

Extract from Pages 13 & 14 of A Guide to the Planning system in Scotland

In all cases the council must **make decisions in line with the development plan** unless 'material considerations' justify going against the plan.

A material consideration is a planning issue which is relevant to the application and can include national policy, comments by the public and by organisations the council has consulted, the design of the proposed development, and the effect of the plan on the environment. The council must decide how important these material considerations are.

Because the council need to consider all the relevant matters, there is no guarantee that development plan policies will be the deciding factor in every case. **But councils will usually approve applications for development which are in line with the development plan.**

When making a decision about an application, the council can:

- grant planning permission without conditions;
- grant planning permission with conditions; or
- refuse planning permission.

Councils should usually make a decision on applications for local development in two months and for national or major development in four months.

The time period for deciding an application begins from the date on which the council receives all the information needed by planning law.

Once the council has reached its decision, it will issue a decision notice unless the application is to be decided by Ministers. The council must also tell anyone who has made a comment on an application what its decision is.