

3. HOUSING



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3.1 HOUSING IN SETTLEMENTS

Structure Plan Context

<i>Key Objective</i>	<i>Relevant Policy or Proposal</i>
<i>To ensure that an adequate supply of effective housing land is identified to meet the needs of local communities.</i>	<i>Policy SP/DS2 - Development Strategy Policy SP/DS3 - Settlement Hierarchy Proposal SP/H1 - Housing Allocations - Settlements</i>

Local Plan Policy

POLICY LP/H1			
NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES			
<p>Settlement boundaries have been defined around each of the towns, villages, and rural settlements. These indicate the extent to which these settlements are allowed to expand during the Local Plan period, and all housing development related to the settlements should be contained within these boundaries. Planning permission will be granted for the development of appropriate housing on allocated sites within the settlement boundaries of the following towns, villages and rural settlements, as identified in the Local Plan Proposal Statements and Maps:</p>			
<u>Towns</u>	<u>Mainland Villages</u>	<u>Isles Villages</u>	<u>Rural Settlements</u>
Kirkwall Stromness	Dounby Evie Village Finstown Stenness Village St. Mary's The Palace	Balfour Village Brinyan Burray Village Kettletoft Lady Longhope Lyness Pierowall St. Margaret's Hope Whitehall	Burnside Evie School Greenfield Hamar Hillhead Houton Pier Hoy Lyron Madras Norseman Orphir Village Quoyloo Scapa Brae Twatt
<p>In addition, residential development will be also permitted within settlement boundaries if it comprises:</p>			
<p>a) infilling, conversion, small scale development, the use of neglected, derelict or underused land or the redevelopment of land or premises; or,</p>			
<p>b) 'backland' development (including sub-division of garden ground) and the site can accommodate the entire development, including an appropriate amount of open space, satisfactory vehicle and pedestrian access, and car parking.</p>			

Background and Issues

3.1.1 The Structure Plan envisages that new housing development in Orkney will largely be accommodated within existing settlements on the Mainland and linked South Isles. The development strategy identifies a hierarchy of settlements, and indicates the level of development appropriate to that settlement. In general, the levels of acceptable growth are greater in the towns where a wide range of services are provided as opposed to smaller settlements with a much-restricted range of services.

3.1.2 The policy aims to ensure that development occurs where it is acceptable in principle, and that ribbon development and urban sprawl are avoided. Pressure for housing development on the edges of particularly the towns and larger villages has resulted in areas of urban sprawl and ribbon development, and has “blurred” the distinction between the built-up areas and the countryside. Defining settlement boundaries should ensure that development is contained within recognised limits, in line with good planning practice.

3.1.3 Within existing settlement boundaries there will also be opportunities for new housing on smaller sites not identified on the Proposals Maps. “Windfall” developments include infill and backland developments and provide considerable opportunity to supplement housing land supply. The policy promotes the development of such sites within existing settlements where the opportunity arises, whilst paying due regard to the existing settlement pattern. Windfall housing developments can be diverse, and it is important that such developments demonstrate sound planning principles, do not cause unnecessary loss of amenity to surrounding land-uses, fit well into the built environment and can be readily serviced.

3.1.4 SEPA recommends that there should be a presumption against the use of septic tanks for the drainage of infill sites. These sites should only be developed if suitable sewerage infrastructure is in place.

Implementation and Monitoring

3.1.5 The policy will be implemented through the development control process. Applicants for planning permission must ensure that proposed housing development is within recognised settlement boundaries.

3.1.6 Monitoring of the policy will be undertaken by reviewing planning consents to assess whether or not development is being permitted outwith settlement boundaries.

3.2 HOUSING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Structure Plan Context

<i>Key Objective</i>	<i>Relevant Policy or Proposal</i>
<i>To ensure that an adequate supply of effective housing land is identified to meet the needs of local communities.</i>	<i>Policy SP/DS2 - Development Strategy Policy SP/DS3 - Settlement Hierarchy Policy SP/H2 - Housing in the Countryside</i>

Local Plan Policy

<p>POLICY LP/H2</p> <p>HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE</p> <p>On the Mainland and the linked South Isles, planning permission will be granted for the erection of a new dwelling house in the countryside provided it satisfies one of the following criteria:</p> <p>a) <u>Local Housing Areas</u></p> <p>it is located within one of the following local housing areas as identified in the Local Plan Proposal Statements and Maps;</p> <p>Annfield; Beaquoy; Bigswell; Bimbister; Cleat; Clestrain; Costa; Cumlaquoy; East Heddle; Gaudiesback; Halmyre; Hellia; Herston; Hillside; Howe Road; Lighthouse Park; Linnadale; Maggie Garson's Corner; Mirbister; Newark; Newhouse; North Dawn; Northside; Parkhill; Petertown; Quholm; Quoylanks; Redbraes; Scibbowick; Skiddy; Tingwall; Turrieday; Vinbrake; Whitecrest; Windbrake; Woodstock; Yinstay; or,</p> <p>b) <u>Replacement Housing</u></p> <p>it involves the replacement of a derelict or ruinous dwelling and provided it meets all of the following criteria:</p> <p>i. the existing house is neither worthy of retention nor capable of being restored or renovated at an economical cost and the site is within the ownership of the applicant;</p> <p>ii. the replacement takes place on the original site; or, where redevelopment of the original site would be impractical, or create an unacceptable landscape impact; a site in the close proximity of the existing dwelling;</p> <p>iii. the existing dwelling house is demolished and the material disposed of, or converted to some ancillary or alternative use, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority, prior to the occupation of the new dwelling; or,</p> <p>c) <u>Conversion of Redundant Buildings</u></p> <p>it involves the redevelopment and change of use of agricultural and other non-domestic buildings to residential use provided that:</p> <p>i. the building to be converted is truly redundant and unlikely to be needed for its previous use by virtue of its location or size; and,</p> <p>ii. the building is of permanent, substantial and sound construction and is proposed for reuse without major extension or complete reconstruction; or,</p> <p>d) <u>Housing for Rural Business</u></p>

it involves the erection of a new dwelling-house associated with a rural business and the development takes place in close proximity to that business on a site which is considered by the Planning Authority to minimise its impact on the landscape and which conserves or, where possible, enhances landscape quality within the prevalent landscape character types of the surrounding area; and provided that the applicant satisfies one of the following criteria:

- i. the dwelling is to be erected by a retiring farmer who is, at the time of application, both owner and occupier of the holding; either for him/herself, or for a close relative taking over the farm and requiring a house on the holding;
- ii. a full time farmer who owns a viable agricultural holding which has no farmhouse at present;
- iii. a full time worker (including an agricultural worker) in a rural business who requires a new house close to the business site in order to provide 24 hour supervision; and,
- iv. there is no opportunity to meet the applicant's needs through the application of either part a) "Local Housing Areas"; part b) "Replacement Housing; or part c) "Conversion of Redundant Buildings" or there is no existing permission on the holding, which has not yet been taken up or developed.

All applications under parts a), b), c), and d) of this policy must be consistent with the form, scale and character of indigenous development in the locality and landscape character types, and accord with the good practice identified in the guidance contained in PAN 36 "Siting and Design of New Housing in the Countryside" and the guidance which is provided in the advice booklet on "Siting and Design of Houses in Orkney's Countryside" published by Orkney Islands Council and any other relevant guidance.

Applications approved under part d) of this policy will normally be required to enter into a legally binding agreement under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 limiting occupation to a person solely, mainly or last working in the locality in agriculture or other rural business, or a widow or widower of such a person and to any resident dependants.

Background and Issues

3.2.1 Over the past 10 years there has been an explosion in the number of new houses built in the open countryside of Orkney. Many have been poorly sited, partly as a result of the rigid application of a 'mathematical' policy, and poorly designed for the open landscapes of the county. Past development has seen suburbanisation of parts of the countryside with the use of house designs and features more commonly associated with urban development. The need to promote a more sustainable settlement pattern together with a concern over the long term impact of poorly designed and sited new houses has promoted a change in the emphasis of policy. The rural settlements and public transport corridors are now seen as the optimal locations for new rural housing development to take place.

3.2.2 In addition, there is growing disquiet around the cost of providing the infrastructure to serve widespread rural housing development. Many side roads on the mainland are considered to be at capacity and insufficient to accommodate further development without considerable public investment. Such investment prejudices proactive development by Orkney Islands Council in the settlements.

3.2.3 Opportunities for greenfield rural housing development are limited to a selected number of local areas where the landscape and infrastructure are better able to cope with new development. Even in these areas, however, great attention to the siting and design of a new dwelling house is required to ensure that suburban styles do not predominate and landscape character is not prejudiced. A loose scatter of buildings in large plots within the local housing areas is deemed the most desirable distribution of buildings in these areas both in terms of landscape impact and to providing sufficient land for sustainable and self-

contained drainage systems. This is in accordance with the best practice advice contained within the Council's publication - "The Siting and Design of Houses in Orkney's Countryside."

3.2.4 Outwith the designated settlements and 'local housing areas' limited opportunity for reuse and redevelopment of derelict dwellings will ensure that the existing legacy of dereliction evident in some parts of the county is reduced. It is the intention that flexibility in the siting of the new property is permitted to mitigate the possible negative impacts of proposals whilst at the same time securing clearance of the original house, or its use for an ancillary purpose.

3.2.5 The Orkney Landscape Character Assessment (Land Use Consultants 1998) highlights that "the abandonment of very many traditional built homesteads and farm buildings is a commonplace image which is detrimental to the quality and character of most landscape types". An opportunity exists to facilitate the development of new rural housing in a pattern which mirrors the traditional settlement pattern and combats the negative image portrayed by derelict property by permitting redevelopment of these sites. Redevelopment of, and extension to (if required) the existing dwelling will always be preferred, but in many cases this may be uneconomic or impracticable. Current demands are for larger floor areas than those provided by traditional buildings, and demolition of the existing dwelling and the redevelopment of the site may be the only alternative.

3.2.6 Care must be taken to ensure that all new housing reflects the indigenous styles and forms of building and does not appear out of character or have an adverse landscape impact. New buildings on old sites may be inappropriate and flexibility is needed to allow optimal siting of new structures in the landscape. Many derelict sites have remained undeveloped because development in situ would cause inconvenience to agriculture. Flexibility to permit the moving of a site from an inappropriate or inconvenient site may therefore be required provided that negative landscape and visual impacts are minimised. To allow for such flexibility, pre-application discussions with the Planning Authority are encouraged.

3.2.7 Removal or conversion of the derelict building must be carried out to a high standard and will usually be conditioned as part of any consent granted. Where there is more than one derelict building on the site, consideration will be given to their removal or conversion so removing any blight to the landscape.

3.2.8 Changing agricultural practices, the use of bigger machinery and amalgamation of smaller units has left many agricultural buildings redundant and suitable for conversion to housing. Changing patterns of life have also left other buildings in the countryside redundant e.g. schools and churches. The policy enables sympathetic redevelopment of rural buildings while ensuring the retention of their character and protection of the surrounding landscape. The redevelopment of such buildings maintains the existing pattern of development within the landscape while giving new life to buildings with character and appeal.

3.2.9 Redevelopment will only be appropriate where the building is substantial, would accommodate conversion with a minimum of extension or alteration, and where it is no longer required for its original purpose. For example, mills may be appropriate for residential conversion while the conversion of a garage or workshop may not be considered appropriate.

3.2.10 Exceptions to the main rural housing policies can be made for those needing to reside close to their place of work and for those retiring and passing a farm business on to a close relative. In these cases, and if it is impossible to provide for their development needs through any other channel, it is acceptable to allow the applicant to erect a new dwelling house. The policy provides for the erection of a new dwelling for people retiring from a farming enterprise, or for a dwelling which is essential for the efficient running of a rural business enterprise where such a dwelling cannot be provided through conversion of a redundant building, redevelopment of an uninhabited or derelict house or development within designated local housing areas.

3.2.11 In order to avoid misuse of the policy, any planning permission granted in respect of retirement from the farm or employment on a farm would be subject to an agricultural

occupation condition together with a Section 75 agreement to ensure that the dwelling is kept available to meet this need. Application for removal of this condition can be made under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. Only one application under this policy will be permitted per holding. Similar conditions and legal agreements will be used to ensure that dwellings erected to provide on-site accommodation for a rural business are kept free for this use.

Definitions

3.2.12 The definition of a derelict dwelling house must be governed by common sense. It is not appropriate to set rigid standards to which a derelict dwelling must comply before becoming eligible for “one for one” replacement. Provided that a building exhibits features which make its previous use as a dwelling house obvious it will accord with the policy.

3.2.13 A “derelict” dwelling house in part b) of the policy is defined as one:

- which can be shown to have been used as a permanent dwelling house within the last 50 years past;
- retains features (such as a hearth, chimney breast and/or window openings) which, in the opinion of the Planning Authority, give the structure the appearance and character of a house and make it obvious as to the original use of the structure; and,
- has not undergone a subsequent change of use to agriculture.

3.2.14 In identifying an alternative “site in the close proximity of a derelict dwelling” in part b) of the policy the Planning Authority will have regard to the following:

- i. whether the proposed site will have less of an impact on the landscape than the original site;
- ii. whether it preserves or, where possible, enhances landscape quality within the prevalent landscape character types of the surrounding area;
- iii. the use of derelict, vacant or underused land;
- iv. the need to preserve the efficient operation of farming enterprises;
- v. existing settlement pattern; and,
- vi. distance to nearest public transport route.

3.2.15 For the avoidance of doubt, any dwelling house which has been modified to accommodate agricultural use such as the installation of stalls or widening of doorways to permit tractor access is considered to be an agricultural building and not a house under the terms of criteria b) - “Replacement Housing”.

3.2.16 A full-time farmer is defined as one whose main income is from the farming enterprise. Viability of the holding will be a function of size and farming enterprise and would be assessed by the independent advisor.

3.2.17 The policy is applicable to sites on the Mainland and linked South Isles.

Implementation and Monitoring

3.2.18 This policy will be implemented through the development control process. Applicants for planning permission will be required to show that intended developments meet the criteria of the policy, particularly those criteria relating to the optimal siting and design of the building to minimise landscape impact.

3.2.19 In terms of part c) of the policy - “Conversion of Redundant Buildings” - the applicant will be required to demonstrate that the building is truly redundant (on which point an

independent agricultural advisor may be asked to arbitrate); and whether it can be developed without significant reconstruction or unsympathetic extension.

3.2.20 Under part d) of the policy - "Housing for Rural Business" - applicants wishing a proposal to be considered under this criterion will have to justify to the Planning Authority, the need for the dwelling in the light of other development opportunities which may be available in the area. Determination of whether a rural business or farming enterprise has a need for a new house will be undertaken by an independent agricultural advisor approved by the Planning Authority at the developer's cost. In all cases the applicant will be required to demonstrate that all other means of providing accommodation have been investigated and proven to be unworkable before the proposal will be considered under this policy.

3.2.21 In all instances early discussion between the developer, the Planning Authority and Scottish Natural Heritage will be encouraged to ensure that proposed developments are appropriate in terms of form, scale and siting. In addition, to ensure that the historic dimension of the landscape is appropriately addressed, discussion between the developer and Orkney Archaeological Trust is recommended where new development in the local housing areas is planned.

3.2.22 Monitoring of this policy will be through the review of planning consents to assess:

- the proportion approved within the local housing areas ;
- the proportion involving either redevelopment of derelict residential properties or "one for one" replacement;
- the proportion of all residential consents involving redevelopment of redundant non-domestic buildings; and,
- the number and type of applications approved under the rural business exception.

3.3 ESTABLISHED HOUSING

Structure Plan Context

<i>Key Objective</i>	<i>Relevant Policy or Proposal</i>
<i>To ensure that an adequate supply of effective housing land is identified to meet the needs of local communities.</i>	<i>None.</i>

Local Plan Policy

<p>POLICY LP/H3</p> <p>ESTABLISHED HOUSING AREAS</p> <p>The predominantly residential character of existing housing areas will be safeguarded. Development, which is incompatible with the residential amenity of the area, will not be permitted.</p> <p>a) <u>House Extensions and Alterations</u></p> <p>Extensions and alterations to existing houses will normally be permitted provided that the appearance of the house and surrounding area is not adversely affected and in particular that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the occupants of existing neighbouring buildings experience no significant loss of amenity, for example loss of privacy or daylight as a result of overshadowing or overlooking; ii. it would not damage the character or amenity of a residential area; iii. it is of a scale, position and form compatible with the existing building and its surroundings; and, iv. it accords with the other relevant policies of the Local Plan. <p>b) <u>Sub-Division of Properties</u></p> <p>Applications for permission to subdivide existing residential properties into multiple independent units will be permitted provided that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the proposal would not have a serious detrimental effect on the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of the new unit(s) or of adjoining residential properties by reason of noise, adverse effect on privacy or excessive traffic congestion; ii. the proposed development would not be out of keeping with the general character of the area; and, iii. the proposed development would not be prejudicial to the comprehensive development of a larger area of which the proposed development forms a part. <p>Subdivision of detached rural properties to create additional, independent residences will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the building was originally designed to support multiple occupancy (e.g. servants' quarters) and the future use of the unit created will usually be controlled through Section 75 agreements to prevent part of the property from being sold separately.</p>
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Background and Issues

3.3.1 In order to protect the amenity and character of established housing areas, there will be a presumption in favour of retaining existing uses.

3.3.2 In areas covered by the policy, the Council will, in considering planning applications, try to ensure that proposals for development do not conflict with the residential character of the surrounding area. Development proposals should neither conflict with, nor detract from, the character, amenity and design of an area. The policy does not attempt to preclude appropriate new development, and is not intended solely to maintain the status quo. Shops, offices and business uses may be appropriate within residential areas provided that the predominantly residential use and character of the area is maintained. Development that could cause unacceptable levels of noise, smells, traffic movement or other adverse environmental impacts will not be permitted.

3.3.3 Extensions and alterations to houses may require planning permission depending on size, location and other factors, and advice on the need for such permission should be obtained from Planning staff within the Department of Development and Protective Services. Extensions or alterations to an existing house should be designed to appear as an integral part of the existing house. It is important that such developments do not cause unnecessary loss of amenity to surrounding land-uses, and respect the character of the existing development.

3.3.4 Subdivision of existing properties may result in changes to the internal layout and may have significant impacts on the amenity of surrounding properties. The policy allows for sub-divisions of existing residential properties without prejudicing the amenities of surrounding land users or the ability for comprehensive redevelopment to take place. In order to effect the subdivision, additional wall and roof openings may be required which could significantly affect the appearance of the building within the streetscape or landscape. In addition there may be increased need for car parking provision.

3.3.5 Subdivision of large rural properties is detrimental to their character and is therefore undesirable.

Implementation and Monitoring

3.3.6 This policy will be implemented through the development control process through the granting of planning permission in appropriate cases for extensions and alterations. Applicants for planning permission will be required to ensure that any conversion to buildings will have minimum impact on the amenity of the area.

3.3.7 This policy will be monitored through recording the number of applications approved which contravene the policy, or the number of planning applications for alterations to dwelling houses which have been refused for design and amenity reasons.

3.4 AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

Structure Plan Context

Key Objective	Relevant Policy or Proposal
To encourage the provision of affordable housing and housing for varying needs	Policy SP/H4 - Affordable Housing

Local Plan Policy

<p>POLICY LP/H4</p> <p>AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING</p> <p>The Council will continue to give support to the provision of affordable and special needs housing throughout Orkney, where a quantifiable local need for such housing has been identified. Such developments should generally occur on designated housing sites where a mix of tenures will often be encouraged. Additional proposals will be favourably considered where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) there is no site available within a designated settlement boundary; or, b) an alternative identified site would allow housing for the elderly, or for disabled groups, to be located near to established community services (e.g. shops and post offices); and, <p>the following guidance will also apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. the proportion of a site which the Council will expect to be used to satisfy affordable and special needs housing will generally be commensurate with the site size and the specific extent and nature of local needs; and, ii. the proposal must be accompanied by a detailed agreement which will satisfy the requirement that once built the residences created will be retained for the purpose intended, for the benefit of successive as well as initial occupiers.

Background and Issues

3.4.1 One of the key housing issues in Orkney is the issue of affordability for households on low incomes, the unemployed, the elderly and those with special needs. Orkney has the lowest percentage of social rented housing stock in the whole of Scotland. The Structure Plan commits the Council to identifying areas where there is a shortfall in the provision of affordable housing, as well as using planning agreements to secure such housing for the benefit of successive as well as initial occupants. The whole issue of affordable and special needs housing in Orkney will be better informed when the results of a Housing Needs Assessment currently being undertaken, are known.

3.4.2 This policy has been developed to (a) accommodate the housing needs of those who may be on a lower income and cannot afford to buy their own place to live, and (b) accommodate those who may have other special housing requirements. Demand for housing from other sectors such as the specialist and lower ends of the market also needs to be catered for. The terms “affordable” and “social” housing are generally taken to mean housing, both rented and owner occupied, which is subsidised financially and is therefore available for less than the normal market value to people unable to afford to enter the local housing market. Private developers tend not to develop lower cost housing due to marginal profits, and thus partnership schemes with for example, Orkney Housing Association and mixed housing developments need to be encouraged.

Implementation and Monitoring

3.4.3 The policy will be implemented through the encouragement of partnership working which enables the development of mixed housing in new developments. The Planning

Authority can assist in achieving this by ensuring a mix of housing types when granting planning permission for large-scale developments.

3.4.4 Monitoring of the policy will be undertaken by comparing the numbers of affordable and special needs houses granted planning permission as a percentage of the total number of houses granted permission.

3.5 SITING, DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Structure Plan Context

<i>Key Objective</i>	<i>Relevant Policy or Proposal</i>
<i>To establish and maintain a high standard of siting and design in relation to all housing development.</i>	<i>Policy SP/DS3 - Settlement Hierarchy Policy SP/H3 - Siting and Design of Housing in the Countryside</i>

Local Plan Policy

<p>POLICY LP/H5</p> <p>SITING, DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY</p> <p>The following criteria will apply to new housing design:</p> <p>a) ALL LOCATIONS – In order to maintain privacy, the minimum distance between any combination of windows to living rooms, dining rooms and/or bedrooms directly facing each other shall not normally be less than 21m. To provide adequate amenity space for the enjoyment of residents, the total footprint area of all buildings should not exceed one third of the total plot area.</p> <p>b) TOWNS – A greater diversity in design will prevail with the caveat that new development should not compromise the character or local distinctiveness of the area. New developments within major development sites will comply with the development brief for the area in terms of the building types, massing, boundary treatments and general design themes. In close to and town centre locations, densities of no fewer than 25 units/hectare will be required while in the remainder of the town 15 units/hectare will be acceptable.</p> <p>c) VILLAGES – A greater diversity in design will prevail with the caveat that new development should not compromise the character or local distinctiveness of the area. Use should be made of vernacular architectural features and appropriate materials to ensure developments contribute to, rather than erode local distinctiveness. Densities should match the surrounding area with a maximum of 15 units/hectare being permitted.</p> <p>d) RURAL SETTLEMENTS – Control of design will be imposed to maintain the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Use should be made of vernacular features and appropriate materials to enhance local distinctiveness and the character of the area. Densities should match the surrounding area with a maximum of 10 units/hectare being permitted.</p> <p>e) THE COUNTRYSIDE (including local housing areas) – Strict control of siting and design will be imposed to maintain the character and local distinctiveness of the area. Design should comply with the supplementary planning guidance contained in the Council’s publication ‘Siting and Design of Houses in Orkney’s Countryside’. Good use of vernacular building forms or features should be made, or design employed which is in sympathy to or has affinity with local vernacular architecture. Use of traditional or sympathetic materials and colours should be made to enhance local distinctiveness and the character of the area.</p>
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Background and Issues

3.5.1 The purpose of this policy is to promote and uphold the highest quality of design in new housing development throughout Orkney. The standards of design, layout and materials used in new development, redevelopment and alterations can have a significant impact on the character and amenity of the surrounding area, and every effort should be made to ensure new development enhances local distinctiveness and the character of the area.

Implementation and Monitoring

3.5.2 The Development and Protective Services Department have produced guidelines covering the siting and design of new housing in the Orkney landscape, and this should be used to guide development design, and promote high quality housing design.

3.5.3 Monitoring of this policy can be carried out through analysing how many planning applications are recommended for refusal on siting and design grounds.

3.6 OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

Structure Plan Context

<i>Key Objective</i>	<i>Relevant Policy or Proposal</i>
<i>To establish and maintain a high standard of siting and design in relation to all housing development.</i>	<i>Policy SP/DS3 - Settlement Hierarchy Policy SP/H3 - Siting and Design of Housing in the Countryside</i>

Local Plan Policy

<p>POLICY LP/H6</p> <p>OPEN SPACE STANDARDS FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS</p> <p>The Council will require the provision of open space, including children’s play space, in housing developments. The extent of provision should reflect the type and density of development, and should accord with the Council’s approved standards.</p> <p>In some cases, for example sheltered housing developments, it may be appropriate to forego the open space requirements of a development if the developer is willing to make an equivalent financial contribution to improving the quality of an adjacent play-area.</p> <p>In all cases the costs and responsibility for the maintenance of open spaces is the responsibility of the developer, unless a subsequent agreement can be reached with the Council, a residents or community association, or a third party. The Council, in consultation with developers and other bodies, will continue to seek the best mechanisms for funding the long term maintenance of open spaces.</p>
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Background and Issues

3.6.1 National planning policy and Planning Advice emphasises that an important outcome of the planning process is the quality of development on the ground. To this end the council is committed to ensuring the highest quality of development and associated amenities therein.

3.6.2 There are increasing numbers of dwellings built in Orkney that have no respect for the surrounding landscape and countryside. This results in developments that dominate the landscape and ribbon developments. The purpose of this policy is to uphold a high quality of design and associated open space in new development throughout Orkney, and secure standards of layout and design that have a significant impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area, whether in the towns and villages or in the countryside.

Implementation and Monitoring

3.6.3 It is important that all development proposals are specified to the highest standards of layout design and open space standards. The Development and Protective Services Department has produced guidelines covering the Siting and Design of New Housing in the Countryside and together with future design guidance, these guidelines will be used to promote better siting and open space arrangements for housing in the County.

3.6.4 Monitoring of this policy can be carried out through analysing how many planning applications are recommended for refusal on provision of open space grounds.

3.6.5 The Council will produce supplementary guidance on open space in line with the contents of the latest government advice and guidance.

3.7 RESIDENTIAL CARAVANS

Structure Plan Context

<i>Key Objective</i>	<i>Relevant Policy or Proposal</i>
None.	None.

Local Plan Policy

<p>POLICY LP/H7</p> <p>RESIDENTIAL CARAVANS</p> <p>a) <u>New Residential Caravan Sites</u></p> <p>The creation of new residential caravan sites or extensions to existing sites will not be permitted under any circumstances.</p> <p>b) <u>Existing Residential Caravan Sites</u></p> <p>The Council will aim to remove the need for residential caravan sites within Orkney over the next 10 years. In order to fulfil this aim, the Council will seek assistance from other bodies, such as the Orkney Housing Association and Orkney Islands Property Development Ltd. to assist in providing permanent re-housing opportunities.</p> <p>c) <u>Siting of Single Caravans</u></p> <p>The Council will resist the locating of single caravans for residential purposes outwith designated caravan sites. Exceptions to this will only be granted:</p> <p>i. on sites which have received full planning permission for a new dwelling house or complete renovation within the last two years. Such consents will be for a temporary period not exceeding 3 years while development is actively taking place. The caravan will not be permitted more than 1 month in advance of development and must be removed within 3 months of completion of the development. The caravan should not exceed 10 feet in width; or,</p> <p>ii. under exemptions of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960; or,</p> <p>iii. where the proposal is in connection with the rural housing location policy for a new house (Policy LP/H2) and where it is the intention of the developer to undertake a proportion of the building work themselves, where a temporary one-off 3 year permission would be granted with no grounds for renewal of this permission.</p> <p>The Council will also aim to ensure that all unauthorised residential caravans are removed, and disposed of.</p>

Background and Issues

3.7.1 Caravans are a temporary and insubstantial form of accommodation, which are not suited to the Orkney climate. They are a very poor substitute for a permanent dwelling house both in terms of their amenities and impact on the landscape. Residential caravans are not considered satisfactory as a means of permanent habitation, especially for families with children. However, residential caravans are still used as permanent residential accommodation in Orkney, with the main site being located in Kirkwall.

3.7.2 The purpose of this policy is to prevent the use of caravans as permanent residential accommodation. The long-term intention of the Council is to eliminate the use of caravans as permanent accommodation.

3.7.3 There is a limited supply of emergency housing stock available for rehousing persons displaced from unauthorised caravans. A planned and systematic approach to removing

unauthorised caravans is required to minimise hardship and avoid unacceptable burdens on the emergency housing stock. The mobile home site at the Crafty, Kirkwall will, however, be retained as long as the facility is required. The Council together with Orkney Housing Association will look at alternative methods of providing low cost housing for caravan residents.

3.7.4 In certain situations a case for the temporary use of caravans can be made e.g. in connection with house building in the countryside, but restriction of their use as permanent dwellings is justified.

Implementation and Monitoring

3.7.5 The policy will be implemented through the refusal of any applications received for the establishment of residential caravan sites or extensions to existing sites. The siting of single caravans for residential purposes will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, and enforcement action will be undertaken to ensure that unauthorised caravans are removed.

3.7.6 There is provision under the 1960 Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act for farms to operate up to 3 caravans for summer letting without the need for planning permission. These caravans may not be used as permanent residences without planning permission and must be removed from the land, and stored, during the winter season.

3.7.7 There are also an increasing number of unauthorised residential caravans often sited in unsuitable locations such as coastal car parks, to the severe detriment of the amenity of these areas. Measures should be taken to control the number of residential caravans being situated in unauthorised locations.

3.7.8 The policy will be monitored through measuring the number of applications for residential caravans refused planning permission, numbers and types of exceptions made for the siting of single caravans, and the number of enforcement actions taken against unauthorised developments.

