Geddes Institute Studies in Sustainable Planning: Tayplan Area

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Part A:

Geddes Institute Studies in Sustainable Planning: Tay Plan Area
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1. Introduction
This project is a pilot study for research in sustainable planning in Scotland, with a particular focus on sustainable housing development. We have an opportunity to collaborate with European partners in Spain, Hungary, and Norway, and hence to broaden the scope to a European-wide study of sustainable development. It is almost universally recognised that the quality of our natural and built environment is under pressure from population growth and the market forces that determine most decisions concerning development. In order to accommodate its growing population, the Scottish Government has plans to build 35,000 new houses per year over the next 10 years, which at present densities would cover an area the size of Edinburgh. It is also recognised that there is a critical need to identify and adopt sustainable strategies for development in order to address this pressure. Additionally, there have been recent changes in planning law and recent publication of Government planning policy documents calling for sustainable development that maintains and protects the qualities of the natural and built environment.

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2006 calls for the replacement of local authority Structure Plans by new Strategic Development Plans. To deliver this change Scottish Government has grouped local authorities into larger Strategic Development Planning Authorities (SDPAs) and tasked them with preparing Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) for their areas. The Tayplan SDP is currently being developed by the four local authorities of Perth & Kinross, Dundee, Angus, and Fife. These plans are intended to be 20 year projections – a spatial strategy and vision of Scotland in 20 years time – as opposed to the 5 year projections of the current Structure Plans. It is also intended that the local authorities work together for the mutual benefit of their constituents rather than compete for the same resources and development income. In its document Designing Places (2001), the Government promotes sustainability to the forefront of the section ‘The qualities of successful places’. The National Planning Framework for Scotland (2009) lists five critical issues with respect to sustainable development: climate change, transport, energy, waste, biodiversity, new technologies. It also announces on its inside cover five ‘headlines’ that will shape Government policy in delivering its vision of Scotland for the year 2030: wealthier and fairer, greener, smarter, safer and stronger, healthier. ‘Health and wealth’ - creating environments that promote the health and healthy lifestyles of its inhabitants and that offer opportunities for wealth creation – are perhaps the overarching concerns of sustainability.

Although Scotland is committed at a policy level to sustainable development, this policy has not yet robustly impacted upon planning design guidelines, at least not at the level of urban and rural design, not – in other words – at the level of the aggregation, arrangement, and scaling of housing units on a site. While considerable research has gone into the development of green technology and green housing, relatively little has gone into green or sustainable ways of arranging such units on a site, in relation to public transport, in relation to resource, waste, and energy flows, in relation to natural and man-made features of the environment, in relation to each other. There is – in other words - little in the way of studies of sustainable development morphologies.

In this two week scoping and feasibility study, we began by producing survey plans of Scotland, which collected information on transport and energy (roads, railroads, power stations), natural features (rivers, forests, mountains, national forests and parks, coastlines), and settlements. In order to limit the scope and go into greater detail, we produced plans of the Tayplan Area with similar information.

We compared settlements with respect to size, density, and proximity to transport in the area of the Perth central local plan, which is one of the components of the Tayplan area. This is intended to be the scoping study and background information gathering for...
We used a simple graphic to represent low, medium, and high density development on each site (10, 30, and 100 units/hectare). We placed 100 square metre rectangles on the sites to produce simple demographic arrays of rectangular dots that visualise the implications of the different densities (no claim is here made to respond to site conditions and hence to propose schematic site design solutions). Then we identified low, medium, and high density areas of Perth and montaged these at the same scale into our sites with no effort to graft them into their context. In this way we were able to visualise the densities with a credible sense of urban texture.

As seemingly serendipitous as this montage process may seem, it raises questions that go to the heart of any urban design process. It raises the question of where we get our imagery from, on both the individual and institutional level: the archive of sources, references, and stock solutions, that drive our design thinking, decisions, and choices. Indeed, as one would expect, the Perth Local Area Plan refers to Perth itself as a baseline in too many places to cite: our montage plans are the visual counterpart to this. More fundamentally, it raises the question of an appropriate cartography - a cartographic language of forms and structures - for studying sustainability and then implementing it at the urban design level. To use Perth to repopulate itself with housing is to appropriate a basic recursive grammar that any rap star or dj-vj in any club would instantly recognise as fundamental to his/her creative process. A key component of sustainability is the incorporation of local context and conditions into the morphologies of new developments, and hence to maintain bio and cultural diversity across a diverse region. In this regard montage is nothing if not a graphic technique incorporating forms and structures. We propose here – tentatively, speculatively, as is appropriate for such early stages – to use Perth or any region to regenerate itself, by developing montage techniques for using local form to generate new form.

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This work was limited by time and resources; no claim is made on its behalf to being comprehensive or conclusive in either scope or the number of design determinants that we looked at. Indeed, we have not yet reached conclusions. Our aim, not yet arrived at, is to produce a catalogue of urban and rural design morphologies for sustainable development. Future research will:

- address the A+D S brief, for which we need at least one comparator in another local authority like the Highlands and Islands, which has a different local climate, geography, geology, culture, and different patterns of development; or even a comparator within our present local authorities, the highlands identified within our Tayplan area plans;
- look at such crucial determinants as patterns of financing and other market forces, local resources for energy and building materials, energy distribution, density of road use, employment (i.e. commuting), and the like;
- look at other aspects of development morphology, including patterns of development and housing unit aggregations, and the structure of public and open space;
- enable us to visit the different locales and sites to record their qualities, and to liaise more closely with local authorities.

The current study has set out a baseline for future research, in the sense that it has set out areas that need to be examined, and it has made a firm commitment to the graphic nature of the project: visualising quality as well as quantity; and begun to develop graphic techniques and strategies for comparison. It has also indicated the magnitude of the project, in terms of time, file sizes, processor speeds, printing costs, and the like. For instance, if three junior researchers produced this amount of work in two weeks, using digimap™ file resources, we would probably need these three researchers for 20 weeks to cover the whole Tayplan area in the depth indicated in the bullet points above.

In addition to the design policies in the Perth Central Area Plan – some of which is reproduced below - we also referenced:

- Scottish Government, *Pan 67 Housing Quality* and *Pan 76 New Residential Streets*, which should be read together, both of which follow on from:
- Scottish Government, *Designing Places: a policy statement for Scotland* (2001), and

Lorens Holm 24 July 2009
2. Plan List
2.1. Plan: UK & Ireland location of Tayplan area within Scotland

2.2. Plans: Scotland
- road network
- lakes and rivers
- minor urban settlements
- major urban settlements
- composite plan

2.3. Plans: Tayplan Area
- local authority boundaries
- major roads + minor roads
- track roads + railways
- lakes and rivers + woodlands
- water & coastline + national parks & sssi
- minor urban settlements + major urban settlements
- place names + composite plan
- power & transport

2.4. Plans: Perth & Kinross
- perth & kinross area of study + local boundaries within perth & kinross
- major roads + minor roads
- track roads + railways
- minor urban settlements + major urban settlements
- lakes & rivers + woodlands
- place names + composite plan

2.5. Plans: Perth Central
- historical maps of city centre 1850, 1902, 1950
- Perth City figure ground

2.6. Selected Housing Sites in the Perth/Central Area Local Plan:
- location plan of city centre & edge of city site
- CH1 Bus Station/Leonard Street (Kaissa Tait)
- PH1 Murray Royal Housing Hospital Development (Krisztina Mészöly)
- PH3 & PH4 Oakbank Road & Cleeve Gardens Housing Developments (KT)
- VH 37 & VH 38 St Madoes/Glencarse (Cameron McEwan)
3. Notes on the
Selected Housing
Sites in the
Perth/Central
Area Local Plan
CH1 Bus Station/Leonard Street (p44, Perth City Centre, ref. Map 1 Perth City Centre) 60 affordable houses on 0.6ha. 100% affordable housing at high density.

PH1 Murray Royal Housing Hospital Development (p59, Perth City, ref. Map 2 Perth City) (KT) 58 Affordable and a total of 232 houses on 14.4ha. Mixed density.

PH3 & PH4 Oakbank Road & Cleeve Gardens Housing Developments (p60, Perth City, ref. Map 2 Perth City) (KM) Oakbank Road: 48 houses and 18 flats on 3.6ha. & Cleeve Gardens: 17 houses and 15 flats on 2.3ha.

VH 37 & VH 38 St Madoes/Glencarse (p128, Map 35, p129, Village, Landward Area, ref. Map3 Perth Landward Area) (CMcE) VH 37 The Glebe: 10 houses on 0.8ha. Housing site at low density. & VH 38 Western Entrance: 6 flats on 0.1ha, Housing site at high density.

12.36 The village has seen significant expansion during the life of the existing Local Plan with 205 additional houses being constructed. Two housing sites remain undeveloped.... The landscape and open space framework in the village is identified.... (p128)
4. Notes relating to design, abridged from the Perth & Kinross Local Plan
**Part 2: Perth City Centre**
CH 1 Bus Station/Leonard Street Housing

**Overview**
9.5 The thrust of the Plan for the central area is to build upon past successes and to consolidate the role of Perth City Centre as the heart of the Council area and a wider hinterland....

9.6 In particular this means:... developing detailed design policies for new buildings. (pp37-8)

**Policies**
9.7 The policy framework identified in this section seeks to promote mixed-use development and establish a balance between potentially conflicting uses. It recognises four distinct land use zones within the central area:

- City centre prime retail area,....
- City centre mixed uses, ....
- City centre residential uses, where encouragement will be given to ground floor residential uses (residential uses are encouraged on the upper floors elsewhere in the city centre) and ...the protection of residential amenity....
- Retail Park, ...retention of the large retail units. (p38)

**Policy 4 City Centre Residential Areas**
Insert Map 1 identifies areas where residential use and amenity will be protected and encouraged at both ground floor level and above. There will be a presumption against non-residential uses in these areas.... (p40)

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**Part 2: Perth City Excluding City Centre**
PH 1 Murray Royal Housing
PH 3 Oakbank Road Housing
PH 4 Cleeve Gardens Housing

**Overview**
10.3 The key issues within the city are:

- To provide sufficient land capable of early development in the right locations for employment purposes.
- To make best use of windfall and brownfield sites..., recognising the need to protect employment land and land for affordable housing. The Plan proposes a mixed-use zoning on key sites... to respond to changing market conditions.
- To protect the amenity of the city as a whole by resisting proposals which would change the amenity of established residential areas and result in 'town cramming' and the loss of valuable open space.
- To protect the existing pattern of neighbourhood shopping centres....
- To address traffic issues,... especially at the A9/A85 interchange, where radical road solutions are likely to be required.... (p50)

**Policy 14 Residential Areas**

**General**
Inset Map 2 identifies areas of residential and compatible uses.... Ancillary development such as corner shops and community facilities will be permitted in residential areas. Changes from such ancillary uses will be resisted unless there is demonstrable market evidence that the existing use is no longer viable....

**Open Space**
Small areas of private and public open space will be retained where they are of recreational
Policy 18 Mixed Use Areas
Inset Map 2 identifies mixed land use areas which are suitable for a variety of compatible uses including: ....

Note: Residential development may also be an acceptable use providing it is a subordinate component of a mixture of uses on a site and it is compatible with adjoining land uses. (pp52-3)

Policy 23 Open Space/Recreation
Inset Map 2 identifies areas of public and private open space, which are to be retained....

(p54)

14 Landward Area (Proposals Map)
The Landward Area includes Green Belt around Perth

VH 37 & VH 38 St Madoes/Glencarse

14.2 The key objective of the Plan is to manage the countryside in a way that helps to sustain the rural economy and services, protect important landscapes, including the Perth Green Belt, from inappropriate and irreversible development, recognising the pressures for development in the vicinity of the cities of Perth and Dundee.

14.4 The Plan gives encouragement to proposals for rural development including agricultural diversification and tourist development and particular encouragement is given to reusing brownfield sites in the countryside (such as former sawmills) for a variety of uses.

Policy 47
The Council will normally only support proposals for the erection of individual houses in the countryside which fall into at least one of the following categories:

1. Building Groups
   (i) Development within existing small groups where sites are contained by housing or other buildings
   (ii) Development within or adjacent to established building groups which have compact nucleated shapes creating an identifiable “sense of place”.

2. Renovation or Replacement of Houses

3. Conversion or Replacement of Non-Domestic Buildings

Note: The design principles set out in the Council’s “Guidance and Design of Houses in Rural Areas” will be used as a guide for all development outwith Perth City.

15 Policies Applicable to the Entire Local Plan Area (pp179ff)

Policy 50 Development Criteria
All developments will be judged against the following criteria:

(a) the sites should have a landscape/townscape framework capable of absorbing or screening the development...;

(c) the development should be compatible with its surroundings in land use terms and should not result in a significant loss of amenity to the local community;

(d) the local road, path and public transport network should be capable of absorbing the additional traffic...;

(e) where applicable, there should be sufficient spare capacity in drainage, water and education services to cater for the new development; and

(f) buildings and layouts of new developments should be... energy efficient.
Policy 51 Design and Landscaping
The Council will require high standards of design:...
(a) ...incorporating energy-efficient technology and materials; and
(b) avoiding the use of extensive under-building on steeply sloping sites.
Note: ...the Council’s “Guidance and Design of Houses in Rural Areas” for all development outwith Perth City.

Policy 52 Design Statements
Design Statements will normally be required... to accompany a planning application...
Note: Further guidance is contained in Pan 68 Design Statements

Policy 53 Landscape Treatment
Details of landscape treatment should be submitted with development proposals including, where appropriate, boundary treatment, treatment of settlement edge, and impact on key views....

Policy 58 Noise Pollution
The location of sources of high noise levels near to existing or proposed noise-sensitive development or uses will not be permitted.... [P]roposals for noise-sensitive development will not be allowed in areas exposed to excessive noise.
Note: noise-sensitive development is defined as housing, hospitals, educational establishments, offices and hotels....

Policy 59 Light Pollution
The Council will not grant consent for proposals that would result in unnecessary and intrusive light pollution....

Policy 65 Affordable Housing
...[T]he preferred type of affordable housing, in order of preference, is:
(a) social housing either for rent, or through shared equity schemes; or
(b) subsidised or discounted housing for sale; or
(c) private sector rented accommodation,....

Policy 70 Open Space Provision
The Council will seek the provision of appropriate areas of informal and formal recreational open space as an integral part of new housing development.
Formal
...[M]eet the minimum standards of the National Playing Fields Association of 2.43 ha per 1,000 population,....
Informal
The appropriate level of informal recreation open space and creation of access networks will need to be assessed for each site,.... ...carried out under Policy 4.
Off Site Provision
It may be appropriate for open space provision to be made on land outwith the development site....

Recommendation 1
Scottish Water is requested to ensure that drainage capacity is available to serve the current and future development needs of Perth.

Recommendation 2
...[T]he Council recommends to Scottish Water that... improvements are carried out to the following waste water treatment facilities:....

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Policy 74 Roads and Transport
Suitable provision for parking and public transport must be made in all new developments. The Council’s “Roads Development Guide”.

Policy 75 Roads and Transport
The Council will monitor public transport and it will encourage and promote the improved use of the rail network for both passenger and freight traffic.

Policy 76 Cycling
The Council will encourage proposals which make cycling possible, with particular attention being paid to the provision of appropriate access and parking facilities.

Environment and Nature Conservation

Policy 81
Development will only be permitted on a site designated under the Habitats or Birds Directives (Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas) or a Ramsar Site, where the appropriate assessment indicates.

Policy 82
The Council will not grant consent on: sites supporting species mentioned in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; the European Community Habitats Directive or the European Community Wild Birds Directive.

Policy 83
Development which would affect a National Nature Reserve or a Site of Special Scientific Interest will not normally be permitted except.

Policy 84
The Council will not normally grant consent for any development that would have an adverse effect on sites of local nature conservation or geological interest....

Policy 85
The Council will seek to protect and enhance habitats of local importance to nature conservation, including grasslands, wetlands and peat-lands and habitats that support rare or endangered species. The Council will take account of the Tayside Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)....
5. Reference planning documents (compiled by Kaissa Tait)
**PERTH & KINROSS**  [http://www.pkc.gov.uk/](http://www.pkc.gov.uk/)

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**ANGUS**  [http://www.angus.gov.uk/](http://www.angus.gov.uk/)

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**FIFE**  [http://www.fife.gov.uk](http://www.fife.gov.uk)

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**G ed d e s I n s t i t u t e S t u d i e s i n S u s t a i n a b l e P l a n n i n g : T a y P l a n A r e a**
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<td>Windfarms Tayplan</td>
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**FURTHER READING**

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<td>2002/03</td>
<td>Scottish Natural Heritage</td>
<td>Documents&gt;Further Reading&gt;SSSI <a href="http://www.snh.org.uk/">www.snh.org.uk/</a></td>
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Geddes Institute Studies in Sustainable Planning: Tay Plan Area
6. Bibliography
(compiled by
Deepak Gopinath
Town & Regional Planning)
emphasis on
European Context


Note: Items on bold are recommended.
7. Acknowledgements
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