



## **REPORT TO GARIOCH AREA COMMITTEE - 3 FEBRUARY 2015**

### **ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN SETTLEMENT STATEMENTS**

#### **1 Recommendations**

**The Committee is recommended to consider and recommend to Full Council that the Settlement Statements presented at Appendix 1 should be included in the Local Development Plan 2016.**

#### **2 Background / Discussion**

- 2.1 Aberdeenshire Council approved a large part of the proposed Local Development Plan at their meeting on the 22 January 2015. This included all matters relating to the policy content of the plan and the global housing and employment land allocations. Area Committees were required to consider "Settlement Statements" to be included as Appendix 8 of the plan. These have been extracted and the Garioch settlements are presented as **Appendix 1** of this report.
- 2.2 All settlement statements are set out in the same manner with headings relating to the vision that we have for the community (developed following consultation with Community Councils), land protected for other uses (taken from the open space audit, or land required for specific infrastructure), reference to natural and historic environment designations affecting the site, a statement on flood risk (from SEPA), a statement on infrastructure requirements (from other services, key agencies, and the Future Infrastructure Requirements for Services group), and statements on the development of sites themselves identifying the scale of allocation and providing a statement on the opportunities which could be used to create distinctive and localised places. Site allocations and the numbers of homes or hectares of employment land have been agreed by Council and are not open for debate. New sites should not be added and sites shown in the plan should not be removed.
- 2.3 All sites available for development are included in the plan as "opportunity sites". This includes sites that were allocated in the current plan, even if they have been granted planning permission but development has not started. This allows us to review whether historical development sites should be continued into the next plan and allows removal of sites where, despite receiving consent previously, there is no real prospect of them coming forward. Generally these are "long term constrained" sites where the constraints are either physical, lack of infrastructure (and an inability for development of the scale proposed to deliver this in an economic manner), or ownership constraints (we have no record of whom the owner is, or the owner has advised us through the Action Programme that they have no intention of offering the site up for development). This gives communities a clear vision of what land we are confident will be brought forward over the plan period. If development starts on an "opportunity site" prior to adoption of the plan we

would intend to delete the statements on placemaking associated with it and instead refer to the existence of the implemented consent. This approach has some difficulties associated with it (such as notifying neighbours of an approved but unimplemented proposal and giving an impression that there is an additional opportunity to have the site barred) but reflects the short life of a planning consent (3 years): Applications approved this year could lapse in 2017, and an opportunity is required to evaluate whether the site remains an appropriate development site for the next plan period as well.

- 2.5 Within the Garioch area the majority of sites are being “rolled forward” from the 2012 plan but, as discussed at the Area Committee meeting on 27 May 2014, the potential realignment of the A96 as part of a National programme to dual the whole route creates significant uncertainty for Inverurie. Traffic constraints result in no new sites being brought forward other than those in the current plan or those representing brownfield redevelopment opportunities. With sites for over 2000 houses available for construction in Inverurie, this is not foreseen to be a problem during the life of this plan.

### **3 Equalities, Financial and Staffing Implications**

- 3.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and there are no staffing or financial implications arising as a direct consequence of this report.
- 3.2 After consideration by relevant officers it was agreed that an Equality Impact Assessment was not required because the recommendation will not have a differential impact upon people with protected characteristics.

**Stephen Archer**  
**Director of Infrastructure Services**

Report prepared by: Piers Blaxter, Policy Team Leader  
Date: 16 December 2014