

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 16 APRIL 2024

LOCAL LANDSCAPE AREAS IN ANGUS

REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

1. ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of the designation of four Local Landscape Areas in Angus following a period of public consultation in order to protect and celebrate those landscapes within Angus which are special.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

Commitment to delivery of this project contributes to the following priorities in the Angus Council Plan 2023-2028.

Caring for our Place

- Take action to mitigate against climate change by delivering our Transition to Net Zero Action Plan: 2022 to 2030.
- Coordinate activity and develop a vision for our places, through relevant plans and strategies.
- Enhance and restore Angus Biodiversity, corporately and with a range of stakeholders.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Notes and gives due regard and consideration to the public consultation responses received on the proposed Local Landscape Areas in Angus and the draft Guidance for Local Landscapes;
- (ii) Agrees the Angus Council proposed responses to the consultation and the proposed changes to the Local Landscape Areas and draft Guidance for Local Landscapes as set out in Appendix 1;
- (iii) Approve the designation of Local Landscape Areas in Angus and the final Guidance report on Local Landscapes Areas in Angus as set out in Appendix 2; and
- (iv) Authorise the Chief Planner and Service Leader – Planning and Sustainable Growth to make any minor technical and typographical changes, as well as any presentational and graphical changes to the Local Landscape Areas in Angus Guidance report, where required,

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At a meeting of this Committee on 21 November 2023 (Report No. [318/23](#)), it was agreed to approve the proposed Local Landscape Areas in Angus, the draft Guidance for Local Landscapes, and to undertake a six week period of consultation.

5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 Public consultation on the proposed Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) and the draft Guidance took place between 22 November 2023 and 26 January 2024. The consultation was originally

scheduled to close on 2 January but was extended following communication from National Farmers Union Scotland - Angus. The consultation was promoted through the Engage Angus portal and regular posting on the council's social media channels. Both the proposed LLA's, Guidance and an interactive digital map showing the proposed LLAs were also available on Engage Angus.

5.2 There were 172 responses to consultation. Appendix 1 to this report summarises and groups the 172 responses into themes; provides the proposed responses from the Council; and any proposed changes to the LLAs and Guidance document. Appendix 3 sets out each individual response in detail, who made that response, respondent identification number, questions asked, and responses colour coded to the themes set out in Appendix 1. This has been created from data received on Engage Angus in relation to the consultation.

5.3 A brief summary of the responses to the consultation are set out below:

- High levels of support for the designation of all four proposed LLAs.
- Overall support for proposed LLA boundaries, but some would like boundaries substantially extended.
- Overall support for the proposed landscape guidance.
- Some want guidance in relation to tall structure strengthened.
- Small number considered the designations are either unnecessary or that they may be restrictive on businesses.
- Comments in relation to flooding on the River South Esk and coastal erosion.
- Comments relating to the status of the designation in relation to NPF4.

5.4 A summary of the proposed changes to the LLAs and Guidance, in response to these comments, are summarised within Paragraph 6.2 below.

6. PROPOSALS

6.1 Overall and there is generally strong support for the designations as proposed and it is considered that little change is required. As part of the consultation responses, some changes are proposed to the landscape guidance within the final report. These are summarised below for the information of Members:

- An incorrect reference to a designation within Perth & Kinross Council has been deleted.
- Several small text changes within The Angus Glens section have been made to address comments received from Cairngorms National Park Authority.
- Several small boundary changes have been carried out to correspond with geographic features where possible and to improve digital accuracy including a small amendment to the boundary has been included at Edzell to exclude the urban area.
- Appendix 4 (Statement of Participation) within the final report has been updated to include the summary of public consultation.

6.2 It is proposed that following public consultation, that the four Local Landscape Areas be designated, and the final Guidance report (Appendix 2) be approved.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Work has been undertaken within existing resources.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 NPF4 requires Local Development Plans to identify and protect locally, regionally, nationally and internationally important natural assets, on land and along coasts. Therefore, the identification of Local Landscape Areas is important to meet this requirement and provide the evidence base for the new Local Development Plan for Angus. If the proposed LLA's is not approved for designation by this committee meeting, along with the Guidance, the resulting delay may leave a gap in our evidence base and will not accord with the requirements for NPF4. Without a designated suite of Local Landscape Areas, there would be increased risk that the special qualities of these areas would be eroded through inappropriate development or land use changes.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 9.1 In April 2018, after undertaking a screening process, the Local Landscape Area document was determined, in consultation with Nature Scot, SEPA and Historic Environment Scotland, to be unlikely to have significant environmental impacts and therefore no further SEA process was required.

Carbon and Biodiversity

- 9.2 The landscape guidance contained within the final report will lead to increased biodiversity and an increase in sequestered carbon through woodland and forest expansion.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

- 10.1 A screening assessment has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for the following reason:

- It does not impact on people.

11. CONSULTATION

- 11.1 In the preparation of this report consultation has been undertaken with the Director of Finance and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services. Consultation has taken place with NatureScot as part of the steering group overseeing the study. In addition, a public engagement exercise was carried out prior to the consultation draft being prepared. The Guidance contained within the study has been consulted upon and reviewed by Development Management within the Planning Service.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Local Landscape Areas in Angus – Summary of Public Consultation
Appendix 2: Local Landscape Areas in Angus – Final Report