The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out the Scottish Government’s national spatial planning policy, which is incorporated into local authority strategic and local development plans. The NPF also sets out the Scottish Government's strategic development priorities over the next 20-30 years and can designate specific developments as ‘national developments’.

This briefing provides a short history of the National Planning Framework. It goes on to summarise the changes to the status of the NPF and parliamentary approval process introduced by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. It then briefly outlines key points from the development and parliamentary consideration of NPF2 and focuses on the development of NPF3 and the draft currently before Parliament.
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INTRODUCTION

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets out the Scottish Government’s national spatial planning policy, which is incorporated into local authority strategic and local development plans. The NPF also sets out the Scottish Government’s strategic development priorities over the next 20-30 years and can designate specific developments as ‘national developments’.

This briefing provides a short history of the National Planning Framework. It goes on to summarise the changes to the status of the NPF and parliamentary approval process introduced by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006. It then briefly outlines key points from the development and parliamentary consideration of NPF2 and focuses on the development of NPF3 and the draft currently before Parliament.

THE FIRST NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The first NPF was a non-statutory Scotland-wide planning policy document, published by the Scottish Executive on 1 April 2004. The role of the first NPF, as defined in its introduction, was:

“…to guide the spatial development of Scotland to 2025…It is not intended to be a prescriptive blueprint, but will be a material consideration in framing planning policy and making decisions on planning applications and appeals. It will be taken into account by the Executive and its agencies in policy and spending decisions.”

The first NPF provided a description of Scotland in 2004, identified key issues and drivers of change, set out a vision for Scottish development to 2025 and identified priorities and opportunities for different parts of the country.

The groundwork for the first NPF was laid when Sam Galbraith MSP, then Minister responsible for planning, announced in November 2000 that the Scottish Executive intended to undertake a review of strategic planning. The Scottish Executive published a consultation, entitled Review of Strategic Planning, in June 2001, which outlined proposals for changes to the strategic planning system. The responses to this consultation were analysed in the Review of Strategic Planning – Conclusions and Next Steps published in June 2002, this document also outlined the Executive’s initial proposals for changes to strategic planning. Among the proposals outlined was the publication of a non-statutory NPF, to cover the period up until 2025.

During the development of the NPF, the Executive held two series’ of stakeholder workshops. These workshops were supplemented by a series of bilateral meetings between the Executive and public and private sector groups and presentations to MSPs and councillors. There was no general public consultation on the first NPF.

As a non-statutory strategy document there was no legislative process for adopting the first NPF. The launch of the NPF was announced by Margaret Curran MSP, then Communities Minister, in a statement to Parliament on 1 April 2004 (Scottish Parliament 2004). The Parliament had no formal involvement in the development or adoption of the first NPF.
THE PLANNING ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006

The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 provides a statutory basis for the NPF. Section 1 of the 2006 Act describes the role of the NPF as:

“…to set out in broad terms how the Scottish Ministers consider that the development and use of land could and should occur.”

To do this the legislation requires the NPF to include a strategy for the spatial development of Scotland and a statement of Scottish Ministers priorities for that development. The NPF may also include information or policies on land use related matters and list any number of “national developments” along with Ministers’ justification as to why each national development merits that designation. The 2006 Act does not include a definition of what should constitute a national development, rather it is left to the discretion of Scottish Ministers to decide which developments fall into this category.

The 2006 Act also requires Scottish Ministers to publish a participation statement prior to the development or review of the NPF. This statement should set out the consultation process that will be followed throughout the development or review process.

Scottish Ministers can either update the NPF every five years or choose not to update it and publish an explanation as to why they have decided not to update it.

The NPF cannot be formally adopted by Scottish Ministers without it completing a 60 day period of parliamentary consideration. During this period the Scottish Parliament and/or its Committees will consider the contents of the draft NPF and, subject to Parliamentary agreement, publish report(s) or pass a resolution on the NPF. Scottish Ministers are required to “have regard to any resolution or report of, or any committee of, the Scottish Parliament made, during the period for Parliamentary consideration”.

The 2006 Act requires Scottish Ministers to exercise their NPF functions “…with the objective of contributing to sustainable development”.

THE SECOND NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (NPF2)

The development and parliamentary consideration of NPF2 is summarised below:

- Initial engagement on the scope and content of NPF2 ran from February 2007 until October 2007. Work during this period included the establishment of an NPF2 website, stakeholder meetings, seminars and the establishment of an advisory committee.
- The NPF2: Discussion Draft (Scottish Government 2008a) and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment were published on 9 January 2008, with consultation running until 15 April 2008. In addition to a call for written evidence the Scottish Government ran a series of five NPF2 conferences around the country, met with key stakeholders and held other participation events in an attempt to gather views on the content of NPF2.
- The National Planning Framework for Scotland 2: Proposed Framework (Scottish Government 2008b) was laid before Parliament on 12 December 2008, starting the 60 day parliamentary consideration of NPF2. The Local Government and Communities Committee were appointed as the lead Committee. The NPF2 was also considered by the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change (TICC) Committee and Energy, Economy and Tourism (EET) Committee.
• The Local Government and Communities Committee took oral evidence from Scottish Government planning officials, the Royal Town Planning Institute, Heads of Planning Scotland, Scottish Building Federation and the Ministers for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change over three meetings (17 December 2008, 14 January 2009 and 21 January 2009).

• The Local Government and Communities Committee published its Report on the National Planning Framework 2: Proposed Framework (Scottish Parliament 2009a) on 25 February 2009, which included contributions from the TICC and EET committees.

• A plenary debate (Scottish Parliament 2009b) on the Local Government and Communities Committee Report on NPF2 was held on 5 March 2009. A motion approving the Committee’s Report and suggesting several changes to the final NPF2 was agreed.


• The final version of NPF2 (Scottish Government 2009b) was published at the same time as the Scottish Government’s response to the Committee’s report on 25 June 2009.

NPF2 is accompanied by an action programme, which identifies 80 actions, and how they contribute to the NPF strategy. It also sets out milestones to be completed and the lead partners and delivery bodies that will deliver the actions. Progress on the NPF2 Action Programme is reported to Parliament annually. The most recent progress report was published in July 2012 and is available online.

A detailed description of the content, development and parliamentary scrutiny of NPF2 can be found in the SPICE Briefing “The National Planning Framework for Scotland 2” (Rehfisch 2009), which was published on 4 March 2009.

THE THIRD NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (NPF3)

PREPARATORY WORK ON NPF3

The Scottish Government (2012a) published the initial Participation Statement for NPF3 on 2 October 2012. The participation statement sets out how and when Scottish Ministers will consult during the development of NPF3. The Scottish Government (2012b) also issued a public Call for National Developments that could be included in NPF3 as national developments, this consultation closed on 14 December 2012. The call for national developments stated that, to be proposed national developments would be assessed against the following criteria:

Mandatory

• The development will be of more than regional significance.

National developments must also make a significant contribution to one or more of the following:

• An 80% reduction in emissions by 2050.
• Achieving the aims of the Zero Waste Plan.
• The Scottish Government’s Renewable Energy Targets.
• Skills development, reducing unemployment and job creation.
• Strengthening Scotland’s links with the rest of the world.
• Improving our digital, transport, utilities or green infrastructure networks.
• Adapting to or mitigating the effects of climate change.
• Improving the quality of the built or natural environment.
A total of 642 proposed national developments were submitted to the Scottish Government, of which 151 were considered suitable for consideration as a potential national development. The Scottish Government (2013a) published an analysis of these 151 proposed national developments in an Assessment of Proposed National Developments Report on 28 April 2013. This report makes it clear that even where a development meets the above criteria that “…national development status is only finally applied to those national developments that are considered suitable for designation and where the spatial strategy identifies that they are needed”

The National Planning Framework 3: Main Issues Report was published by the Scottish Government (2013b) on 30 April 2013, along with a number of accompanying documents. The draft was open for comments until 23 July 2013. This is the first time that a main issues report has been produced for the NPF, as opposed to the consultation draft that was produced for NPF2. Main issues reports are produced by planning authorities as a first formal consultation on the probable contents of a development plan and the Scottish Government has adopted a similar approach to the production of NPF3. Planning Circular 1/2009 Development Planning (Scottish Government 2009c), which is primarily aimed at local authority development plans and not specifically at the NPF, describes the purpose and contents of a main issues report as follows:

“This must set out the authority’s general proposals for development in the area and in particular proposals as to where development should and should not occur. The report must be sufficiently clear and precise to enable people to understand what is proposed and to make meaningful comments. The report must also contain one or more reasonable alternative sets of proposals. Finally, it must draw attention to the ways in which the favoured and alternative proposals differ from the spatial strategy of the existing approved Strategic Development Plan (if any).”

The following section focuses on the key issues raised in the NPF3 main issues report, including the list of national developments.

**NPF3: MAIN ISSUES REPORT – KEY ISSUES**

The Scottish Government sets out the spatial strategy for the development of Scotland in the NPF3 main issues report under four main headings:

- A low carbon place
- A natural place to invest
- A successful and sustainable place
- A connected place

Under each heading, the Scottish Government sets out its long term vision along with a series of shorter term opportunities which will assist in achieving that vision.

This is a considerable departure from the layout of NPF1 and NPF2, making direct comparisons between the documents difficult. However, it is important to remember that the NPF provides the spatial framework for many other Scottish Government policy documents – meaning that there is considerable policy continuity between each version of the NPF, regardless of how a particular version is set out. The main issues raised under each of these four headings are summarised below:
A low carbon place: NPF3 aims to support the delivery of the policies and proposals set out in the Report on Proposals and Policies 2, a draft of which was recently considered by the Scottish Parliament, with a particular focus on reducing energy demand and the development of carbon neutral heating systems. In addition, it provides guidance to planning authorities on the location of onshore wind farms, providing a spatial aspect to the new national policy on onshore wind farm location set out in the draft SPP, the NPF3 main issues report states:

“We see merit in indicating where, from a national perspective, there are known to be significant landscape constraints to large-scale onshore wind energy development.

2.18 Map 2 shows our finest and most iconic landscapes - National Parks and National Scenic Areas. The draft Scottish Planning Policy makes clear that the Scottish Government does not wish to see new wind farms in these areas. In addition to our nationally important, most scenic, landscapes, we also want to continue our strong protection for our wildest landscapes.”

Offshore wind also features in the NPF3 main issues report, although the NPF3 does not deal directly with offshore areas it does deal with the onshore infrastructure necessary to support its development and operation. Such infrastructure is suggested for inclusion as a national development.

The NPF3 main issues report supports the continued operation of fossil fuel powered electricity generating stations, and life extension of nuclear stations, supported by the development of carbon capture and storage facilities – which would be a world first at commercial scale.

In addition, the NPF3 main issues report supports the development of new electricity grid infrastructure to allow for the development of new renewable generating capacity, support for the further development of the oil and gas sector and the development of fabrication and support facilities for on and offshore renewable infrastructure.

A natural place to invest: NPF3 identifies Scotland’s key land assets through a series of maps, including agricultural land, forestry and woodland cover, peatland and international and national natural cultural designations and highlights work ongoing to protect and enhance these assets, along with a restatement of the commitment in the draft SPP “…that assets like prime quality agricultural land, woodland and deep peat should be protected, and that this protection should be balanced against the need for new development and infrastructure.”

There are then a series of questions as to how to support development in sensitive locations and suitable use of environmental assets. It then goes on to cover issues around the tourism sector, with a particular focus on long distance walking and cycling routes and other sustainable tourism measures. It then briefly covers mineral, waste and water and drainage issues

A successful and sustainable place: This section focuses on the delivery of sustainable economic growth, identifying key enterprise areas and industry sectors that the Scottish Government considers likely to be growth areas. It also commits the Scottish Government to closing the gap between the best and worst performing areas of Scotland and to protect and develop Scotland’s strategic infrastructure.

The section goes on to set out the Scottish Government’s priorities for the development of sustainable settlement strategies, with the focus being on the city regions covered by Strategic Development Plans. It also proposes the designation of Dundee Waterfront and Ravenscraig as national developments (see the section on national developments below for more information). It then raises the issue of areas of deprivation, using the term fragility, promotes
the development of green networks and sets out how planning can assist in overcoming health inequalities.

A key part of this section covers housing, which notes the significant fall in house building since the publication of NPF2, due to the economic crisis. The NPF3 main issues report is clear that there is no need to fundamentally change how housing need is assessed by local authorities and that no specific housing development, regardless of its size, should be designated as a national development – although housing may form part of certain national developments, e.g. Ravenscraig.

**A connected place:** This section focuses on the developments that are needed to decarbonise transport networks, encourage modal switch from car to walking, cycling and public transport and to reduce the need to travel through the development of super-fast broadband and mobile networks. A particular focus is on the development and improvement of intercity transport links. In addition, this section looks at how transport can support economic growth and how to improve links between urban and rural areas.

The final area of importance is the development of Scotland’s international transport hubs, five national developments cover ports, airports and high speed rail within Scotland, which may eventually connect with a UK high speed rail network.

**Areas of Co-ordinated Action**

This section highlights six areas of Scotland where co-ordinated action on issues such as transport, investment in particular industries, community development and environmental management are required to deliver the priorities set out in the NPF3 main issues report. These areas, and suggested priorities for action, are:

- **Orkney, Pentland Firth and Caithness:** A focus on marine renewable energy development, along with improving connections to the rest of Scotland and further afield, protecting the area’s cultural heritage and environment while promoting economic development.
- **Inverness and the Inner Moray Firth:** Support developments that enhance the role of Inverness as the Highland capital, including the A96 corridor and Inverness Airport, unlock benefits from renewable energy developments for the area’s ports and harbours, focus on key sectors such as food, drink and tourism while promoting environmental protection.
- **Aberdeen and the North East:** Support the area’s growth – particularly as a hub for the energy industry, with a focus on improving transport connections and ensuring adequate housing supply.
- **Firth of Forth:** Work to accommodate strong growth in the Edinburgh area while protecting the sensitive environment of the area. Support port and related transport developments while limiting/mitigating any negative impacts. Manage flood risks and support climate change adaptation.
- **Firth of Clyde:** Work to support the regeneration of this area, with a focus on infrastructure projects, green infrastructure and the regeneration of vacant and derelict land. Address the economic downturn through investment in emerging industries and take a long term approach to climate change adaptation.
- **South West Coast:** Improve connectivity with the rest of Scotland and focus on the development of key transport terminals, i.e. Prestwick Airport, Cairnryan and Hunterston ports. Support the development of tourism and recreation across the area.
National Developments

The national developments included in NPF2 and the NPF3 main issues report are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPF2</th>
<th>NPF3: Main Issues Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Replacement Forth Crossing</td>
<td>Onshore infrastructure for offshore renewable energy</td>
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<tr>
<td>West of Scotland strategic rail enhancements</td>
<td>Grid infrastructure enhancements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Speed Rail Link to London</td>
<td>Baseload capacity at existing sites: Longannet and Cockenzie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Airport Enhancements</td>
<td>Grangemouth and Peterhead carbon capture and storage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grangemouth Freight Hub</td>
<td>National cycling and walking network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional container capacity on the Forth</td>
<td>Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port developments at Loch Ryan</td>
<td>Central Scotland Green Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scapa Flow container transhipment facility</td>
<td>Dundee Waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Power Station and Transhipment hub at Hunterston</td>
<td>Ravenscraig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New non-nuclear baseload capacity at other existing power station sites</td>
<td>Aberdeen Harbour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity Grid Reinforcements</td>
<td>Grangemouth Investment Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Scotland Green Network</td>
<td>Freight capacity on the Forth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Scheme</td>
<td>High Speed Rail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Games Facilities and Infrastructure</td>
<td>Airport Enhancements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New national developments proposed in the NPF3 main issues report are **highlighted in yellow**. National developments included in NPF2 but not included in the NPF3 main issues report are **highlighted in blue**.

While the reasons for the removal of individual national developments are not set out in the NPF3 main issues report, there appear to be obvious reasons why they have been omitted – as set out below:

- Replacement Forth Crossing: This is currently under construction.
- West of Scotland strategic rail enhancements: The enhancements are either complete, e.g. infrastructure upgrades between Glasgow, Paisley and Ayrshire, or currently under construction, e.g. Edinburgh-Glasgow Improvement Programme.
- Port Developments at Loch Ryan: This development is effectively complete and Stena Line services are now operating from Loch Ryan.
- New Power Station and Transhipment hub at Hunterston: The developers have withdrawn proposals for this development following a legal challenge.
- Scapa Flow container transhipment facility: No progress to date.
- Commonwealth Games Facilities and Infrastructure: These are currently under construction or complete.

While they are no longer designated as National Developments, the development of new deep water port facilities at Hunterston and Scapa Flow are still included in the policy section of the main issues report as “longer-term opportunities”.

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9
The new national developments proposed in the NPF3 main issues report are generally in support of the Scottish Government’s renewable energy and climate change targets, i.e. onshore infrastructure for offshore renewable energy, Grangemouth and Peterhead carbon capture and storage, national cycling and walking network and Aberdeen Harbour, or identify new major development locations, i.e. Ravenscraig and Dundee Waterfront.

KEY ISSUES RAISED BY RESPONDENTS TO THE MAIN ISSUES REPORT

The Scottish Government commissioned Planning Aid for Scotland and Craigforth to undertake an Analysis of Consultation Responses (Scottish Government 2013c) to the NPF3 main issues report. This analysis was published on 28 October 2013. The following section briefly highlights key issues raised by respondents as assessed by the Scottish Government’s consultants. It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive overview of all the main issues raised, rather a summary of the major issues raised by a large number of respondents. Individual responses are available on the Scottish Government’s website (Scottish Government 2013d).

A total of 549 responses were received, of which 50% came from individuals, 17% from businesses, 16% from third sector organisations, 8% from local authorities and related organisations, 5% from professional and academic groups or companies, 4% from public bodies and 1% from politicians and political parties.  

The Analysis of Consultation Responses summarises the overall focus of responses received as follows:

“In terms of issues of concern, a significant number of respondents, many of whom were Individual Respondents, focused either on the impact of onshore wind developments, or on planned developments in the Grangemouth area. Other responses included calls for NPF3 to offer more or less support for a particular policy direction or to offer more or less support for a particular sector, industry or specific type of approach or initiative. Many responses also contained calls for greater recognition of, or for more support to be offered to, particular locations or specific initiatives.

The role of NPF3 itself was also the subject of a number of comments, some of which set out the respondents’ views on what the role of NPF3 should be, whilst others contained questions about, or sought clarification on, what the Scottish Government intends the role of NPF3 to be. The issue of where NPF3 sits within the wider Scottish planning system, along with how it relates to the Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) and a range of other national strategies, was a common theme to emerge from the analysis. In terms of the particular contribution NPF3 should make, suggestions included that it should be aspirational whilst still addressing current challenges and should provide the right conditions to ensure that national targets within the revised SPP can be delivered.

The complexity of both the pattern of responses and their content makes it difficult to give an overview of respondents’ overall views on the plans set out within the Main Issues Report. However, general observations which can be made are that a number of group respondents, including some Public Body, Local Authority, Professional Body and Third Sector Respondents, supported the general ‘direction of travel’ suggested by the Main Issues Report. While some particularly commended the ambition of the plans, most also raised issues they would like to see addressed, or changes they would like to see made, 

1 Figures add up to 101 rather than 100 due to rounding.
in the final NPF3. In some cases, these included significant changes to specific proposals.

Business respondents operating in a sector which is being ‘promoted’ through NPF3 also tended to be broadly supportive. However, many also expressed the hope that the final NPF3 will go further in supporting or promoting their sector than the Main Issues Report implies.

A large number of respondents, including many Individual Respondents but also some Group Respondents, raised profound objections to elements of the spatial policy described in the Main Issues Report. Many of these objections stemmed from concerns about the growth of the onshore and offshore wind industry and the impact this is having on Scotland’s landscape and communities, or related to plans to develop a new power station in Grangemouth. While many respondents took a ‘national perspective’, others focused on issues affecting their local neighbourhood or area. This applied to both Individual and Group Respondents.”

**AMBITION, OPPORTUNITY, PLACE: SCOTLAND’S THIRD NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK: PROPOSED FRAMEWORK**

The Scottish Government (2014a) laid *Ambition, Opportunity, Place: Scotland’s Third National Planning Framework: Proposed Framework* ("the proposed framework") in the Scottish Parliament on 14 January 2014. The following associated documents were published at the same time:

- An updated Participation Statement
- An update to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report
- A draft Action Programme
- A Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment
- The result of the Equality Impact Assessment

These documents are available on the [Scottish Government’s website](https://www.gov.scot).

The layout of the proposed framework is broadly similar to that of the main issues report, the key change being the removal of the “areas of co-ordinated action” section, with much of its content being incorporated into the Successful, Sustainable Place chapter of the proposed framework. This chapter includes sections which focus on regional action under a number of headings, i.e. Scotland’s seven city regions, vibrant rural areas, rural towns and coastal and island communities, which replaces the previous areas of co-ordinated action chapter.

The naming and ordering of the chapters has been changed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Issues Report</th>
<th>Proposed Framework</th>
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<tr>
<td>Our Spatial Strategy</td>
<td>Our Spatial Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Low Carbon Place</td>
<td>A Successful, Sustainable Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Natural Place to invest</td>
<td>A Low Carbon Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Successful, Sustainable Place</td>
<td>A Natural, Resilient Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Connected Place</td>
<td>A Connected Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas of Co-Ordinated Action</td>
<td>(Removed - content effectively included in other chapters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of Proposed National Developments</td>
<td>Delivery (National Developments and further actions)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key changes to the policies and proposals that were set out in the main issues report, plus details of any new policies or proposals, are outlined below under the chapter headings used in proposed framework:

**Our Spatial Strategy:** The overall vision for Scotland set out in the main issues report is effectively unchanged in the proposed framework, which is for a Scotland that is a:

- successful, sustainable place.
- low carbon place.
- natural, resilient place
- connected place

The order of these four aspects of the Scottish Government’s vision has been changed to place “a successful, sustainable place” at the head of the list, something that was requested by both Scottish Enterprise (2013) and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (2013) in their main issue report consultation responses.

The proposed framework expands on this vision, emphasising the flexibility of the framework and its ability to deliver sustainable growth and development for city regions, towns, rural areas, rural towns and villages and coasts and islands.

**A Successful, Sustainable Place:** While the structure of this chapter has changed considerably from that in the main issue report, as set out above, there is little change in the actual content. A key change is the removal of any direct reference to a “sustainable settlement strategy” in the proposed framework. The main issues report included the following:

“A sustainable settlement strategy
4.19 Over the long term, our aims are to ensure that new developments and changes to existing settlements are sustainably planned, to facilitate adaptation to climate change, and to reduce resource consumption and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Planning should support, not act as a barrier to, the behavioural change required to combat and adapt to climate change. We want to help people to make lower carbon transport choices and facilitate more sustainable service provision. Emerging technologies for renewable energy, meeting our heating needs and delivering improvements in digital connectivity, are also changing our understanding of what constitutes a sustainable community.”

While the proposed framework states:

“2.6 Our strategy aims to ensure that all parts of Scotland make best use of their assets to build a sustainable future. Planning will help to create high quality, diverse and sustainable places that promote well-being and attract investment.

2.7 Great places support vibrant, empowered communities, and attract and retain a skilled workforce. Emerging technologies for renewable energy and improved digital connectivity are changing our understanding of what constitutes a sustainable community. We must ensure that development facilitates adaptation to climate change, reduces resource consumption and lowers greenhouse gas emissions.”

Further detail is provided under the heading “A flexible strategy for diverse places” for distinctive city regions, vibrant rural areas, rural towns, coastal and island communities.

**A Low Carbon Place:** The layout of this section has also changed from that set out in the main issues report, reflecting the new focus on cities, towns, rural areas and island and coastal
communities. However, there is little change in policy. One addition is the identification of hydroelectric pump storage “to complement our ambitions for more renewable energy capacity” within the text of the chapter and the inclusion of pump storage as a new national development, with a particular focus on the Cruachan hydroelectric site as a location for further pump storage development. This change was suggested by Scottish Power, owners of the Cruachan Site, in its response (Scottish Power 2013) to the main issues report.

As outlined above, the location of onshore wind farms was a key issue raised by respondents to the main issues report, particularly in areas of landscape sensitivity. The Scottish Government stated in the main issues report that it “…did not wish to see” new onshore wind farms constructed in national parks or National Scenic Areas. This policy remains unchanged in the proposed framework. However, it is worth noting that the detail of this policy will be set out in the Scottish Planning Policy, which is not subject to formal parliamentary scrutiny and is currently under review by the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government published a Scottish Planning Policy: Scottish Government Position Statement (Scottish Government 2014b) alongside the proposed framework. This “…outlines the Scottish Government (SG) position in relation to key issues relevant to the review of the SPP as of January 2014. It is intended to support the Scottish Parliament’s consideration of the Proposed NPF3.”

A Natural, Resilient Place: Again, the layout of this chapter has been changed to reflect the focus on city regions, rural areas and coast and island communities. However, there is very little in the way of policy change, although the name of the chapter has been changed to emphasise a focus on resilience – particularly to the possible effects of climate change.

While the maps showing different land uses and classifications included in the main issues report have been removed this is simply a layout change and does not reflect any policy changes. The proposed framework does have a stronger focus on active travel in urban areas within this chapter, in addition to the national walking and cycling routes which are designated as a national development. The proposed framework states that “We need to begin to plan now for the kind of change to urban environments which is needed to support the vision in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS), and the forthcoming National Walking Strategy, for example by rolling out 20mph zones to more residential and shopping streets and further application of the principles set out in Designing Streets.”

A Connected Place: Again, the layout of this chapter has been changed to reflect the focus on cities, rural areas and island and coastal communities. However, there is no substantive policy change from that set out in the main issues report, although there is a greater emphasis on the development of broadband infrastructure in rural, coastal and island areas with a view to supporting economic growth and remote working.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The table below compares the national developments identified in the main issues report and the proposed framework:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NPF3: Main Issues Report</th>
<th>NPF3: Proposed Framework</th>
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<td>Aberdeen Harbour</td>
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<td>Airport Enhancements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baseload capacity at existing sites: Longannet and Cockenzie</td>
<td>Carbon Capture and Storage Network and Thermal Generation</td>
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<td>Central Scotland Green Network</td>
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<td>Dundee Waterfront</td>
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<td>Grangemouth and Peterhead carbon capture and storage</td>
<td>National Digital Fibre Network</td>
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<td>Grangemouth Investment Zone</td>
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<td>Grid infrastructure enhancements</td>
<td>High Voltage Electricity Transmission Network</td>
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<td>High Speed Rail</td>
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<td>Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Plan</td>
<td>Metropolitan Glasgow Strategic Drainage Partnership</td>
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<td>National cycling and walking network</td>
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<td>Onshore infrastructure for offshore renewable energy</td>
<td>Pumped hydroelectric storage</td>
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<td>Ravenscraig</td>
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Two new national developments have been introduced in the proposed framework, these are:

- **Pumped Hydroelectric Storage:** Any hydroelectric pumped storage development, whether new, expanded or refurbished, which exceeds 50MW would fall within this national development, regardless of its location within Scotland.

- **National Digital Fibre Network:** Any development which extends the broadband network, where the length of cabling exceeds eight kilometres, would fall within this national development, regardless of its location within Scotland.

The “Onshore infrastructure for offshore renewable energy” national development proposed in the main issues report has been removed from the list of national developments. The “Baseload capacity at existing Sites: Longannet and Cockenzie” and “Grangemouth and Peterhead carbon capture and storage” National developments proposed in the main issues report have been amalgamated into a single “Carbon Capture and Storage Network and Thermal Generation” national development.

The proposed framework does not outline the reasoning behind the changes to the list of national developments.
sources


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