



**REPORT TO: PLANNING & REGULATORY SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
30 MAY 2017**

SUBJECT: MORAY HOUSING LAND AUDIT 2017

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE)**

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 This report summarises the housing land supply situation in Moray and asks the Committee to agree the final version of the Moray Housing Land Audit 2017.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (E) (2) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to the Review and Preparation of Strategic and Local Plans.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) note the housing land supply in Moray; and**
- (ii) agree the finalised Moray Housing Land Audit 2017 in Appendix 1**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) requires planning authorities to carry out regular monitoring of housing completions and to programme projected completions to demonstrate the availability of land for housing. The aim is to ensure that an ongoing effective supply of housing land is available. This is achieved through an annual Housing Land Audit prepared in consultation with Homes for Scotland, local developers, landowners and statutory consultees.
- 3.2 The SPP requires Local Development Plans (LDP) to allocate land on a range of sites to meet the housing land requirement up to year 10, providing effective sites in the initial phase for at least 5 years from the date of adoption. The aim is to maintain sufficient effective land for 5 years at all times. Beyond

year 10 and up to year 20, the LDP should provide an indication of the possible scale and location of the housing land requirement.

3.3 The audit has three key functions;-

- To demonstrate the availability of sufficient effective land to meet the strategic housing land requirement for a minimum of 5 years into the future;
- To provide a snapshot of the amount of land available for the construction of houses at any particular time; and
- As an information source for a variety of purposes including school roll forecasts, transport infrastructure provision and health care.

4. **PROPOSALS**

4.1 The information contained in the audit is important to monitor the LDP strategy for housing and the process enables adjustments to be made to address any issues arising.

4.2 The audit includes three categories of land supply;-

- Effective - land that can be developed for housing within the period under consideration, which is free from constraints in terms of ownership, physical, contamination, marketability, infrastructure and land use.
- Constrained - land that is considered to be constrained within the period under consideration and the constraint cannot easily be overcome in the short term.
- Established - the total housing land supply (effective added to constrained).

4.3 The draft audit was made available for consultation on the website and housebuilders and agents were notified, with comments invited by 27 April 2017. Three responses were received from Springfield Properties, Urban Animation on behalf of Altyre Estate and the Council's Transportation services. Comments were related to site ownership details and projected completions and these have all been addressed in the final audit.

4.4 The final audit is included as **Appendix 1**.

4.5 The final audit identifies that there is a 24.4 year established housing land supply (based on an annual housing land requirement identified in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment of 538 units). This consists of 7.6 years effective housing land (4094 units) and 16.8 years constrained housing land (9047 units).

- 4.6 The constrained housing land supply includes 5945 units identified as LONG term sites. Completions in 2016 were 334 compared with 337 in 2015, 309 in 2014, 315 in 2013, 342 in 2012, 418 in 2011 and 431 in 2010. The majority of completions in 2010-2015 were in Elgin, Forres and Buckie.
- 4.7 The Scottish Government Chief Planner, in a letter to all Heads of Planning on 20 October 2010 made it clear to Councils that he expects planning authorities to take account of economic circumstances in land audits, but also to respond by making every effort to maintain 5 year land supplies.
- 4.8 While the overall effective supply of housing land is very good and continues to meet the requirements of SPP, the projected house completions reflect the low supply of new housing in Keith and Speyside. Releasing additional land will not address this issue, but officers are looking at how existing sites can be made more effective as part of the preparation of the Moray LDP 2020.
- 4.9 To address shortfalls in supply, the Moray LDP 2015 contains a number of LONG term housing sites, which are embargoed from development within the period of the LDP unless specific triggers for their release are met. The triggers were agreed at the Planning and Regulatory Services Committee on 24 June 2015 (para 4 of minute refers).
- 4.10 The agreed triggers are set out in **Appendix 2**. If triggers 1, 2 or 3 are met then a recommendation would be made for a release of LONG term housing land, if considered appropriate.
- 4.11 One of the key aims identified in the Moray Economic Strategy and the LDP is to encourage population growth. A key aspect of achieving this is to ensure an appropriate and effective supply of housing land is available. The audit demonstrates that the LONG term approach taken in the Moray LDP 2015 has and will continue to ensure that Moray maintains a good overall supply of effective housing land in compliance with SPP requirements.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2015 - 2017**

The annual Housing Land Audit is a key part of monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of the LDP, which delivers Corporate and Community Planning objectives. Ensuring an effective supply of housing land and taking a longer term approach supports economic growth, delivers much needed housing, notably affordable housing and allows for longer term planning for community services and infrastructure including education and health facilities.

(b) Policy and Legal

The preparation of an annual Housing Land Audit is a key requirement of SPP to monitor the effectiveness of the Moray LDP and ensure an effective supply of housing land is maintained.

(c) Financial implications

None.

(d) Risk Implications

None.

(e) Staffing Implications

Preparation of an annual Housing Land Audit is part of the workload of the Planning and Development section.

(f) Property

None.

(g) Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

(h) Consultations

The Corporate Director (Economic Development Planning & Infrastructure), the Head of Development Services, the Legal Services Manager (Property & Contracts), the Equal Opportunities Officer, Senior Engineer Transport Development, the Transportation Manager, Lorraine Paisey (Principal Accountant), the Educational Resources Manager, the Housing Strategy and Development Manager, the Development Management Manager and Lissa Rowan (Committee Services Officer) have been consulted and their comments incorporated into the report.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 SPP requires planning authorities to carry out an annual Housing Land Audit to ensure there is a 5 year effective housing land supply available at all times.

6.2 The Moray LDP 2015 identifies housing designations under policies H1 and H2 to meet housing land requirements.

6.3 The Housing Land Audit 2017 identifies that there is a 7.6 year effective supply of housing land with a total 24.4 year established land supply.

6.4 Triggers to control the release of LONG term sites under the terms of Policy H2 have been agreed. An assessment of LONG term sites against these triggers has concluded that there is no need to release additional LONG term sites through the audit to meet the minimum housing land requirements of SPP.

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Background Papers:
Ref: