic Marine Protected Areas</b>	Historic Marine Protected Areas are areas designated in Scottish territorial waters (0-12 miles) under the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 for the purpose of preserving marine assets of national importance. These can be wrecks of boats or aircraft or more scattered remains, such as groups of artefacts on the seabed from a submerged prehistoric landscape. Their designation is carried out by Marine Scotland based on advice from Historic Environment Scotland.
<b>Housing land requirement</b>	The amount of land identified in National Planning Framework for a 10-year period for each authority area that is to be identified within the pipeline of housing development.
<b>Huts</b>	A simple building used intermittently as recreational accommodation (ie. not a principal residence); having an internal floor area of no more than 30 square meters; constructed from low impact materials; generally not connected to mains water, electricity or sewerage; and built in such a way that it is removable with little or no trace at the end of its life. Huts may be built singly or in groups.
<b>Lifeline links</b>	A lifeline ferry service required in order for a community to be viable. Glossary of the Ferries Plan 2012.
<b>Listed building</b>	A listed building is a built structure of ‘special architectural or historic interest’. The term ‘building’ can be defined as ‘anything made by people’ such as houses, schools, factories, boundary walls, bridges and sculptures. They are designated by Historic Environment Scotland under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 and they maintain the list.
<b>Local housing strategy</b>	Local Housing Strategies were introduced as part of the <b>Housing (Scotland) Act 2001</b> to widen the strategic and enabling role for local authorities in relation to housing in their area. The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out the outcomes the Council and its partners want to achieve, and the actions they will take, to address housing need and demand in their area.
<b>Masterplan</b>	A strategic scheme within which a location is proposed to be regenerated or changed in order to meet a perceived challenge or strategic need.

<b>Masterplan consent area</b>	A masterplan consent area scheme can grant authorisation for the type of development set out in the scheme, within the geographic location (area) to which the scheme relates. In setting out the type of development that the scheme authorises, this can be either expressly specified or described as type of development that is specified in the scheme.
<b>Mitigation hierarchy</b>	The mitigation hierarchy indicates the order in which the impacts of development should be considered and addressed. These are: i. avoid – by removing the impact at the outset; ii. minimise – by reducing the impact; iii. restore – by repairing damaged habitats; iv. offset – by compensating for the residual impact that remains, with preference to on-site over off-site measures.
<b>Nature network</b>	A Nature Network is a joined-up system of places important for wild plants and animals, on land and at sea. It allows plants, animals, seeds, nutrients and water to move from place to place and enables the natural world to adapt to change, providing plants and animals with places to live, feed and breed. Effectively functioning nature networks will connect existing nature rich areas through habitat corridors, habitat ‘stepping stones’ or habitat restoration areas.
<b>Net zero</b>	Scotland has set a target to become ‘Net Zero’ by 2045. This means the amount of greenhouse gas emissions we put into the atmosphere and the amount we are able to take out will add up to zero.
<b>Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs)</b>	A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values (CBD, 2018).
<b>Open space</b>	Space within and on the edge of settlements comprising green space or civic areas such as squares, market places and other paved or hard landscaped areas with a civic function.
<b>Open Space Strategy</b>	An open space strategy is to set out a strategic framework of the planning authority’s policies and proposals as to the development, maintenance and use of green infrastructure in their district, including open spaces and green networks. It must contain: an audit of existing open space provision, an assessment of current and future requirements, and any other matter which the planning authority consider appropriate.
<b>NTS2 National Transport Strategy 2</b>	<p>The National Transport Strategy sets out an ambitious vision for Scotland’s transport system for the next 20 years. The vision is underpinned by four priorities: Reduces Inequalities, Takes Climate Action, Helps Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth and Improves our Health and Wellbeing, each with three associated outcomes.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out the strategic framework within which future decisions on investment will be made, including the sustainable travel and investment hierarchies.</p>

<b>Placemaking</b>	Placemaking is the process of creating good quality places that promotes people's health, happiness and wellbeing. It concerns the environment in which we live; the people that inhabit these spaces; and the quality of life that comes from the interaction of people and their surroundings. Placemaking is a collaborative approach involving the design and development of places over time, with people and communities central to the process.
<b>Remedial Notice (forestry)</b>	<p>A Remedial Notice is a notice issued by Scottish Ministers if it appears to them that a person has failed or is failing to comply with a condition on felling permission, a felling direction (including any condition imposed on it), a restocking direction (including any condition imposed on it), or a registered notice to comply.</p> <p>A Remedial Notice requires the person to take such steps or stop such activity as may be specified in the notice on order to comply with or otherwise give effect to the condition, direction or (as the case may be) registered notice to comply, and, to take steps or stop the activity within the period specified in the notice.</p>
<b>Restocking Direction</b>	A Restocking Direction is a notice issued by Scottish Ministers, in response to an unauthorised felling or a failure to comply with a continuing condition on a felling permission. A restocking direction requires an owner of the land on which the felled tree was located or the land to which the continuing condition relates, to stock the land in question.
<b>Self-build housing</b>	Where a person builds their own house or appoints their own builder.
<b>Self-provided housing</b>	Includes self-build housing, custom-build housing and collective build housing.
<b>Setting</b>	<p>Setting is more than the immediate surroundings of a site or building, and may be related to the function or use of a place, or how it was intended to fit into the landscape or townscape, the view from it or how it is seen from areas round about, or areas that are important to the protection of the place, site or building.</p> <p>'Setting' is the way the surroundings of a historic asset or place contribute to how it is understood, appreciated and experienced.</p>
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Scheduled monuments are archaeological sites or monuments of national importance that are legally protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. They are designated by Historic Environment Scotland who maintains the schedule.
<b>Short-term let</b>	<p>The use of a dwellinghouse (a residential house or flat) for rental by persons other than the owner for short periods and for financial or other remuneration.</p> <p>Typically includes properties advertised as being available for holiday let, although can apply to other situations.</p>
<b>Strategic Transport Network</b>	Includes the trunk road and rail networks. Its primary purpose is to provide the safe and efficient movement of strategic long-distance traffic between major centres, although in rural areas it also performs important local functions.

<b>Sustainable development</b>	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (The Brundtland Definition. Our Common Future, The World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987.)
<b>Sustainable Travel Hierarchy</b>	The National Transport Strategy 2 Sustainable Travel Hierarchy should be used in decision making by promoting walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and shared transport options in preference to single occupancy private car use for the movement of people. The efficient and sustainable freight transport for the movement of goods, particularly the shift from road to rail should also be promoted.
<b>Sustainable Investment Hierarchy</b>	The National Transport Strategy 2 Sustainable Investment Hierarchy will be used to inform future investment decisions and ensure transport options that focus on reducing inequalities and the need to travel unsustainably are prioritised. We also need to focus on maintaining and safely operating existing assets, taking due consideration of the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Investment promoting a range of measures, including innovative solutions, to make better use of existing capacity will then be considered, ensuring that existing transport networks and systems are fully optimised. Only following these steps should investment involving targeted infrastructure improvements be considered.
<b>Town Centre</b>	Centres which display: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a diverse mix of uses, including shopping;</li> <li>– a high level of accessibility;</li> <li>– qualities of character and identity which create a sense of place and further the wellbeing of communities;</li> <li>– wider economic and social activity during the day and in the evening; and</li> <li>– integration with residential areas.</li> </ul>
<b>Transport Appraisal</b>	A Transport Appraisal should inform the spatial strategy by appraising the impact of the potential spatial strategy options on the transport network, in line with Transport Scotland's DPMTAG guidance. It should determine the potential impacts of development on the transport network and mitigation to address adverse impacts, how they will be funded and who should deliver these. This should inform the Proposed Plan.
<b>Transport Assessment</b>	A Transport Assessment report should aim to provide supporting evidence to accompany the planning application to demonstrate that the development is sited in a location where current and likely future travel behaviour will produce a desired and predicted transport output. The TA should provide information in a suitable form to enable the local authority and, if necessary, Transport Scotland to assess and determine the planning application, seek any changes to the proposal and devise necessary planning conditions or negotiate planning or other legal agreements.

<b>Travel Plan</b>	A Travel Plan (TP) is a document that sets out a package of positive and complementary measures for the overall delivery of more sustainable travel patterns for a specific development. Their ability and success in influencing travel patterns is dependent upon the commitment of the developer or occupier of a development and the enforcement of travel plan monitoring by the local authority. Travel Plans should be implemented to encourage a shift in transport mode for those travelling to and from a development.
<b>Vacant and derelict land</b>	Vacant land – Previously developed land, without physical constraint, which the Planning Authority has indicated is currently available for redevelopment.  Derelict land – Previously developed land which is un-remediated and/or which has a constraint caused by its previous use which hampers its redevelopment or naturalisation.
<b>World Heritage Sites</b>	World Heritage Sites are internationally important cultural and/or natural heritage sites which have been inscribed for their ‘Outstanding Universal Value’. Though no additional statutory controls result from world heritage designation, the impact of proposed development upon the outstanding universal value, including its authenticity and integrity of a World Heritage Site and its setting, is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Their selection, assessment and designation is carried out by UNESCO based on advice from State Parties and the relevant devolved Government.

**Q58: Do you agree with the definitions set out above? Are there any other terms it would be useful to include in the glossary?**





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