



Planning & Building Control Service

Development Plan

CUSTOMER

CHARTER

How development planning is carried out

What information and advice is available

How you can influence development plans

The standards of service you can expect

About the Planning System

Constructing new buildings, altering the use and appearance of buildings and changing the way land is used are ways in which we can help to provide jobs, housing, shops, and other facilities. Planning aims to create the circumstances where the right development takes place at the right time and in the right place - to improve the quality of life and our environment. In doing this, the planning system must balance competing and conflicting demands to secure the efficient and effective development and use of land in the public interest. It must also ensure everyone has the opportunity to have a say in the future development of their area and how that affects the quality of their environment.

The Development Plan

The Development Plan for Fife comprises of two types of documents: the structure plan and local plans. These plans provide the basis for decisions on planning applications and show the extent of future development, where it is likely to take place, and what is likely to be allowed.

SERVICE STANDARD

We will establish and maintain a programme of preparing plans to provide Fife with an up-to-date plans, including:

- structure plans submitted for approval within 2 years of the start of preparation;
- local plans being reviewed at least every 5 years; and
- All local plans adopted within 3 years of the start of preparation (2 years for alterations)

The Fife Structure Plan provides a long-term strategy for land use and development across all of Fife. Local plans cover smaller areas within Fife and identify in more detail the policies and proposals that will guide development decisions, conserve environmental assets, and promote physical improvements and regeneration. Fife Council is in the process of reducing the number of local plans in Fife from ten to three. These will cover West, Central, and East Fife respectively. This means they will each cover larger areas but should be quicker to prepare. There is also a separate plan which deals solely with minerals planning across all Fife.

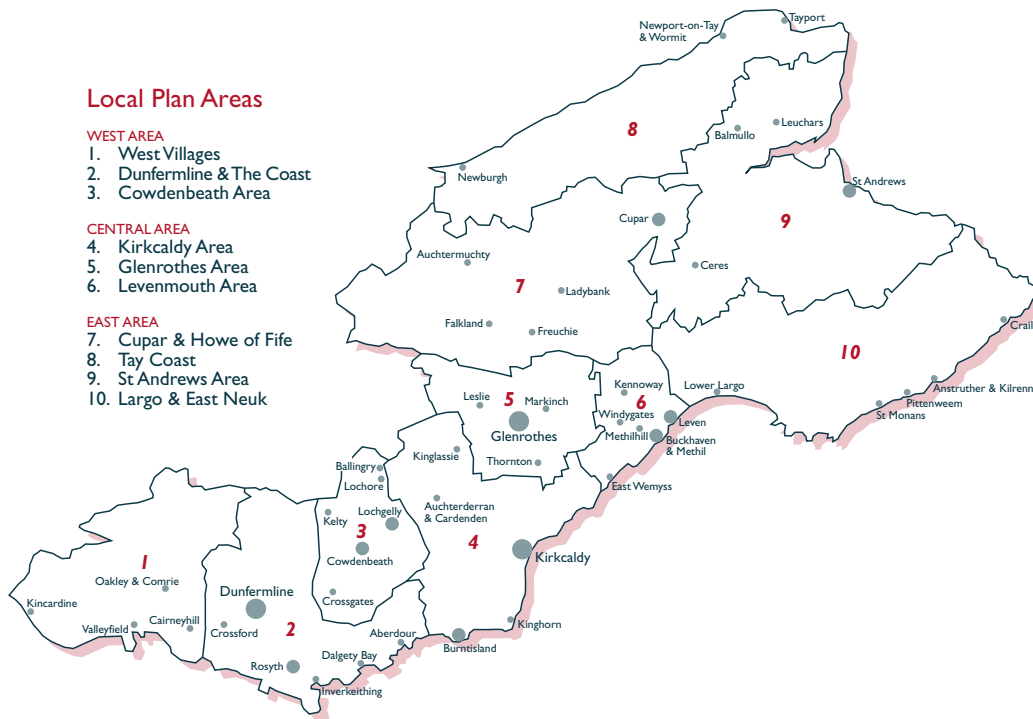
SERVICE STANDARD

We will make available up-to-date information on the status of the structure plan and local plans:

- at any Planning & Building Control Service reception area (no appointment required for a general enquiry);
- if you phone, e-mail, or write to the relevant Planning & Building Control Service contact (details at the end of the Charter); and
- via Fife Council's web site.

In June 2002, the Scottish Executive agreed to review the arrangements for strategic development planning which, if the proposals are implemented, will significantly alter how development planning in Fife is managed. In the meantime, Fife Council has decided that a strategic overview of land use in Fife will continue to be necessary and so a 20-Year Plan for Fife will be prepared.

Land use planning is not carried out in isolation. In preparing the Development Plan, account is taken of its relationships with other documents which deal with matters such as transport, housing, waste management, community strategies, coastal planning, and biodiversity.



Local Plan Areas

WEST AREA

1. West Villages
2. Dunfermline & The Coast
3. Cowdenbeath Area

CENTRAL AREA

4. Kirkcaldy Area
5. Glenrothes Area
6. Levenmouth Area

EAST AREA

7. Cupar & Howe of Fife
8. Tay Coast
9. St Andrews Area
10. Largo & East Neuk

How you can get involved

Involving people is a fundamental part of the planning system and everyone has the right to submit comments. It is vital to participate in shaping its content at the consultation stage - waiting until a planning application is submitted may be too late to comment on the development of a site.

SERVICE STANDARD

We will take a positive approach to participation and consultation by:

- advertising widely and telling you how you can make comments on, or become involved in, a local plan/structure plan at every stage of the process; and
- using information technology to assist access to information and publicity.

Preparing the Development Plan

The stages involved in preparing and becoming involved in structure and local plans are broadly the same. If an existing plan is being altered (relatively minor updating), then the number of consultation stages may be reduced. These are described in the flowchart below.



Does not apply to the Structure Plan, but Scottish Ministers have the discretion to hold an examination in public.

Starting a Plan (Structure Plan or Local Plan)

When we start a new plan, we will actively seek input from all sectors of the community early in the its preparation, and will organise local meetings or workshops to help participation in the plan making process.

SERVICE STANDARD

We will ensure that draft plans for consultation are available in Planning & Building Control offices, local libraries, Locality Offices, and widely available in the community.

The Draft Plan Stage (Structure Plan or Local Plan)

The draft structure or local plan is the first and main opportunity for the Council to publish its proposals based on surveys and taking account of earlier consultation. All comments received at this stage will be taken into account in preparing the next stage of the plan and may form the basis for further dialogue between the Council and interested parties. Your comments will be published and publicly available; consequently, they cannot be treated as confidential.

SERVICE STANDARD

Fife Council is committed to extending consultation periods for the Development Plan and will usually allow 6 to 8 weeks for you to make representations.

The Finalised Plan - the 'Deposit' Stage (Structure Plan or Local Plan)

A finalised plan will be prepared, having taken into account all the comments received on the draft. When this is complete it will be made available again when there is an opportunity to submit a written objection to any aspect of its content (it is placed on 'deposit' for at least 6 weeks).

If objections are submitted, the Council will try to resolve these by negotiation. This may involve making changes to local plans (called modifications). The Scottish Executive makes modifications to the structure plan; objections to these modifications should be submitted to the Scottish Ministers, not to Fife Council.

SERVICE STANDARD

We will make sure that it is clear how and to whom you should submit your comments and objections

Local Plan Inquiry

If objections to a local plan cannot be resolved, a Public Local Inquiry (PLI) will be held - this is also referred to as a local plan inquiry. A Scottish Executive Reporter will be appointed to hold the inquiry. Everyone who has objected to the plan or the modifications within the deposit period has the opportunity to be heard at the PLI. You can speak at the PLI or send in your statement in writing.

SERVICE STANDARD

We will aim to provide you with assistance and information to help you participate in a public local inquiry.

The Reporter submits a report to the Council following the Inquiry. The Council will consider the Reporter's comments and decide what changes it intends to make to the Plan. There is then another period of at least 6 weeks in which objections to the Plan can be made.

SERVICE STANDARD

We will ensure that the Reporter's report is widely available along with details of the changes the Council intend to make to the Plan.

Approval of the structure plan

The procedure for approving the structure plan is broadly similar to that for local plans. In this case, the Scottish Executive manages the process. Currently, there is no requirement for the Scottish Ministers to hold an inquiry (called an examination in public) to hear objections to a structure plan. They may, however, use their discretion to hold an examination in public if they feel they need more information before approving the structure plan. Examinations in public are very rare.

After plans have been approved or adopted

Once plans are in place, the Council is required to use them as the basis for making decisions on planning applications. If the Council decides to grant planning permission for a development which does not comply with the Development Plan it must follow a set procedure. This may include a hearing into objections to a planning application and giving a statement of the reasons why the Council feels justified in departing from its policies.

Getting access to plans

You can refer to the latest published versions of any of Fife's structure and local plans in any Planning & Building Control Service office. Plans for particular areas will also be available in Fife Council libraries and Locality Offices within those areas. If you wish, you can purchase copies of any plan from Planning & Building Control Service offices or by post (contact details for ordering are given at the end of the Charter). Large print versions of our publications can be made available on request.

SERVICE STANDARD

A copy of plans will be made available, free of charge, to Fife community and special interest groups.

Further help with planning issues

We encourage you to contact the Planning & Building Control Service if you have a query which you think may be a planning matter. We will direct you to other contacts if it is the responsibility of another Council Service or other organisation.

We understand that sometimes it is helpful to have support from other organisations in connection with planning matters and recommend that:

- free and independent advice should be sought from Planning Aid for Scotland,* a voluntary organisation able to help individuals and groups have their say in planning matters; or
- advice is sought from a chartered planning consultant.

* *Planning Aid for Scotland, Bonnington Mill, 72 Newhaven Road, Edinburgh EH6 5QG
Tel: 0131 5551565. Fax: 0131 4677830. Email: office@planning-aid-scotland.org.uk*

SERVICE STANDARD

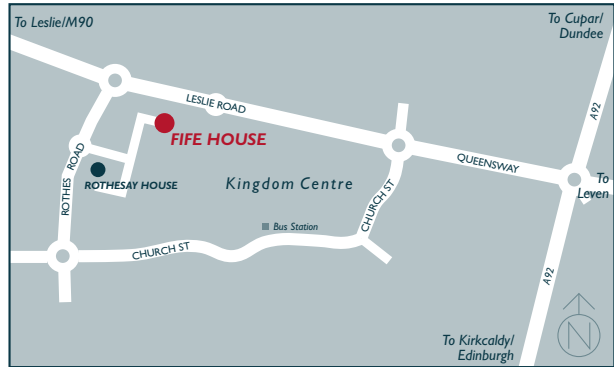
We will make an officer available, by appointment, to discuss any aspect of a Plan with you and will endeavour to make someone available or respond to your enquiry by phone - even if you have not made an appointment.

THIS PUBLICATION IS AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT ON REQUEST

Where to find us

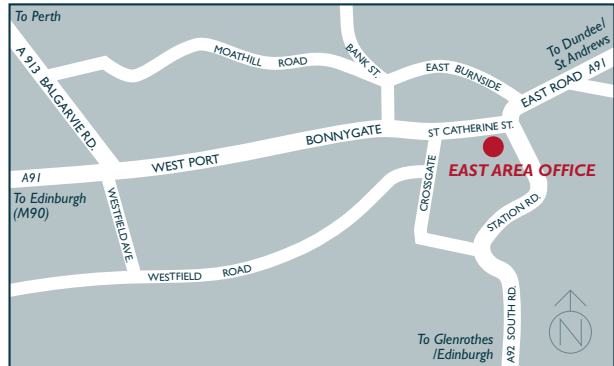
FIFE HOUSE

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 GLENROTHES
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 Fax: (01592) 416300
 Email: pbchq@fife.gov.uk



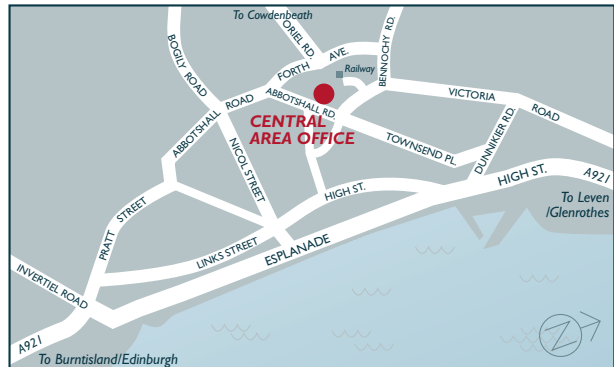
EAST AREA

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 Tel: (01334) 412200
 Fax: (01334) 412800
 Email: pbceast@fife.gov.uk



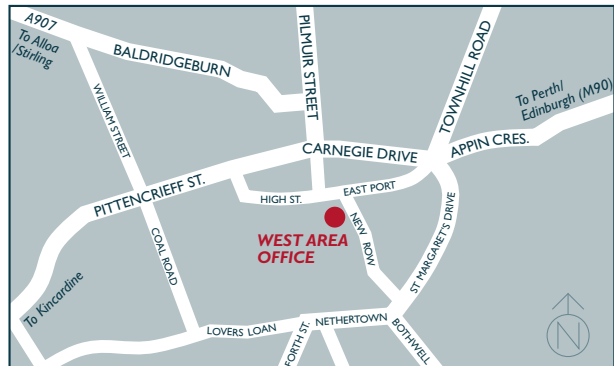
CENTRAL AREA

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 Planning & Building Control Service
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