

## SIMPLIFIED PLANNING ZONE - FACTSHEET

### Have Your Say!

Argyll and Bute Council (A&B) is working alongside Rapleys LLP and Inch Architecture & Design to create two Simplified Planning Zones (SPZ) in Argyll and Bute. One will be in Salen, Isle of Mull and the other will be in Lochgilphead.

A&B intends to bring forward these SPZs to help deliver housing in remote rural areas. This sheet will present answers to the key questions of this project and what is involved with preparing an SPZ.

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#### Q) What is an SPZ?

A) An SPZ is an area where the need to apply for planning permission is removed for certain types of development. An SPZ requires the preparation of an SPZ Scheme which details the types of development and nature of uses that are permitted together with any limitations, conditions and guidelines that a development proposal must comply with.

#### Q) What is the purpose of the proposed SPZ?

A) As part of the review of the planning system the Scottish Government is currently examining how SPZ can assist with the delivery of housing, in particular self/custom-build. A&B Council has been selected to take forward one of four pilots across Scotland and to assess if this can help deliver housing in rural areas. The multidisciplinary team, noted above, are working with, and on behalf of, A&B to deliver the SPZs.

#### Q) What stages are there to the development of an SPZ?

A) The main stages or parts to an SPZ can be summarised as follows:

- 1) **Preparation Work** - background research, scoping and initial analysis.
- 2) **'Pre-Deposit' Consultation** - Awareness raising and a chance for the public to shape the content of the SPZ i.e. the public can make comments on what should and should not be included; and other general observations.
- 3) **Preparing Draft Scheme** - The scheme which will outline the characteristics of the SPZ.
- 4) **'Draft Scheme Deposit' Consultation** - A further opportunity for the public to make representations/comments of the draft scheme i.e. what is being proposed by the project team before it is formally adopted.
- 5) **Adoption** - the SPZ scheme is formally adopted.

However, if you would like more information on the process of preparing an SPZ, please see the following documents:

*Simplified Planning Zone: How to Guide* - <https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/stpfiles/resources/best-practice-and-case-studies/How+To+Guides/Renfrew+SPZ+How+To+Guide.pdf>

*Circular 18/1995 - Simplified Planning Zones* - <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/1995/08/circular-18-1995>

**Q) Why have these specific sites in Salen, Isle of Mull and Lochgilphead been chosen?**

A) The sites which have been selected within the settlements where the principle of development is already established.

A&B has a declining population and a stated need for more homes in certain areas to attract people and investment. For example, some local businesses have stated that a lack of living accommodation can deter people from taking up employment and thus negating economic growth.

This pilot will examine if an SPZ can help deliver self/custom build housing in a successful way; and if it can be used again in the future.

Engagement with the local community will raise awareness of the process and opportunity to self-build and inform a range of house designs that fit the SPZ Scheme.

**Q) What benefits does an SPZ bring?**

A) The pilot SPZs will allow A&B to work with communities and developers to explore a new way of planning and delivering homes in a sustainable manner, that have the potential to enhance the existing settlement. The pilot SPZs aim to 'de-risk' self/custom build housing by establishing many of the processes without having to submit a planning application.

**Q) Are there any other SPZs in Scotland?**

A) Yes. Scotland has an employment SPZ at the Hillington Business Park (west of Glasgow) with the aim of attracting new businesses and investment to the area. Renfrew Town Centre also benefits from an SPZ which allows certain use classes to locate there and alterations to shopfronts. The Scottish Government as part of their review into the Scottish Planning System also aim to establish other SPZs across Scotland.

SPZs are used in other countries but sometimes go by different names or titles. For example, Dublin, Ireland has established a Strategic Development Zone which has the same principles as a Scottish SPZ. England also uses SPZs and Slough Borough Council recently established one in 2014.

**Q) What is the Purpose of the Public Consultations?**

A) A&B Council and the project team wish to consult with local residents to hear their views and how they can input into the creation of design of the SPZs. Local knowledge and insight is invaluable and we are keen for the public to attend the public consultations.

We plan to hold one consultation in each location at the beginning of the process to inform the initial stages of the SPZ; and then a further consultation in each location once we have a draft SPZ scheme in place.

**Q) What if I need more information on the proposals?**

A) You can view the project in more detail on the dedicated website: <https://rapleys.com/consultation/argyll-bute-spz/>

Or

Contact a member of the team by sending an email to this address: [spzab@rapleys.com](mailto:spzab@rapleys.com)

Or

Send any comments to the following address: Caledonian Exchange, 19A Canning Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EG