

South Ayrshire Housing Need and Demand Assessment 2015

Legal and Policy Context

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Legal and Policy Context

Legal Context

1. Both the LHS and Local Plan are legislative requirements:

[The Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#) places a responsibility on Local Authorities to prepare a [Local Housing Strategy](#) (LHS) supported by an assessment of housing need and demand and the provision of related services.

The [Town and Country Planning \(Scotland\) Act 1997](#) (as amended), requires Local and Strategic Planning Authorities to plan for land use in their area, including the allocation of land for housing.

2. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 introduced changes to policy areas which will affect housing supply within South Ayrshire either directly or indirectly:
 1. Changes affecting the allocation and management of social sector tenancies;
 2. Abolition of the Right to Buy;
 3. Changes affecting the private rented sector including changes to the tenancy regime, statutory regulation of letting agents, introduction of the right for a third party to apply to the Private Rented Housing Panel, and development of a Housing Tribunal to deal with civil private sector housing disputes outwith court;
 4. Strengthening of the license regime for mobile homes sites with permanent residents;
 5. Strengthening local authority powers to pay missing shares where the majority of owners have agreed to carry out work but one or more of the owners has not paid their share;
 6. Amending the '20 year rule' on loans etc. So that it does not affect private housing such as the new Help to Buy (Scotland) shared equity scheme;
 7. Strengthening the Scottish Housing Regulator's powers to transfer the assets of an RSL at below market value without consulting tenants or lenders ; and
 8. Amending the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 so that pre-cast concrete houses are no longer termed as defective.

National Policy

Homes Fit for the 21st Century

3. 'Homes Fit for the 21st Century' (2011) is the Scottish Government's Strategy and Action Plan for Housing up to 2020.
4. The strategy outlined four key targets:
 - Abolition of priority need by December 2012;
 - SHQS compliance by April 2015;
 - Abolition of Fuel Poverty (so far is reasonably practicable) by November 2016; and
 - A 12% reduction in energy consumption and a 42% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by December 2020.

5. To achieve these targets the Scottish Government set out two strategic objectives:

- To build new, high quality, affordable homes (including social housing) to meet current demand as well as future demand arising from our growing and ageing population; and
- To maximise sustainable housing options across all tenures, including housing options for people on lower incomes, and to significantly improve the quality of the existing housing stock and the places we create.

Scottish Planning Document

6. The Scottish Government's updated Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014) sets out three main guiding principles;
 - Planning improves quality of life by helping to create well-designed sustainable places for Scotland's people;
 - Planning protects and enhances Scotland's built and natural environments as valued national assets;
 - Planning supports sustainable economic growth and the transition to a low carbon economy.
7. These policy principles emphasise that the planning system should identify a generous supply of land for each housing market area within the plan area to support the achievement of housing supply targets across all housing tenures.
8. The planning document also refers to the identification of functional housing market areas by local authorities, by forming Housing Market Partnerships comprising of housing and planning officials within local authorities, together with Registered Social Landlords, developers, and other specialist interest groups.
9. In terms of affordable housing it is broadly defined as housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes.
10. The definition encompasses a range of housing options, including social sector rented accommodation, mid-market rented accommodation, shared ownership housing, shared equity housing, and low cost housing without subsidy.

Local Policy

South Ayrshire Single Outcome Agreement

11. The South Ayrshire Single Outcome Agreement 2013 – 2023 commits South Ayrshire Council and its partners to the vision:

“to establish South Ayrshire as the most dynamic, inclusive and sustainable community in Scotland”

12. Included in the South Ayrshire Single Outcome Agreement 2013 – 2023 are seven visionary outcomes:
 - South Ayrshire has an enterprising and sustainable economy
 - People in South Ayrshire are skilled, confident and successful in accessing employment
 - Our children and young people in South Ayrshire have the best possible life chances
 - People in South Ayrshire enjoy the best possible health
 - Older people in South Ayrshire enjoy full and positive lives within their own communities
 - Communities in South Ayrshire are stronger and safer
 - South Ayrshire is clean, attractive and delivering a sustainable low carbon future

South Ayrshire Council Plan 2014 – 2017

13. The [South Ayrshire Council Plan 2014 - 2017](#) confirms the Council's commitment to the South Ayrshire Single Outcome Agreement 2013 – 2023 and outlines six strategic objectives which are that South Ayrshire Council will work to maximise the potential of:
- Our local economy
 - Our children and families
 - Our adults and older people
 - Our communities
 - Our environment; and
 - Improve the way that we work as a Council.
14. The Council also outlined the themed approaches that will be adopted:
- Integration: working with our partners to provide services that are effective, flexible and affordable
 - Early intervention and prevention: reshaping services by assessing what delivers the greatest and earliest targeted impact on the major issues that face our communities
 - Empowerment: enabling and empowering communities to work with us to design and deliver local solutions that will ease future demands for services and lead to positive outcomes for individuals and families
 - Redesigning and transforming service deliver: improving the quality and efficiency services by eliminating duplication, streamlining processes, harnessing technology, getting the most out of our assets and developing our workforce.

South Ayrshire Local Development Plan

15. The [South Ayrshire Local Development Plan \(LDP\)](#) was adopted on 23rd September 2014.
16. The aim of the Council's LDP is to support development that encourages sustainable economic growth, improves the quality of the environment and creates sustainable communities.
17. The Plan includes a Spatial Strategy which prioritises sustainable development, expressed within three different areas: the "core investment towns", the "core investment area" and the "Carrick investment area".
18. Development is directed to locations with access to amenities, infrastructure and a good transport network.
19. The LDP also recognises the role of housing development in promoting economic growth, regenerating towns and providing a wider range of housing choice.
20. The location of housing sites in the LDP aligns with the Spatial Strategy and provides a generous housing land supply to meet local needs and future demand. Housing sites (for at least 1,900 new houses) were chosen in the north of South Ayrshire to:
- increase the choice and variety in the housing land supply;
 - minimise the impact on infrastructure and development costs for developers;
 - support local communities;
 - avoid direct competition with existing strategic housing allocations; and
 - select the most environmentally suitable housing sites.
21. To protect undeveloped countryside, and to meet national guidance, housing development is, wherever possible, directed to existing gap sites, or to redevelopment of brownfield sites within settlements.

Strategic Housing Investment Plan

22. The purpose of the South Ayrshire Strategic Housing Investment Plan is to outline the affordable housing investment priorities for the period 2015/16 to 2019/2020.
23. It has been developed in the context of current (as well as the subsequent development of future) South Ayrshire Local Housing Strategies.
24. The Council was notified in October 2013 that its Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) for 2015-16 would be £4.275m. This replaces and supersedes the amount of £2.420m being the previous RPA awarded to South Ayrshire in March 2013.
25. The national resources available for future RPAs will depend on future budget decisions by the Scottish Government, however the Council has been asked to work on the assumption that future RPAs will be at least:
 - £3,604,000 for 2016-17;
 - £2,842,000 for 2017-18; and
 - £1,895,000 for 2018-19.
26. These figures have been used to inform a programme of development, which draws on the current HNDA (2010).

Conclusion

27. As the discussion highlights above, the Housing Need and Demand Assessment is now embedded within the wider policy context.
28. The Housing Need and Demand Assessment is, therefore, key in providing evidence on which priorities and housing targets are identified and set.