



National Planning Framework 4 Early Engagement – Policies

COASTAL PLANNING

Scottish Planning Policy (2014)

87. *The planning system should support an integrated approach to coastal planning to ensure that development plans and regional marine plans are complementary. Terrestrial planning by planning authorities overlaps with marine planning in the intertidal zone. On the terrestrial side, mainland planning authorities should work closely with neighbouring authorities, taking account of the needs of port authorities and aquaculture, where appropriate. On the marine side, planning authorities will need to ensure integration with policies and activities arising from the National Marine Plan, Marine Planning Partnerships, Regional Marine Plans, and Integrated Coastal Zone Management, as well as aquaculture.*

88. *Plans should confirm that **new development requiring new defences against coastal erosion or coastal flooding will not be supported** except where there is a clear justification for a departure from the general policy to avoid development in areas at risk. Where appropriate, development plans should identify areas at risk and areas where a managed realignment of the coast would be beneficial.*

89. *Plans should **identify areas** of largely developed coast that are a major focus of economic or recreational activity that are likely to be suitable for further development; areas subject to significant constraints; and largely unspoiled areas of the coast that are generally unsuitable for development.*

90. *Plans should **promote the developed coast** as the focus of developments requiring a coastal location or which contribute to the economic regeneration or well-being of communities whose livelihood is dependent on marine or coastal activities. They should provide for the development requirements of uses requiring a coastal location, including ports and harbours, tourism and recreation, fish farming, land-based development associated with offshore energy projects and specific defence establishments.*

91. *Plans should **safeguard unspoiled sections of coast** which possess special environmental or cultural qualities, such as wild land. The economic value of these areas should be considered and maximised, provided that environmental impact issues can be satisfactorily addressed*

What has changed since 2014?

- The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 introduced a requirement for the NPF to set out how it will contribute to the outcome of increasing the population of rural areas of Scotland. In addition, when the NPF is reviewed, Ministers are to have regard to the desirability of resettling rural areas that have become depopulated.
- In 2015 the Scottish Government published Circular 1/2015¹ addressing the interface between land use and marine planning. This encourages positive alignment of plans

¹ [The Relationship Between The Statutory Land Use Planning System And Marine Planning And Licensing](#)

supported by the two statutory regimes and provides more detailed advice on links arising from key coastal activities such as renewable energy and aquaculture.

- The Dynamic Coast² project was launched in 2017. It assessed past erosion and accretion rates and projected these forward to 2050. It identified which assets lie behind the soft eroding coastline. This tool can be used by those involved in planning at the coast.
- In 2018 a second phase of research was commissioned ('NCCA2 enhancing the evidence base and our ability to adapt'). This research is due to conclude early in 2020 and considers multiple research questions including: the extent and resilience of natural coastal flood protection features; climate change accelerations; technological improvements and the development of adaptation and resilience plans at 7 super sites.
- *Looking ahead: planning for coastal change*³ guidance was published by SNH as part of the wider Dynamic Coast project. This was in response to the increasing effects of climate change, such as sea level rise and increased likelihood of flooding which could change the coastline and put existing and planned built development and infrastructure at risk. The guidance aims to help those involved in development and infrastructure planning at the coast to work towards sustainable development that takes account of current and future coastal change.

Proposed key objectives of NPF4: To recognise and support the unique challenges facing Scottish coastal areas and communities and promote development that supports their needs.

Issues to consider:

- Can policies in NPF4 do more to support the resilience and sustainability of coastal communities, particularly in light of the expected long term impacts of climate change?
- How can NPF4 best complement existing policies and guidance, such as the National Marine Plan and Dynamic Coast?
- Is there a need for further policy or guidance that specifically addresses the marine/land interface, going beyond or building in the key elements of Circular 1/2015?
- Is there a need to change wider existing policies, and if so which ones and how?

Get Involved

For more information and other resources



www.transformingplanning.scot

² [Dynamic Coast: Scotland's Coastal Change Assessment](#)

³ [Looking ahead: planning for coastal change](#)



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