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To: All Members of the Council

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 11 December 2012

COUNCIL MEETING

The Members of the **COUNCIL** are requested to meet in Council Chamber - Town House on **WEDNESDAY, 19 DECEMBER 2012 at 10.30am.**

JANE G. MACEACHRAN
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

- 1 Admission of Burgesses
- 2 Members are requested to resolve that any exempt business on this agenda be considered with the press and public excluded
- 3 Requests for Deputations

MINUTES OF COUNCIL

- 4(a) Minute of Meeting of Council of 10 October 2012 - for approval (circulated separately)
- 4(b) Minute of Meeting of Urgent Business Committee of 29 November 2012 - for approval (Pages 1 - 2)

MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- 5(a) Pamphlet of Minutes - for information (circulated separately)

BUSINESS STATEMENT, MOTIONS LIST AND OTHER MINUTES

- 6(a) Business Statement (Pages 3 - 8)

- 6(b) Motions List (Pages 9 - 10)

REFERRALS FROM COMMITTEES

- 7(a) Third Don Crossing - Referred by Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee of 6 December 2012 (Pages 11 - 12)

GENERAL BUSINESS

- 8(a) Appointments - Report by Chief Executive (Pages 13 - 16)

- 8(b) Treasury Management - Mid Year Review - Report by Director of Corporate Governance - Referred by Finance and Resources Committee of 4 October 2012 (Pages 17 - 22)

- 8(c) Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan - Referred by Strategic Development Planning Authority of 9 November 2012 (Pages 23 - 270)

- 8(d) Annual Audited Accounts 2011/12 - Referred by Audit and Risk Committee of 27 November 2012 (Pages 271 - 306)

- (i) External Auditor's Annual Report on the 2011/12 Audit
- (ii) Annual Audited Accounts 2011/12 (circulated previously)

- 8(e) Appointment of Members to the Older People's Advisory Group - Referred by Corporate Policy and Performance Committee of 29 November 2012 (Pages 307 - 310)

- 8(f) Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Housing Capital Budget 2013/14 to 2015/16 - Joint report by Director of Corporate Governance and Director of Housing and Environment - Referred simpliciter by Finance and Resources Committee of 6 December 2012 (Pages 311 - 350)

- 8(g) Strategic Police Priorities - Report by Chief Executive (Pages 351 - 360)

MOTIONS

9(a) Councillor Malone

"In view of the recent decision to reduce the speed limit from the Kingswells roundabout to Blacktop from 60mph to 40mph, that officers be instructed to report on the implications of this for the neighbouring rural roads network including Countesswells Road, Kirk Brae and Baillieswells Road, and on the need to ensure consistency of speed limits in the area, instruct the Director of Corporate Governance and Head of Finance to identify an appropriate budget from which to fund any works which officers may propose."

9(b) Councillor Greig

"That this Council:

- (1) identifies how city centre safety can be improved for a period of approximately the next 5 years through a series of actions agreed through community planning in partnership with the BID, Police, Fire, NHS, Unight and other relevant organisations with community safety responsibilities;
- (2) agrees to work towards Purple Flag accreditation; and
- (3) reports back to Council at appropriate times with a fuller progress report by 1 April 2013."

9(c) Councillor Yuill

"That this Council agrees to amend Standing Order 3(4)(b) as follows:

"A special meeting of the Council called by requisition of members in terms of Standing Order 4(2) shall, if required, be held on any day, including any day referred to in Standing Order 3(4)(a)(i) or 3(4)(a)(iii). The Lord Provost shall also have the power, in his/her sole discretion and where special circumstances so require, to instruct that a meeting of the Council be held on any date whatsoever."

and that Standing Order 4(2) be amended as follows:

"A special meeting of the Council may be called at any time by the Lord Provost or if required by at least a quarter of the members of the Council and in the latter case shall be held within fourteen clear days of receipt of the requisition by the Head of Democratic Services. For the avoidance of doubt the calculation of one quarter in these Standing Orders shall be rounded down if it results in a figure ending in less than point 5, and rounded up if the figure is point 5 or above. In the case of a meeting called in terms of this Standing Order the notice required to be published in terms of Standing Order 6 shall have attached the letter signed by the members requisitioning the meeting and shall specify the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting. For the further avoidance of doubt special meetings of the Council may not be held on a Saturday or Sunday or on public holidays observed by the staff employed in the Town House."

9(d) Councillor Yuill

"That this Council agrees to establish a Public Petitions Committee to consider petitions presented to the Council by citizens of Aberdeen and instructs officers to prepare a report on this."

9(e) Councillors MacGregor and Samarai

"Council agrees to establish a working group consisting of relevant officers, local members, community representatives and relevant partner organisations to develop and implement proposals for a community garden in Bucksburn, utilising the land adjacent to the Cloverleaf Hotel which was handed over as part of the 3Rs development and sourcing appropriate external funding to enable the delivery of the project."

9(f) Councillors Crockett, Allan, Boulton, Carle, Cooney, Donnelly, Lesley Dunbar, Finlayson, Forsyth, Graham, Grant, Len Ironside CBE, Laing, Lawrence, Malik, Jean Morrison MBE, Nathan Morrison, Reynolds, Taylor, Thomson and Young

"This Council acknowledges that the people of Scotland will decide our nation's future in a referendum. This Council agrees that Aberdeen as the power house of Scotland's economy, as Europe's oil capital, is more prosperous stronger and better together as part of the United Kingdom. This Council further agrees that the people of Aberdeen benefit greatly as part of the United Kingdom and that the United Kingdom is richer with Scotland as a partner."

9(g) Councillor Boulton

"That the Council agrees to write to Keith Brown the Transport Minister requesting a meeting with him and Council Leaders on bringing forward as a matter of urgency the Haudagain improvement. Mr Brown will surely appreciate the problems faced by commuters on a daily basis having been delayed at the Haudagain himself and realise that the people of Aberdeen should not have to wait until 2019. Immediate improvements would allow the long awaited regeneration of Middlefield to begin."

9(h) Councillor Greig

"That the Council recognises and appreciates the key role that micro, small and medium sized local businesses, including shops and single traders in Aberdeen, as economic generators which play a major part in determining and enhancing the quality of life across the city.

That this Council undertakes a broad-ranging review to identify specific ways that the Council and its partners can work together to support and foster micro, small and medium sized business activity.

To this end, that the Council carries out a consultation exercise to enable micro, small and medium sized business people to have their say in identifying specific suggestions and proposals; and that a report is produced with recommendations for action."

9(i) Councillor Kiddie

“Aberdeen City Council agrees that in view of the current problems in the city affecting the delivery of home care services a summit meeting should be organised of all interested parties to determine a way forward to resolve the current difficulties.”

BUSINESS THE COUNCIL MAY WISH TO CONSIDER IN PRIVATE

10(a) Pinewood and Hazledene Development Sites - Report by Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure - Referred by Finance and Resources Committee of 6 December 2012 (Pages 361 - 386)

Website Address: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Martyn Orchard, tel. (52)3097 or email morchard@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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URGENT BUSINESS COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 29 November, 2012 - Minute of Meeting of the URGENT BUSINESS COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Crockett, Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Cooney, Dickson, Jackie Dunbar, Forsyth, Kiddie (substituting for Councillor McCaig), Laing, Malone, May, Noble, Taylor and Young.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found at:-

<http://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=334&MId=2746&Ver=4>

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillors Boulton and Kiddie declared interests in relation to the items of business on the agenda by virtue of their appointment by the Council to the Board of Aberdeen Performing Arts. Both Councillors chose to remain in the meeting as Aberdeen Performing Arts was a body being a company as set out in paragraph 5.18(2)(i)(d) of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

DETERMINATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1. In terms of Standing Order 28(3)(vi), and in accordance with Section 50(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Committee was informed that it had to determine (1) that the items on the agenda were of an urgent nature; and (2) that the Committee required to consider the items and take decisions thereon.

The Committee resolved:-

to agree that the report on the Aberdeen Art Gallery Redevelopment Programme was of an urgent nature and required to be considered this day, and a decision taken thereon.

Councillor Jackie Dunbar moved as a procedural motion, seconded by Councillor Kiddie:-

That the report on the redevelopment of the Music Hall was not of an urgent nature and should instead be referred to the Council meeting on 19 December 2012 for determination.

On a division, there voted:- for the procedural motion (5) - Councillors Dickson, Jackie Dunbar, Kiddie, May and Noble; against the procedural motion (8) - Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Cooney, Forsyth, Laing, Malone, Taylor and Young.

The Committee further resolved:-

to reject the procedural motion and thereby agree that the item was of an urgent nature and required to be considered this day, and a decision taken thereon.

ABERDEEN ART GALLERY REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - ECS/12/062

2. The Committee had before it a report by the Acting Director of Education, Culture and Sport which advised of progress with the submission of an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the redevelopment of Aberdeen Art Gallery and provided an update on related work, in particular the Museums Collection Centre.

The Committee had earlier received a short presentation from the Acting Director of Education, Culture and Sport.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) note the progress to date on the Art Gallery redevelopment and Museums Collection Centre;
- (b) agree that the Council submit an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Grant programme for £10million for the redevelopment of the Art Gallery prior to this year's deadline of 30 November 2012;
- (c) agree that a sum of £3million be set aside from the Council's Non Housing Capital Programme in 2013/14;
- (d) agree that a sum of £10million be set aside from the Council's Non Housing Capital Programme for the financial period 2013-2017; and
- (e) agree that the Council provide a guarantee to meet any shortfall in the level of fundraising up to £10million.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations.

MUSIC HALL REDEVELOPMENT - ECS/12/061

3. The Committee had before it a report by the Acting Director of Education, Culture and Sport which provided an update on recent developments regarding the Music Hall and sought agreement for Aberdeen Performing Arts to conduct a design competition to determine the scope of any future redevelopment.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee confirm the Council's support for and agreement to Aberdeen Performing Arts carrying out a design competition in order to determine the full potential of any redevelopment of the Music Hall.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request officers to provide members with a copy of the detailed financial model and business plan for the Music Hall as instructed by the Education, Culture and Sport Committee of 20 January 2011 (Article 15 of the minute refers); and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations

- BARNEY CROCKETT, Convener.

**COUNCIL
BUSINESS STATEMENT
19 DECEMBER 2012**

Please note that this statement contains a note of every report which has been instructed for submission to Council. All other actions which have been instructed by the Council are not included, as they are deemed to be operational matters after the point of decision.

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Minute Reference</u> | <u>Council/Committee Decision</u> | <u>Update</u> | <u>Lead Officer(s)</u> | <u>Report Due</u> | <u>Report Expected (if known)</u> |
|------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Council 16.12.09 Article 19 | <p><u>50m Swimming Pool</u></p> <p>The Council approved a number of recommendations regarding design and procurement issues relating to the 50m Pool. The Council agreed that the management of the project be transferred to Aberdeen Sports Village subject to (a) the provision of further legal and financial advice in respect of any potential risks to the Council; and (b) the other partners confirming their financial contribution to the project.</p> <p>The Council requested that Aberdeen Sports Village provide the Council with a report within four months on how they planned to drive the project forward. This is still awaited.</p> | <p><u>Please see Appendix for full information.</u></p> <p>The Education, Culture and Sport Committee of 2 June 2011 approved the following recommendations:-</p> <p>(d) to approve funding of up to £8 million and this be met from the Non-Housing Capital Programme for the construction of a 10 lane pool subject to:</p> <p>(iii) officers reaching an agreement with partners in regard to the use of the facilities in light of the potential migration of swimming clubs to the new facility; and</p> <p>(iv) officers reaching an agreement on a Transfer Agreement Document, which will</p> | Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure | 24.03.10 | |

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Minute Reference</u> | <u>Council/Committee Decision</u> | <u>Update</u> | <u>Lead Officer(s)</u> | <u>Report Due</u> | <u>Report Expected (if known)</u> |
|------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | <p>formalise the transfer of responsibility for the delivery and operational phases of the 50 metre pool project to ASV Limited.</p> <p>(f) to instruct officers to report back to the next appropriate meeting of the Council in regard to the progress on the negotiations on items d(iii) and (iv) above.</p> <p>A progress report was considered by Council on 6 October 2011, which dealt with the above matters, as well as the latest position regarding negotiations with Aberdeenshire Council. Council approved the recommendations contained within the report and instructed officers to arrange a meeting of the 50m Pool Project Working Group as soon as possible.</p> <p>The request for a report from Aberdeen Sports Village on how they planned to drive the project forward (as referred to in the Council Decision column on the previous page) has been</p> | | | |

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Minute Reference</u> | <u>Council/Committee Decision</u> | <u>Update</u> | <u>Lead Officer(s)</u> | <u>Report Due</u> | <u>Report Expected (if known)</u> |
|------------|----------------------------------|--|--|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | | <p>superseded by events given that construction works have begun.</p> <p>It was recommended to Council in December 2011 that this item be removed from the Business Statement in view of the above information; however Council agreed to retain the item in order that members could be kept informed of discussions with Aberdeenshire Council regarding their funding contribution.</p> <p>At the Council meeting on 4 April 2012, the Council requested that an update be provided on the impact if Aberdeenshire Council did not proceed with a financial contribution to the 50m Pool.</p> | | | |
| 2. | Council 09.02.12 Article 4 | <p><u>Common Good Budget - 2012/13</u></p> <p>The Council, in approving the recommendations contained within the report with some minor amendments, agreed, amongst other things, to:-</p> <p>(i) instruct the Head of Finance to undertake a review of the level of cash balances that should be retained for a long term financial strategy, and report back to Council at an</p> | <p>A report on the Common Good Budget was considered by the Finance and Resources Committee on 6 December 2012.</p> | Head of Finance | 19.12.12 | |

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Minute Reference</u> | <u>Council/Committee Decision</u> | <u>Update</u> | <u>Lead Officer(s)</u> | <u>Report Due</u> | <u>Report Expected (if known)</u> |
|------------|--|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | (ii) appropriate time; and instruct the Head of Finance to report back to Council on a proposed 5 year budget, taking account of the cash balance strategy to be adopted. | | | | |
| 3. | Council 13.06.12 Article 13 | <u>Draft Statement of Accounts 2011/12</u> The Council noted that the audited Statement of Accounts would be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee, along with the external auditor's report to members in the autumn, and would come back to a Council meeting thereafter. | This item is on the agenda. | Head of Finance | 10.10.12 | 19.12.12 |
| 4. | Audit and Risk 25.09.12 Article 11 | <u>Roles and Responsibilities: Is Aberdeen City Council Getting it Right?</u> The Audit and Risk Committee instructed that a report be submitted to Council covering the following items:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review and agree the most effective structure of reports to committees; • review the committee structure, particularly to | | Director of Corporate Governance | 06.03.13 | |

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Minute Reference</u> | <u>Council/Committee Decision</u> | <u>Update</u> | <u>Lead Officer(s)</u> | <u>Report Due</u> | <u>Report Expected (if known)</u> |
|------------|------------------------------|--|--|--|-------------------|--|
| | | <p>broaden scrutiny; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the scheme of delegation and standing orders. | | | | |
| 5. | Council 10.10.12 Article tbc | <p><u>Crematorium Bus Service</u></p> <p>The Council (1) agreed in principle to reinstate the crematorium bus service as soon as feasible; (2) instructed the Housing and Environment Service to identify potential sources of funding for those elements of a crematorium bus service that cannot be covered by existing resources; and (3) instructed officers to report back to Council, or the Housing and Environment Committee, on the implementation date.</p> | This report will be submitted to the Housing and Environment Committee on 15 January 2012. | Head of Planning and Sustainable Development | 06.03.13 | Housing and Environment Committee 15.01.12 |
| 6. | Council 10.10.12 Article tbc | <p><u>Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route</u></p> <p>The Council instructed officers to continue to negotiate with Transport Scotland on the future funding mechanism and report back in due course on this funding package.</p> | | Head of Finance | 06.03.13 | |

APPENDIX

ITEM 1 - 50m SWIMMING POOL

At its meeting of 27 April 2011, the Council agreed to delegate authority to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee to make all necessary decisions at its meeting on 2 June 2011, in order to keep the project on track, and that officers report accordingly.

The Education, Culture and Sport Committee of 2 June 2011 approved the recommendations contained within the report, as outlined below, and added an additional recommendation at d(v) "subject to officers receiving clarification from Aberdeenshire Council that their revenue funding contribution remains intact".

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) note the content of the report;
- (b) note that the development cost, based on the most economically advantageous tender for the 10 lane option is £21,918,104 and for the 8 lane option is £21,638,104 compared to the previously reported estimated costs of £23,347,259 for the 10 lane option and £22,726,794 for the 8 lane option;
- (c) note that the total funding available from the other partners as detailed in section 5.3 of the report has increased from the previous total of £10 million reported to Council on 15 December 2010 to £14 million. This being the result of the University of Aberdeen increasing their contribution from £5 million to £8 million and Aberdeen Sports Village Ltd. (ASV Limited) agreeing to underwrite the shortfall of £1 million for the 10 lane option to ensure that the funding package can be secured. The remaining balance of external funding coming from a £5 million grant from **sportscotland**;
- (d) agree to approve funding of up to £8 million and this be met from the Non-Housing Capital Programme for the construction of a 10 lane pool subject to:
 - (i) the Corporate Asset Group, on behalf of the Corporate Management Team, managing the overall spend of the Non-Housing Capital Programme in 2011/12 to stay within approved spending limits and to take into account the future capital demand for this project in the budget process for 2012/13 and 2013/14;
 - (ii) the revenue support for the ongoing costs of the project being capped at £250,000 per annum at 2010/11 prices with a review of future indexation once the facility is nearing completion of the construction phase;
 - (iii) officers reaching an agreement with partners in regard to the use of the facilities in light of the potential migration of swimming clubs to the new facility; and
 - (iv) officers reaching agreement on a Transfer Agreement Document, which will formalise the transfer of responsibility for the delivery and operational phases of the 50 metre pool project to ASV Limited.
- (e) note that the most economically advantageous tender for the 50 metre pool project was submitted by Contractor A, and subject to the Committee agreeing to approve funding on the basis of recommendation (d), to instruct officers to arrange, in conjunction with Aberdeen University and Aberdeen Sports Village Ltd., to appoint Contractor A as the Principal Contractor, based on their tender figure for the 10 lane option which results in an overall development cost of £21,918,104;
- (f) **to instruct officers to report back to the next appropriate meeting of the Council in regard to the progress on the negotiations on items d(iii) and (iv) above; and**
- (g) to note that the provision of a 50 metre pool has been included within the scope of the Water Management Plan currently underway, and will also be included within the report to Committee, due on 15 September 2011. The Committee should be aware that historically there has been a recognition that the city has a greater number of swimming pools for the size of population than elsewhere. **sportscotland** is providing support to model the existing water provision and future needs. The recommendations will also take full account of the reducing revenue and capital budgets and the costs associated with the 50 metre pool and are likely to include a reduction in the number and range of facilities.

At its meeting on 17 August 2011, the Council agreed that the above information be added back in to the business statement, and noted that a report would be submitted to the meeting on 6 October 2011.

COUNCIL

MOTIONS LIST

19 DECEMBER 2012

Please note that this statement tracks all Notices of Motion (relevant to Council) submitted by members, until the point of disposal. The motion will remain on the statement until the Council has agreed to remove it.

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Motion</u> | <u>Date of Council Meeting</u> | <u>Decision of Council</u> | <u>Action taken / Proposed Future Action</u> | <u>Responsible Head(s) of Service</u> | <u>Due Date</u> | <u>Is authority sought to remove motion from list?</u> |
|------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------|--|
| 1. | <p><u>Motion by Councillor McCaig</u></p> <p>“In recognition of his successful football career, including his position as the Scotland national team’s joint top goal scorer with thirty goals and as the only Scottish footballer to have been crowned European Footballer of the Year, Council agrees to bestow the Freedom of the City on Denis Law.”</p> | 04.04.12 | To instruct officers to report to a future meeting on the process of nominating candidates for Freedom of the City, detailing the relevant implications and merits of this nomination as well as the other two nominations submitted. | The Council, on 10 October 2012, agreed to establish a Freedom of the City Working Group chaired by the Lord Provost and comprising the Group Leaders to (1) consider in further detail each of the three proposals for the freedom of the city and to recommend to Council a decision on each; and (2) consider the current process for nomination and conferral of the freedom of the city and to recommend to the Council any changes it would wish to see adopted. | Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive | 06.03.13 | No |
| 2. | <p><u>Motion by Former Councillor Hunter</u></p> <p>“That Council confers the Freedom of the City upon Paul Lawrie for his services to golf and to</p> | 04.04.12 | To instruct officers to report to a future meeting on the process of nominating candidates for Freedom of the City, detailing the relevant implications and merits of this nomination as | The Council, on 10 October 2012, agreed to establish a Freedom of the City Working Group chaired by the Lord Provost and comprising the Group Leaders to (1) consider in | Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive | 06.03.13 | No |

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Motion</u> | <u>Date of Council Meeting</u> | <u>Decision of Council</u> | <u>Action taken / Proposed Future Action</u> | <u>Responsible Head(s) of Service</u> | <u>Due Date</u> | <u>Is authority sought to remove motion from list?</u> |
|------------|---|--------------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------|--|
| | the city and for his charitable work.” | | well as the other two nominations submitted. | further detail each of the three proposals for the freedom of the city and to recommend to Council a decision on each; and (2) consider the current process for nomination and conferral of the freedom of the city and to recommend to the Council any changes it would wish to see adopted. | | | |
| 3. | <p><u>Motion by Former Lord Provost Peter Stephen</u></p> <p>“That the Council confers the Freedom of the City on Professor Paul Mealor of the University of Aberdeen. Professor Mealor is well known having written the music for the hit song by the Military Wives which topped the music charts in December 2011 - this has brought huge credit to the city and the university, focussing on the military background which the UK are currently involved in.”</p> | 04.04.12 | To instruct officers to report to a future meeting on the process of nominating candidates for Freedom of the City, detailing the relevant implications and merits of this nomination as well as the other two nominations submitted. | The Council, on 10 October 2012, agreed to establish a Freedom of the City Working Group chaired by the Lord Provost and comprising the Group Leaders to (1) consider in further detail each of the three proposals for the freedom of the city and to recommend to Council a decision on each; and (2) consider the current process for nomination and conferral of the freedom of the city and to recommend to the Council any changes it would wish to see adopted. | Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive | 06.03.13 | No |

ENTERPRISE, PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

6 DECEMBER 2012

THIRD DON CROSSING

2. With reference to article 1 of this minute, the Convener invited the members who had requisitioned the special meeting to put forward their proposal.

Councillor Corral moved, seconded by Councillor Yuill:-

Following the end of the legal challenge against the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee agrees to renew the commitment to “lock in” the benefits of the AWPR by progressing with the third Don crossing on the route previously agreed by Council, and the dualling of the Berryden corridor as quickly as possible”

Councillor Thomson moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Forsyth:-

Council recognises its commitment to the existing policy for the third don crossing and recognises that the Council needs to bring forward a balanced budget for 2013/2014 and agrees the third Don crossing will be part of that process. Council further notes the complete failure of the SNP Administration to include the Berryden corridor in their capital budget plan for 2011/12 and further notes the complete hypocrisy of the SNP who when in Administration with the Liberal Democrats between May 2007 and May 2012 failed to build the third Don crossing, failed to proceed with the Berryden corridor and failed the people of Aberdeen.

On a division, there voted:-

For the motion (7) – Councillors Corral, Cormie, Delaney, Jaffrey, MacGregor, Townson and Yuill. For the amendment (8) – the Convener; the Vice-Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Finlayson, Forsyth, Grant, Laing and Thomson.

The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the amendment.

In terms of Standing Order 36(3) Councillor Yuill intimated that he wished the matter dealt with in the preceding article to be referred to Council for final decision. He was supported by Councillors Corall, Cormie, Delaney, Jaffrey and Townson in this respect.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| COMMITTEE | Council |
| DATE | 19 December 2012 |
| LEAD OFFICER | Chief Executive |
| TITLE OF REPORT | Appointments |
| REPORT NUMBER: | OCE/12/030 |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To bring before the Council vacancies for representation on the Boards of Sport Aberdeen and Oakbank School.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council agrees representatives to fill the vacancy on the Sport Aberdeen Board and the three vacancies on the Oakbank School Trust.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As noted in the original reports on appointments to the Statutory Meeting of the Council on 16 May 2012, the financial implications associated with the subject matter of this report are negligible.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications to this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

At the Statutory Meeting on 16 May 2012, Council considered reports on the appointment of members to specific sub-committees, groups, Council-supported trusts and boards (CG/12/056) and on the appointment of representatives to outside bodies (CG/12/057).

With regard to the former report, Council resolved to defer consideration of the appointment of members to the trusts and boards appended to that report for discussion amongst Group Leaders. With regard to the latter report, Council resolved to agree that a meeting of Group Leaders be held in early course to agree the appointment of members to the various bodies listed in appendices appended to that report.

Sport Aberdeen

Following a meeting of the Group Leaders on 23 May 2012, at its meeting of 1 June 2012 the Urgent Business Committee considered and agreed a report by the Chief Executive on appointments (OCE/12/009). This report detailed the appointment of 3 members (including an opposition member) to the Board of Sport Aberdeen – Councillors Dickson, Forsyth and Lawrence.

Councillor Forsyth has now intimated his resignation from the Board and consequently the Council is requested to agree a representative to fill this vacancy. For the Council's information, in relation to the appointment of Council representatives the Memorandum and Articles of Sport Aberdeen state that they "shall be appointed on the basis of their having skills and experience which, in the opinion of the Council, would allow them to make a substantial contribution to the work of the Board".

Oakbank School Trust

With regard to the Oakbank School Trust, as requested by the Council at its meeting of 13 June 2012 the Chief Executive reported to the Council at its meeting on 22 August 2012 (OCE/12/016) on the requirement for Council representation on the Board. The report detailed that the Scheme of Administration of the Oakbank School Trust states that nine of the eleven Governors of the Trust should be elected by Aberdeen City Council. Not fewer than five of the nine should be experienced in Education and not fewer than four of the nine should be experienced in Social Work. The Trust has confirmed that it wishes the full complement of Council representatives appointed. The report recommended that three further members are appointed.

At its meeting of 22 August 2012 the Council resolved to note that the SNP Group would give consideration to appointing members to the Oakbank School Board of Governors if a copy of their accounts could be provided to them.

Having been provided by the Trust on 10 October 2012, a copy of the Oakbank School Trust accounts was provided to Councillor McCaig by the Head of Service, Office of Chief Executive on 11 October 2012.

The Council is requested to agree three representatives to fill the vacancies on the Oakbank School Trust.

6. IMPACT

Representation on the various sub-committees, trusts, boards and outside bodies assists the Council in fulfilling its role in delivering the Single Outcome Agreement.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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DRAFT

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

4 October 2012

TREASURY MANAGEMENT – MID YEAR REVIEW (CG/12/095)

1. With reference to article 13 of the minute of its meeting of 21 June 2012, the Committee had before it a report by the Head of Finance which provided an update on treasury management activities for 2012/2013.

The report recommended:

that the Committee recommend that Council -

- (i) note the treasury management activities undertaken in 2012/2013 as detailed within the report; and
- (ii) approve the revised counterparty list as detailed at appendix 1.

The Committee resolved:

to approve the recommendations.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| COMMITTEE | Finance and Resources |
| DATE | 04 October 2012 |
| DIRECTOR | Stewart Carruth |
| TITLE OF REPORT | Treasury Management – Mid Year Review |
| REPORT NUMBER: | CG/12/095 |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Committee on Treasury Management activities undertaken to date, during financial year 2012/13.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee considers and recommends this report to Council for approval as follows:

- a) Notes the Treasury Management activities undertaken in 2012/13 as detailed, and
- b) Approves the revised Counterparty list as detailed at Appendix 1.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Treasury Management activities influence the loans pool interest rates and aims to minimise the cost of borrowing. This directly impacts upon costs chargeable to the Council's revenue budgets through the interest rates that are applied to capital financing costs. Whilst the level of borrowing a Council can undertake is now devolved from the Scottish Government to individual Councils, it will still be constrained by the requirement for capital investment to be affordable, sustainable and prudent. The main test of affordability will be whether the capital financing costs can be contained within the revenue budgets.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

If an active Treasury Management policy is not undertaken and implemented there may be future budgetary implications for the Council through greater than budgeted capital financing costs.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Introduction

The Council previously approved a Treasury Management policy on 15 March 2012. Part of this policy is to report a mid-year review to committee on Treasury Management activities undertaken.

With effect from 1 April 2004, Councils are now required by regulation to have regard to the Prudential Code (the Code) when carrying out their duties under part 7 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Historically, the Council's annual programme of capital investment has been funded by Treasury Management activities, such as additional long-term borrowing.

It is a requirement of this Code that Treasury Management is carried out in accordance with good professional practice. The Code requires the Council to comply with CIPFA "Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services", which this Council does.

This "mid-year" review on activities undertaken is also in line with new reporting requirements from the latest update of the CIPFA Code of Practice.

5.2 Treasury Management 2012/13

The following is a summary of Treasury Management activities which have been undertaken thus far in 2012/13: -

Long Term Borrowing

One new PWLB (Public Works Loans Board) loan for £10 million was borrowed in April 2012, at the relatively low rate of 2.95%, with this year's capital borrowing requirement in mind.

PWLB Interest Rates

As a direct result of the Government Spending Review last October, there was a major change to PWLB public sector lending rates. The rationale behind this major change is that HM Treasury will now set the rates at an average of 100 basis points (or 1 per cent) over the relevant gilt price.

However, this additional rise in PWLB rates by 90 basis points has somewhat discouraged the use of PWLB loans, and forced the Council to consider other forms of long term borrowing, such as LOBO loans (Lenders Option Borrowers Option) from financial institutions, and Bond Issuance.

Short Term Borrowing

Short-term borrowing rates for periods of up to 1 year continue at relatively low levels. The Council's borrowing strategy both last year and this year has been to borrow short-term where possible, to take advantage of these lower rates. The Council currently has some £55m of Temporary Loans from other Local Authorities, at an average rate of 0.65%.

Investments

Due to the downturn in the global economy, many previously undoubted financial institutions have been removed from the Council's Counterparty list during the last few years. The Counterparty list is the list of approved banks and building societies that the Council may lend to either directly or through the Money Markets, on a temporary basis.

Reviews of the Council's Counterparty list were undertaken and approved by Committee as the situation deteriorated. Last year, upon advice from Sector Treasury Services, the Council's Treasury Management advisors, the maximum lending term for all institutions was reduced to 3 months, with the exception of the Nationalised UK Banks, which were to remain at 12 months. Although this was purely a temporary measure to protect the Council's investments, there are no plans to review this at present, as the current financial climate remains volatile.

After recent discussions with our Treasury Management advisors, it is proposed that the Council increases the Counterparty Limit of the Nationalised UK Banks from £20m to £30m. This would provide the Council with the additional flexibility required to maximise returns on short-term surplus funds, without compromising on Counterparty quality.

Money Market Funds

Money Market Funds are AAA rated, short term pooled investment vehicles. They offer security, counterparty diversification and instant access to funds, when required.

The Council opened three Money Market Fund accounts in August 2012. This had been approved previously as part of the Council's annual Investment Strategy. These Money Market Fund accounts will greatly assist the Council in spreading its Counterparty risk and also improve cashflow liquidity.

The accounts were opened in August with Goldman Sachs Asset Management, Federated Prime Rate Capital Management and Ignis Asset Management.

6. IMPACT

Corporate – Failure to approve the changes to the Counterparty list could lead to reduced earnings to the Council.

Public – None.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Neil Stewart, Treasury Officer,
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**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
REVISED COUNTERPARTY LIST**

Changes are required to the current counterparty list as follows:

1. Increase the limits for the two Part UK Nationalised Banks, Lloyds Banking Group and The Royal Bank of Scotland plc, from £20m to £30m.

Deposits up to 12 months

UK Nationalised and Part Nationalised Banks - £30m limit

Lloyds Banking Group (includes Lloyds TSB Bank plc, Halifax Bank of Scotland)

The Royal Bank of Scotland plc
(includes National Westminster Bank plc, Ulster Bank Ltd)

UK Local Authorities, including Police Authorities - £10m limit

Deposits up to 3 months

Council's Bankers - £20m limit

Clydesdale Bank plc

UK Banks - £10m limit

Barclays Bank plc

UK Building Societies - £10m limit

Nationwide Building Society

Collective Investment Schemes - £30m total limit

Money Market Funds - £10m limit

Federated Prime Rate Sterling Liquidity Fund

Goldman Sachs Sterling Liquid Reserve Fund

Ignis Liquidity Fund

DRAFT

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY

9 November, 2012

ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

With reference to article 6 of the minute of its previous meeting, the Authority had before it a report by the Strategic Development Plan Manager which presented a draft of the proposed Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for consideration.

The report provided a background to the Plan and a synopsis of the draft Plan, which was appended to the report along with (1) a number of indicative plans and diagrams, (2) a draft habitats regulation appraisal record, (3) a strategic environmental assessment report, (4) a strategic flood risk assessment, (5) an equalities and human rights impact assessment; and (6) a document outlining responses to the comments received in relation to the October, 2011 Main Issues report. A minute extract from the meeting of the Aberdeen City Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee meeting of 6 November, 2012 was circulated at the meeting, as was a list of suggested amendments as follows –

- page 1, update page number due to typo.
- page 6, paragraph 3.9 – “this will include new or extended primary and secondary schools...” to enable responsive solutions to educational provision in cases where new development extends a community with an existing secondary school.
- page 9, paragraph 3.32 – “we will need to make sure that one or two new secondary schools...” to clarify existing wording.
- page 11, paragraph 3.41 – “we will need to make sure new or extended secondary schools and associated primary schools are provided in this area”.
- page 12, paragraph 3.44 – add “this will have significant infrastructure requirements, including a new secondary and associated primary and schools...” to rectify an omission regarding the Chapelton of Elsick new settlement.
- page 12, paragraph 3.45 – “this will be supported by the potential for expansion of a new secondary school...” to clarify existing wording.
- page 13, paragraph 3.55 – “we will also need to make sure that new or extended secondary schools and associated primary schools are provided in this area”.
- page 26, paragraph 5.6 – “...and certain developments (including River Dee link) to demonstrate no adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 site” to provide clarity around the link to Habitats Regulations appraisals.

- page 27, paragraph 5.11 – “...A96 between Inverurie and the border with Moray...” due to typo.

In relation to page 92 of the report, whereby the condition of the site at Loch of Skene was identified as “unfavourable declining”, officers undertook to ascertain as to what the problem was, and what actions were being taken to alleviate this, and to advise members accordingly by way of email.

The report recommended –

that the Authority –

- (a) discuss and agree the draft of the Proposed Plan (Appendix 1) and the associated supporting documentation (Appendices 2 – 6) as the SDPA’s settled view of the recommended final content of the plan;
- (b) agree the arrangements set out in section 5 above for the period for representations on the Proposed Plan;
- (c) delegate to the Strategic Development Plan Manager the task preparing the plan for publication (including the graphic design of the plan) and the finalisation of the Action Programme for consultation alongside the proposed plan;
- (d) seek delegated authority from both councils to submit the Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers for examination and approval if no substantive changes are proposed to the plan following representations; and
- (e) refer this report to both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council for ratification.

Councillor Bellarby moved –

that the Strategic Growth Area 3 (Aberdeen – Laurencekirk) be extended to include Edzell Air Base.

Councillor Bellarby’s motion did not attract a seconder, and therefore his motion fell. The Authority agreed in terms of Standing Order 7.27 (1) to suspend Standing Order 7.21 (7) in order that the motion could be recorded in this minute

The Authority resolved:

- (i) to approve the draft of the Proposed Plan (Appendix 1) incorporating the amendments as above, and the associated supporting documentation (Appendices 2 – 6) as the SDPA’s settled view of the recommended final content of the plan; and
- (ii) to approve recommendations (b) – (e) as above.

**ABERDEEN CITY & SHIRE
STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AUTHORITY**

Date: 9 November 2012

Title: Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present a draft of the Proposed Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) for discussion and agreement, recommending that the decision be referred to the two councils for ratification followed by a period for representations before submission to Scottish Ministers.

2 Background

2.1 The [Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan](#) was approved by Scottish Ministers in August 2009. It was the last structure plan to be approved in Scotland before the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 came into force, introducing a requirement to prepare SDPs in the four largest city regions (including in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire).

2.2 Both councils have now adopted local development plans consistent with the structure plan. This was a significant achievement given the scale of change required from the previous local plans.

2.3 Although not applying directly to the first SDP, there is a statutory requirement for future plans to be submitted to Scottish Ministers within four years of the approval of the previous plan. The current and previous development plan schemes have presented plan preparation timetables which set this as a target for the first strategic development plan. This means that submission is required to Scottish Ministers by 17 August 2013.

2.4 The SDPA started work on the preparation of a replacement plan in late 2010. This has involved the preparation of a range of studies and assessments as well as monitoring of the current structure plan and engagement with stakeholders and agencies. The SDPA approved a Main Issues Report at its meeting of 23 September 2011 and consultation took place between October 2011 and January 2012, with 85 responses received.

2.5 All members of both councils have been invited to two informal seminar sessions during the preparation of the plan to date. The first took place on 10 June 2011 on the proposed content of the Main Issues Report while the second took place on 10 September 2012 on the content of the Proposed Plan itself.

2.6 An early draft of the Proposed Plan was shared with the Key Agencies for comment and their feedback was useful in informing the final draft attached.

- 2.7 The Aberdeen City and Shire SDP is the last of the four plans to be prepared in Scotland. The plans for the Glasgow and Dundee areas were approved by Scottish Ministers in June this year, while the plan for the Edinburgh area was submitted to Scottish Ministers in August. This reflects the fact that the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was only approved in 2009 – the plans being replaced elsewhere in Scotland were largely approved in the period between 2002 and 2006.
- 2.8 Scottish Ministers' guidance on the form and content of SDPs is set out in Circular 1/2009. The quote below gives an indication of their expectations:

Scottish Ministers expect SDPs to be concise visionary documents that set clear parameters for subsequent LDPs and inform decisions about strategic infrastructure investment. Vision statements should provide a realistic expression of what the plan area could be like in 20 years' time and a useful springboard for the spatial strategy of the plan. The spatial strategy should encapsulate the headline changes that the plan seeks to achieve, and provide a locational strategy for new development up to year 12 from plan approval and a broad indication of the scale and direction of growth up to year 20.

Circular 1/2009 (para 14)

- 2.9 The Regional Transport Strategy prepared by Nestrans is also being refreshed at the current time to ensure it remains up-to-date and consistent with the SDP. Consultation on an issues report is due over the coming months with the intention of publishing an update to the strategy next year. The refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy does not have the same legislative approval mechanism so the two documents will be brought into line at the same time. The Proposed SDP and Regional Transport Strategy refresh have been prepared in parallel through close partnership working.

3 Proposed Plan

- 3.1 The preparation of a Proposed Plan is a key stage in the preparation of the SDP. The proposed plan builds on the monitoring of the previous plan, engagement with stakeholders and Key Agencies, responses to the Main Issues Report and the various studies and assessments prepared in support of the plan.
- 3.2 The Proposed Plan presented in Appendix 1 represents a significant level of continuity with the current structure plan. This was the view clearly expressed by the majority of stakeholders, Key Agencies and those responding to the Main Issues Report.
- 3.3 The plan continues to present an ambitious strategy for growth for the area while also focusing regeneration activity in those parts of the area with particular challenges. A common view throughout engagement and consultation was that the focus should be on implementation rather than making changes to a plan which was widely welcomed and still only a few years old.
- 3.4 As identified in the Main Issues Report, while by no means immune from the consequences of the global economic turmoil since 2007/08, Aberdeen City and

Shire has been one of the most resilient parts of the UK. Aberdeen City and Shire is consistently identified as one area in Scotland and the UK which has the potential to drive economic recovery. It is important that the SDP supports this and helps deliver on this opportunity.

- 3.5 Housing and employment allowances up to at least 2026 have already resulted in allocations being made by the two Local Development Plans so there is already a clearly defined pattern of growth. The focus is therefore rightfully on the implementation of these plans.
- 3.6 As indicated in the Main Issues Report, the opportunity has been taken to expand the 'Spatial Strategy' section of the plan and at the same time include more diagrams to explain the effect of the plan on different areas. At the same time the text retains the Crystal Mark from the Plain English Campaign for its clarity.
- 3.7 The main changes from the current structure plan relate to five additional proposals and the policy positions around waste management and the strategic transport fund. These are addressed below after a consideration of the housing land supply position.

Housing Land Supply

- 3.8 The 2012 Housing Land Audit is reported elsewhere on this agenda. The Audit identifies a record supply of housing land, with further land entering the Audit in Aberdeenshire next year from its local development plan.
- 3.9 While housing completions in Aberdeen City and Shire have declined since the start of the global economic turmoil in 2007/08, they have been more resilient than elsewhere in Scotland. The 2012 Audit indicates that completions are likely to rise again over the next few years as the new LDP allocations are developed.
- 3.10 The Proposed SDP does not require additional housing or employment land to be identified in the subsequent LDPs for the period to 2026.
- 3.11 The housing requirement and allowances in the Proposed Plan are based on the outputs of the 2011 Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA). Recent projections prepared by the National Records of Scotland (formerly the General Register Office for Scotland) suggest a significantly higher rate of population and household growth than was used as the basis for the HNDA. The Housing Market Partnership met earlier this year and recommended that the HNDA continue to be used as the basis for the SDP. The Proposed SDP continues to provide a generous supply of housing and employment land and is robust enough to accommodate higher levels of growth such as those projected by the National Records of Scotland in the medium-term (ie to 2026 at least and probably well into the final phase of the plan).
- 3.12 Monitoring of population and household growth as well as the rate of new house building will be important on an annual basis to inform the review of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment and the SDP in five years' time to ensure that the SDP continues to provide a robust plan for the future.

Waste Management

- 3.13 The publication of Scotland's Zero Waste Plan in 2010 set a different context for planning for waste management to that contained in the current structure plan. This was anticipated in the structure plan which stated that the new framework would be reflected in the first SDP.
- 3.14 The urgency and significant of the change to a more sustainable approach to waste management expressed in the structure remains. This plan seeks to facilitate the development of the required infrastructure, viewing waste as an important resource.
- 3.15 The MIR presented a series of options to deal with the area's waste and the preferred option has largely been carried forward into the proposed SDP. The proposed SDP emphasises the objective of meeting our waste management needs locally as far as possible, in line with the waste hierarchy, the proximity principle and the Zero Waste Plan.
- 3.16 While we currently have sufficient landfill capacity, there is a need for at least an additional 300,000 tonnes of capacity in new waste management facilities in the area. These are likely to be facilities such as material recycling and composting plants as well as energy from waste facilities. The plan directs most of this capacity to the strategic growth areas within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area to reduce the environmental and financial costs of transporting waste and maximise the opportunity for using the heat generated by such proposals. Given the nature of modern waste management facilities, sites identified for employment purposes in the two local development plans are likely to be potentially suitable, along with sites adjacent to existing waste management facilities. Sites outwith the strategic growth areas may also be suitable, particularly where they meet a more local need or require a rural location.

Strategic Transport Fund

- 3.17 The SDPA approved Supplementary Planning Guidance on a Strategic Transport Fund (STF) in December 2011 and this was subsequently ratified by both councils in early 2012.
- 3.18 Financial contributions from development have already been received and a number of planning agreements have been signed which require a contribution to be made at a future date. Most of the contributions to the fund will come from new sites allocated in the two recently approved local development plans so it can be expected that the number of planning agreements with STF contributions will rise significantly as sites come forward for development over the next year or two.
- 3.19 Engagement with the development industry is due to take place over the next few months around the timing of implementation of the individual interventions. This will also seek views on the implementation of the guidance and how it can be improved. A review of the guidance will be carried out over the next six to twelve months with reports to future meetings of the SDPA. Consultation will be carried out as part of this process and enable the guidance to be adopted as statutory supplementary guidance alongside the approval of the SDP. The existing guidance will continue in force until that time.

Proposals

- 3.20 All of the proposals contained in the current structure plan have been carried forward to the Proposed SDP with one exception. The proposal for a new prison at Peterhead has been removed as construction is well underway. All other proposals are still awaiting implementation and there is value in retaining the plan's support for them until that stage has been reached.
- 3.21 A number of additional proposals have been included in the Proposed SDP. Most of these were highlighted in the MIR, although the Scottish Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan gave a commitment to dualling the A96 north of Inverurie and this has also been included.
- 3.22 The new proposals include:
- Upgrading the A96 to dual carriageway north of Inverurie;
 - Carbon capture and storage infrastructure at Peterhead as well as infrastructure for the transport of CO₂ to St Fergus from outwith the area (either by pipeline or ship);
 - Electricity transmission infrastructure to the south of Peterhead including an extension to the electricity substation and converter stations required for offshore transmission (subject to a development framework for the area);
 - Proposals to realise the potential of the ports at Aberdeen and Peterhead, particularly in the context of the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan; and
 - Strategic transport interventions required to address the cumulative impact of new development in and around Aberdeen. These interventions were identified and will be funded through the Strategic Transport Fund.

Main Issues Report Consultation Responses

- 3.23 Consultation responses received to the Main Issues Report were presented to the SDPA at its meeting in March 2012. These were used to inform the drafting of the Proposed Plan. Appendix 2 contains proposed responses to the issues raised.

Publication

- 3.24 The final version of the Proposed Plan will be graphic designed and presented in such a way as to express the vision and aspiration of the plan as well as highlight its key messages. The current maps in the Proposed Plan are draft in nature and will be completed prior to publication. It will be made clear that they are not maps and are indicative in nature.
- 3.25 Although distribution via the SDPA website is the preferred means, a number of hard copies of the plan will be required. It is proposed that up to 1,000 copies of the proposed plan are printed and made available free of charge in line with the commitments contained in the development plan scheme.

4 Supporting documents

- 4.1 A series of supporting documents accompany the Proposed SDP. These are required to be published alongside the plan and are set out in Appendices 3-6 to this report.
- Habitats Regulations Appraisal (Appendix 3)
 - Strategic Environmental Appraisal (Appendix 4)
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Appendix 5)
 - Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (Appendix 6)
- 4.2 A Proposed Action Programme is also required to be published alongside the Proposed Plan. This is still being developed in partnership with those likely to be identified to deliver the plan. Given the high level of continuity with the current structure plan, its action programme has been used as the basis for the new Action Programme. Amendments can be made to the Action Programme at any time and it does not go through the same statutory process as the plan itself. Delegated authority is requested below to finalise the Action Programme prior to consultation.
- 4.3 In addition to these new or revised documents, a Housing Need and Demand Assessment, Climate Change Study and Monitoring Statement were published alongside the Main Issues Report and are still of relevance. These documents will not be republished but are available from the SDPA website and limited numbers of hard copies will be available on request.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The Development Plan Scheme (DPS) 2012/13 sets out the commitments we have made to engagement at different stages of the plan preparation process. It requires that we seek representations for a period of 7 weeks and that we send copies of the plan to all those on our contact database (which includes all Community Councils as well as those who responded to the Main Issues Report). The DPS also identifies that press notices and press releases will be issued to help reach other interested parties.
- 5.2 In addition to the minimum set out in the DPS it is proposed to place the press notice on the 'tellmesotland.gov.uk' website and provide information to a range of organisations which circulate newsletters by email.
- 5.3 Following the close of the period for representations, it is proposed to provide a brief summary of responses to the March 2013 meeting of the SDPA and a full response to the June meeting. This will enable the plan to be submitted to Scottish Ministers in advance of the August 2013 target date.
- 5.4 In order to ensure that the plan can be submitted to the Scottish Ministers by the target date it is recommended that delegated authority is sought from the two councils to submit on their behalf in mid-2013 as long as no substantive changes are proposed to the plan at that stage.

5.5 Submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers starts the examination phase of the plan preparation process where Scottish Ministers appoint Reporters from the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals to examine the representations and recommend any changes required to the plan. They report to directly to Scottish Ministers who can approve the plan with or without modifications.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The financial implications arising from this report relate to the publication, distribution and publicity around the Proposed SDP. These expenses have been accounted for within the SDPA's budget. Costs later in the process around the examination of the plan have been identified in the SDPA's indicative budget for 2013/14.

7 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that the SDPA:

- a) discuss and agree the draft of the Proposed Plan (Appendix 1) and the associated supporting documentation (Appendices 2 – 6) as the SDPA's settled view of the recommended final content of the plan;
- b) agree the arrangements set out in section 5 above for the period for representations on the Proposed Plan;
- c) delegate to the Strategic Development Plan Manager the task preparing the plan for publication (including the graphic design of the plan) and the finalisation of the Action Programme for consultation alongside the proposed plan;
- d) seek delegated authority from both councils to submit the Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers for examination and approval if no substantive changes are proposed to the plan following representations; and
- e) refer this report to both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council for ratification.

David Jennings
Aberdeen City & Shire Strategic Development Plan Manager

Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of Planning & Sustainable Development
Aberdeen City Council

Robert Gray
Head of Planning & Building Standards
Aberdeenshire Council



Report prepared by: David Jennings, Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Manager

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1 – Introduction

1.1 Aberdeen City and Shire is a region of global significance. As the energy capital of Europe it has the ambition, skills and resources to lead the move towards a more secure and sustainable supply of energy and lead Scotland forward on a path of economic recovery.

1.2 The area already has an enviable reputation as an attractive place to live and work, with a high-quality environment, above-average incomes, low unemployment and among the happiest people in the UK. However, there is no room for complacency. The effects of climate change, the need to use resources more efficiently, changes in North Sea oil and gas production and differences in wealth and opportunity between some of the region's communities will threaten everyone's wellbeing if we do not take action.

1.3 By 2035, Aberdeen City and Shire will need to have adapted to a very different world. We need to face up to the challenges ahead to be able to maintain and improve the attractiveness of the region as a place to live, visit and do business.

1.4 The purpose of this plan is to set a clear direction for the future development of the North East – recognising the importance of improving links and connections, adding to the already enviable quality of life and providing the opportunities for high-quality sustainable growth towards which the public and private sectors can work to deliver our vision.

1.5 This plan is the first strategic development plan to cover the area. It has been developed from the previous structure plan approved by Scottish Ministers in 2009 and reflects the widespread support that plan received.

1.6 The plan covers the whole of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire except that part within the Cairngorms National Park. It has been prepared by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development

Planning Authority on behalf of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils. It represents a shared vision for the future of the area and has been developed in a way which aims to include everyone in the process, including communities, public-sector organisations and businesses.

Layout and content of the plan

1.7 This plan focuses on what we want to change. It does not cover all planning issues but only those which are nationally or regionally important or can best be dealt with by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council working together. Both councils prepare local development plans which cover a wider range of issues in more detail.

1.8 A key part of this plan is our vision and spatial strategy, supported by a series of objectives and targets. Proposals are included where they are important to putting the plan into practice. We have tried to use as few technical terms as possible, but there is a glossary at the end of the plan which defines some words and phrases you may not be familiar with.

1.9 It is vital to recognise the links between the different parts of the plan. We have divided the plan into a number of themes rather than topic-based chapters because individual topics relate to some, if not all, of the themes. This emphasises that the plan should be read as a whole.

1.10 The plan is supported by a Proposed Action Programme which shows how we plan to put the plan into effect with our partners. Local development plans are one of the main ways of putting this plan into effect but there are others. Both councils will use this plan in appropriate cases to help decide whether a development proposal would take the area in the right direction. However, local development plans (and supplementary guidance) consistent with this plan will be the main plans we will use to assess applications for planning permission.

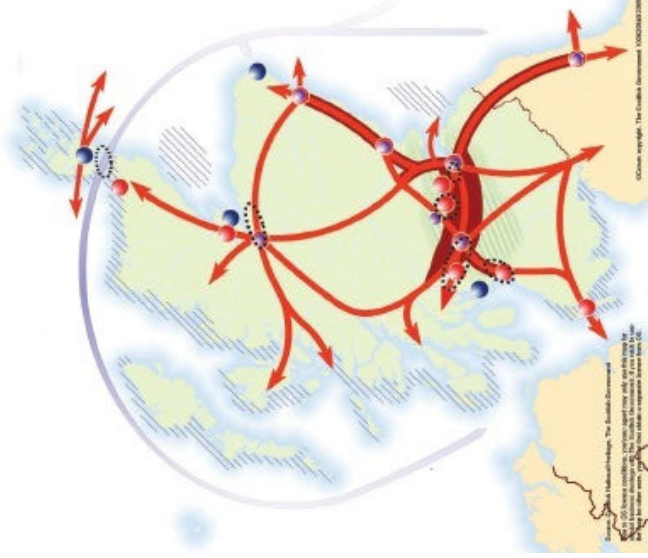
Influences on the plan

1.11 We have written this plan with a wide range of international, national and regional influences in mind.

1.12 At an international level, issues such as climate change, protecting the environment, securing energy supplies for the future and economic recovery all set an important context for this plan.

1.13 At the national level, National Planning Framework 2 was published by the Scottish Government in June 2009. The framework looks forward to 2030 with the main parts of the development strategy being shown in figure 2. The east coast corridor from Aberdeen to Newcastle is identified as a 'key economic corridor' offering opportunities to develop 'knowledge economy links' with the energy and offshore industries and the universities along the route. Peterhead is identified as a 'deep water opportunity' and Aberdeen as an international gateway.

The A90 and A96 are identified as strategic transport routes while Aberdeen is also shown as having 'strategic transport routes' beyond the strategic development plan area. A potential subsea energy network has been identified off the east coast, with a key onshore connection at Peterhead.



1.14 Along with the opportunities associated with the changing nature of the offshore oil and gas industry, the potential of the North East to build on its strengths is also recognised – growing and diversifying the economy. The National Planning Framework emphasises the opportunities offered by the deepest harbour in the North East at Peterhead, including a potential role in taking offshore equipment out of use. Three 'national developments' have been identified in the area – improvements (including access) to Aberdeen airport, the upgrading of Peterhead power station and reinforcing the electricity grid (East Coast transmission route).

1.15 Recent legislation and Scottish Government strategies, including the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, Land Use Strategy, Zero Waste Plan, Economic Strategy, Regeneration Strategy and the Agenda for Cities, have been published since the previous structure plan. Forthcoming work includes marine planning at the national and regional level.

1.16 Over the last few years the Scottish Government has identified a range of improvements to the road and rail infrastructure in the area over the period of this plan. These include making the full length of the A96 a dual carriageway as well as reducing journey times and increasing the frequency of trains on the Aberdeen-Inverness railway line.

1.17 The regional strategies and plans which have an important influence on this plan include the North East Scotland Transport Partnership's (Nestrans) Regional Transport Strategy and Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future's Economic Manifesto.



2 – The vision for the plan

2.1 We need to face up to the challenges and grasp the opportunities ahead to be able to maintain and improve the attractiveness of the region as a place to live, visit and do business. A vision for a successful and sustainable future is set out below.

Vision

“Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more attractive, prosperous and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, visit and do business.

We will be recognised for:

- our enterprise and inventiveness, particularly in the knowledge economy and in high-value markets;
- the unique qualities of our environment; and
- our high quality of life.

We will have acted confidently and taken the courageous decisions necessary to further develop a robust and resilient economy and to lead the way towards development being sustainable, including dealing with climate change and creating a more inclusive society.”

2.2 To make this vision a reality, we have developed a series of aims. These provide a useful guide which both interprets the vision and focuses clearly on the role this plan will play in delivering it. This recognises that many different people and organisations will be involved in delivering this vision.

Aims

The main aims of the plan are to:

- provide a strong framework for investment decisions which help to grow and diversify the regional economy, supported by promoting the need to use resources more efficiently and effectively; and
- take on the urgent challenges of sustainable development and climate change.

To support these main aims, the plan also aims to:

- make sure the area has enough people, homes and jobs to support the level of services and facilities needed to maintain and improve the quality of life;
- protect and improve our valued assets and resources, including the built and natural environment and our cultural heritage;
- help create sustainable mixed communities, and the associated infrastructure, which meet the highest standards of urban and rural design and cater for the needs of the whole population; and
- make the most efficient use of the transport network, reducing the need for people to travel and making sure that walking, cycling and public transport are attractive choices.

2.3 We are committed to all the aims as a whole. This is the only way we will be able to achieve our vision.

Policy

In assessing development proposals, we will balance the importance given to each aim in coming to a decision, taking into account the spatial strategy, objectives and targets of the plan.

3 – The spatial strategy

3.1 All parts of the North East are important for the future of the area. However, different areas will take different roles as a result of their current characteristics and future opportunities. This plan will set a clear direction and be specific where necessary, while giving local development plans the opportunity to respond to local circumstances.

3.2 Identifying where development will take place is a vital part of delivering the changes needed in the Aberdeen City and Shire area. Being clear about where we want new homes, businesses and other developments to be provides long-term certainty and confidence for communities, businesses and organisations that provide services. It allows us to make best use of the investment that we will need to maintain and improve the quality of life in the area over the coming decades of growth.

3.3 We have developed a spatial strategy which promotes development in places that meet the needs of business and, at the same time, are sustainable and take on the challenges of climate change. The strategy also recognises the need to maintain and improve the area's communities and the services they depend on.

3.4 All parts of the strategic development plan area are either within a strategic growth area or a local growth and diversification area. However, some areas are also identified as regeneration priority areas.

3.5 This strategy (see figure 3) focuses development in places where there are clear opportunities to encourage people to use public transport, which itself can be provided in an efficient way. The strategy plans for significant growth in a limited number of places, where there can be significant public and private investment in schools, community facilities and transport infrastructure without affecting people's quality of life. It also provides the flexibility to

meet the needs of local communities. The strategy also identifies those areas that need investment to tackle important regeneration needs.

3.6 All areas will need significant upgrades to the communications infrastructure to allow for superfast broadband early in the period covered by this plan.

Targets

- Over the period to 2035, at least 75% of all homes built, and employment land developed should be in the strategic growth areas.
- Over the period to 2035, at least 50% of all homes built should be in Aberdeen City.
- For all developments meeting more than local needs to be in strategic growth areas, unless another area can be justified.

How to meet the targets

- Local development plans (and, where appropriate, supplementary guidance) will use the spatial strategy to set policies and identify land for development.
- Planning applications will be assessed against the spatial strategy to decide whether the location, nature and scale of development is in line with the plan.

Monitoring

Patterns in house-building and land used for new employment uses will be monitored each year.

Strategic growth areas

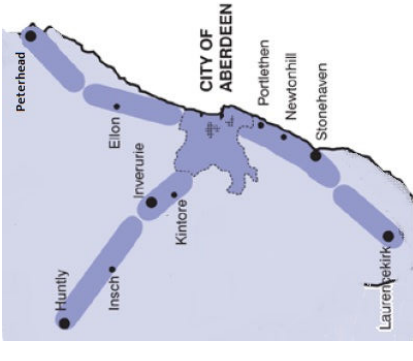
3.7 This strategic development plan identifies four strategic growth areas which will be the main focus for development in the area up to 2035.

3.8 Although these areas will carry out different roles, together they can be expected to account for around 75% of the growth over the next 20 years or more. The strategic growth areas are centred on Aberdeen and the main public transport routes. They aim to make housing, employment and services highly accessible by public transport and they will be relatively narrow, up to around 5km wide. However, the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan will decide which settlements and sites are within a strategic growth area.

3.9 Development in these areas will bring about a significant need for new and improved infrastructure. This will include new primary and secondary schools, open space, improvements to roads and railways as well as walking, cycling and bus networks, and new water and waste-water systems.

3.10 We should explore opportunities to put in place a strategic walking and cycle network which builds on the current networks being developed in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire towns by linking these together. We should do this in a way which creates opportunities for improvements to the natural environment by linking habitats and species in green networks. New tree-planting could play an important role in delivering these networks.

3.11 This investment in infrastructure is essential if we are to create successful sustainable mixed communities, and the cost is likely to be several hundred million pounds. While the public sector is committed to investing in the area, a significant part of the cost will have to be paid for by developers and landowners who should take account of this when negotiating the price paid for land.



3.12 We also need investment in new waste-management infrastructure such as recycling, composting and energy from waste. Most of this should be located in the strategic growth areas close to Aberdeen or in Aberdeen itself.

3.13 All four strategic growth areas should focus on creating sustainable mixed communities with the services, facilities and infrastructure necessary for the 21st century.

3.14 We discuss each of the four areas in detail below.

Local growth and diversification areas

3.15 Most of Aberdeenshire is identified in this plan for local growth and diversification. These areas are important assets to the North East and Scotland as a whole, providing areas of rich agricultural land as well as high environmental quality for tourism and outdoor recreation. The towns and villages reflect the different roles they have played over time.

3.16 Fishing, farming and forestry are important sectors of the economy. However, there is a need for diversification and growth in the economy in this area to meet local needs, with tourist-related developments having a role to play. Encouraging employment growth in these areas is a central part of making them more sustainable and reducing the need to commute, with its economic, social and environmental consequences.

3.17 Increasing tree cover can bring significant environmental, economic, social and community benefits if new planting respects the different functions of the land concerned and its role in a wider green network. There is clear potential to increase the tree cover of this area while respecting the competing interests for land. This will contribute to a wider Scottish Government target of increasing tree cover and recognising the role of woodland in reducing the causes of climate change (known as mitigation).

3.18 We need to improve some of the road infrastructure in the area, particularly those links to and from northern coastal communities such as Fraserburgh and Banff. This will support vital economic growth and regeneration in this area. This area will also play a part in supporting new sustainable energy infrastructure, and harbours along the north coast may play a role in supplying services to offshore renewable energy facilities.

3.19 Levels of growth in individual settlements should relate to local needs, although the scale of this growth will vary from place to

place. While we should aim to provide a mix of housing opportunities for everyone, we need to focus on providing smaller homes to buy or rent, and a significant amount of affordable housing. We need to give priority to mixed-use developments which respect the character of the landscape and local identity.

3.20 Housing allowances for this area are set out below, while employment land should be made available to meet local needs.

| | Housing allowances | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Existing LDP allocations to 2016 | 2017-2026 | 2027-2035 |
| Local growth (AHMA) | 1,000 | 1,350 | 1,350 |
| Local growth (RHMA) | 4,200 | 4,000 | 4,000 |

3.21 In this area, there will continue to be pressure for housing in the countryside which is not connected to existing settlements. However, local development plans, in line with Scottish Planning Policy, should approach this by focusing new housing in, or as an extension to, existing settlements, particularly those which are well served by public transport. This will help to create and maintain successful places and be more sustainable.

3.22 In some cases, developments which aim to meet more than local needs may need to be based in this area, such as mineral extraction. In these cases, developers will need to justify this against the aims, strategy, objectives and targets of this plan. Meeting regeneration needs could be one part of this justification.

Regeneration priority areas

3.23 Regeneration is a vital part of the strategy of this plan. Inequality exists in some parts of the area and these areas will not meet their full potential unless we take positive steps. These actions are needed to support ongoing community efforts and will involve forming partnerships across the public, private and voluntary sectors, and will focus on achieving clear results. Work is already going on but needs to continue and increase.

3.24 The areas in need of regeneration are identified broadly in this plan but are focused on the needs of existing communities. They include some of the coastal communities of north and south Aberdeenshire (including the two largest towns of Fraserburgh and Peterhead), as well as parts of Aberdeen (the City Centre and a number of its communities). Improving the economy, environmental quality, accessibility, employment opportunities and the competitiveness of business should play a particular role in these areas.

3.25 The challenges and opportunities in these areas are wide-ranging and demand a response appropriate to the particular area. We must do everything we can and explore funding to bring about positive change in these communities. This change must bring lasting benefits and have positive effects on their vitality and viability.

3.26 Opportunities for redeveloping brownfield sites will vary from place to place and over time but need to be a clear priority. Such redevelopment should respect the character of the local area, improve the quality of the environment, use high-quality design and include a mix of uses.

3.27 Aberdeen City Council is currently developing a new framework for regeneration to replace its strategy of 2007. This will integrate social, economic and area-based initiatives in a number of

parts of the city. As well as redirecting existing spending, the strategy will look at access to new funding sources and the use of its own asset base to stimulate new investment.

3.28 Aberdeenshire Council developed a 'Framework for Regeneration' in 2010 and this is supported by a series of action plans. These are based on the needs and opportunities of particular communities and cover improvements to the built and natural environment, actions to improve town-centre vitality, and measures to improve opportunities for employment.

3.29 Improvements to transport are particularly important to the coastal communities of north and south Aberdeenshire. The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and dualling of the A90 between Balmedie and Tippetty are important projects to help tackle these issues. However, further improvements to the A90 north of Aberdeen and better links to the trunk road network (such as improvements to the A947 and A952 from Banff and Fraserburgh) will also help improve access to markets. Access to services and employment in south Aberdeenshire is being supported through action by communities.

3.30 The quality of the environment varies from area to area, although it will be possible to further develop tourism in some coastal areas.

Aberdeen City

3.31 Aberdeen is Scotland's third-largest city and the regional centre for employment, retail, culture, health and higher education as well as being the region's transport hub – with road, rail, sea and air links.

3.32 Around half of all new development in the city region will be within Aberdeen City. While we prefer development to take place on brownfield sites, the scale of growth we expect will mean that more than half of the development will need to take place on greenfield sites. Reducing travel distances and making walking, cycling and public transport more attractive to people is vital. We will need to make sure that one or two secondary schools, associated primary schools and improvements to transport infrastructure are provided to serve new development in the city.

3.33 Housing and employment allowances for Aberdeen

| | Housing allowances | |
|------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| | Existing LDP allocations to 2016 | 2017-2026 2027-2035 |
| Brownfield | 4,500 | 3,000 |
| Greenfield | 12,000 | 4,000 |
| | Employment land allowances (hectares) | 70 |

3.34 We have planned a wide range of transport measures to either tackle existing problems or support the growth planned over the next 20 to 25 years. While congestion is a key factor, reducing the effect of transport on the environment (including improving air quality) is also important. Substantial public-sector funding will deliver the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and park-and-ride at its junction with the A96 as well as improvements to the Haudagain Roundabout and a new bridge over the River Don. Further proposals to support growth include:

- new bus services and action to give priority to buses and increase their frequency;
- junction improvements on the A96, A944, A956, A90, Kingswells North and Parkhill;
- safety improvements on the access road to the A93;
- improvements to the Parkway and Persley Bridge; and
- a link over the River Dee.

3.35 Communication and transport links are critical to the future prosperity of the city region, and Aberdeen Airport has a vital role to play in maintaining and improving these both domestically and internationally. Improvements at the airport are needed to improve customers' experience and increase the number of travellers it can support while keeping the effect on the environment to a minimum. Access to the airport also needs to be improved, including building the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and other related projects.

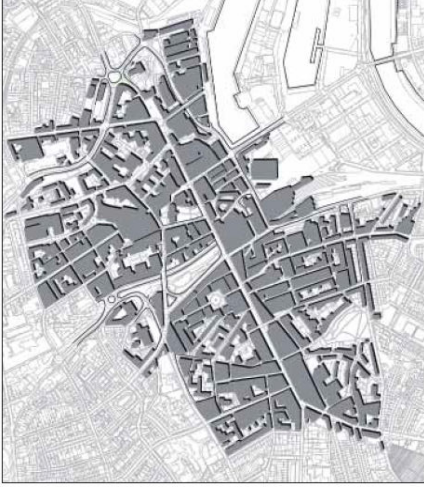
3.36 Aberdeen Harbour is a vital gateway for the regional economy and provides important passenger and freight links to the Northern Isles. The harbour has been identified as a key port in the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan. Work will be needed to set out in more detail the likely implications of this (building on 'The Case for Growth') and how the growth of the harbour can be accommodated to inform the next local development plan. Given its city-centre location, this work should take into account the wider city-centre regeneration as part of the current City Centre Development Framework and the competing demands for land.

3.37 Aberdeen City centre is an important asset for the region but its regeneration is vital for the economic future of the area and how potential investors and residents see it. Details on this are included in the City Centre Development Framework but we need to take determined action to create a city centre to be proud of and which reflects the global status and ambitions of the city and the wider region. The Business Improvement District (BID), set up in 2011, was a major initiative and showed that the private sector was willing

to actively take part in this process. There needs to be a strong focus on improving the quality of the city centre's shopping, leisure, commercial and residential environment – with partial pedestrianisation of Union Street having an important role.

3.38 Aberdeen has a number of communities which would benefit from regeneration. These are largely areas with a high percentage of social housing built in the 1960s which no longer provide satisfactory living conditions. There is more detail about this in the Regeneration Priority Area theme below.

3.39 Two possible locations are shown for a new Community Stadium to support the growing sporting infrastructure of the city.



Aberdeen to Huntly

3.40 This area is the key corridor linking Aberdeen and Inverness and contains several thriving Aberdeenshire communities. Significant development will take place in the 31-mile road and rail corridor stretching from Huntly to Blackburn. Development at the southern end of the corridor will be mainly focused towards the end of the plan period, beyond 2027, while further north it will be spread throughout the period of the plan.

Housing and employment allowances for this area

| | Housing allowances | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----------|-----------|
| | Existing LDP allocations to 2016 | 2017-2026 | 2027-2035 |
| Inverurie - Blackburn | 1,000 | 1,500 | 4,000 |
| Huntly - Pitcaple | 300 | 500 | 200 |
| Huntly - Blackburn | | 42 | 28 |

3.41 South of Inverurie the corridor is served by a dual carriageway to Aberdeen, with the Scottish Government committed to completing the A96 dual carriageway between Inverurie and Inverness over the lifetime of this plan. However, short-term improvements will also be made (such as replacing the Inveramsay Bridge to allow two-way traffic) before the more comprehensive upgrade planned for later in the plan period. Significant improvements are also planned to the Aberdeen-Inverness railway line, with more services, shorter journey times and a new station at Kintore. We will also look at further improvements, in the form of a more local rail service to better serve commuters, shoppers, students and visitors. This will be supported by development in this corridor. Bus services on this corridor are already good, although we will need to make further improvements to make these services

an even more attractive choice. We will need to provide a secondary school and associated primary schools in this area. Several trunk road junctions will also need to be improved, including those at Inverurie, with opportunities considered for an eastern bypass for the town.

3.42 Development will be supported by new infrastructure within Aberdeen City such as the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, a new park-and-ride site at its junction with the A96 and other improvements on the A96 corridor.

Aberdeen to Laurencekirk

3.43 This area is the key corridor linking the region with central and southern Scotland as well as the rest of the UK by road and rail. Its main settlement is Stonehaven where the Highland Fault Line marks the boundary between Highland and Lowland Scotland, which can be seen in the geology and landscape of the area.

3.44 We are proposing significant new development in the northern part of this corridor early in the plan period. A significant new settlement is planned south of Portlethen at Chapelton of Elswick which has the potential to set the standard for future new development in Aberdeen City and Shire and beyond.

3.45 New housing and employment development is also proposed in the southern end of the corridor as well, but on a more limited scale. This will be supported by a new secondary school in Laurencekirk (Mearns Academy Community Campus) which will replace the existing school on a nearby site.

Housing and employment allowances for this area

| | Housing allowances | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | Existing LDP allocations to 2016 | 2017-2026 | 2027-2035 |
| Portlethen – Stonehaven | 2,200 | 2,400 | 1,000 |
| South of Drumlithie - Laurencekirk | 500 | 400 | 100 |
| | Employment land allowances (hectares) | | |
| Portlethen - Laurencekirk | 63 | | 42 |

3.46 Improved junctions on the A90 will also be needed for development at Elswick and Laurencekirk (where existing safety issues also need to be taken into account) to go ahead.

3.47 The southern leg of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route passes through the northern part of this area and the Fastlink will significantly improve access from the south to the airport and northern Aberdeenshire. A park-and-ride will be built at Portlethen so that traffic heading for the city can use more sustainable travel for the last leg of the journey.

3.48 A new station opened at Laurencekirk in 2009 and has proved extremely popular, with twice the expected number of passengers already using it. We will look at the potential for developing a further station at Newtonhill alongside other possible locations within Aberdeen. Other rail improvements include improvements to journey times and electrification.

3.49 Development will be supported by new infrastructure within Aberdeen City such as a new link over the River Dee and improvements to the A956.

3.50 We will support proposals outwith the strategic development plan area which reduce journey times by road and rail south.

Aberdeen to Peterhead

3.51 This area has important strategic assets, high environmental quality and significant potential for development. Energetica is already helping to realise this potential and create a global hub for the energy sector in a first-class coastal location. This is being done through partnership between the public and private sectors.

3.52 Both employment and housing land will be needed over the period of the plan, with these allowances set out in figure sdf below. Current plans already identify land up to 2026, while land identified for the period beyond 2027 will need to be allocated in future local development plans.

Housing and employment allowances for this area

| | | Housing allowances | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| | Existing LDP Allocations to 2016 | 2017-2026 | 2027-2035 |
| Blackdog - Eilon | 800 | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| Hatton - Peterhead | 800 | 800 | 600 |
| Blackdog - Peterhead | | 45ha | 43ha |
| | | Employment land allowances (hectares) | |

3.53 The northern end of the Energetica corridor has a unique opportunity to play an important role in the energy future of Europe.

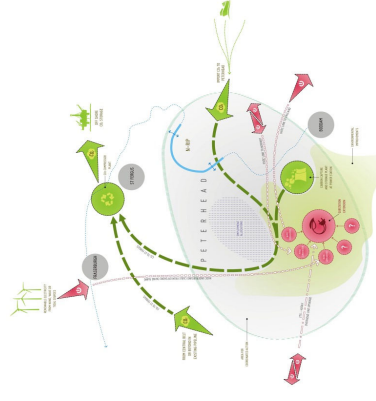
- We need to make the best use of the deepwater opportunities at Peterhead Port. It has been identified in the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan and we need to aid its diversification into oil and gas decommissioning as well as offshore renewables.
- The Peterhead and St Fergus area has been vital to the UK oil and gas industry over the last 40 years and will be well into the future. It now also has significant potential for capturing,

transporting and storing carbon dioxide under the North Sea (carbon capture and storage). This would make extensive use of existing infrastructure, help to deliver significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and provide a major competitive advantage in this emerging technology.

- Peterhead also has the potential to be an important hub in transmitting renewable energy both within the UK and more widely as part of a European network. Its coastal location and existing connections make it an attractive choice for subsea cables and their onshore infrastructure.

3.54 These nationally and internationally important developments need to be co-ordinated effectively (see figure sdf). To achieve this, a development framework will be needed for the southern gateway to Peterhead.

3.55 Further south, realising the economic potential of the Menie Estate golf resort will be important as well as delivering vital infrastructure projects in the first plan period to encourage growth. These include building the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, making the A90 between Balmedie and Tipperty a dual carriageway, improving the Haudagain Roundabout and delivering a new bridge over the River Don. Until this infrastructure is in place, development in the southern part of the corridor will be limited. The focus in the whole area needs to be on developing and diversifying the economy with a strong focus on the quality of development. We will also need to provide a new secondary school and associated primary school in this area.



Economic Growth

Objective

To provide opportunities which encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate for and attractive to the needs of different industries, while at the same time improving the essential strategic infrastructure necessary to allow the economy to grow over the long term.

Issues

4.1 Aberdeen City and Shire has a healthy economy. While currently dominated by the oil and gas industries, it also has significant strengths in life sciences, food and drink and tourism. The oil and gas industry will continue to be very important into the future. Its changing focus over the next few decades (into supplying the export market and decommissioning) will mean that the area will need to sell itself more strongly to make sure growth happens here. Traditional industries, such as farming and fishing, must continue to be supported. To promote a diverse local economy we will have to build on our existing assets (particularly in the field of renewable energy) and put into practice new ideas, including those from our universities, research organisations and our skilled and innovative workforce, and improve our connections to the outside world through transport and high-speed digital communications networks.

4.2 A strong service sector is also important and in particular, retail and all forms of tourism, including business tourism, will have a role to play. It is very important that retail services throughout the region are promoted to guarantee the vitality and viability of our town centres, while creating opportunities for growth in the economy. It is particularly important that we continue to support the regeneration of Aberdeen city centre – making sure that this key regional asset

fulfils its potential by improving its shopping, leisure, commercial and residential environment as well as its visitor experience. Some of the building blocks are already in place (such as the City Centre Development Framework and the Business Improvement District) but there is still much to be done. In line with Scottish Planning Policy, a sequential approach will be taken when identifying sites for new retail development across the strategic development plan area.

4.3 Making sure that there is enough of the right type of land for business use, in the right places, will give Aberdeen City and Shire a competitive advantage, this includes mixed-use developments on appropriate sites. We expect that the Energetica initiative will help to deliver this in the Aberdeen to Peterhead strategic growth area, while we will encourage economic development in local growth and diversification areas at appropriate levels to meet local need. Aberdeen City and Shire already has a very well-developed role in the knowledge economy. Providing high-quality business space has an important role to play in building on this, as has support for high quality education and training opportunities from schools, colleges and universities.

4.4 The roll-out of high-speed broadband throughout the area is vital for the economy as well as bringing social and environmental benefits. World-leading internet access is essential in the strategic growth areas, while significantly improved speeds are also necessary in the rural growth and diversification areas. The public and private sectors will need to work together to deliver these improvements.

4.5 Connections, within Aberdeen City and Shire as well as to the rest of Scotland, the UK and the rest of the world are critical for the future health of the local economy. Aberdeen airport and the region's main ports are key gateways and have a vital role to play in accessing international markets as well as providing lifeline services to Orkney and Shetland. It is vital that these important

regional assets are supported in meeting their potential for the regional economy and that they reflect the aims of the area. Future development should not be allowed to limit the growth of the economy by making the region less attractive to business, particularly in relation to congestion and access to roads, ports, airports and rail facilities. This infrastructure needs to be protected and improved, including supporting freight being transported by rail and sea.

Targets

- To make sure there is at least 60 hectares of marketable land available to businesses at all times in a range of places within Aberdeen City.
- To make sure there is at least 60 hectares of marketable land available to businesses at all times in a range of places within strategic growth areas in Aberdeenshire.
- For at least 20 hectares of the above land available to businesses in the strategic growth areas to be of a standard which will attract high-quality businesses or be suitable for company headquarters.
- For Aberdeen to remain one of the top-20 retail areas in the UK.
- For all new development to have the use of modern, up-to-date high-speed telecommunications networks, such as fibre optics.

How to meet the targets

- Local development plans should, where possible, protect strategic reserve land from other uses (see figures 3 and 4).

Figure 3: Employment land allocations

| | Established land 2011 (hectares) | Marketable land 2011 (hectares) | Minimum land available at all times (hectares) | LDP allocations to 2026 (hectares) | Strategic reserve land 2027-2035 (hectares) |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|
| Aberdeen City | 210 | 87 | 60 | 105 | 70 |
| Aberdeenshire | | | | | |
| Huntly to Laurencekirk | 153 | 75 | 40 | 105 | 70 |
| Blackdog to Peterhead | 104 | 86 | 20 | 45 | 43 |
| Total | 467 | 248 | 120 | 255 | 183 |

- Identifying and maintaining an appropriate amount of business land in the local development plan for 'local growth and diversification' areas in Aberdeenshire.
- Put the City Centre Development Framework into practice and carry out a wider regeneration of the area.
- Work with partners to make significant improvements to provide world-class telecommunications networks.
- Working in partnership with universities, colleges and other research organisations to help them make as positive a contribution as possible to the area, including for example, the implementation of the Foresterhill Masterplan prepared by the University of Aberdeen and NHS Grampian.
- Using action programmes to identify and co-ordinate the actions needed to make land allocations available to business in line with the spatial strategy.

Monitoring

Monitoring will focus on the supply of employment land, the roll-out of high-speed telecommunications networks and retail rankings.

Sustainable development and climate change

Objective

To be a city region which takes the lead in reducing the amount of carbon dioxide released into the air, adapts to the effects of climate change and limits the amount of non-renewable resources it uses.

Issues

4.6 The challenges of sustainable development and climate change are some of the most serious we will face over the period covered by this plan. Reducing the causes of climate change (known as mitigation) is important. However, due to current and past actions, it is vital to put in place a number of measures to limit the consequences of climate change as well (known as adaptation).

4.7 To tackle climate change, energy efficiency will need to be improved in existing as well as new development. All new developments must be designed and built to use resources more efficiently and be located in places where they have as little an effect on the environment as possible. Focusing initially on using energy-efficiency measures is likely to be the best way of reducing the demand for energy as a step towards achieving carbon-neutral development, and this should be done as soon as practically possible. Joint supplementary guidance may be prepared to require new development to meet specific carbon-dioxide levels through the sustainability labelling mechanism. Developers will need to examine the scope for including combined heat and power schemes when preparing larger development proposals.

4.8 Significant changes will also be needed to reduce the effects of transport on climate change. As well as increasing energy efficiency, we will need to encourage the use of alternative fuels and take opportunities, such as providing electric-vehicle charging points, to encourage people to use them.

4.9 We also need to tackle the supply of energy during the plan period. This will involve increasing the supply of energy from renewable sources and reducing emissions of climate-change gases from existing power stations. As well as some extra capacity for onshore wind there is still considerable potential in offshore wind, energy from waste, solar and biomass, as well as ground, water and air source heat pumps. A more balanced mix of renewable energy sources will be needed if we are to meet our renewables targets.

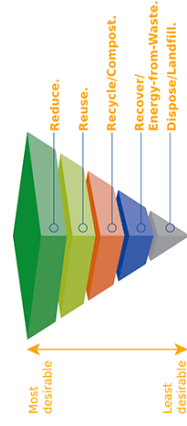
4.10 One of our significant potential roles will be to put in place infrastructure so that Scotland can meet its renewable energy and carbon-emissions targets.

- The onshore electricity grid will need to be upgraded to allow new sources of renewable energy to be developed in the north of Scotland. This means upgrading the East Coast transmission route from 275kV to 400kV (identified as a 'national development' in the National Planning Framework) as well as the line from Rothienorman to Peterhead. However, the volumes of electricity likely to be generated mean that offshore transmission will also be necessary, with Peterhead acting as a main transmission hub with links to England as well as other European countries to balance renewable energy generation and overcome the intermittency challenges associated with the widespread use of wind energy.
- Carbon capture and storage has significant potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from conventional power stations and help the change to a low-carbon future. We are well placed to play a key role in this, building on our world-leading expertise, existing infrastructure and nearness to potential storage sites. The technology has huge global-market potential over the period of this plan and beyond. The power station at Peterhead offers an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the technology and

significant storage potential that lies in old oil and gas reservoirs under the North Sea, with St Fergus the established gateway to this potential. Using existing infrastructure will be the key to making the technology commercially viable, with existing high-pressure gas pipelines already in place between St Fergus and central Scotland. Peterhead also has the potential to act as a key import point, with carbon dioxide being shipped there from elsewhere in the UK or further afield before being transported in existing pipelines up to St Fergus and onwards for storage under the North Sea.

4.11 Areas of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are already at risk from flooding, but increased risk comes about through changing and more unpredictable weather patterns and rising sea levels. Avoiding flood risk is an important measure to adapt to climate change. We will need to take account of the scale of these changes when we consider what new developments should be built and where they should be located.

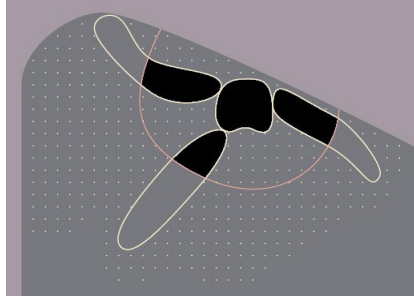
4.12 Scotland's Zero Waste Plan has set a target of recycling or composting 70% of all waste, and limiting waste sent to landfill sites to 5%, by 2025. Meeting these targets will represent a significant change from current practice and move the emphasis from providing enough landfill space to providing sites for other treatment processes (such as composting and energy from waste).



4.13 Our objective is to meet our waste-management needs locally as far as possible. This will make sure that the economic, social and environmental value from managing this important resource is kept in the local area and the environmental costs of transport are kept to a minimum.

4.14 While there is no overall need for new landfill space in the plan area, we are likely to need time extensions at some existing sites to make sure we maintain capacity, make the best use of sites and restore the sites to the highest standards. We should do this while taking into account the effect on communities and the legitimate concerns of residents close to such facilities.

4.15 Managing our waste responsibly and in line with the waste hierarchy, proximity principle and Zero Waste Plan will mean we will need a variety of significant extra waste-treatment facilities (with a capacity of over 300,000 tonnes) in a variety of locations. We should develop these new facilities as close as possible to the source of the waste, with around 75% of them being in the strategic growth areas within or close to Aberdeen.



proposed uses.

4.16 When deciding whether a site is suitable, a range of factors will be important, including good access to the transport network and whether there is a realistic prospect of using any heat or electricity generated by the process. We must integrate how we manage waste into all development proposals and consider construction and demolition waste as well as waste generated during the lifetime of the development. Energy from waste facilities within wider development proposals which use surplus heat for homes, businesses and community facilities are likely to be very efficient and will require potential developers to speak to each other at an early stage.

4.17 The River Dee (see figure 6) is an important economic asset as well as being the region's main source of drinking water and a Special Area of Conservation. This resource is under pressure and as a result, managing the use of water and increasing water efficiency is vital. During and beyond the period of this plan the effects of climate change may affect the river and we may have to take appropriate adaptation measures.

Targets

- For all new buildings to be carbon neutral by 2020.
- For the city region's electricity needs to be met from renewable sources by 2020.
- To avoid having to increase the amount of water Scottish Water are licensed to take from the River Dee, as a result of the new developments proposed in the plan.
- For all new developments to use water-saving technology.
- To avoid developments on land which is at an unacceptable risk from coastal or river flooding (as defined by the 'Indicative River and Coastal Flood Map for Scotland' or through a detailed flood risk assessment), except in exceptional circumstances.
- To work towards an extra 300,000 tonnes of new waste-management infrastructure.

How to meet the targets

- Local development plans (and supplementary guidance) will promote a gradual move towards buildings which are carbon neutral.
- Local development plans (and supplementary guidance) will identify areas or technology which can contribute to the supply of renewable energy.
- Work with Scottish Natural Heritage, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Water and other stakeholders to better understand the likely medium to long-term effects of climate change

on the River Dee and any adaptation measures that may be needed.

- The two councils should work together to identify and put in place appropriate residual waste management solutions.
- Local development plans should not identify sites for new development which are at an unacceptable risk from flooding, except for brownfield sites which have appropriate flood prevention measures in place. Unacceptable risk will normally be more than a 1 in 200 (0.5%) chance of a flood happening in any year, although this will vary with the type of development being proposed.
- Use master planning (and supplementary guidance) to consider the possible scope of combined heat and power schemes to contribute towards using energy more efficiently and in reducing the amount of energy used overall.

Monitoring

Monitoring will focus on the quantity of water extracted from the River Dee, the amount of renewable energy produced in the area and the percentage of waste which is taken to landfill, recycled or composted.

Population growth

Objective

To increase the population of the city region and achieve a balanced age range to help maintain and improve people's quality of life.

Issues

4.18 Expectations of housing need and demand over the period to 2035 have been assessed in a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (2011).

4.19 The population of the city region has been growing for a number of years and was 465,000 in 2011. This is expected to grow to around 500,000 by 2035. However, as well as the total size of the population, the age range of the population also presents challenges in the years ahead. The over-65s age group is predicted to grow at the fastest rate – this will have a significant effect on the economy of the area and the way in which services are provided for an increasingly elderly population.

4.20 Planning for an increase in the population of 35,000 over 24 years will be a significant challenge for the North East. However, most of the need for almost 54,000 new homes (see figure 8) comes from the existing population of the area as the average number of people in each household falls. We will only achieve these challenging levels of growth if we work towards our aims and objectives with our partners.

4.21 If the population grows to the levels we are aiming for, we will need an increase in the number of homes which are built each year. This presents a significant challenge given the current access to finance for both developers and households.

4.22 The housing requirement is set out in figure 8 below.

Figure 8: Housing requirement

| | 2011-2016 | 2017-2026 | 2027-2035 | Total |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Aberdeen HMA | 9,965 | 15,017 | 13,506 | 38,488 |
| Rural HMA | 4,237 | 6,411 | 4,836 | 15,484 |
| Total | 14,202 | 21,428 | 18,342 | 53,972 |

4.23 Schedule 1 (page 27) shows the housing allowances needed to help deliver this increase in new homes and allow development at the rates targeted in this plan.

4.24 In line with Scottish Planning Policy, these allowances provide a generous supply of land for new housing (Schedule 1) on top of the housing requirement (figure 8). As a result, we cannot expect all the new homes to be built within the relevant plan period. This makes sure the plan can cope with higher levels of demand than we currently expect.

Targets

- To increase the population of the city region to 500,000 by 2035.
- To move towards building at least 2,500 homes a year by 2016 through the development plan.
- To move towards building at least 3,000 homes a year by 2020 through the development plan.

How to meet the targets

4.25 Both planning authorities will need to make land available for homes through local development plans in line with the spatial strategy and schedule 1 of this plan. Phasing of land allocations for the period 2017-2026 may be put in place where appropriate. We will use action programmes, planning agreements and possibly

compulsory purchase powers to focus attention on delivering new housing, employment and commercial uses and providing the necessary infrastructure.

4.26 As well as these, there are also other actions we need to take to meet this objective. These actions are covered under other objectives which focus on the quality of development and will help to make the North East an even more attractive place to live, visit and do business. In this way, providing land for housing and increasing the population is one part of a strategy to increase the quality of life in the area. Providing new housing which does not meet the requirements of the spatial strategy or meet the standards set out under other objectives will not be supported by this plan.

4.27 Meeting these targets will also depend on factors which are not related to the development plan or under the control of the planning authorities. These factors include the health of the global and local economy, the price of oil, access to and the cost of development and mortgage finance, the response of the house-building industry and how the area is marketed to potential residents from the rest of Scotland or further afield.

Monitoring

Monitoring will assess trends in population growth and house-building in the area.

Quality of the environment

Objective

To make sure new development maintains and improves the region's important built, natural and cultural assets.

Issues

4.28 The built, natural and cultural environment is a valuable resource, but one which needs to be protected. The way in which sites are chosen, and high quality design, will make sure that development does not lead to the decline of the North East's built, natural and cultural assets.

4.29 Biodiversity, wildlife habitats and landscape can be vulnerable to the effects of new development. As a result, we need to focus on maintaining and improving them, especially where there are plans for development. In particular, we need to take care over the possible effects of development on Natura 2000 sites and the Cairngorms National Park.

4.30 Not all water bodies in the area meet the quality standards under the Water Framework Directive. River Basin Management Plans have been prepared in partnership to deal with these issues.

4.31 The green belt around Aberdeen will continue to play a vital role in protecting the character and landscape setting of the City. However, it will need to change to meet the growth this plan seeks to achieve. It must guide development to appropriate places while protecting the most important areas. Accessible green networks within and around Aberdeen and other major settlements will also be important to achieving a high quality environment.

4.32 Sites and areas valued for their contribution to the built and historic environment are just as sensitive and should be protected from the negative effects of development.

Targets

- To make sure that development improves and does not lead to the loss of, or damage to, built, natural or cultural heritage assets.
- To avoid new development preventing water bodies achieving 'good ecological status' under the Water Framework Directive.

How to meet the targets

- Local development plans (and supplementary guidance) will make sure the North East's natural environment and historic sites and buildings continue to be protected and improved.
- Both councils will take part in the River Basin Management Planning process, particularly as it relates to new development.
- Both councils will take account of biodiversity, wildlife habitats, landscape, green networks and other sensitive areas in identifying land for development, preparing masterplans and assessing development proposals.

Monitoring

- Measuring the percentage of water bodies that achieve 'good ecological status', carried out by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency.
- Assessing how development has directly or indirectly led to the loss of the built, natural and cultural assets, by carrying out reviews through local development plans.
- Assessing how much development has been granted planning permission against green belt policies, using appeal decisions and Scottish Minister notifications.

Sustainable mixed communities

Objective

To make sure that new development meets the needs of the whole community, both now and in the future, and makes the area a more attractive place for residents and businesses to move to.

Issues

4.33 Too often in the past, new development has not been sustainable, mixed or focused on meeting the needs of the community. We must not allow this to continue. If we are to achieve our vision, we must set the highest standards for urban and rural design, the mix of land uses, using land more efficiently and re-using previously developed land.

4.34 A focus on sustainable mixed communities means not dealing with different land uses in isolation. Retail, employment, education, health, leisure, open space and transport as well as housing are all vital for successful development. Such development creates a strong sense of place and a high-quality environment in which to live and work.

4.35 Our future communities must be mixed in terms of the type and size of homes, as well as their tenure and cost. We also need to make sure that new homes are designed to a high standard and that they respect and improve the existing qualities of the area. If we want to allow people to have a choice of where they want to live, developments must provide a wide range of options, from starter homes to large detached houses. Providing affordable housing is also critical to delivering sustainable mixed communities. However, currently there is more of a need for affordable housing (identified in the Housing Need and Demand Assessment as 38% of new homes) than there is funding available. Meeting the targets in this plan will need considerable effort and creativity on the part of both

public and private sectors working together. The two councils will prepare local housing strategies which will consider in more detail how to provide affordable housing. Having a variety of homes and residential environments will help to improve urban design in the city, towns and rural areas. New housing which does not meet the targets set out below will not be supported by this plan.

4.36 It is important that new development meets the needs of the whole community, including the specific needs of Gypsies / Travellers. With an ageing population and smaller households, new development will need to meet the changing needs of society over its whole life.

4.37 Land brought forward for development must be used efficiently and brownfield sites and regeneration areas should be given priority. Through this process, we should create opportunities for new development that will close the gap between the wealthy and most disadvantaged areas of the region.

4.38 New development needs to focus on communities. In the strategic growth areas, services and facilities for the community must be a part of the development. This plan will not support house-building that fails to provide these services and facilities which help make successful and sustainable communities.

4.39 In the same way, a focus on communities means that new housing and developments for employment and commercial use should be integrated (well related to each other and community facilities) to improve people's quality of life and opportunity. This should be a particular focus in masterplans prepared for larger development areas.

4.40 To create sustainable mixed communities, retail services must be one of the main considerations in preparing masterplans and development briefs for new development. We will take a sequential approach to new retail development. However, we will also support

existing retail centres to make sure that the needs of the community are met now as well as in the future.

4.41 This plan has a clear objective for population growth in the North East and increasing the level of house-building. However, this will only be acceptable if the development is of the highest quality.

Targets

- To increase the range and quality of housing and the residential environment in the 'regeneration priority areas'.
- For 40% of all new housing in Aberdeen City to be on brownfield sites.
- For all housing development of over one hectare in strategic growth areas to be in line with approved supplementary guidance and generally have no less than 30 dwellings per hectare.
- For the quality and design of new developments in the city region to be nationally recognised.
- For new housing to meet the needs of the whole community by providing appropriate levels of affordable housing (around 25%) and an appropriate mix of types and sizes of homes, in line with local development plans and approved supplementary guidance.
- For local development plans and all masterplans to fully consider the scope for a mix of uses on a site.

How to meet the targets

- Local development plans will take account of these targets when deciding how and where to identify land for development.
- Everyone involved in the process needs to show a commitment to quality and set the highest standards throughout the development process, settling for good practice, but aiming for excellence.
- Using supplementary guidance to provide more detail on the appropriate mix of properties, urban-design principles and community facilities.

- Maintain a design review process for masterplans and the most significant planning applications.

Monitoring

- Measuring how many properties there are in each hectare for sites of over one hectare which have been granted planning permission in strategic growth areas, carried out each year using the housing land audit.
- Measuring the percentage of new housing on brownfield sites in Aberdeen, carried out each year using the housing land audit.
- Report on regeneration activity and outcomes.
- Building up a detailed picture of new housing development, including the sizes, types and tenure of properties, carried out each year using the housing land audit.

Accessibility

Objective

To make sure that all new developments contribute towards reducing the need to travel and encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport by making these attractive choices.

Issues

4.42 It is widely accepted that there are negative environmental, economic and social effects associated with road transport, including air and noise pollution and congestion.

4.43 This plan will help to promote the link between land use and transport to make sure that all new development is conveniently located and designed in such a way as to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport. Improving bus and train services will make sure that people will be encouraged to use more environmentally friendly forms of transport.

4.44 Walking and cycling are the most environmentally friendly forms of transport and should also be encouraged as this will help to achieve important health, social and environmental benefits.

4.45 Improving access to the North East is also essential to developing a strong economy and providing better links. The spatial strategy promotes opportunities at harbours and the airport as well as helping to promote accessibility by making sure that future development also allows for improvements in the rail and road networks. This will help to improve bus and train services and encourage people to use them.

Targets

- For all developments to meet the accessibility standards set out in the regional transport strategy.

- For major employment and service developments in strategic growth areas to show that they are easy to access by walking, cycling or using public transport. The travel plans produced for these developments should reduce the need for people to use cars.
- To reduce the percentage of journeys made by car.

How to meet the targets

- Local development plans will identify and protect land from development to make sure that transport proposals identified in the local and regional transport strategies can be developed. Transport proposals needed due to development promoted in the plan will be identified in supplementary guidance.
- Work with Neustrans to make sure that putting the strategic development plan into practice closely links with the regional transport strategy.
- The spatial strategy will direct development to areas that can be accessed by a greater choice of more environmentally friendly forms of transport.
- Both councils will prepare and keep under review core path plans taking account of where new developments will take place and issues which affect both council areas.
- The action programme will, at an early stage, identify the necessary requirements to make sure that developments can be accessed by walking, cycling and public transport.
- Approved supplementary guidance will include layouts and design for new developments which can be accessed easily by walking, cycling and public transport.

Monitoring

Monitoring will focus on the accessibility of developments and the percentage of journeys which are made by different methods.

5 - Putting this plan into practice

5.1 This plan provides a vision that aims to develop the economy, maintain and improve the quality of our environment and provide a high quality of life. The scale of the changes needed and the challenges set by the vision, especially in relation to sustainable development and climate change, should not be underestimated.

5.2 This plan sets the framework for other plans and strategies, and promotes targets to achieve our aims. Partnership working between the public and private sectors will be essential to put the plan into practice. One of the main ways we will put this plan into practice is through local development plans and supplementary guidance. These are prepared separately by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council and must be consistent with this plan.

5.3 However, local development plans will not have the long-term vision of the strategic development plan. There may be action that needs to be taken now to allow proposals to be included in future local development plans. We have developed an action programme to support this plan.

5.4 The programme identifies who is to take action, when this will need to happen and how it will be funded and delivered. This will give the people concerned the confidence to make decisions on investment. The action programme will be monitored regularly and reviewed at least every two years.

5.5 In truly exceptional circumstances, for example if it is essential to put the plan's strategy into practice, planning permission may need to be granted on sites identified in local development plans for the period 2027-2035 (shown in schedule 1). Any permission may have conditions which control the rate of development. We would need to highlight the need for this action through the Action Programme and both the strategic development planning authority and the relevant council would have to agree to it.

5.6 We have carried out a 'Habitats Regulations Appraisal' for this plan. However, we will have to carry out a more detailed assessment at a later stage for local development plans and certain developments to make sure they will not have a negative effect on any Natura 2000 site.

Providing infrastructure

5.7 To make changes on the scale proposed in this plan, we must invest in existing and new infrastructure in the strategic development plan area. This is important to maintain quality of life in communities. The existing roads, sewers and schools will not be able to cope with the demands extra development will bring. We will also need to invest in facilities and services for communities. These two needs have to be carefully considered very early in the land-development process, even before land is identified in local development plans.

5.8 Developers will have to accept the need for contributions towards necessary infrastructure, services and facilities within their own site. However, in cases where development has wider effects, we will have to secure contributions to deal with these as well.

5.9 We will prepare supplementary guidance in support of this plan. This will allow (through a 'Strategic Transport Fund') transport projects which are needed as a result of the combined effect of new development in the strategic growth areas within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area to be funded and delivered.

5.10 We expect that the increase in land value, as a result of granting planning permission, will fund a large percentage of the new infrastructure needed, although the public sector will also need to make an important contribution. We will need to secure a higher percentage of the increase in land values than we have in the past, to be able to create sustainable mixed communities.

5.16 We will review this plan on the timescale set out in the legislation, with a revised plan going to Scottish Ministers within four years of this plan's approval.

5.11 The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, dualling of the A90 between Balmedie and Tipperly and of the A90 between Inverurie and the border with Moray are already Transport Scotland projects, along with a new station at Kintore and other service improvements on the Aberdeen-Inverness rail line. All other work affecting the trunk road, or rail network, will need Transport Scotland's permission.

Proposals

5.12 A range of projects have been proposed that will help us achieve our vision for the North-East. While some are well under way, others are at an early stage. These are set out at the front of the plan in the spatial strategy as well as being listed in Schedule 2. You can find more detail on each proposal in the [Proposed] Action Programme.

Monitoring and reviewing this plan

5.13 We recognise that things will change over time, both in response to the direction this plan promotes and events we were not able to predict. Monitoring must take place to assess our progress in meeting the plan's objectives and ultimately, the vision.

5.14 Each objective of this plan identifies ways of monitoring and we will produce a monitoring report to assess our progress in meeting the targets.

5.15 Significant changes in society, the economy, environment and population will only become clear over the longer term, but will also need to be monitored to make sure the plan's objectives are appropriate. Monitoring these will, in practice, be a continuous process. However, we will only report on them as part of the monitoring statement prepared for the next plan.

Schedule 1: Housing allowances

| | Effective Land Supply 2011 | Constrained Land supply 2011 | Existing LDP allowances to 2016 | 2017 to 2026 | 2027 to 2035 | Total |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Aberdeen City – Brownfield* | 1,188 | 1,244 | 4,500 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 10,500 |
| Aberdeen City – Greenfield* | 1,207 | 506 | 12,000 | 5,000 | 4,000 | 21,000 |
| Aberdeen City | 2,530 | 1,750 | 16,500 | 8,000 | 7,000 | 31,500 |
| Huntly – Pitcaple | 191 | 207 | 300 | 500 | 200 | 1,000 |
| Inverurie – Blackburn* | 1,191 | 279 | 1,000 | 1,500 | 4,000 | 6,500 |
| Portlethen – Stonehaven* | 714 | 16 | 2,200 | 2,400 | 1,000 | 5,600 |
| South of Drumlithie – Laurencekirk | 253 | 10 | 500 | 400 | 100 | 1,000 |
| Peterhead – Hatton | 724 | 311 | 800 | 800 | 600 | 2,200 |
| Eilon – Blackdog* | 280 | 545 | 800 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 3,800 |
| Local Growth (AHMA)* | 1,283 | 185 | 1,000 | 1,350 | 1,350 | 3,700 |
| Local Growth (RHMA) | 1,584 | 1,434 | 4,200 | 4,000 | 4,000 | 12,200 |
| Small Sites (AHMA)* | 455 | | | | | |
| Small Sites (RHMA) | 745 | | | | | |
| Aberdeenshire | 7,285 | 2,987 | 10,800 | 12,450 | 12,750 | 36,000 |
| AHMA (*) | 6,318 | 2,775 | 21,500 | 14,750 | 14,850 | 51,100 |
| RHMA | 3,497 | 1,962 | 5,800 | 5,700 | 4,900 | 16,400 |
| Aberdeen City and Shire | 9,815 | 4,737 | 27,300 | 20,450 | 19,750 | 67,500 |

*Aberdeen Housing Market Area (AHMA)

Note: The 'Effective Land Supply 2011' includes the 5-year effective housing land supply as well as the effective supply programmed beyond year five. To avoid double-counting, we have not included any local development plan allocations in the effective or constrained land supply.

The Plain English Campaign's Crystal Mark does not apply to any table.

Schedule 2: Proposal

- The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and other associated measures to provide better access and connections to other places and to allow environmentally friendly methods of transport to be provided.
- Dualling between Balmedie and Tippiery and further improvements to the A90 (north) to provide better access and connections.
- Replace the Inveramsay Bridge and longer-term dualling of the A96 between Inverurie and the border with Moray.
- Improvements to the Haudagain roundabout, a third crossing of the River Don and other associated measures to deal with congestion and allow growth in and to the north of the city.
- Two new park-and-ride services around Aberdeen to improve accessibility, air quality and provide wider transport benefits.
- Road and rail improvements, including a new station at Kintore and improved local rail services, to make environmentally friendly methods of transport more attractive – including reducing journey times to Inverness and Edinburgh / Glasgow and beyond.
- Putting the Aberdeen airport masterplan into practice.
- Better links between Aberdeen and the communities on the north coast of Aberdeenshire.
- Initiatives by the universities, colleges and research organisations to strengthen our knowledge economy.
- The Energetica initiative being promoted by Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future for the Aberdeen to Peterhead strategic growth area.
- Improving the port and associated facilities at Aberdeen and Peterhead to make the most of their opportunities and potential, particularly for the energy (including offshore wind) and fishing sectors.
- Proposals to regenerate Aberdeen city centre and some of the city region's most disadvantaged areas.
- Put in place the City Centre Development Framework, which includes proposals to make part of Union Street an area for pedestrians only.
- A new community stadium – a regionally important facility which will bring economic, social and cultural benefits (two possible locations are shown on map x).
- Upgrades to the onshore electricity grid and the development of offshore transmission from Peterhead.
- Upgrading of Peterhead power station and putting in place carbon capture and storage technology and infrastructure.
- A range of transport measures to deal with the combined effect of new development on the transport network in a number of locations including:
 - new bus services and action to give them priority and increase their frequency;
 - junction and capacity improvements on the A96, A944, A956, A90, Kingswells North and Parkhill;
 - safety improvements on the access road to the A93;
 - improvements to the Parkway and Persley Bridge; and
 - a link over the River Dee.

Glossary

Action programmes

Documents that set out what needs to be done to put the development plan into practice. They show important dates and who is responsible for each action.

Adaptation

Action to limit how exposed the environment and people are to the effects of climate change.

Affordable housing

Housing which is made available at a cost below full market value to meet an identified need. It includes homes rented from the council and housing associations and, in some cases, homes sold or rented from the private sector.

Allocations

Areas of land identified in a local development plan for development.

Biodiversity

The variety of life and richness of all living things in the natural world.

Brownfield sites

Land, normally in towns and villages, which has been built on or used in the past for some purpose. Brownfield land does not include private or public gardens, sports pitches, woodlands or open spaces used for leisure and recreation purposes. The grounds of institutions (such as schools or hospitals) that are no longer used are not considered as brownfield sites.

Carbon neutral

Development which limits the amount of energy used and creates as much renewable energy as it uses each year for heating and electrical appliances.

Compulsory purchase

This gives local authorities the power, by law, to buy land and buildings which are needed to deliver important projects.

Diversify

Increase the range of sectors of the economy to reduce the risk of relying too much on any one sector.

Dwellings per hectare

The number of homes that are built on a single hectare of land.

Effective housing land supply

The housing land available on which to build new homes.

Energetica

A development initiative between Aberdeen and Peterhead to create a world-class business and residential location within a high-quality environmental setting.

Energy from waste

The process of creating energy, in the form of electricity or heat (or both), from waste.

Flood prevention measures

Examples include walls, embankments, new channels and flood storage areas to try and prevent a site from flooding.

Green belt

An area of countryside where strict planning controls are in place to protect the landscape setting of the city, maintain the identity of places and provide land for recreation.

Greenfield sites

Land on which no building has taken place.

Grid reinforcement

Upgrading the electricity supply network, which includes overhead power lines and substations.

Habitats Regulations Appraisal

An assessment we must carry out under the European Habitats Directive to make sure the plan will have no negative effects on internationally designated environmental sites.

Hectare

An area of land equal to 10,000 square metres (100 x 100 metres) or 2.471 acres.

High-value markets

The goods and services across many different market sectors that are considered to be of higher value, for example, luxury ice cream, high-quality clothing, oil support or computing technology services.

Housing requirement

The total amount of new housing needed over the plan period.

Hub

An important point on a transport (or other) network which has a number of connections.

Infrastructure

The parts of cities, towns or villages that make them work. This includes water, drainage, electricity and phones, as well as roads, schools, community halls, healthcare facilities, libraries, open space and bus stops.

Knowledge economy

Sections of the economy that use knowledge rather than physical resources to create wealth. Examples include education, research, and product development.

Local development plan

These are prepared by every local authority. They contain detailed policies and sites that have been chosen for development in line with the approved strategic development plan and after a lot of consultation with local communities. The local development plan will be the main way for planning applications to be assessed.

Mitigation

Action to reduce carbon dioxide and other harmful substances released into the air as a way of reducing the level of climate change.

National development

A project in the National Planning Framework which the Scottish Government agrees is needed and wants to see built.

National Planning Framework

A document that sets out the Scottish Government's development priorities and identifies national developments.

Natura 2000

A European network of protected sites which represent areas of the highest value for natural habitats and species of plants and animals which are rare, endangered or vulnerable in the European Community. The areas are known as either 'Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)' or 'Special Protections Areas (SPA)'.

Non-renewable resources

Resources that will run out and cannot be replaced. Non-renewable energy sources include coal, gas and oil.

Planning gain

Money or infrastructure (see above) provided by developers and landowners to allow essential projects to be built that are directly linked to development proposals. Planning gain will normally be part of a legal agreement.

Renewable resources

Resources that do not run out. Renewable energy sources include energy from the sun, the ground, wind, waves, tides and wood.

Residual waste

The waste left over after items have been removed to be re-used or recycled.

Scottish Planning Policy

Statements of the Scottish Government's policies on national land use and other planning matters, such as housing, transport and green belts.

Sequential approach

A process for choosing sites for retail development. The approach first looks for sites in city and town centres, then sites on the edge of these centres, then other commercial centres identified in the development plan, and finally out-of-town sites which can be, or are, accessed by different forms of transport.

Strategic

Important issues which need both councils to work together.

Strategic development plan

These have replaced structure plans and are prepared by strategic development planning authorities. They set out a plan for their area and must concentrate on the main land use and development matters in that area. These, along with the local development plan (see above), will be the main way for planning applications to be assessed.

Strategic infrastructure

This is major investment in large-scale infrastructure (see above). This can include main roads, major junctions, water reservoirs, waste-water treatment works, pumping stations, secondary schools and hospitals.

Strategic reserve

Areas of land identified in a local development plan for possible future development.

Supplementary guidance or supplementary planning guidance

These documents support a plan by setting out details of how the policies or proposals should be put into practice. These can include masterplans, development briefs and design briefs. They may also include other policy statements on a wide range of issues.

Sustainability labelling

A system which recognises the most sustainable new development through the building standards system.

Sustainable

Something that will last because it has tackled its current and longer-term environmental, social and economic effects and does not rely on non-renewable resources.

Sustainable development

A widely used definition of this is 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. It means that development should take full account of its implications on the local community and economy and on the environment both locally and worldwide.

Tenure

The legal right under which property is held. Housing tenures include owner-occupied homes, homes rented from private landlords, and homes rented from a council or housing association. Shared ownership is a tenure where a percentage of a property is owned and the rest is rented.

Vitality and viability

A measure of how lively and busy city and town centres are and their ability to attract ongoing investment for maintenance, improvement and to meet changing needs.

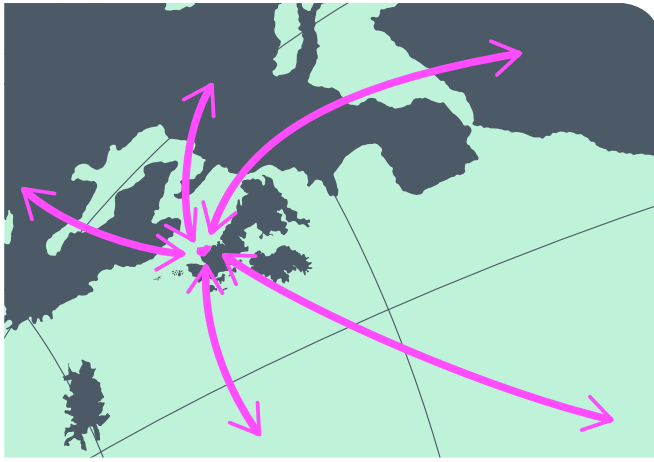
Waste hierarchy

A way of thinking about waste which focuses on reducing waste in the first place through re-using, recycling, and recovering energy. Waste disposal in landfill sites is at the bottom of the hierarchy.

Water bodies

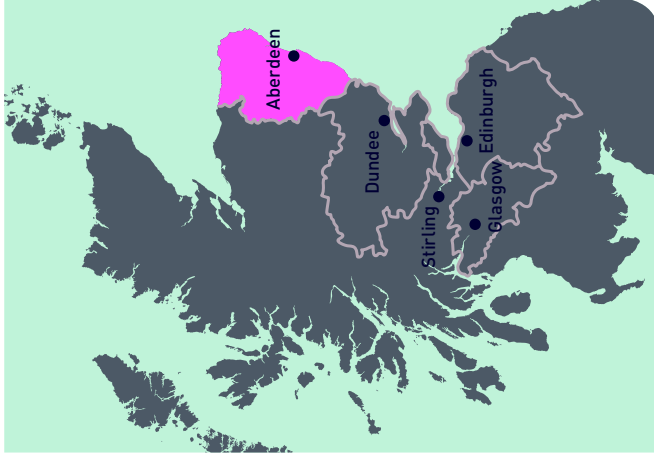
Places where water is found such as rivers, burns, lochs, ponds, boggy wet land, water held under the ground and coastal waters.

01 Context map (location) | International, national, local and B Plan local

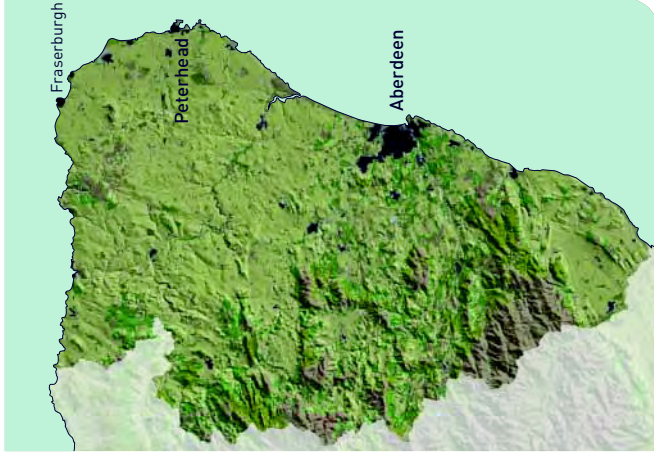


Key

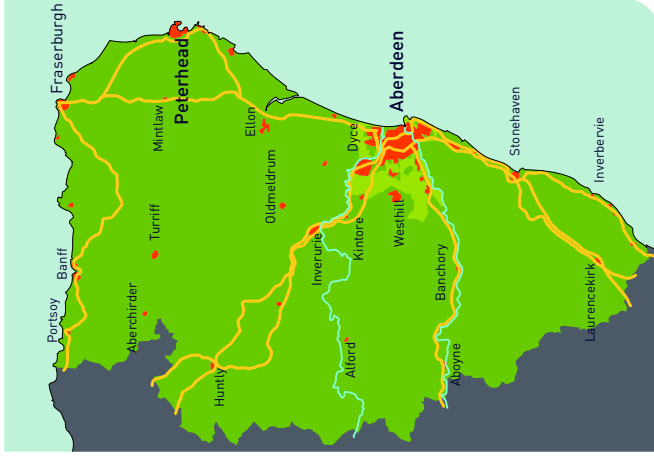
- International trade**
- Africa
 - Asia Pacific
 - Australasia
 - European Union
 - Former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe
 - Latin America
 - Middle East
 - North America
 - Western Europe (excluding EU)



- Strategic Development Plan Areas**
- Aberdeen City and Shire
 - Dundee, Perth, Angus and North Fife
 - Edinburgh and South East Scotland
 - Glasgow and the Clyde Valley

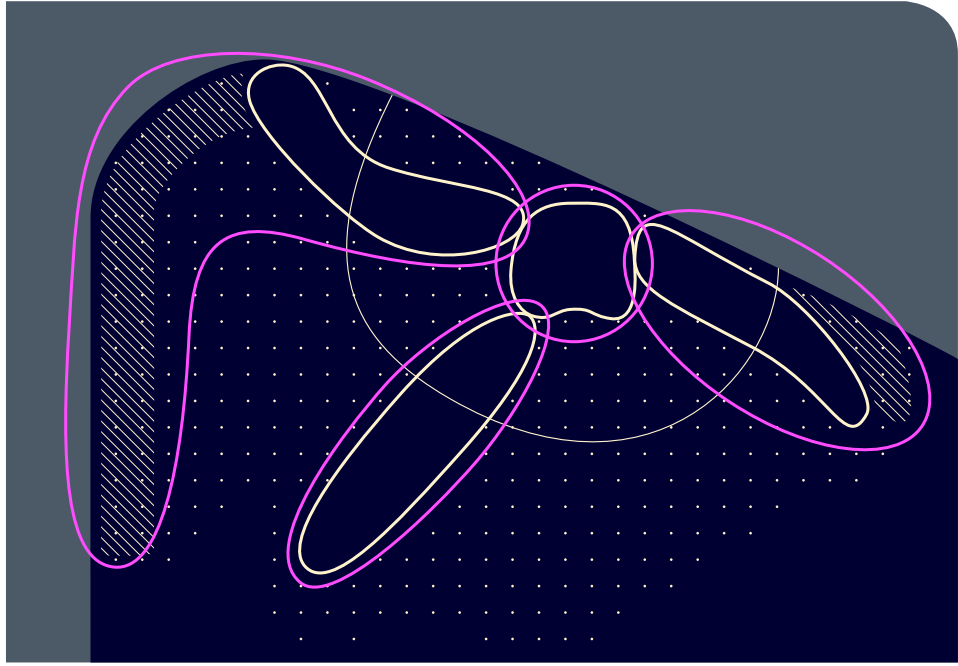
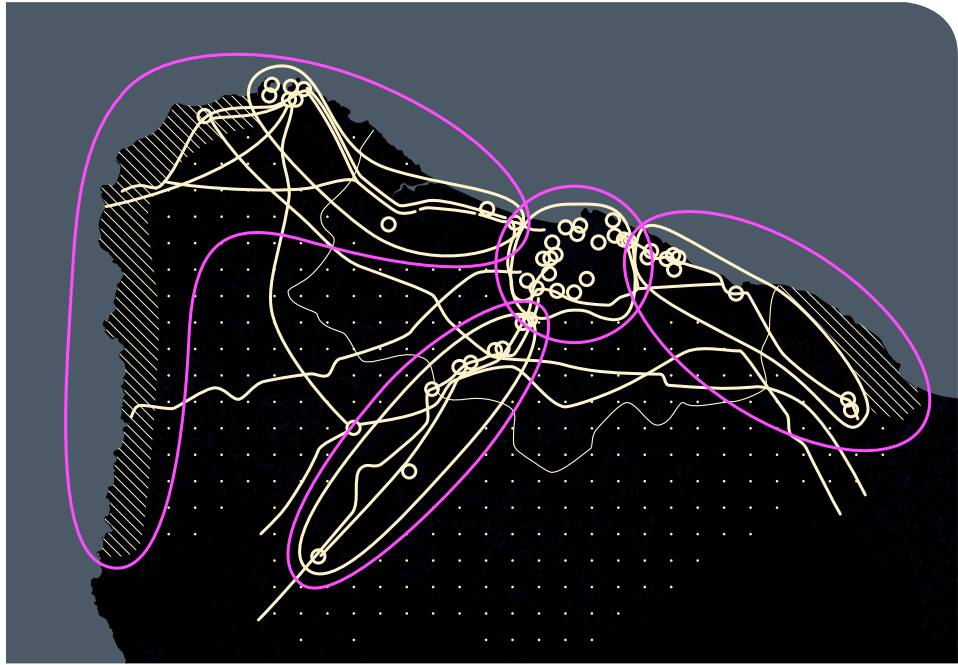
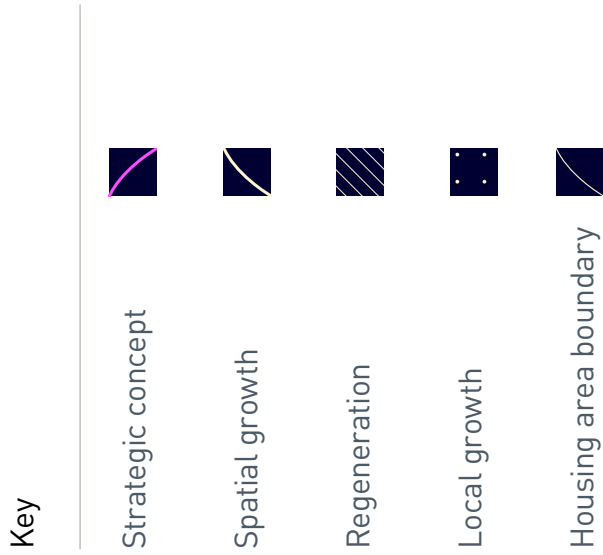


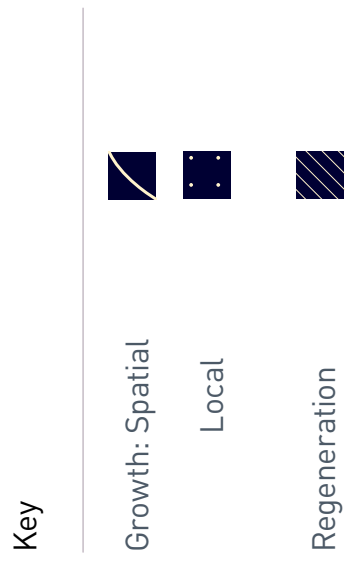
Satellite land use image



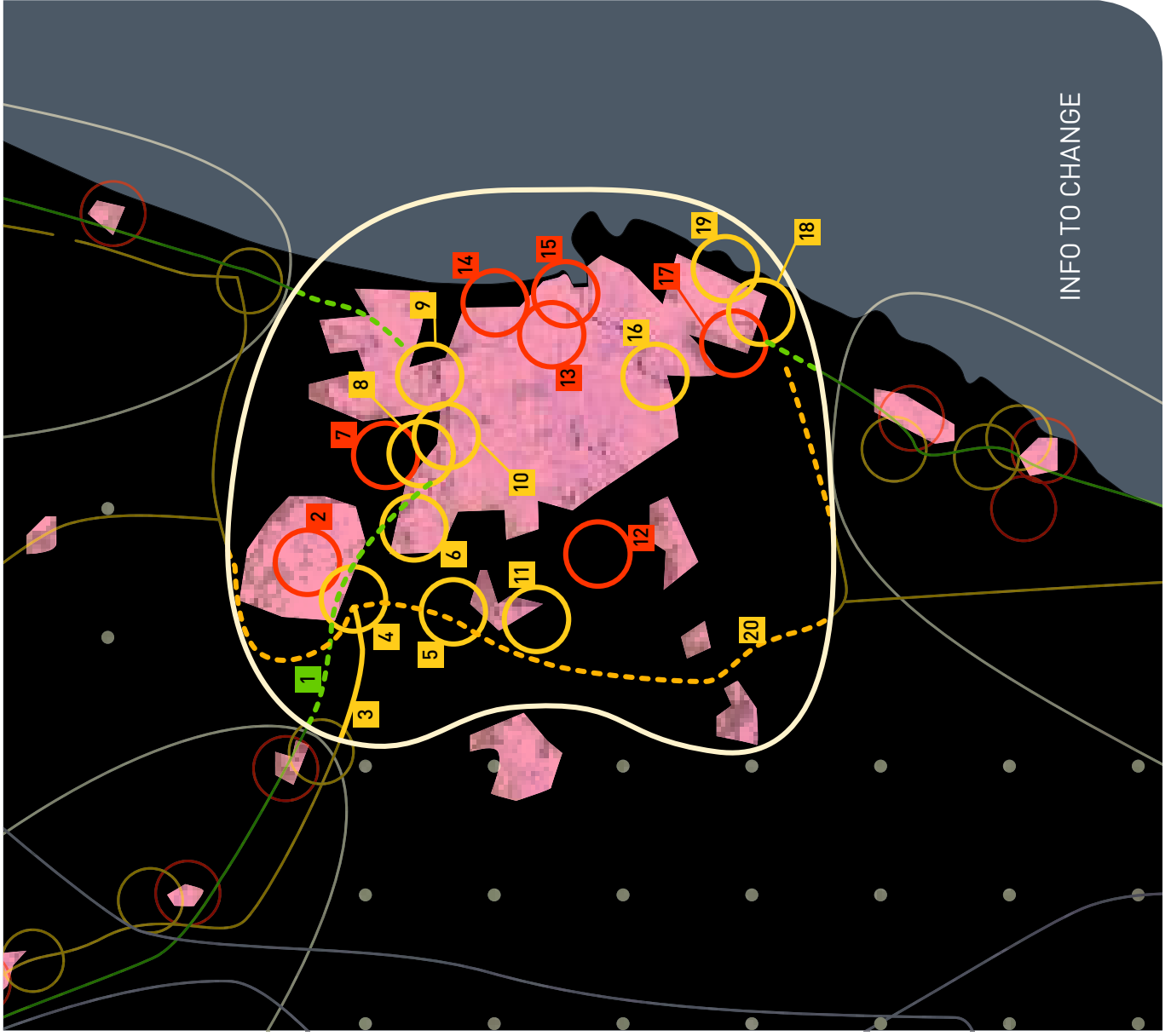
Ordnance Survey B Plan

- Movement
- Green/Greenbelt
- Place
- Water



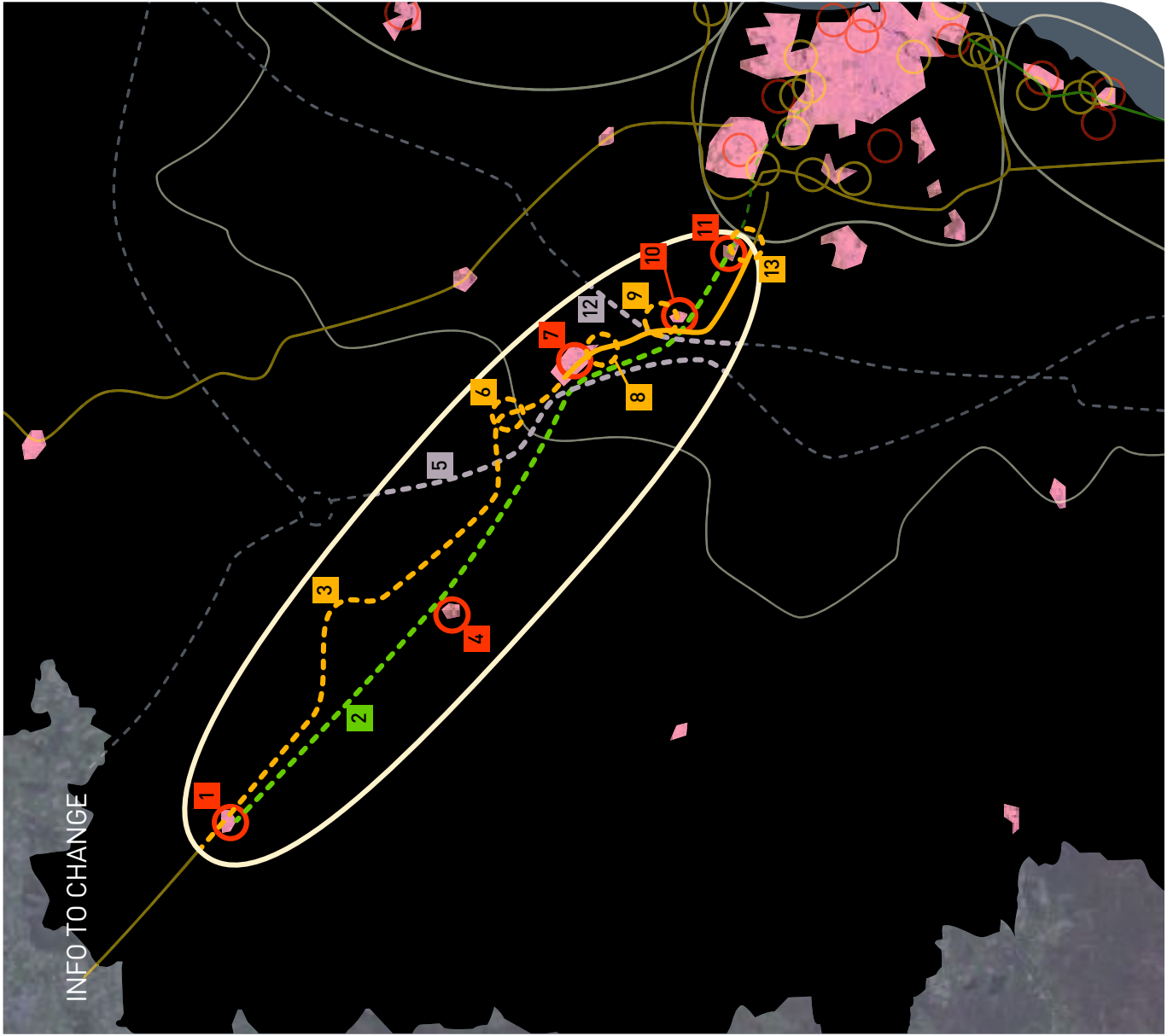


| Key | Existing | Proposed |
|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Spatial growth areas | | |
| Urban areas | | |
| Movement | | |
| | | |
| Place | | |



INFO TO CHANGE

| Key | Existing | Proposed |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| Spatial growth areas | | |
| Urban areas | | |
| Housing area boundary | | |
| Movement | | |
| Green | | |
| Place | | |
| Infrastructure | | |



Key Existing Proposed

Spatial growth areas



Urban areas



Housing area boundary



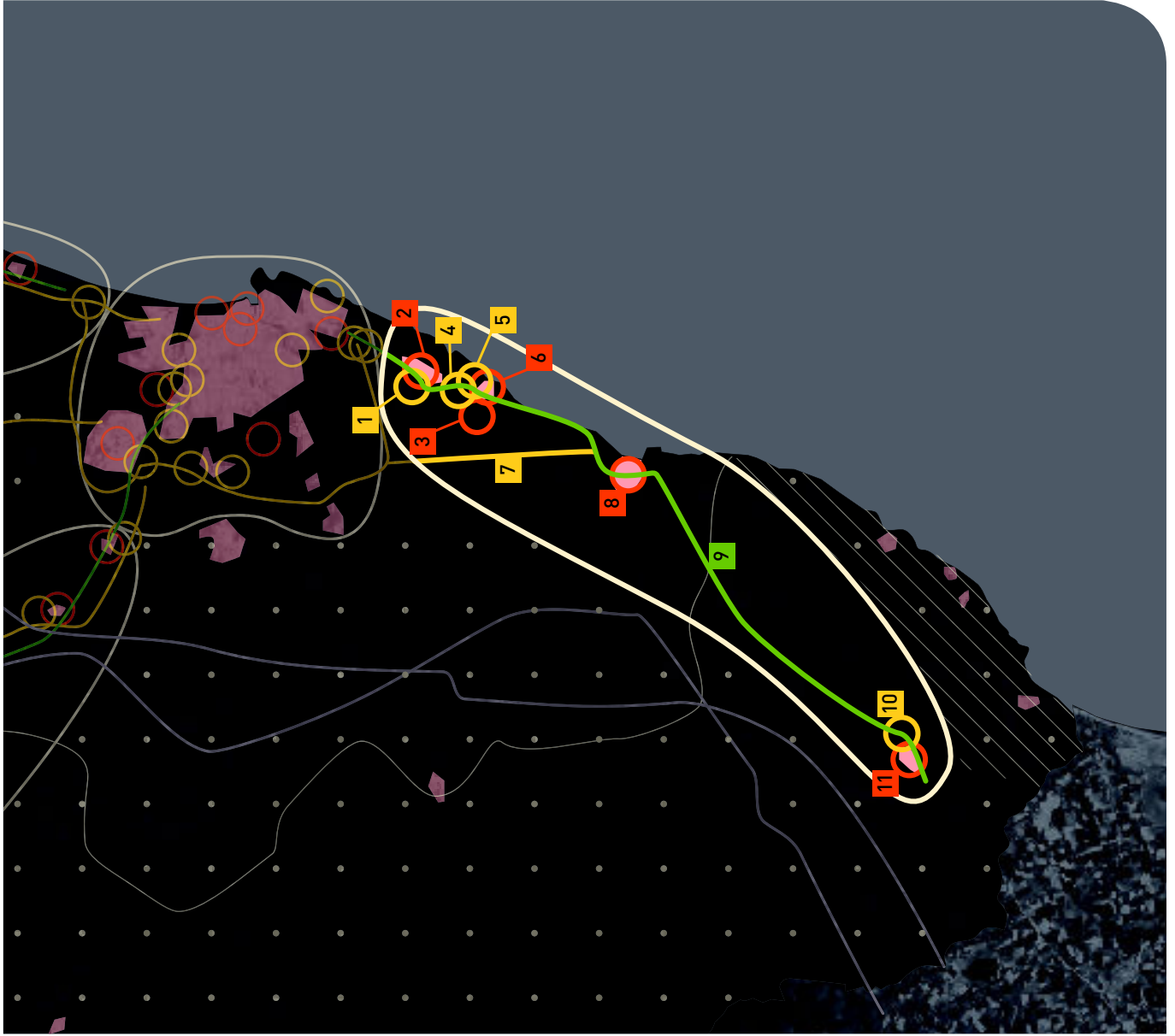
Movement

















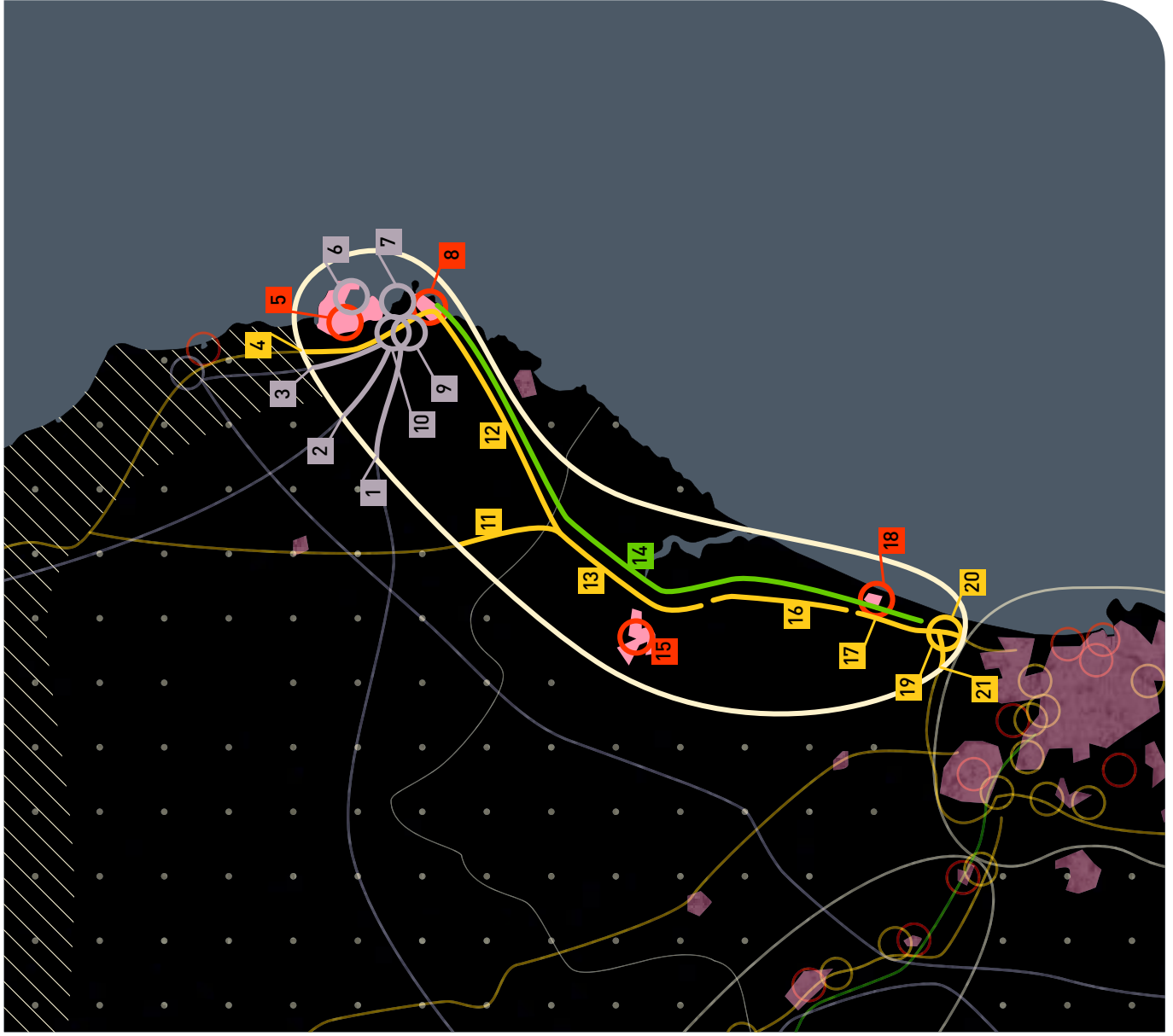
Green

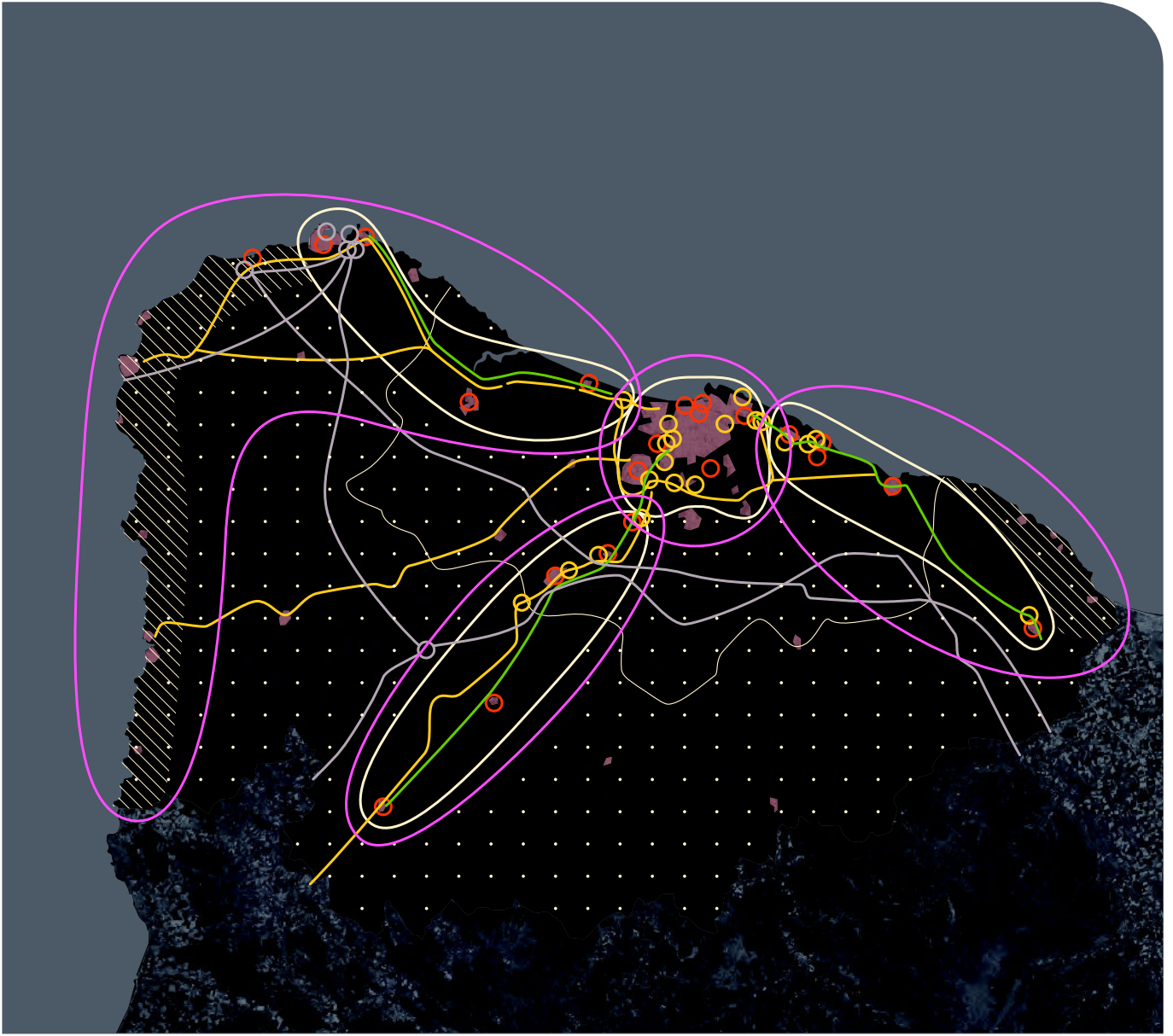
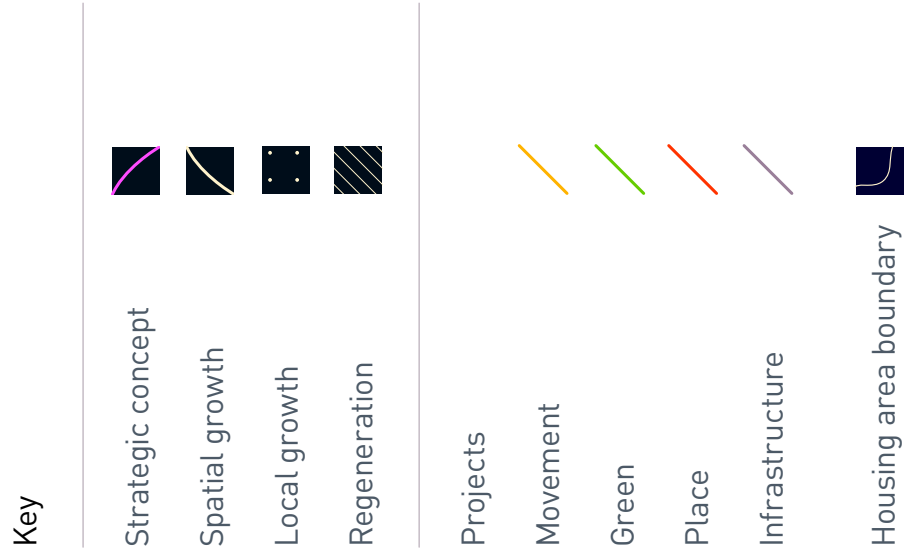


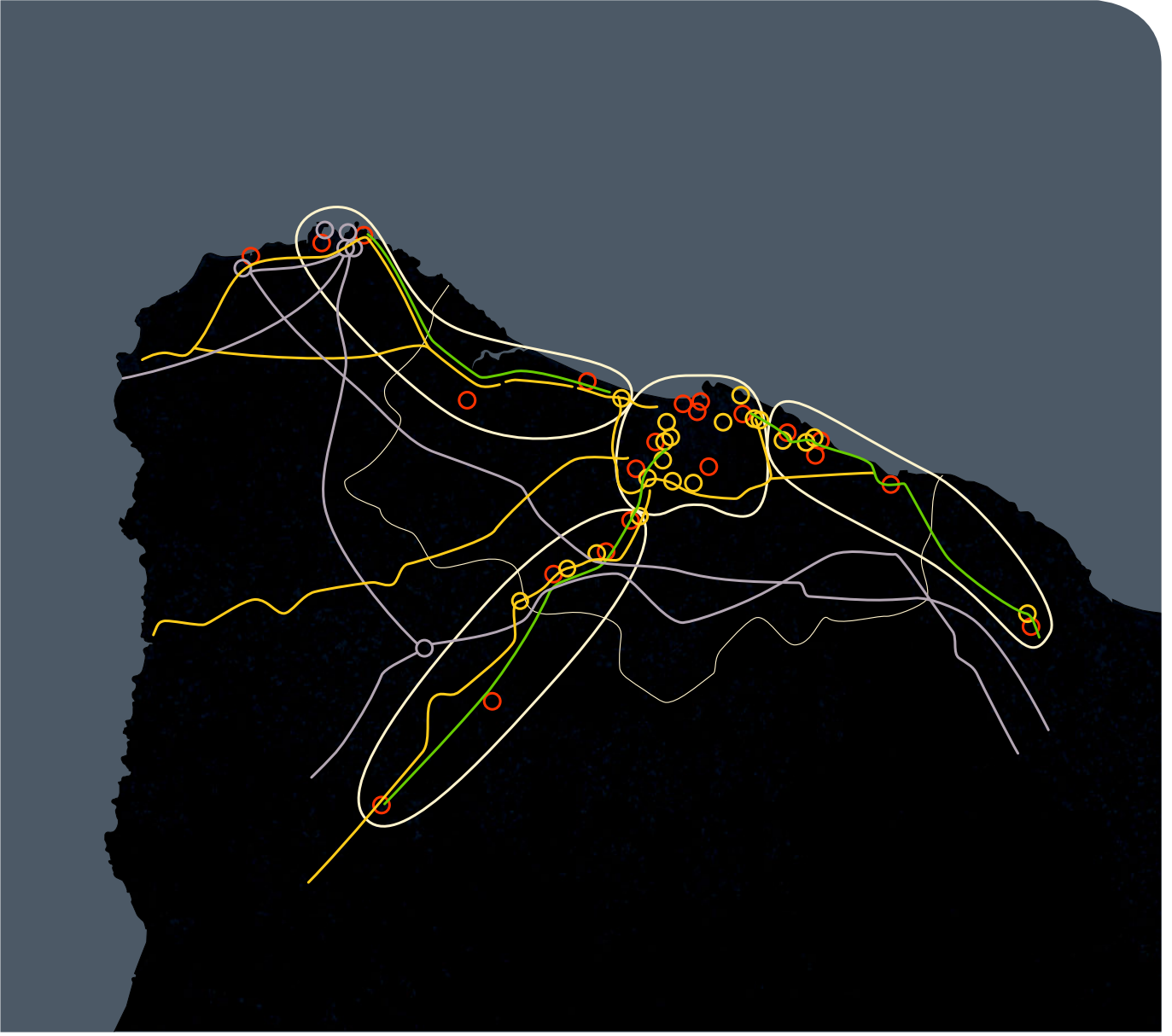
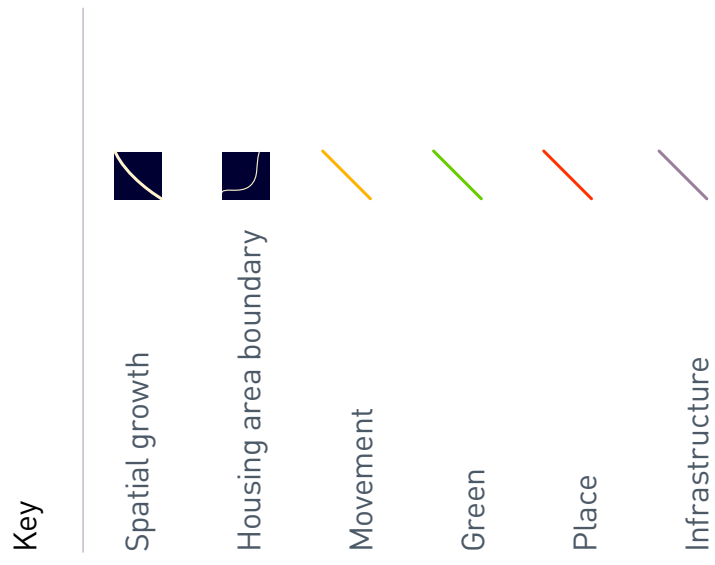
Place



| Key | Existing | Proposed |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Spatial growth areas |  |  |
| Urban areas |  |  |
| Housing area boundary |  |  |
| Movement |  |  |
| Green |  |  |
| Place |  |  |
| Infrastructure |  |  |







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Main Issues Report: Responses to Comments Received

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) published a 'Main Issues Report' (MIR) in October 2011. The consultation period lasted for 13 weeks and closed on 6 January 2012.

A summary of responses to the consultation was presented to the SDPA at its meeting in March 2012 which was subsequently published on the SDPA website (<http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=958&SID=38>).

The responses received were used to inform the content of the proposed strategic development plan (SDP). This document provides a response to the issues raised in that consultation and is presented using the same structure as the MIR itself.

One of the challenges encountered by a number of those responding to the consultation was that they were unfamiliar with the content of the current structure plan and a lot of suggestions were made which related to matters already addressed in the plan (and hence not emphasised in the MIR). This is one of the challenges of reviewing an existing plan under the new development plan process.

Responses which welcomed the content of the MIR have generally not been highlighted below but were welcome and were captured in the earlier consultation report.

1 – Introduction and general comments

Comments welcoming the quality, format and clarity of the MIR are welcome, along with appreciation for the consultation events. The consultation was 13 weeks long so there was adequate opportunity for community groups to respond, even with an early January closing date.

It is recognised that the online form was not very user-friendly. A better form will be used for the consultation on the Proposed Plan.

The MIR was prepared with the input of a range of individuals, businesses and organisations. ACSEF was just one of these. Local views are important and these need to be captured in development plans so that they inform decision-making on individual applications. Local development plans are the best way of capturing issues specific to particular communities.

The SDP starts the next cycle of plan-making in Aberdeen City and Shire. Recently adopted local development plans were prepared to be consistent with the structure plan.

Economic growth is a focus of the plan because that growth can move the area in a more sustainable direction. Renewable energy, electricity transmission and carbon capture and storage all create investment and employment as well as reducing emissions of gases responsible for climate change. 'Steady-state' economics is not incompatible with growth at a local level.

Forward planning is challenging in the current economic climate but that is not a reason not to do it. The current climate makes it even more important that plans are robust enough to cope with a variety of scenarios. This area has been one of the most economically resilient in the whole of the UK since 2007, which suggests that less has changed here than in the rest of the country.

2 – Major influences on the strategic development plan

Widespread support for the identification of ‘supporting development in challenging economic times’ and ‘responding to the challenges and opportunities of climate change’ as the main issues was welcome. A number of other issues were mentioned which are already highlighted in the current structure plan such as sustainable development, the conservation of finite resources, the importance of Energetica and the need to conserve our high quality environment.

The suggestion that in harsh economic times less ambitious plans may be more realistic fails to recognise the different economic context in Aberdeen City and Shire (not immune but considerably more robust) and the fact that less ambitious plans would have serious social, economic and environmental consequences for the area. The SDP is a long-term strategic plan which looks forward to 2035. Short-term economic challenges may influence implementation in the short-term but will not last and should be seen in the context of longer-term objectives.

Sites to meet the plan’s allowances are identified in the local development plans rather than the SDP itself.

It is the SDP itself rather than the MIR which is required to contribute to sustainable development and Climate Change Act emissions reductions. The MIR focuses on those things where changes are proposed rather than presenting a draft plan. Issues of energy security are addressed in the MIR but more fully in the SDP itself. This is one of the challenges of preparing a MIR rather than a draft plan and thought will be given as to how this could be better communicated next time.

There isn’t a disconnect between the two issues and the rest of the MIR as they largely drove its content and the way individual topics were addressed.

Climate change is a significant driver of policy at UN, EU, UK and Scottish Government levels. It is not possible for the SDP to reject this, not least because of its legal requirements under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act and the Planning etc (Scotland) Act. It cannot be seen as a secondary consideration.

It is agreed that high quality sustainable design and places are critical to the implementation of the plan. The structure plan already attaches a high level of importance to these issues.

The vision of the plan will not be achieved without development and it would not be appropriate to fail to take reasonable steps to facilitate the delivery of the plan.

'Giving with one hand and taking with the other' is not a contradiction but a direct consequence of the need to prioritise in the current economic climate. Support is provided, for example, by proposing to delay the requirement for carbon neutrality, not increasing the requirement for affordable housing and the approach to the provision of new infrastructure through the strategic transport fund.

It is agreed that the Westminster and Scottish Governments must support development in the area.

Suggested documents will be taken into account in the Proposed SDP.

The delay to the AWPR has been regrettable but it is critical to the future to the development of the area.

Efficient use of land is vital to the delivery of the strategy of the plan. Scottish Planning Policy requires that prime quality agricultural land should be avoided where possible but it is very unlikely that all 'productive' land can be avoided.

It is agreed that the plan should continue to prioritise city and town centres for retail development.

The current structure plan was able to take into account the implications of the Planning etc (Scotland) Act, SPP and NPF2 (in draft) so the changes required are more modest than would otherwise been the case.

Aberdeen City and Shire doesn't have the capacity within existing infrastructure to support the level of growth envisaged within the plan so the challenges for the development industry in financing projects need to be recognised and addressed. The strategy of concentrating growth in the strategic growth areas is designed to facilitate the delivery of the required infrastructure.

Quality development and high quality infrastructure is essential if the area is to be able to attract the talent to address existing and future skills shortages and allow the economy to grow. This requires a long-term view to be taken.

A range of costs can be passed onto future generations as a result of decisions made today (economic, financial, social and environmental) and it is important that all of these costs are taken into account, as well as the lost opportunities that can result from particular decisions.

3 – Format

Widespread support for the format of the existing structure plan and proposed amendments is welcome. Graphic design suggestions will be taken into account for the Proposed SDP.

The Key Diagram is a reflection of the need to be explicit about how the plan should be implemented in the two council areas. The Proposed SDP has a new map / diagram but the importance of clarity for the two council areas remains. More detailed maps are provided to focus on particular areas of change.

Implementation of the SDP will be through local development plans as well as actions by a range of public sector bodies and private sector businesses. The Action Programme published alongside the Proposed Plan will clarify what needs to be done to put the plan into practice.

The approach of the current structure plan was to provide appropriate choices at the local development plan level in terms of their implementation of the plan. It is not appropriate for the SDP to take this discretion away unless there is a clear case for it.

The structure plan contained significant elements of policy material as well as its spatial strategy and clarity around targets. The level of policy prescription is considered appropriate and no examples have been provided where greater clarity is required.

4 – Vision and spatial strategy

Widespread agreement that the current vision and spatial strategy are appropriate for the SDP is welcome, particularly when the current focus should be on delivery.

The maintenance and enhancement of ecosystem services is important and amendments have been made which seek to reflect the important roles played by different land uses.

Development proposals are not considered in a vacuum but by law must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Support for Energetica, science parks, development around the airport and improved road and rail links are noted. The need for a sea link along the coast is more of an issue for the Regional Transport Strategy than the SDP.

It is agreed that quality of life and the environment are critical to the future success of the area. Being a desirable place to live is very important but growth has to be accommodated in the most sustainable way possible. The plan does not promote 'urban sprawl' but the development of high quality sustainable mixed communities.

Vision

Rather than move the date in the vision back every five years when a new plan is produced, it is now proposed to remove the date. The inclusion of a date indicates a target (which would be continually pushed back at each review) which was not intended.

Suggestions were made as to how the vision should change but these tended to add to its length without significant benefit. Support for particular types of development (such as renewable energy) and sustainable location / design are contained elsewhere in the plan and it would not be appropriate to repeat these in the vision.

This applies to proposed references to the city centre as well, where stronger language will be included in the text of the plan.

Support for a more sustainable and inclusive society is welcome. These were covered in the MIR, in terms of spatial strategy, policy and individual proposals but are more fully expressed in the Proposed SDP itself.

The plan needs to be read as a whole and individual proposals need to be seen in that context as well. Road improvements are part of the solution, not the solution in and of themselves.

Spatial strategy

Support for the current spatial strategy is welcome.

Levels of brownfield development are informed by an 'Urban Capacity Study'. There is already a generous supply of greenfield land for development and there is no justification for a mechanism to increase this further. The plan is reviewed every five years and such issues can be addressed through the review process.

It is recognised that renewable energy projects can support diversification and regeneration in rural areas. This is supported by the plan but was not a focus of the MIR.

The delivery of the AWPR is vital to the future development of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. It is not appropriate to develop a strategy which assumes it will not be delivered just because it has been subject to legal challenge. It is supported by both councils, the Scottish Government and a significant majority of the population of the area.

The level of growth appropriate in individual settlements in the local growth and diversification area (such as Newmachar) is a matter for the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan, taking into account the strategy and objectives of the SDP.

The plan recognises the importance of Fraserburgh and the need to revive its economy. The plan does not limit the growth potential of the town but reflects the challenges and opportunities it faces, focusing on the need for regeneration. Regeneration funding is available to Fraserburgh through Aberdeenshire's 'Framework for Regeneration' and associated action plans. It is not proposed to change the strategy as it applies to Fraserburgh.

A number of responses suggested extending the coverage of strategic growth areas to include particular settlements or sites not currently covered. The current structure plan identifies the extent of the strategic growth areas in general terms but provides some discretion to the Aberdeenshire LDP to define which settlements fall within the area. It is not proposed to remove this discretion in the SDP. However, a number of areas are clearly currently outwith the scope of being included within one of the SGAs - these include Edzell Air Base, Westhill, Kemnay and Park Quarry (Drumoak). The SDP does not prevent development happening in such locations but does impact

on the scale of growth which might be appropriate. The strategy is only a few years old and implementation is only just commencing in full now that the two local development plans have been approved. It is too early to start changing the strategy without sound justification. The strategy focuses strategic growth in a limited number of places so that public and private sector investment in schools, community facilities and transport infrastructure can be coordinated and concentrated. Spreading growth too thinly would have a significant impact on the deliverability of the infrastructure required to service it. The strategy also directs strategic growth to locations which provide clear opportunities to encourage people to use public transport which can be provided in an efficient way. Diluting that strategy at this time would be detrimental to the delivery of the plan. The SDP is reviewed every five years so there will be opportunities to consider the strategy again in future years.

Edzell Air Base – previously in use as an air base the site received a large allocation in the Aberdeenshire LDP as part of the local growth and diversification area. However, the site is remote from the A90 (even if the strategic growth area did extend to the border with Angus) and the provision of public transport services to the site which would be both attractive and efficient is unrealistic. Considerable development would be required to deliver the necessary infrastructure but it would be remote from services and facilities. The strategy of the plan is to concentrate strategic levels of growth in the most sustainable locations and extending the strategic growth area to include Edzell Air Base would not meet this objective. The Reporters to the LDP examination strongly supported the concentration of development in Laurencekirk in order to benefit from its services and facilities and help to overcome existing constraints.

Park Quarry – a new settlement proposal in a quarry which is coming to the end of its extraction phase located on the south side of the River Dee on the South Deeside Road opposite Drumoak (11 miles from the city centre). The site will be restored to agricultural use after quarrying ceases. While the proposal is commendable in many respects (many of which were highlighted in the consultation response), there is no clear justification for extending the strategic growth area when housing allowances up to 2027 have already been identified in both LDPs (with this site rejected on a number of grounds) and no additional allowances are being proposed in the SDP. The site would be subject to significant infrastructure challenges, not least around transport given its location on the South Deeside Road. Scottish Planning Policy sets out the circumstances when a new settlement may be appropriate if it is justified by the scale and nature of the housing land requirement – the housing land requirement does not indicate a new settlement in this location is required as alternative sites have already been identified.

Kemnay – is some distance from the A96 corridor upon which the strategic growth area is based and the opportunities for encouraging public transport are considerably lower than within the corridor itself which was key to its identification. The secondary school roll currently exceeds the school's capacity. Diverting infrastructure

investment away from the Blackburn – Inverurie corridor would not be consistent with the plan’s vision, spatial strategy and objectives. Inverurie already has a station and one of the plan’s proposals is for an additional station at Kintore, the opportunities to maximise use of the railway were important factors in generation of the spatial strategy for the plan.

Westhill – has grown significantly over the last 20 years, both in terms of households and employment, but such growth does not, in itself, justify further expansion. The town is subject to a range of constraints including transport and education capacity as well as being physically constrained to the east and west by pipelines. In addition, opportunities have been identified in close proximity to Westhill to the west of Aberdeen so there are already significant opportunities for residential and commercial development within a distance of only a few miles.

Aberdeen City Centre was identified on the structure plan Key Diagram and will be in the strategic development plan as well.

Potterton – Aberdeenshire Council decided during the preparation of their LDP to exclude the settlement from the strategic growth area and this was supported by the Reporters at the recent LDP examination. Nothing has changed which would indicate that the SDP should take a contrary position.

Stonehaven is already part of the strategic growth area and the scale of growth in that town is a matter for the Aberdeenshire local development plan, taking into account the strategy and objectives of the SDP.

5 - Sustainable economic growth

Housing requirement and allowances

Acceptance of the proposed update to the housing requirement and that the current allowances are adequate to 2035 is welcome.

It is the role of local development plans to allocate site for housing at an appropriate density, with proximity to railway stations one of the important considerations.

The requirement no longer accounts for almost 5,000 demolitions in regeneration areas in Aberdeen City and this has had a significant impact on the housing requirement proposed for the SDP. Allowances for the period 2017-2027 are on top of the existing supply in 2011 and the allowances for the period to 2016 – providing a generous supply on top of the housing requirement in this period.

Some have questioned the need for such significant rates of new housing over the plan period. Although completions have declined over the last few years due to the financial crisis, they are projected to increase again in the next few years. The HNDA is not based on recent levels of population growth continuing at the same rate over the next 23 years, it is based on a more realistic scenario. It is not true that developers can’t sell houses, new house building in Aberdeen City and Shire is considerably higher than the Scottish average. Most new housing is required to

house the existing population rather than to cater for an increase in population due to in-migration but jobs growth is forecast over the next 10-15 years.

No evidence is given to support the need for an increase in housing allowances other than 'GRO projections' and 'increasing demand'. However, the Housing Market Partnership has confirmed that the HNDA remains based on realistic expectations of future household and population growth in spite of more recent 2008 and 2010-based projections. The allowances contained in the plan are of a scale which enables the plan to be robust over the medium to long-term even with higher levels of growth than those foreseen in the plan – because a generous supply of housing land has been provided for. Increasing allowances to 100,000 would have significant infrastructure implications beyond those that the development industry is currently facing. Flexibility was built into the previous plan through a generous supply of housing land. That supply is still generous. Monitoring over the next five years will ensure that all available evidence is fed into the next HNDA and informs the next review of the plan.

It is not accepted that there is a significant qualitative and quantitative backlog in the housing land supply. Land is provided for affordable as well as market housing.

There is only one housing requirement in the existing structure plan and there will only be one in the SDP. Schedule 1 contains the generous allowances made to meet the requirement.

While delivery of housing is important (as evidenced by the targets in the plan, making it clear that sites are required to deliver units within a particular plan period would mean that allowances would need to be reduced because they currently provide a generous supply of housing land and the structure plan is clear (as will the SDP be) that they will not all be built in a particular period. This is not the outcome being sought by the respondent.

The Portlethen to Stonehaven strategic growth area already identifies a further 1,000 units for the period to 2035 and there is no realistic basis to increase this further at the current time. Monitoring of completions over the next five years at Chapelton of Elsick will inform future reviews of this plan.

The proposed SDP continues to provide considerable scope for small-scale expansion for smaller communities and no change is required to deliver this.

Local housing strategies will be emphasised as important in the delivery of the plan.

Available evidence of completions over the last five years provides no support for changing the balance between the two housing market areas. However, monitoring will continue to ensure that the balance between the two housing market areas is appropriate.

Employment land

The supply of employment land was not identified as a main issue so received limited attention in the MIR but that did not indicate it would not receive the same prominence in the SDP as it had in the structure plan. Regular monitoring is carried out and significant sites have come through the structure plan and two local development plans this year. Mixed-use sites are designed to integrate residential, employment and other uses through masterplans.

Population and household growth

The population of the SDP area in 2011 was around 23,500 higher than it was in 1996. However, the population fell for several years after 1996 before rising again.

The housing market area boundary does date from the early 1970's but the DTZ study of 2007 didn't identify a significant change during that period until data zones were used to try to build up an area. Following that study it was decided that no change would be made but that the results of the 2011 Census would inform the next review of the boundary. This decision was based on the fact that the observed changes were not significant, continuity of boundary had numerous advantages and there was no appetite for change within the development industry. The development appropriate to Catterline would not be determined by the Housing Market Area it is in.

The structure plan explicitly refers to the needs of the Gypsy/Traveller communities and it is expected that the SDP will continue to do so.

The HNDA is the main forum to debate future population and household growth scenarios. It was 'robust and credible' and has informed the MIR and Proposed SDP. That document was published alongside the MIR and contains the justification for the scenarios chosen.

The Housing Land Audit will monitor the effectiveness of housing land. Because generous allowances have been provided, it is not anticipated that additional sites will be required – this is one of the reasons a generous supply is required in the first place.

The allowances provide a generous supply of housing land and are robust enough to cope with higher levels of growth than anticipated by the plan. There is no justification for making LDPs add a further level of generosity on top, this would not be in line with Scottish Government policy.

It is agreed that quantity must not be at the expense of quality, which is why the current structure plan and future SDP place such a high priority on the quality of new development, including the provision of appropriate infrastructure.

A working group was established in late 2011 with representatives from the SDPA, SNH, SEPA, Scottish Water, Dee Salmon Fisheries Board and Aberdeenshire Council to look at water abstraction from the River Dee. This work concluded that the growth to 2035 was unlikely to have an adverse impact on the integrity of the river. However, climate change (in the long term) may have an impact which needs to be investigated further, including possible mitigation measures.

Connectivity

Significant support for putting more emphasis on the transport network in encouraging economic growth and the role of Aberdeen Airport are welcome.

Ways of reducing the need to travel and encouraging walking, cycling and public transport are central to the plan in both its spatial strategy as well as its policy material. A strategic cycle network will help make these connections for longer journeys.

Reducing congestion has an important role to play in improving air quality. The construction of the AWPR enables development closer to the City where walking, cycling and public transport are potentially more attractive choices.

The plan focuses on the importance of digital connectivity as well as transport as both are vital.

The role of the SDP to provide a strategic framework for the development of Aberdeen City and Shire. It is not the place for detailed wording of policies on level crossings, however important that might be. In the same way, it is not the place for details of airport safeguarding, although the principle is mentioned in the current structure plan and will be carried forward. The airport will be identified on the strategy map.

Upfront funding of infrastructure by the public sector is actively being explored but comes with considerable challenges.

Pipelines do play an important role and their use can vary over time. The MIR identified one potential use (transporting CO₂) but there can be others. Pipelines are safeguarded under Health and Safety legislation and through local development plans.

The importance of mixed use development was emphasised in the structure plan and it is proposed that this remains in the SDP.

Development is required to mitigate its transport impacts. Hundreds of millions of pounds is being spent on the transport infrastructure in the area and the contribution of new development needs to be seen in this context.

The delivery of the AWPR is important to the strategy of the plan and was factored into the strategy of the current structure plan so it does not require amendment at this stage.

The delivery of development in particular locations is a matter for local development plans in the context of the strategy set out in the SDP.

Nestrans is refreshing the Regional Transport Strategy alongside the SDP to ensure the two documents remain consistent.

Road, rail and airport infrastructure are all important to the future prosperity of the area, as well as actions aimed at encouraging people to walk, cycle and take public transport. Climate change emissions are one of the factors which is central to the strategy of the plan but that cannot mean that people are prevented from travelling longer distances for business or leisure.

Digital infrastructure

There was overwhelming support for the rollout of high-speed broadband throughout the area. It is agreed that the SDP should provide strategic direction to this process and it is welcome that some developers are already integrating such technology into new developments. It is agreed that it can encourage flexible working and reduce transport emissions and congestion. The SDPA are working with partners to influence infrastructure investment decisions but there is also a need to encourage developers to build high-speed broadband enabled homes which are fit for the 21st Century (which enable much faster speeds than retrofitting existing homes).

Retail

It is agreed that the city centre must continue to be supported, both protected and enhanced to meet the needs of businesses, residents and visitors alike. . Support for the existing structure plan's retail position is welcome.

Proximity to the AWPR is not a good justification for out-of-town retail when the clear priority must be on the city centre, while facilitating retail uses at a scale appropriate to existing centres in the hierarchy and mixed-use proposals on a neighbourhood scale.

Other

A range of suggestions were made to the MIR as to other changes needed to the current structure plan to support sustainable economic growth but these are either already covered in the structure plan or issues for the regional transport strategy, LDPs or implementation.

6 – Supporting development

A range of suggestions about how to support were suggested in response to the MIR, many of which extend beyond the remit of the SDP (such as tax measures). Clarity, flexibility and a pragmatic approach to implementation were advocated as well as supporting community trusts and social enterprise. A generous supply of housing land was also advocated as well as flexibility in the plan's strategy to support smaller sites with less significant infrastructure requirements – both of which are already provided by the plan. Incentivising mixed-use schemes was also suggested, or standing firmer against proposals which do not meet the highest standards. Doing more to explore innovative funding mechanisms was suggested to influence implementation of the plan. Some responses were clear that the plan should be neutral and enabling rather than encouraging and facilitating, with planning gain

discussed in an open and transparent way. Imaginative redevelopment of Aberdeen Harbour was suggested, along with a European Capital of Culture bid.

Strategic transport fund

[Consultation on the Strategic Transport Fund took place in parallel with the MIR consultation and the SDPA have already agreed a response.]

A variety of responses were received, with general support for the principal and questions over the detail of implementation and justification. It is recognised that transport assessment will still be required in some cases to address the local impacts of development.

A review of the guidance is required to bring it forward as part of the development plan and further engagement will take place to address remaining concerns over some of the details of implementation.

Timing of new developments and the AWPR

The continued commitment of the Scottish Government to the delivery of the AWPR is welcome, as is Transport Scotland's commitment to work in partnership in the intervening period. It is not possible to delay all development until construction of the AWPR has started but construction timetables do need to be taken into account when transport mitigation is proposed.

Affordable Housing

The provision of affordable housing is vital to the delivery of the plan's vision. When the funding situation improves (from the perspective of both the public sector and private sector) there will need to be a reassessment of requirements. Commitments by the private sector in excess of 25% in individual cases are welcome where they are otherwise in accordance with the plan. In the case where need has been identified at 38% in the HNDA, reducing expectations to 25% is already a significant change and reducing it further would not be consistent with the vision and strategy of the plan. While some responses sought 25% to be a maximum and some a minimum, around 25% is appropriate in the SDP with the ability for LDPs to vary the requirement on a site-by-site if necessary.

The need for creative solutions is recognised in the challenges of delivering affordable housing at the current time but the MIR did not imply that increased need for affordable housing had led to a fall in completions. The delivery of affordable housing is largely an issue for the two local housing strategies.

The importance of a range of house types, tenures and sizes is recognised as critical to the delivery of sustainable mixed communities.

The move away from one-year funding programmes for affordable housing is welcome as this will help delivery through the development plan.

Development charges are an issue being considered by the Scottish Government and were subject to a preliminary consultation earlier this year.

The importance of a robust framework for affordable housing is vitally important to ensure delivery of the plan. Indications are that there is likely to be a significant increase in new house completions in Aberdeen City and Shire over the next few years – up to and beyond what was seen in the period up to 2008.

Infrastructure fund

A variety of views were expressed on whether there was merit in rolling out a wider infrastructure fund. That is was something worth looking at was a commonly held view, particularly where the public sector were forward-funding the fund. Advantages were seen as speeding up the negotiation process for planning permission and increasing certainty over costs. Challenges were expressed about fit with current legislation and practical implementation and delivery. This issue can be explored further through the action programme with the Scottish Government and others.

Regeneration

The structure plan focused regeneration activity in Aberdeenshire and Fraserburgh was one of the areas it identified. A 'Framework for Regeneration' and associated action plans have been produced but implementation will take time and results cannot be expected overnight.

Regeneration Priority Area designation does not mean priority will be given to economic development proposals over environmental issues. The plan recognises that the issues in the southern area (in both scale and nature) are very different from those along Aberdeenshire's north coast and the text of the SDP should allay these concerns. The needs and opportunities of areas differ and enhancing the current environmental assets to focus on tourism could present opportunities in this area, as well as providing better access to services and employment.

A revised regeneration strategy is being developed by Aberdeen City Council which will emerge over the next few months.

7 – Managing resources efficiently

While the SDP is about principles, it is also about action to deliver our vision. It would not be appropriate to completely ignore the effects of the economic cycle. One of the key responses is around prioritisation where this is required.

Using land efficiently is recognised as important in the plan, with the redevelopment of brownfield sites and higher densities on greenfield sites both seen as vital to the implementation of the plan. While agricultural land will be lost to new development, there is no alternative if we are to grow at the scale envisaged by the plan.

Text has been included in the plan to reflect the importance of avoiding flood risk and the role of land use to climate change adaptation. The expansion of woodland cover has also been identified as having a role to play.

Renewable energy (heat as well as electricity) will be supported by the plan. This includes biomass and heat pumps as well as energy from waste. The plan recognises the importance of early engagement between developers if effective use is to be made of heat through district heating networks. While the setting of renewable electricity targets are not required by the Scottish Government, setting the target is designed to focus attention on the need for a significant increase in generation. The target is not expressed as a limit and progress towards it will be reviewed in future plans.

The importance of the green belt is highlighted in the SDP, with a focus on protecting the character and landscape setting of the city.

Additional sewage infrastructure capacity will be required in some locations but not of a scale which would require inclusion in the SDP. SEPA and Scottish Water, as Key Agencies have been involved in the preparation of both the current structure plan as well as the new SDP.

Carbon neutrality in new development

The challenges around moving to new development being carbon neutral are noted, particularly in the current financial climate. This is reflected in the MIR's suggestion that a flexible approach should be adopted rather than continue with the current target. It is also recognised that building regulations set nationally also have a role to play. However, the scale of development proposed in the plan, the lifetime of that new development and the urgency of emissions reductions makes it imperative that emissions are reduced as soon as practically possible in a local context. 'Fabric first' approaches are likely to be the most cost effective first steps and these should be taken as quickly as possible. Support for a common approach across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire (if not Scotland as a whole) is welcome. A range of views were expressed as to target dates, with the view expressed that 2020 was challenging but realistic. Costs will only come down through large-scale implementation and this will require a push from the planning and building standards systems. A consultation on a review of building standards is anticipated in late 2012. Using the sustainability labelling mechanism does not duplicate work with building standards but focussing on carbon dioxide levels helps to priorities expenditure.

A variation on Option 1 rather than the preferred option in the MIR (Option 4) has been taken forward to the Proposed SDP, with a 2020 target date and the recognition that joint supplementary guidance may be prepared to help deliver this through the sustainability labelling mechanism.

Water efficiency

Support for water efficiency in new development is welcome.

Drinking water is not plentiful in Aberdeen City and Shire, with abstraction from the River Dee - a resource protected for its natural heritage value.

Water storage may be required at some point in the future but would present particular environmental challenges and be very costly. The appropriateness of such a solution will be explored further with partners in the context of the likely impact of climate change on the River Dee and inform future plans. However, water efficiency measures are likely to be more sustainable and cost-effective.

Water efficiency is not currently part of the building regulations in Scotland. In any case, Aberdeen City and Shire has a local challenge to deal with around abstraction from the River Dee.

General support for the use of sustainability labelling as a consistent mechanism to address water efficiency issues, with one standard across the SDP area being the preferred approach (if not across Scotland as a whole), including domestic as well as non-domestic buildings. Support given for the use of the gold standard from the start.

However, the proposed SDP has not specified how water-saving technology should be incorporated into new development, choosing Option 1 rather than the preferred Option 3.

Alternative fuels for transport

Reducing emissions from transport will improve public health but it is recognised that this is not the solution to congestion.

Hydrogen is one alternative that is currently being explored, with a focus on hydrogen buses rather than fuel cells.

The proposed SDP does support the deployment of alternative fuels (such as electric charging points) but is not specific about location. This is an issue being picked up by the refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy.

Managing our waste

Recognition of the importance of changing current waste management practice and the potential contribution of the SDP is appreciated. The Scottish Government see the planning system having an important role to play in facilitating this transition and a planning free-for-all will not deliver the required change. However, it is not possible to restrict the use of non-recyclable materials in the SDP.

The MIR and proposed SDP do not single municipal waste out but seek to plan for all waste. The foreword to the MIR emphasises the importance of waste management in the MIR as well as the space devoted to it – its location in the document is not relevant.

Considerable support for self-sufficiency (Option 2) was expressed, with the benefits this can bring, which is welcome. It is recognised that some waste will need to be transported outwith the area (due to the treatment processes required) and that some may enter the area. However, meeting our waste management needs locally as far as possible is the clear goal. The MIR sought to provide a positive perspective on waste management, there is no indication that 'letting the market decide' will deliver the investment required.

The particular challenges associated with the treatment of hazardous waste are recognised. The plan does not seek to prevent these being dealt with in appropriate facilities.

Widespread support for the approach to landfill is welcome.

Widespread support for the regional concentration of new waste management facilities is welcome. While it is recognised that site characteristics will be important, sites in or on the edge of settlements are likely to be suitable for modern waste management facilities, except where a rural location is required. It is agreed that cumulative impacts need to be taken into account when siting new facilities but this does not need to be highlighted in the SDP. No value is gained by identifying existing waste management sites in the SDP and setting out the types of facilities required is likely to be overly restrictive. Agree that site identification for new facilities can be helpful but no sites were proposed during the preparation of the SDP. It is recognised that transport other than by road is potentially beneficial, depending on the distances involved.

Widespread support for setting a clear framework at the regional level and letting LDPs implement it, either through site-specific allocations or otherwise. It is recognised that the views of local communities may make this challenging on some sites. The LDPs are not out-of-synch with the SDP, both SDP and LDP are reviewed on a rolling basis and new LDPs will be required to implement the SDP.

Although there was a general acceptance that this policy framework will encourage the move towards more sustainable waste management, those who took the view that the market should be left to get on with it without interference from planning did not agree. The SDP provides a positive framework without being too restrictive but it is recognised that confident and courageous decisions will be required to implement it.

Waste is recognised as a resource rather than a problem as well as having a potential role in the generation of renewable energy. The importance of waste minimisation is emphasised. A number of suggestions go beyond the scope of the SDP (such as funding, waste charging, increasing kerbside collections and the use of biodegradable packaging). The SDP does not limit waste management to the strategic growth areas.

8 – Proposals

The proposals contained in the plan are recognised for the support they give to the delivery of the plan and its spatial strategy. They are given explicit support as being in accordance with the plan. A new community stadium is supported by the plan but two possible locations were identified but the choice of site required justification.

Aiding investor confidence for waste management proposals is important but no such proposals have been put forward for explicit support in the SDP.

Existing Proposals

AWPR – The delivery of the AWPR is vital to the future development of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. It is not appropriate to develop a strategy which assumes it will not be delivered just because it has been subject to legal challenge. It is supported by both councils, the Scottish Government and a significant majority of the population of the area. It is agreed that it should not become a location for out-of-town retail development as retail needs to be supported in existing centres, particularly the city centre but also other existing centres.

Haudagain – Proposals have been put forward locally which have been accepted by the Scottish Government. While it is recognised that the proposals will have an impact to the local area, it is not possible to improve the junction without significant change to the adjacent areas. However, attempts have been made to minimise these impacts in the design of the proposals.

Third Don Crossing – A planning application has now been approved, although the ongoing legal action is noted. The SDP supports a third crossing over the River Don because of the relief it brings to existing crossings, the development it enables to the north of Aberdeen and the improvements at the Haudagain roundabout it supports. No indication exists that the proposal would be paid for other than locally, although the AWPR contract has been identified as a possible way of reducing the cost.

New stations – the plan will continue to support the possibility of opening of additional stations. Kintore is now a firm proposal but there is a need for the case for additional stations to be explored further and led by Nestrans in partnership with Transport Scotland and the two councils. Transport Scotland's position regarding new stations has changed over recent months which is helpful in this regard.

Strategic Rail Improvements – support for this strategic rail improvement is noted. Electrification will continue to be supported.

Airport Masterplan – Aberdeen airport plays an important role in the regional economy and is a vital link which needs to be supported. It is however important that efforts continue to be made to minimise the environmental impacts of the airport and this was the focus of the SDPA's response to the draft Masterplan 2012.

Community stadium – It is noted that planning permission has yet to be granted because a legal agreement is required before this can be done. Until the new

stadium is delivered it is proposed to retain both potential sites in the SDP because delivery on the currently preferred site is still subject to uncertainty. A possible new station in the south of Aberdeen will be considered by Nestrans and partners as part of their wider consideration of possible new stations. Aberdeen City Council are minded to grant the application on the site so are comfortable with the traffic impacts of the proposed development on the road network (with the mitigation proposed).

City Centre Masterplan – A development framework has now been produced and it is the implementation of this which is now important.

Electricity grid – SHETL timescales for the Peterhead – Rothienorman upgrade are noted. Leylodge is the closest Aberdeenshire community to the substation, although Kintore is the closest town. Figure 14 was supplied by Scottish and Southern Energy at the time of the MIR but will not appear in the final SDP anyway.

New proposals

Support for the inclusion of these new proposals is welcome. While it is agreed that the strategic transport interventions are of regional importance, the other proposals do have a much wider national and international significance. There is no value to be gained from not identifying projects of national significance in the SDP.

It is recognised that the SDPA does not control the delivery of these proposals. Rather than highlighting this in the plan itself, this will be clear from the action programme, including the sources of funding appropriate in each case.

Although the deployment of carbon capture and storage is ambitious, this project fits extremely well with the plan's vision and aims and should be supported. Although the Longannet proposal has now been abandoned, other projects in central Scotland have replaced it and the use of the existing pipeline to St Fergus is still likely to be attractive.

The challenges around the need for electricity converter stations in and around Peterhead will be reflected in the plan, along with the need for a strategic framework for the area to access capacities, design, scope for coordination and mitigation. While NorthConnect and SHETL disagreed with the need for a 'masterplan', there was a recognition that the projects have the potential to raise significant planning issues. The term 'masterplan' possibly implied a level of detail not originally envisaged in the proposal. The assessment of cumulative impacts through the EIA process will not give the required level of co-ordination in land use planning terms. A strategic framework is proposed as the means of addressing these issues, avoiding the complexities of business separation and competition law. A project to scope the strategic framework is currently underway with Scottish Enterprise and Aberdeenshire Council – this will involve engagement with all the known potential developers in the area. Scottish Natural Heritage will be integrated into the project as it moves forward.

It is recognised that the strategic transport interventions identified require further refinement in terms of detail but the need for them has been identified and is justified on the basis of the cumulative transport appraisal carried out with Nestrans and the two councils. The support of Transport Scotland in this process is appreciated.

Additional proposals

A range of additional proposals were suggested for inclusion in the SDP, some of a general nature such as 'job creation initiatives' and others more specific.

Support for an extension to the Peterhead electricity substation is given in the SDP in recognition of the role it can perform in transmitting renewable energy (particularly from offshore wind). Other onshore infrastructure to support offshore energy generation and transmission is also supported.

It is proposed that the importance of green networks should be recognised in the plan, particularly with reference to the implementation of strategic walking and cycling routes. However, further work is required to more clearly define the scope of work appropriate in a largely rural area in respect of a wider vision and spatial strategy.

The export of water from our ports is not supported because water sources in the area do not generate surplus capacity for export.

The allocation of land is a matter for local development plans in the context of the spatial strategy and objectives of the SDP.

The need for concerted action to improve the city centre is proposed in the plan and this includes support for pedestrianisation. The individual components are largely a matter for Aberdeen City Council and partners. The ACSEF bond proposal would appear to align well with suggestions made around envisaged delivery mechanisms.

The potential for combined heat and power, particularly when powered from renewable energy is already supported by the plan, not just in the Energetica corridor. Hydro-electric schemes are likely to be small-scale in nature but the plan does support renewable energy generally.

The plan has a clear focus on a sequential approach to retail within the plan area, with the city centre as the regional centre which must be supported. While retail uses are vital within new sustainable mixed communities, it is not appropriate to identify Loirston as a site for out of town retail use.

Rail – Reopening the Deeside line would be very expensive and complex given current uses (including as an active travel route). However, rail issues such as this are a matter for the Regional Transport Strategy.

Bus – The Ballater to Perth (Heather Hopper) service is outwith the SDP area. Subsidies for public transport is not an issue for the SDP. Park and ride sites are included in the structure plan and are taken forward in the SDP. Bus priority measures are identified as required under the additional projects identified in the MIR. Issues of bus ticketing are not for the SDP.

Active travel (walking and cycling) – the importance of strategic walking / cycling routes in the strategic growth areas is recognised on the Proposed SDP and is also being taken forward in the refresh of the Regional Transport Strategy.

Pedestrianisation in Aberdeen city centre is supported as a proposal by the current structure plan and it is proposed to retain this support in the SDP.

Road – A link from Inchgarth Road to North Deeside road or from the Netherly Road to the Slug Road would not be a strategic project. No need or funding has been identified for a junction on the fastlink at Chapelton of Elsick at the current time. In line with the current structure plan, it is agreed that STPR project 29 (A90 improvements through or around Dundee) would bring benefits to Aberdeen City and Shire and should be supported in principle in the text of the plan. Issues of congestion charging and car park charging are not issues for the SDP.

Projects not included explicitly within the plan would need to be assessed against the plan as a whole at the time they come forward to assess their acceptability. The plan will be reviewed every five years to ensure it is kept up-to-date.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

Draft Habitats Regulation Appraisal Record

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1 Background to Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA)

Natura 2000 sites are a network of protected sites of international importance which include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), Special Protection Areas (SPA's) and Ramsar Sites. Under Article 6 (3 & 4) of the European Habitats' Directive, any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall undergo an Appropriate Assessment to determine its implications for the site. The competent authority can only agree to the plan or project after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned (Article 6.3). In exceptional circumstances, a plan or project may still be allowed to go ahead, in spite of a negative assessment, provided there are no alternative solutions and the plan or project is considered to be of overriding public interest. In such cases the Member State must take appropriate compensatory measures to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 Network is protected (Article 6.4).

This screening is to ensure that the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP) does not have any significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.

2 Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

This Habitats Regulations Appraisal is being undertaken for the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP). The SDP covers the whole of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire except that part of Aberdeenshire within the Cairngorms National Park. It is a strategy for the future development of the area up to 2035 and is an evolution of the current Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan which was approved by Scottish Ministers in 2009.

A Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) had been undertaken or the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009) and that plan formed the base from which the new SDP has evolved.

A Main Issues Report (MIR) was published in October 2011 as a means of engagement and consultation on the issues and options to inform the preparation of the SDP. An HRA was undertaken of the identified issues and options at the time the MIR was prepared and the results published in parallel with the MIR for consultation. Scottish Natural Heritage responded to that consultation and their response has been used to inform this draft appraisal record for the SDP itself.

The contents of the SDP are summarised in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Contents of Strategic Development Plan

| SDP Vision, Strategy and Policies | Options |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Vision | <p>1.1 Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more attractive, prosperous and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, visit and to do business. We will be recognised for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our enterprise and inventiveness, particularly in the knowledge economy and in high-value markets; • The unique qualities of our environment; and • our high quality of life. <p>We will have acted confidently and taken the courageous decisions necessary to further develop a robust and resilient economy and lead the way towards development being sustainable, including dealing with climate change and creating a more inclusive society.</p> |
| 2. Spatial Strategy | <p>2.1 This retains the same locations and scales of growth identified in the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009). Most new developments will be in (i) the Strategic Growth Areas, with further developments in (ii) the Regeneration Priority Areas and (iii) Local Growth and Diversification Areas. Around half of the development will be in Aberdeen City.</p> |

| | | |
|---|------|---|
| 3. Focus of Allowances | 3.1 | Most of the allowances are within Aberdeen and corridors to Ellon, Inverurie and Stonehaven |
| 4. Economic growth | 4.1 | Employment land allocation, high-speed communication, innovation, retail and tourism, viability of town centres, regional shopping facilities, Energetica corridor, infrastructure needs protected and improved, supporting freight by rail and sea. |
| 5. Sustainable development and Climate Change | 5.1 | Reducing carbon dioxide emissions, adapting to climate change effects and limiting the use of non-renewable resources. Design and use of new development to be resource efficient having minimal environmental impacts, supply and demand management of energy, renewable energy use, upgrading grid, carbon capture and storage, tackling flooding, managing waste according to waste hierarchy and proximity principles with significant increase in waste management facilities, managing water use. |
| 6. Population Growth | 6.1 | Target of increasing the city region population to 500,000 by 2035 (an increase of 35,000 on 2011). An increase in the rate of housebuilding to 2,500 and eventually to 3,000 per year. |
| 7. Quality of the Environment | 7.1 | Maintaining and improving the region's important built, natural and cultural assets as a valuable resource for the future. Continue to use the green belt around Aberdeen to protect its character and landscape setting. Importance of accessible green networks in and around Aberdeen. |
| 8. Sustainable Mixed Communities | 8.1 | New development must be sustainable, mixed and focused on meeting the needs of the community, with high standards of urban and rural design and efficient use of land. Provision of affordable housing and meeting the housing needs of Gypsies / Travellers and the aging population. Sequential approach to retail proposals. |
| 9. Accessibility | 9.1 | Reducing the need to travel and encouraging walking, cycling and public transport. Improving access to the area and opportunities at harbours and the airport. |
| 10. Proposals | 10.1 | The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and other associated measures to provide better access and connections to other places and to allow environmentally friendly methods of transport to be provided. |
| | 10.2 | Dualling between Balmadie and Tippetty and further improvements to the A90 (north) to provide better access and connections. |
| | 10.3 | Replace the Inveramsay Bridge and longer-term dualling of the A96 between Inverurie and the border with Moray |
| | 10.4 | Improvements to the Haudagain roundabout, a third crossing of the River Don and other associated measures to deal with congestion and allow growth in and to the north of the city. |
| | 10.5 | A ring of new park-and-ride services around Aberdeen linking to the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route to improve accessibility, air quality and provide wider transport benefits. |
| | 10.6 | Road and rail improvements, including a new station at Kintore and enhanced local rail services, to |

| | |
|-------|--|
| | make environmentally friendly methods of transport more attractive – including reducing journey times to Inverness and Edinburgh / Glasgow and beyond. |
| 10.7 | Putting the Aberdeen airport masterplan into practice. |
| 10.8 | Better links between Aberdeen and the communities on the north coast of Aberdeenshire. |
| 10.9 | Initiatives by the universities, colleges and research organisations to strengthen our knowledge economy. |
| 10.10 | The 'Energetica' initiative being promoted by Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future for the Aberdeen to Peterhead strategic growth area. |
| 10.11 | Improving the port and associated facilities at Aberdeen and Peterhead to make the most of their opportunities and potential, particularly for the energy (including offshore wind) and fishing sectors. |
| 10.12 | Proposals to regenerate Aberdeen city centre and some of the city region's most disadvantaged areas. |
| 10.13 | A new community stadium – a regionally important facility which will bring economic, social and cultural benefits (two possible locations are shown on the key diagram). |
| 10.14 | The city centre masterplan, which includes proposals to make part of Union Street an area for pedestrians only. |
| 10.15 | Upgrades to the onshore electricity grid and the development of offshore transmission from Peterhead. |
| 10.16 | Upgrading of Peterhead power station and the deployment of carbon capture and storage technology and infrastructure. |
| 10.17 | A range of transport proposals to deal with the cumulative impact of new development on the transport network including bus service, priority and frequency measures; junction improvements on the A96, A944, A956, A90, Kingswells North and Parkhill; safety improvements on the access road to the A93; Parkway and Persley Bridge improvements; and a River Dee link |

3 Background Information on Sites

3.1 List of European sites

In Table 3.1 below, we have provided a list of European sites with the potential to be significantly affected by any future development in the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan area. The Strategic Development Plan is essentially a spatial strategy of how the region will develop in the next 20 to 25 years. Some of them are listed for the likely impacts of the Strategic Development Plan on them. Others are included for their in-combination effects. The criteria used for the selection of sites are the effect on the aquatic environment, effect on mobile species, their vulnerability to recreational pressure, their potential to be affected by increased development and the effects on the coast.

Table 3.1: List of European sites

| European sites | Effect on aquatic environment | Effect on mobile species | Vulnerable to recreational pressure | Increase amount of development | Could affect the coast |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Buchan Ness to Collieston Coast SAC | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 2 Buchan Ness to Collieston Coast SPA | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| 3 Garron Point SAC | | √ | √ | | √ |
| 4 Hill of Towanreef SAC | | | | | |
| 5 Red Moss of Netherley SAC | | | | | |
| 7 Mortlach Moss SAC | | √ | | √ | |
| 8 Reidside Moss SAC | | | | | |
| 9 River Dee SAC | | | | | |
| 10 Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle loch SPA | | √ | √ | | √ |
| 11 Sands of Forvie SAC | | | √ | | √ |
| 12 Turclossie Moss SAC | | | | | |
| 13 Fowlsheugh SPA | | √ | | | |
| 14 Loch of Skene SPA/RAMSAR | | √ | | | |
| 15 Loch of Strathbeg SPA/RAMSAR | | √ | | | |
| 16 Tips of Corsemaul and Tom Mor SPA | | √ | | | |
| 17 Troup, Pennan and Lions Head SPA | | √ | √ | | √ |
| 20 Moray Firth SPA | √ | | | | |
| The following European sites are outwith the SDP area: | | | | | |
| 18 Morven and Mullachdubh SAC | | | | | |
| 19 Muir of Dinnet SAC | | | | | |
| 6 Dinnet Oakwood SAC | | | | | |
| 21 Glen Tanar SAC | | | | | |

Table 3.2: Information about Sites Selected

| Site & Conservation Objectives | Conservation Objectives | Qualifying Interest | Condition of Site | Factors influencing Site | Vulnerability to changes or potential effects of PPS |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| 1. Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC (208.62 ha) designated on 17/03/2005 | To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat (i.e. vegetated sea cliffs) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts | Favourable Maintained (30/09/2000) General site characteristics include the following features: Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets (30%); Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (0.5%) Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (5%) Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland (64.5%) | Applications have been considered for developments, electricity (exc. renewable energy cases) development and water use. The way parts of the site are managed for grazing Management regime of cliff-top grasslands. Recreation, use by walkers, naturalists, climbers. | The varied vegetation would be vulnerable to changes in the management of these cliff-top grasslands. A coastal path runs along the cliff-top and is in part well used by walkers and naturalists. Parts of the site are also used by climbers. Current levels of recreational activity are compatible with maintenance of the cliff vegetation. Summary of Key Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat loss • Disturbance |
| 2. Buchan Ness to Collieston SPA (5,400.94 ha) designated on 30/03/1998 with marine extension on | To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species as a viable component of the site | Seabird assemblage, breeding Guillemot (Uria aalge), breeding Kittiwake (Rissa tridactyla), breeding | Unfavourable No change (04/07/2007) Unfavourable No change (04/07/2007) Unfavourable No change (04/07/2007) | Applications have been considered for marine dredging, onshore wind farm, offshore wind farm, renewable energy projects and other | The management of part of the site by the Scottish Wildlife Trust Longhaven Reserve ensures that there is no significant threats to the interest at present SNH is engaged in a programme of monitoring |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species • No significant disturbance of the species | <p>Fulmar (Fulmarus glacialis), breeding</p> <p>Guillemot (Uria aalge), breeding</p> <p>Seabird assemblage, breeding</p> | <p>Unfavourable declining (04/07/2007)</p> <p>Favourable Declining (04/07/2007)</p> <p>Unfavourable No change (04/07/2007)</p> <p>The low, broken cliffs show many erosion features such as stacks, arches, caves and blowholes. The varied coastal vegetation on the ledges and cliff tops includes maritime heath, grassland and brackish flushes.</p> | <p>development</p> <p>There is a recreational use of the cliffs and rock-climbing.</p> | <p>seabird populations, and is working with the local authority, and owners and occupiers, to agree a programme of path improvements and site interpretation.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat loss • Disturbance • Recreational impact • Unfavourable and declining qualifying features |
| <p>3. Garron Point SAC (15.58 ha) designated on 16/9/2008</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species (Narrow-mouthed whorl snail) or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> | <p>Narrow-mouthed whorl snail (Vertigo angustior)</p> | <p>No information on qualifying feature</p> <p>General site characteristics include the following features: Coastal sand dunes. Sand beaches. Machair (4.5%) Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets (11%)</p> | <p>Recreation use and geological interest in site particularly at Skatie Shore. Introduction of livestock to the site.</p> <p>Disturbance from burning of driftwood and disposable</p> | <p>Vulnerability of snail colonies recreational, wood burning and grazing activities. Potential site erosion from livestock activity. Vulnerability to site to marine oil pollution and long term rising sea level.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> |

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| <p>4. Hill of Towanreef SAC (1885.92 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of the species as a viable component of the site Distribution of the species within site Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species No significant disturbance of the species | | <p>Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (5.8%) Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (18.7%) Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland (60%)</p> | <p>barbecues away from the snail colonies.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat loss Disturbance Risk from fire Coastal squeeze Oil pollution Erosion Recreational impact |
| | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of the habitat on site Distribution of the habitat within site Structure and function of the habitat Processes supporting the habitat Distribution of typical species of the habitat Viability of typical species as components of the habitat No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | <p>Grasslands on soils rich in heavy metals</p> <p>Blanket bog</p> <p>Juniper on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> <p>Marsh saxifrage (Saxifraga hirculus)</p> <p>Dry heaths</p> <p>Alpine and subalpine heaths</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (29/07/2002)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (29/07/2002)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (01/08/2001)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (28/08/2000)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (17/09/2000)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (17/09/2000)</p> <p>Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (15%)</p> | <p>Past peat cutting. Extension of Muirburn onto blanket bog, resulting in loss of Sphagnum cover.</p> <p>Land privately owned.</p> <p>Recreational use by walkers and use for grouse moor and rough grazing</p> | <p>Loss of Sphagnum cover;</p> <p>One part of the site is frequently visited by walkers but this is not damaging to the site's interests</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat loss (blanket bog and dry heaths) Disturbance Potential depletion of carbon sink Recreational impact |

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| <p>5. Red Moss of Netherley (92.52 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | | <p>Degraded raised bog</p> <p>Active raised bog</p> | <p>Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (68%) Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland (17%)</p> <p>Unfavourable No change (22/10/2008)</p> <p>Unfavourable No change (29/10/2008)</p> <p>Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (80%) Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (10%) Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (10%)</p> | <p>Extensive drainage and cutting over of the bog</p> <p>Lowered water table</p> <p>Local loss of bog vegetation and encroachment of open mire by scrub.</p> <p>Damage from muirburn, grazing and prospecting for minerals (diatomite)</p> | <p>Abandonment of past activities are no longer a threat. A few major drains remain along the site's margins and in a more central part of it, and although these are no longer maintained, they are still active. An ongoing problem on parts of the site is scrub encroachment.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on hydrology • Low water table • Erosion • Habitat loss (bog) |
| <p>6. Dinnet Oakwood SAC (19.73 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat(s) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | <p>Western acidic oak woodland</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (12/07/2002)</p> | <p>Non-native plantings and invasive shrubs (Rhododendron) have been</p> | <p>Vulnerable to colonisation by non-native species There is general public access to the site but the</p> | |

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| | <p>conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | | <p>Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (100%)</p> | <p>successfully cleared since creating the reserve in 1966.</p> | <p>current low levels of use are not thought to be damaging to the woodland.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance • Habitat loss • Spreading or introduction of non-native species |
| <p>7. Mortlach Moss SAC (12.02 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat (Base-rich fens) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat | <p>Base-rich fens</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (01/09/2005)</p> <p>Site has Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (100%)</p> <p>For Alkaline fens, this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.</p> | <p>Site contains self-sown pine and other conifers. No damage to the habitat</p> | <p>Forest Enterprise (FE) work to an agreed management plan when undertaking forestry operations in the catchment. Felling Licence has been granted.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues now |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | Active raised bog | Unfavourable Recovering (3/8/2010) | Factors that influence the site include existing drains, woodland encroachment, grazing, cultivation and afforestation | Existing management agreement covering part of the site that controls afforestation, grazing and cultivation will address key issues |
| <p>8. Reidside Moss SAC (87.17 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat(s) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying habitats</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | Degraded raised bog | Unfavourable Recovering (3/8/2010) | | <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on hydrology • Disturbance |
| <p>9. River Dee SAC (2446.82 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate</p> | Atlantic salmon (Salmo salar) (10/09/2004) Otter (Lutra lutra) (10/09/2004) | Favourable Maintained (10/09/2004) Favourable Maintained (30/09/2004) | Site is affected by housing developments, water abstraction and river engineering. The | River Dee Integrated Catchment Management Plan is in place; There is guidance on best practice for river engineering works. |

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| <p>10. Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA (1016.24 ha) designated on 30/03/1998</p> | <p>contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species, including range of genetic types for salmon, as a viable component of the site • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species • No significant disturbance of the species • Distribution and viability of freshwater pearl mussel host species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting freshwater pearl mussel host species | <p>Freshwater pearl mussel (Margaritifera margaritifera) (07/08/2003)</p> | <p>Unfavourable No change (07/08/2003)</p> | <p>site is subject is recreational use</p> | <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat loss • Disturbance • Potential Recreational impact • Coastal squeeze |
| <p>10. Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch SPA (1016.24 ha) designated on 30/03/1998</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species as a viable component of the site | <p>Little tern (Sternula albifrons), breeding Sandwich tern (Sterna sandvicensis), breeding Lapwing (Vanellus</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (29/06/2008) Favourable Maintained (31/07/2008) Favourable Maintained</p> | <p>Factors that influence the site include tourism / leisure Developments, Onshore Wind, Microrenewables, Other developments</p> | <p>Burning will damage sensitive habitats and species. Tern colonies are vulnerable to out damaging activities and disturbance. Tern breeding is vulnerable to predation and the periodic overtopping of the</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species • No significant disturbance of the species | <p>vanellus), non-breeding</p> <p>Eider (Somateria mollissima), non-breeding</p> <p>Redshank (Tringa totanus), non-breeding</p> <p>Common tern (Sterna hirundo), breeding</p> <p>Pink-footed goose (Anser brachyrhynchus), non-breeding</p> <p>Waterfowl assemblage, non-breeding</p> | <p>(02/09/2007)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/01/2002)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/01/2002)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (30/06/2002)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/10/2002)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/01/1999)</p> | <p>favoured shingle beds by sand. Shooting of geese is not thought as an issue. Effects of eutrophication on the estuary and its flora and fauna. Invertebrates, which are the prey of waterfowl, are vulnerable to build up of algal mats</p> <p>Fox control measures and bye laws are thought to be helping</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance • Predation • recreational impacts • eutrophication |
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| <p>11. Sands of Forvie SAC (734.02 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | Shifting dunes | Favourable Maintained (28/09/2000) | <p>Factors that influence the site include trunk roads and other developments</p> | <p>This is highly active and mobile along the fringe but the older dunes have stabilised and largely support heathland and grassland. Very little active management is required to maintain the habitats of interest.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No serious issue |
| | | Lime-deficient dune heathland with crowberry | Favourable Maintained (28/09/2000) | | |
| | | Shifting dunes with marram | Favourable Maintained (28/09/2000) | | |
| | | Humid dune slacks | Favourable Maintained (28/09/2000) | | |
| <p>12. Turclossie Moss SAC (62.77 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation</p> | Degraded raised bog | Favourable Maintained (30/06/2001) | <p>Factors that influence the site include past cut-over bog resulting in lowered water</p> | <p>At present there are no damaging activities being carried out on the site. A hydrological study will inform the restoration</p> |
| | | Active raised bog | Favourable Maintained (30/06/2001) | | |

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| <p>13. Fowlsheugh SPA (1303.54 ha) designated on 31/08/1992</p> | <p>status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | | <p>Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (92%) Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (5%) Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (3%)</p> | <p>table. Turclossie Moss is a remnant of a much larger peatland. Soil and geology is acidic, nutrient-poor, peat</p> | <p>management of this site.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrological effects (lowered water table) • Potential diminishing carbon sink from loss of peatland |
| | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species as a viable component of the site • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species • No significant disturbance of the species | <p>Razorbill (<i>Alca torda</i>), breeding</p> <p>Kittiwake (<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>), breeding</p> <p>Guillemot (<i>Uria aalge</i>), breeding</p> <p>Fulmar (<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>), breeding</p> <p>Herring gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>), breeding</p> <p>Seabird assemblage, breeding</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (11/06/1999)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (11/06/1999)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (11/06/1999)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (18/06/1999)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (18/16/1999)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (18/06/1999)</p> | <p>Applications have been considered for off-shore Wind, and tourism / leisure Developments</p> | <p>There are no significant threats to the interest at present. The site is managed as a nature reserve by the present owners, the RSPB, who have upgraded the public footpath which runs along the cliff-top for the benefit of visitors to the colony, and provided information boards.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential tourism impacts |

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| <p>14. Loch of Skene SPA/RAMSAR (120.89 ha) designated on 01/10/1986</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species as a viable component of the site • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species • No significant disturbance of the species | <p>Greylag goose (Anser anser), non-breeding</p> | <p>99.6% (Marine) 0.04% (Coastal North-east Scotland)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (01/11/2008)</p> | <p>The site has been subject of onshore wind and housing development applications. Lock subject to sailing activities, sports fishing and wildfowling. Hypertrophication from sewerage and agriculture</p> | <p>SPA is vulnerable as hypertrophication increase algal bloom which in turn affects aquatic flora and fauna and reduces food availability to the SPA interest.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypertrophical & pollution • Potential disturbance from site activities |
| <p>15. Loch of Strathbeg SPA/RAMSAR (615.94 ha) designated on 27/11/1995</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species as a viable component of the site | <p>Sandwich tern (Sterna sandvicensis), breeding Pink-footed goose (Anser brachyrhynchus), non-breeding Waterfowl assemblage, non-breeding</p> | <p>Unfavourable Declining (31/07/2004)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/08/2001)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/08/2001)</p> | <p>Conflict between the geese which roost on the loch and the surrounding farms where they feed. Shooting from adjacent land of birds leaves the roost in</p> | <p>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is managing to reduce conflicts and vulnerabilities. For example disturbance is being regulated by RSPB's purchase of some of the shooting rights and by licensing. SNH have piloted a Loch</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species • No significant disturbance of the species | <p>Whooper swan (Cygnus cygnus), non-breeding</p> <p>Teal (Anas crecca), non-breeding</p> <p>Svalbard Barnacle goose (Branta leucopsis), non-breeding</p> <p>Greylag goose (Anser anser), non-breeding</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (31/08/2001)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/08/2001)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/08/2001)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (31/08/2001)</p> | disturbance. | <p>of Strathbeg Goose Management Scheme to alleviate the conflict between the geese farming</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance • Conflict between roosting activities and farming |
| <p>16. Tips of Corsemaul and Tom Mor SPA (83.71 ha) designated on 15/12/2000</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species as a viable component of the site • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species | <p>Common gull (Larus canus), breeding</p> | <p>Unfavourable No Change (22/05/2008)</p> | <p>Applications have been considered for off-shore Wind, and housing Developments</p> <p>The site is managed as a grouse moor and as rough grazing for sheep.</p> | <p>Common gulls are vulnerable to predation from crows and foxes as well as from rotational muirburn</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predation • Disturbance |

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| <p>17. Troup, Pennan and Lion's Heads SPA (3367.21 ha) designated on 14/03/1997</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant disturbance of the species | <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained; and</p> <p>To ensure for the qualifying species that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of the species as a viable component of the site Distribution of the species within site Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species No significant disturbance of the species | <p>Herring gull (Larus argentatus), breeding</p> <p>Razorbill (Alca torda), breeding</p> <p>Kittiwake (Rissa tridactyla), breeding</p> <p>Seabird assemblage, breeding</p> <p>Guillemot (Uria aalge), breeding</p> <p>Fulmar (Fulmarus glacialis), breeding</p> | <p>Unfavourable No change (03/07/2007)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (03/07/2007)</p> <p>Unfavourable No change (03/07/2007)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (03/07/2007)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (03/07/2007)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (03/07/2007)</p> | <p>Applications have been considered off-shore wind, on-shore wind, marine activities, electricity (exc. renewable energy cases) and other developments and water abstraction</p> | <p>There are no significant threats to the interest at present. SNH is engaged in a programme of monitoring seabird populations, and is working with the local authority, and owners and occupiers, to agree an access policy for the site.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential disturbance from access and recreation |
| <p>18. Morven and Mullachdubh SAC (916.76 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> | <p>Juniper on heaths or calcareous grasslands</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (25/01/2005)</p> <p>Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed</p> | <p>Morven, an outlying summit of the eastern Highlands, has extensive juniper scrub on the middle and lower slopes. The use of the land for summer grazing</p> | <p>No known vulnerability</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No issue | |

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| <p>19. Muir of Dinnet SAC/RAMSAR (415.81 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | | <p>vegetation. Fens (1%) Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (62%) Dry grassland. Steppes (28%) Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland (7%) Coniferous woodland (2%)</p> | <p>by sheep and cattle and by a large number of mountain hares is compatible with the site interest, as demonstrated by gradual expansion of the juniper scrub.</p> | |
| | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat | <p>Otter (Lutra lutra)</p> <p>Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface</p> <p>Clear-water lakes or lochs with aquatic vegetation and poor to moderate nutrient levels</p> <p>Dry heaths</p> <p>Degraded raised bog</p> | <p>Favourable Declining (13/07/2010)</p> <p>Unfavourable Declining (30/08/2008)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (25/06/2004)</p> <p>Favourable Declining (16/02/2001)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (30/06/2000)</p> | <p>Applications had been received for electricity (exc. renewable energy cases) and other developments.</p> | <p>The moorland is vulnerable to colonisation from adjacent woodland. Peat growth can be impeded by open ditch and drains</p> <p>Loch Davan is vulnerable to eutrophication.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential recreational impacts • Eutrophication • Colonisation by other plants |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| <p>20. Moray Firth SAC (151347.17 ha) designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitat thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitat that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of typical species of the habitat <p>To avoid deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying species or significant disturbance to the qualifying species, thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying species that the following</p> | <p>Subtidal sandbanks</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (12/08/2004)</p> | <p>Dolphin Watching Need to restore bottlenose dolphin population at a viable level</p> | <p>The species are vulnerable to disturbance, harassment, contamination, harassment, reduction of food availability, traumatic death and injury</p> <p>Accreditation scheme is used for dolphin-watching cruise boats. There are codes of conduct for recreational pleasure craft. A strategy for dumping and dredging activities is also being developed to address these very localised activities adjacent to the coastline.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance • Harassment, • Contamination • Injury • Potential poaching • Recreational impact |
| | | <p>Bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops truncatus)</p> | <p>Unfavourable Recovering (31/03/2005)</p> | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|
| | | | | <p>are established then maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the species as a viable component of the site • Distribution of the species within site • Distribution and extent of habitats supporting the species • Structure, function and supporting processes of habitats supporting the species • No significant disturbance of the species | |
| <p>21. Glen Tanar SAC/RAMSAR (4180.09 ha) Designated on 17/03/2005</p> | <p>To avoid deterioration of the qualifying habitats (listed below) thus ensuring that the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes an appropriate contribution to achieving favourable conservation status for each of the qualifying features; and To ensure for the qualifying habitats that the following are maintained in the long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of the habitat on site • Distribution of the habitat within site • Structure and function of the habitat • Processes supporting the habitat • Distribution of typical species of the habitat • Viability of typical species as components of the habitat • No significant disturbance of | <p>Caledonian forest</p> <p>Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath</p> <p>Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)</p> <p>Dry heaths</p> <p>Blanket bog</p> | <p>Favourable Maintained (08/04/2010)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (21/11/2009)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (30/09/2004)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (23/10/2003)</p> <p>Favourable Maintained (31/10/2003)</p> | <p>Site has been subject to felling activities</p> <p>Positively strict management without intervention and low-intensity silvicultural methods and education has affected the favourability of the site</p> | <p>The main issues controlled include grazing, strikes by woodland grouse and risk of accidental fire.</p> <p>Summary of Key Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance • Injury • Accidental fire |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | typical species of the habitat | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|

4 Screening

The purpose of this screening is to determine whether any part of the SDP, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects is likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites listed in Table 3.2 above. In doing so, we have identified all aspects of the plan which would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan or other plans or projects, so that they can be eliminated from further consideration. In Table 4.1, we have screened out parts of the plan on the basis of the criteria listed in Section 4.1 below. Next in Table 4.2 and Table 4.3, we have screened the aspects of the plan we could not screen out to determine the nature of their effects on the European sites. We have then considered in-combination effects in Sections 4.4-4.7. Where likely significant effects have not been ruled out by the screening exercise, we have considered some straightforward mitigation measures to eliminate risks of likely significant effects (See Section 4.5).

4.1 Screening as parts of the SDP

We have screened out aspects of the plan on the basis of the following considerations:

- general policy statements;
- inability to identify effects on any particular European site because the proposal is too general;
- projects referred to in, but not proposed by the SDP;
- parts of the SDP that are intended to protect the natural environment,
- parts of the SDP which will not in themselves lead to development or other change;
- parts of the SDP which make provision for change but which could have no conceivable effect because of the absence of a link or pathway between the plan and European sites;
- parts of the SDP which make provision for change but could have no significant effect as their effects are likely to minimal; and
- parts of a plan that could have no likely significant effect on a site, alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan, or with other plans or projects

Table 4.1 below shows those policies and proposals within the SDP which have either been screened in or out of the assessment and the criteria used.

Table 4.1: Screening in / Screening out of Contents of PPS

| | | PPS likely to have significant effects | General policy statements | Projects not generated by this PPS | Protective, enhancement and conservation policies | Does not generate development and change | Provision of change with no link or pathway to qualifying features | Provision of changed with no or minimal effects | Too general nature of PPS with no information on where, how, or when of implementation | Screen in / Screen out |
|----|--|--|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|--|------------------------|
| 1 | Vision to make Aberdeen City & Shire attractive, prosperous and sustainable | | X | | | | | | X | OUT |
| 2 | Spatial Strategy | X | | | | | | | | |
| | 2.1. Strategic Growth Areas | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2.2. Local Growth and Diversity Areas | | | | | | X | X | | OUT |
| | 2.3. Regeneration Priority Areas | | | | | | X | X | | OUT |
| 3 | Focus of allowances | X | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Economic Growth | X | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Sustainable Development and Climate Change | | | | X | | | | | OUT |
| 6 | Population Growth | X | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Quality of the Environment | | | | X | | | | | OUT |
| 8 | Sustainable Mixed Communities | X | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Accessibility | X | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | Proposals | | | | | | | | | |
| | 10.1 The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and other associated measures to provide better access and connections to other places and to allow environmentally friendly methods of transport to be provided. | | | X | | | | | | OUT |
| | 10.2 Dualling between Balmedie and Tippetry and further improvements to the A90 (north) to provide better access and connections. | | | X | | | | | | OUT |
| | 10.3 Replace the Inveramsay Bridge and longer-term dualling of the A96 between Inverurie and the border with Moray | | | X | | | | | | OUT |
| | 10.4 Improvements to the Haudagain roundabout, a third crossing of the River Don and other associated measures to deal with congestion and allow growth in and to the north of the city. | | | X | | | | | | OUT |
| | 10.5 A ring of new park-and-ride services around Aberdeen linking to the Aberdeen | | | X | | | | | | OUT |

4.2 Screening for likely significant effects of parts of the SDP on European Sites

In this section, aspects of the SDP screened in from Section 4.1 are screened to determine the nature of their effects on the European sites. Key to the abbreviations used in the screening is explained in the Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Screening for likely significant effects: Aspects of the PPS Screened in from 4.1 above

| Plan | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC | Buchan Ness to Collieston SPA | Garron Point SAC | Hill of Tawantreef SAC | Red Moss of Netherley SAC | Troup Pennan Lion's Head SPA | Fowlhugh SPA | River Dee SAC | Yhan Estuary Sands of Fovie & Meikle Loch SPA | Mortloch Moss SAC | Lock of Skene SPA | Loch of Strathbeg SPA | Sands of Fovie SAC |
|--|---|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Spatial Strategy (Strategic Growth Areas) | HL, RI | HL, RI | HL, RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL, D, RI, CC, EoH | D, RI, WQ, EoH | | | | |
| Economic Development Policy | HL, RI | HL, RI | HL, RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL, D, RI, CC, EoH | D, RI, WQ, EoH | | | | |
| Population Growth | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D |
| Sustainable Mixed Communities | HL, RI | HL, RI | HL, RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL, D, RI, CC, EoH | D, RI, WQ, EoH | | | | |
| Accessibility (including River Dee link) | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D |
| Key | HL – Habitat Loss RI – Recreational Impact CC – Coastal Squeeze WA – Water Abstraction | | | | | | EoH – Effects on Hydrology EoP – Effects on Pollution D – Disturbance WQ – Water Quality | | | | | | |

Table 4.2(cont): Screening for likely significant effects: Aspects of the PPS Screened in from 4.1 above

| | Turclossie Moss SAC | Dinnit Oakwood SAC | Mortlach Moss SAC | Tips of Corsemaul and Tom Mor SPA | Morven and Mullachdubh SAC | Muir of Dinnit SAC | Glen Tanar SAC | Reidside Moss SAC |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Policies, Strategies and Sites | | | | | | | | |
| Spatial Strategy (Strategic Growth Areas) | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Economic Development Policy | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Population Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Sustainable Mixed Communities | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Accessibility (including River Dee link) | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |

4.3 In Combination effects – combination between different parts of the SDP

This section considers the combination between elements of the plan including some aspects of the plan screened out on the basis that they were protective policies or that those aspects could have no likely significant effects. These aspects of the plan include:

1. **Spatial Strategy (Strategic Growth Areas) (SGA);**
2. Regeneration Priority Areas) (RPA)
3. Local Growth and Diversity Areas (LG&DA)
4. **Economic Growth**
5. **Population Growth**
6. **Sustainable Mixed Communities (SMC)**
7. **Accessibility**
8. Sustainable Development and Climate Change (SD& CC)
9. Quality of the Environment (QoE)

The numbers listed against parts of the plan are paired in different permutations in the table below.

Table 4.3: Possible Combination of parts of the plan

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | 2,1 | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 3,1 | 3,2 | | | | | | | |
| 4 | 4,1 | 4,2 | 4,3 | | | | | | |
| 5 | 5,1 | 5,2 | 5,3 | 5,4 | | | | | |
| 6 | 6,1 | 6,2 | 6,3 | 6,4 | 6,5 | | | | |
| 7 | 7,1 | 7,2 | 7,3 | 7,4 | 7,5 | 7,6 | | | |
| 8 | 8,1 | 8,2 | 8,3 | 8,4 | 8,5 | 8,6 | 8,7 | | |
| 9 | 9,1 | 9,2 | 9,3 | 9,4 | 9,5 | 9,6 | 9,7 | 9,8 | 9,9 |

From the table above there are 36 possible combinations between parts of the plan shown below. These 36 combinations have been used in screening the effects of the plan on the European sites considered and the result is indicated in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Screening for in-Combination Effects (Internal)

| In-combination between parts of the plan | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC | Buchan Ness to Collieston SPA | Garron Point SAC | Hill of Tawantreef SAC | Red Moss of Netherley SAC | Troup Pennan Lion's Head SPA | Fowlhough SPA | River Dee SAC | Yhan Estuary & Meikle Loch SPA | Mortloch Moss SAC | Lock of Skene SPA | Loch of Strathbeg SPA | Sands of Fovie SAC |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + RPA | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL D, RI CC, EoH | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | | No added effect from the RPA |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + LG&DA | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL D, RI CC EoH | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | | No added effect from the LG&DA |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + Econ Growth | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP EoH | | | WA, HL D, RI CC EoH | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | | |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + Pop. Growth | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | | EoP, EoH | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + SMC | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL D, RI CC, EoH | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | | |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + Accessibility | HL RI D | HL RI D | HL RI D | | EoP, EoH | RI D | RI D | RI D | RI D | | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + SD&CC | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL D, RI CC, EoH | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | | |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + QoE | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | WA, HL D, RI CC, EoH | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | | |
| RPA + LG&DA | No LSE | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| RPA + Econ Growth | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | D, RI, WQ, EoH | | | |
| RPA + Pop. Growth | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | EoP, EoH | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D |
| RPA + SMC | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | |
| RPA + Accessibility | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D |
| RPA + SD&CC | No LSE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RPA + QoE | No LSE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LG&DA + Econ Growth | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | |
| LG&DA + Pop Growth | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D |
| LG&DA + SMC | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | D, RI, WQ, EoH | | | |
| LG&DA + Accessibility | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | | | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D |
| LG&DA + SD&CC | No LSE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LG&DA + QoE | No LSE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Economic Development + Pop Growth | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | |
| Economic Development + SMC | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | |
| Economic Development + Accessibility | HL, RI, D | HL, RI, D | HL, RI, D | | EoP, EoH | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | D, RI, WQ, EoH, RI, D | RI, D | RI, D | RI, D |
| Economic Development + SD&CC | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | D, RI, WQ EoH | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------------------------------|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Economic Development + QoE | HL RI | HL RI | HL RI | | EoP, EoH | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pop Growth + SMC | HL,RI, D | HL,RI, D | HL,RI, D | RI,D | EoP, EoH | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | WA, HL D, RI CC EoH | D,RI, WQ EoH D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| Pop Growth + Accessibility - including River Dee link | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| Pop Growth + SD&CC | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| Pop Growth + QoE | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| SMC + Accessibility - including River Dee link | HL,RI, D | HL,RI, D | HL,RI, D | HL,RI, D | EoP, EoH | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | WA, HL D, RI CC EoH D, RI | D,RI, WQ,EoH | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| SMC + SD&CC | HL, RI | HL, RI | HL, RI | HL, RI | EoP, EoH | | | | | WA, HL D, RI CC EoH | D,RI, WQ EoH | | | | | | | | |
| SMC + QoE | HL,RI | HL,RI | HL,RI | HL,RI | EoP, EoH | | | | | WA, HL, D, RI, CC, EoH | D,RI, WQ,EoH | | | | | | | | |
| Accessibility - including River Dee link + SD&CC | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| Accessibility - including River Dee link + QoE | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D | RI,D |
| SD&CC + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Key | HL – Habitat Loss RI – Recreational Impact CC – Coastal Squeeze WA – Water Abstraction EoH – Effects on Hydrology EoP – Effects on Pollution D – Disturbance WQ – Water Quality | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 4.4(cont): Screening for in-Combination Effects (Internal)

| In-combination between parts of the plan | Turcossie Moss SAC | Dinnet Oakwood SAC | Mortlach Moss SAC | Tips of Corsemaul and Tom Mor SPA | Morven and Mullachdubh SAC | Muir of Dinnet SAC | Glen Tanar SAC | Reidside Moss SAC |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + RPA | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + LG&DA | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + Econ Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + Pop. Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + SMC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + Accessibility - including R Dee link | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + SD&CC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Spatial Strategy (SGA) + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| RPA + LG&DA | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| RPA + Econ Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| RPA + Pop. Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| RPA + SMC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| RPA + Accessibility - including River Dee link | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| RPA + SD&CC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| RPA + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| LG&DA + Econ Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| LG&DA + Pop Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| LG&DA + SMC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| LG&DA + Accessibility - including River Dee link | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| LG&DA + SD&CC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| LG&DA + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Economic Development + Pop Growth | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Economic Development + SMC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Economic Development + Accessibility - including River Dee link | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Economic Development + SD&CC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Economic Development + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Pop Growth + SMC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Pop Growth + Accessibility - including River Dee link | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Pop Growth + SD&CC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Pop Growth + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| SMC + Accessibility - including River Dee link | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| SMC + SD&CC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| SMC + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Accessibility - including River Dee link + SD&CC | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Accessibility - including River Dee link + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| SD&CC + QoE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE |
| Key | HL – Habitat Loss RI – Recreational Impact CC – Coastal Squeeze WA – Water Abstraction EoH – Effects on Hydrology EoP – Effects on Pollution D - Disturbance WQ – Water Quality | | | | | | | | | | | |

4.4 In Combination effects – combination between parts of the SDP

This section considers the combination between elements of the plan and other plans approved in the region and in neighbouring authorities. The other plans considered include the regional transport strategy, the Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP. The elements of the plan combined with neighbouring plans are the Spatial Strategy, Regeneration Priority Areas, Local Growth and Diversity Areas, Economic Growth, Population Growth, Sustainable Mixed Communities and Accessibility. In able 4.5 below, we show how we have carried out the in-combination effects.

Table 4.5: Screening for in-combination effects (external)

| Policies, Strategies and Sites | European sites affected | Likely Significant Effect | In- combination effects | Risk of LSE persisting? (Yes/No) |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Spatial Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Growth Areas • Local Growth and Diversity Areas • Regeneration Priority Areas | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan | Yes Water abstraction, Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP | Yes Disturbance and pollution on Dolphins |
| Economic Growth | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan | Yes Water abstraction, Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP . | Yes Disturbance and pollution on Dolphins |
| Sustainable Development and Climate Change | Positive effects on all sites | No LSE | No LSE | No |
| Population Growth | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss | Yes Recreational effect and disturbance to species | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray | Yes Disturbance and pollution on Dolphins |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| | of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan, Troup Pennan Lion's Head, Fowlsheugh, Loch of Skene, Loch of Strathberg, Sands of Forvie | and habitats | LDP as well as Angus LDP. | |
| Quality of the Environment | Positive effects on all sites | No LSE | No LSE | No |
| Sustainable Mixed Communities | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan, | Yes Water abstraction, Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP . | Yes Disturbance and pollution on Dolphins |
| Accessibility - including River Dee link | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan, Troup Pennan Lion's Head, Fowlsheugh, Loch of Skene, Loch of Strathberg, Sands of Forvie | Yes Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP . | Yes Disturbance and pollution on Dolphins |

4.5 Summary of Screening and Mitigation applied

In mitigating the effects of the plan on the sites, we have made the choice from the following alternatives as appropriate

- deleting the policy or proposal that may cause the likely significant effect;
- changing the nature or type of a potentially damaging proposals;
- reducing the scale of the potentially damaging provision, whether it is an overall level of growth across all or part of the plan area, or a single proposal of a specific scale or size;
- relocating or altering the spatial distribution of the potentially damaging provision;
- phasing or timing of a proposal so that its possible effects can be adequately managed over time;
- programming a proposal so that it is dependent on key infrastructure provision or upgrading, such as water supply or waste water treatment, being in place before it could proceed; and
- requiring buffer zones to be put in place
- requiring lower-tier plans to undertake HRAs and/or SEAs

These measures are reflected in Table 4.6 below:

Table 4.6: Summary of individual and in-combination effects and Mitigation

| Policies, Strategies and Sites | European sites affected | Likely Significant Effect individually and in combination with parts of the SDP | In-Combination effects (external) | Mitigation Measures | Risk of LSE persisting? (Yes/No) | Is Appropriate Assessment Required? (Yes/No) |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Spatial Strategy | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan | Yes Water abstraction, Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms, Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP. Regarding the Moray Firth, there are the following risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diffuse run-off pollution from agricultural practices • Excessive underwater noise causing disturbance to dolphin populations • Commercial effluent has potential to cause deterioration of dolphin populations • Sewage effluent has potential to cause deterioration of dolphin populations • Marine Litter • Activities involving nets have the potential to cause disturbance, injury and mortality. • Dredging and disposal of materials containing contaminants Offshore renewable energy developments have the potential to cause disturbance or injury. • Oil exploration has the potential to cause disturbance or deterioration of dolphin populations or their prey through oil related | Future LDPs and other strategies like the Local Housing Strategy should avoid policies or proposals that may cause damaging effects on the LSE; Future LDPs and other strategies like Local Housing Strategy should change the nature or type of a potentially damaging proposal; Future LDPs should avoid allocating sites which potentially damages sites. The delivery of future LDPs and strategies should be programmed so that they are dependent on key infrastructure provision or upgrading. Lower-tier plans and strategies should undertake HRA and EIA to ensure that adverse effects are fully mitigated Agree with relevant bodies to ensure that water abstracted will not affect qualifying features. Agree with relevant bodies to prepare a drought plan as an adaptation to future climate impacts Agree with SNH on an action plan to ensure that recreational use of sites do not affect qualifying features and habitats Future LDPs and strategies should require developments to demonstrate through appropriate marine-noise modelling, that adverse impacts on Bottlenose Dolphins and Atlantic Salmon | No | No |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|----|----|
| Economic Growth | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan | Yes Water abstraction, Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms, Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP. | Same as above | No | No |
| Sustainable Development and Climate Change | Positive effects on all sites | No LSE | No LSE | No LSE | No | No |
| Population Growth | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan, Troup Pennan Lion's Head, Fowlsheugh, Lock of Skene, Loch of Strathberg, Sands of Forvie | Yes Recreational effect and disturbance to species and habitats | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP. | Future LDPs and other strategies like Local Housing Strategy should avoid policies or proposals that may cause damaging effects on the LSE; Future LDPs and other strategies like the Local Housing Strategy should change the nature or type of a potentially damaging proposal; Future LDPs should avoid allocating sites which potentially damages sites. The delivery of future LDPs and strategies should be programmed so that they are dependent on key infrastructure provision or upgrading. Lower-tier plans and strategies should undertake HRA and EIA to ensure that adverse effects are fully mitigated | No | No |
| Quality of the Environment | Positive effects on all sites | No LSE | No LSE | No | No | No |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|----|----|
| Sustainable Mixed Communities | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan, | Yes Water abstraction, Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP. | Future LDPs and other strategies like Local Housing Strategy should avoid policies or proposals that may cause damaging effects on the LSE; Future LDPs and other strategies like Local Housing Strategy should change the nature or type of a potentially damaging proposal; Future LDPs should avoid allocating sites which potentially damages sites. The delivery of future LDPs and strategies should be programmed so that they are dependent on key infrastructure provision or upgrading. Lower-tier plans and strategies should undertake HRA and EIA to ensure that adverse effects are fully mitigated | No | No |
| Accessibility - including River Dee link | Buchan Ness to Collieston SAC/SPA, Garron Point, Red Moss of Netherley, Dee and Moray Firth, Ythan, Troup Pennan Lion's Head, Fowlsheugh, Lock of Skene, Loch of Strathberg, Sands of Forvie | Yes Habitat loss, recreational impacts, chemical change, effect on hydrology, disturbance, vibration effects on dolphins | Some minimal effects on the Regional Transport Strategy, as well as sites in the Cairngorms/Cairngorms LDP and Moray LDP as well as Angus LDP. | Future LDPs and other strategies like Local Housing Strategy should avoid policies or proposals that may cause damaging effects on the LSE; Future LDPs and other strategies like the Local Housing Strategy should change the nature or type of a potentially damaging proposal; Future LDPs should avoid allocating sites which potentially damages sites. The delivery of future LDPs and strategies should be programmed so that they are dependent on key infrastructure provision or upgrading. Lower-tier plans and strategies should undertake HRA and EIA to ensure that adverse effects are fully mitigated | No | No |

5 Conclusion

Following the screening of the SDP and the application of mitigation measures, we can conclude that this SDP would not be likely to have a significant effect on European sites listed in this assessment, either alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan or other plans or projects. No further appropriate assessment will be undertaken.

COVER NOTE

SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

PART 1

To

Sea.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Or
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Scottish Executive
Area 1 H (Bridge)
Victoria quay
Edinburgh EH

PART 2

An SEA Scoping Report is attached for the plan entitled

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

The Responsible Authority is:

Aberdeenshire Council

PART 3

**Contact
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Signature

Date

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1 Environmental Report Non Technical Summary

1.1 Purpose of this Environmental Report and key stages

We have written this environmental report (“the report”) for the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP) under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The process taken to write this report is called Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The reason for undertaking SEA is to address all the effects that a plan, programme or strategy (PPS) will have on the environment. The overall aim of the process is to protect the environment. Throughout this SEA process we have taken the views of others into account before coming to final decisions.

The key stages of this SEA are pre-screening, screening, scoping, environmental report and post-adoption statement. We do a pre-screening of a plan, as the first stage, when we show that a plan is not likely to have any effect on the environment; or even it has any effects at all, they will be minimal. After a pre-screening, we will do no further SEA. We do a screening of a plan, to replace the first stage, to find out whether we should do an SEA at all. When a plan is likely to have significant (i.e. very bad, damaging, large or long-lasting) effects on the environment, we will do an SEA. But if the effect is not significant, we will not take any further action. At the second stage, we scope a plan to set out how much information should be in an environmental report and how long we will consult with others on the report. In the environmental report, during the third stage, we show how we assess the effects of a plan on the environment; how we could address those effects through a process called mitigation, and how we will monitor any significant effects of the plan on the environment. When we address the concerns of everyone through consultations before adopting the plan, we must inform everyone about what difference the SEA process and their views have made to the final plan. And we do this through a post-adoption statement. Because of the nature of the plan, we skipped the first stage of the process and began by scoping the plan. During the third stage, we prepared an interim environmental report for the Main Issues. This report assesses the effects of the Strategic Development Plan on the environment.

1.2 The Context of the Strategy

Before this SDP was prepared, the Main Issues Report was used to engage with the public, focusing on the main strategic issues and options facing Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and for the policies that will guide development. The engagement helped us note changes we must make to the options and to the strategic development plan. This proposed Strategic Development Plan broadly shows how we have allocated land for housing and employment over 3 phases up to 2035.

To guide and help us deliver what we plan to do in the Strategic Development Plan and other related strategies like the Local Development Plans, Local Housing Strategy and the Local Transport Strategy, we have made use of high-level documents and statements such as National Planning Framework, Strategic Transport Projects Review, Regional Transport Strategy and Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future’s Economic Manifesto. We have also used 56 documents in the SEA to influence how we will influence this strategy, and these documents cover:

- framework and policies at national level
- climate and flooding

- low carbon economy and energy
- the water environment
- biodiversity (plant and animal life on the land and in the water)
- sustainable development
- transport and air quality issues
- historic environment and landscape
- housing
- design
- soil and pollution
- how we manage our waste
- equality
- ageing, exercise and health

This Environmental Report covers the key issues, outcomes, topics and processes of the SEA process listed at paragraph 1-9 of Schedule 3 of the 2005 Act.

1.3 Baseline/Evolution, Characteristics of Areas & Environmental Problems

We have identified a number of problems and issues in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. In this section, we have listed the significant environmental problems and issues that we have considered in this report. We also use this section to say how baseline information in the area looks like. These issues show the challenges we must deal with through this Plan.

- We have serious air quality problems in some areas in Aberdeen called Air Quality Management Areas. The increasing number of cars, trucks and vehicles that pass through the City worsens this. This problem is not as serious in Aberdeenshire.
- We burn a lot of fuel to heat our homes and to drive our cars. This is pumping more CO₂ into the air and causing our carbon and ecological footprints to rise.
- Future climate change will affect how much water we will have and how stable our soils will be.
- How we throw away waste can also affect our soils, water and climate. But new ways of how we manage waste has improved this.
- The area is rich in cultural heritage and has distinctive landscapes, but the houses we have built in the past has put pressure on these resources. But new housing development offers the opportunity to improve the efficiency of our homes and create landscapes.
- New buildings are putting pressure on animal and plant life (biodiversity).
- When we have good parks or open spaces, people will want to build and live around them.
- The make-up of the population is an issue that needs to be considered for future development. For example, there are a range of age groups living in the area, but because we are living longer there will be an increased proportion of older people, and there is an increase in people coming to live here from other countries.

1.4 Assessment of Effects

We have put together how the Strategic Development Plan could effect the environment in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Assessment of Effects

| SEA Issue | Plan Impact |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Air | On the whole we found that the effects of the plan on the air to be mixed (i.e. positive and negative). The effects are however not significant. Some localised air quality issues are likely in parts of Aberdeen. Where biomass is likely to be encouraged there could be problems with air quality. Because of the improvements we expect as we develop new infrastructure, the effect of the plan on air quality will also be positive. |
| Climatic factors | We found that the effects of the plan on climatic factors are mixed (i.e. positive, negative & neutral). Because of the improvements we expect through new infrastructure, the effect of the plan on climatic factors is not significant across the City and the Shire. The potential increased car and energy use in homes and work places may make the effect of the plan on climate significant in the long term. |
| Water | We think that the effects of this plan on water will be negative and significant. Although the additional amount of water abstracted should be small, some development works like infrastructure development, particularly across the Dee as well as pollution from agricultural activities can affect the general water environment. |
| Soil | Through house building and development, there will be soil loss, soil sealing, soil erosion and soil structural degradation. We think that the effects are significant. However, the availability of improved waste management technologies means that we do not expect contamination from these activities. |
| Biodiversity (flora and fauna) | The overall effects on biodiversity are mixed. If we develop 67,500 new houses in the area, we must take some greenfield sites, fragment habitat and lose species and habitats and disturb other species. The River Dee and other protected areas are the home to some protected species like otter, salmon and freshwater pearl mussel. Taking too much water can harm them. |
| Population | The overall effects of the plan on people are very positive. The scale of development proposed is significant. If implemented, many people in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire will potentially find houses to buy and rent. |
| Health | The overall effects of the plan on people's health are mixed. Positive in some cases but negative in some others. If traffic from new development makes air quality worse it may have a negative affect on human health but overall the effects are not thought to be significant. |
| Cultural Heritage | We found that the effects of the SDP to be negative although not significant on the historic environment. Design policies will |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| | make the impact small. |
| Landscape | We found that the effects of the SDP on landscape to be mixed but not significant. Development that can be seen from lots of places can have negative affects on views and scenery. |
| Material Assets | The overall effect of the plan on wealth creation through new buildings and roads is very significantly positive. |

1.5 Broad Mitigation Measures

Some of the options and projects that flow from the SDP will have to do environmental impact assessments (EIAs) as appropriate. Those options which promote new developments that are likely to have adverse affects on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites or projects should be subject to appropriate assessment. For the strategic options, policies, and sites we have assessed, we have shown how we would address their negative or positive affects in Table 1.2 below:

Table 1.2: Mitigation Measures

| SEA Issue | Mitigation Measures |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Water | We will work with public bodies to regulate the amount of water taken from the Dee. We must promote policies that develop infrastructure to service new developments and to use water efficient technologies. Future plans should provide for drainage impact assessment and SUDs. Sites likely to flood should not be allocated; they should serve as buffer strips. Lower levels plans should provide for EIAs and HRAs. Future plans should do everything to improve the ecological status of water bodies. |
| Soil | We will make sure that development avoids peat soils. We will ensure that designs should avoid pouring concrete of many surfaces and encourage landscaping. Structure planting and landscaping so be done in such a way as to avoid soil erosion and soil loss. |
| Biodiversity (flora and fauna) | We will put policies in place through lower-tier plans to make sure that more brownfield land are used before green field sites. We will ensure that land that is poor in biodiversity is developed rather than land that is rich in biodiversity so that we do not lose as many of our species and habitats. We will request that lower HRAs and EIAs are undertaken for developments that are likely to affect protected species and habitats. We will continue to talk and agree with bodies charged with managing water. |
| Climatic factors | We will seek to enhance (i.e. add value to) the positive impacts as we work with our partners. We will look to reduce car dependence and provide people with choice on how they travel. We will have a mix of houses, jobs, shops and schools close together so that these uses are more easily reached by non motorised transport. We will avoid building on land which can be flooded. We will make sure buildings need less heat and electricity. Future land allocation will not be on peat soil. |
| Material Assets | We will make sure that lower-tier plans have policies that promote quality of developments - roads, drains, houses, workplaces, schools and hospitals. We will also ensure that more materials are recycled. |
| Population | We will encourage the provision of services, jobs, houses and facilities that cater for all sectors of society, old and young. We will avoid building where there are risks to health like areas of bad air quality or smell. |

1.6 Monitoring

We will monitor the significant negative and positive affects of the plan through the monitoring plan that we have set out in the environmental report. We have stated what actions we must carry out, who must carry out each of the actions and when we must carry them out.

1.7 How to Comment on the Report

If you would like to express your views on this environmental report, please send your comments to:

David Jennings
Strategic Development Plan Manager
Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA
27-29 King Street
Aberdeen
AB24 5AA

Telephone 01224 628214

.

2. The Main Environmental Report

2.1 Introduction

As part of preparing Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP), we (Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority) have carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is a systematic method for considering the likely environmental effects of certain PPS on the environment. SEA aims to integrate environmental factors into PPS preparation and decision-making; improve PPS and enhance environmental protection; increase public participation in decision making; and facilitate openness and transparency of decision-making.

SEA is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The key SEA stages include screening, scoping, environmental report, adoption and monitoring. In screening we aim to determine whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required. In scoping, we decide on the scope and level of detail for the Environmental Report, and how long we will consult with Consultation Authorities. In the Environmental Report, we publish the environmental effects of the PPS on the environment and show we will mitigate significant adverse effects and enhance significant positive effects. Through a post-adoption statement we provide information on the adopted PPS; how the consultation processes have been taken into account; and methods for monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the PPS. We will also have to monitor significant environmental effects in such a manner that we can identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and undertake appropriate remedial action.

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to provide information on the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan; identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the PPS and its reasonable alternatives; and provide an early and effective opportunity for the Consultation Authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this Environmental Report. The SEA process for this SDP involved the preparation of a scoping report and a subsequent interim environmental report for the Main Issues Report. Following a further development of the SDP and the analysis of comments on the Main Issues Report and the Interim Environmental Report we have now prepared this Environmental Report.

The organisation of the sections of this report begins with a non-technical summary at Section 1. Section 2 covers this introduction, key facts and SEA activities to date. Next, Section 3 describes the content and the alternatives of the PPS while Section 4 discusses the issues that set the context for the strategy such as other PPS and environmental protection objectives, baseline data, the evolution of the baseline without the PPS; and environmental problems relevant to the plan. Section 5 then looks at the scope and level of details comprising alternatives, and assessment framework, cumulative effects assessment, mitigation and monitoring as well as general weaknesses of the report and difficulties we have faced. The next steps are outlined in this section, while the Appendices occupy Section 6. Maps can be found in Section 7.

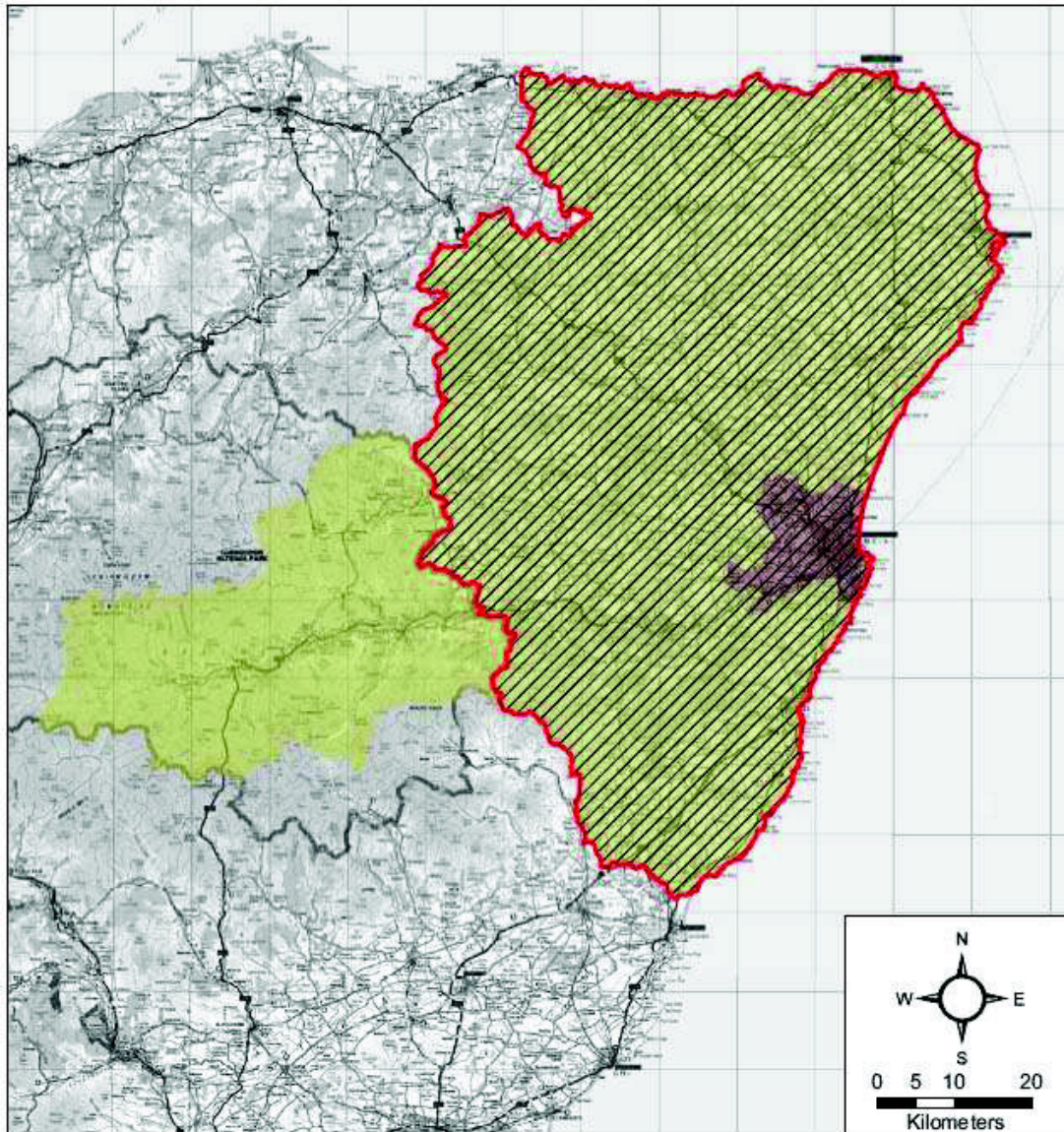
2.2 Key Facts

The key facts relating to the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan are set out in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Key Facts relating to the Strategic Development Plan

| Name of Responsible Authority | |
|---|---|
| Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Authority | |
| Title of the PPS | Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan |
| What Prompted the PPS | Planning & etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 |
| Subject | Land Use |
| Period Covered by the PPS | 2011 to 2035 |
| Frequency of Updates | Every five years |
| Area covered by the PPS | The Strategic Development Plan covers all of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire excepting that part of Aberdeenshire that forms part of the Cairngorms National Park. (As shown in Figure 2.1 below) |
| Purpose and/or objectives of the PPS | To set the framework for the development of land across the city region |
| Contact Point | David Jennings Strategic Development Plan Manager Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA 27-29 King Street Aberdeen AB24 5AA Telephone 01224 628214 |

Figure 2.1: Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Area



Source: The Scottish Government ([Circular 3/2008](#))
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2.3 SEA activities to date

Table 2.2 summarises the SEA activities to date in relation to the Environmental Report for the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

Table 2.2: SEA activities to date

| SEA Action/Activity | When carried out | Notes (e.g. comment on data availability, particular issues or any advice from the Consultation Authorities that has now been taken into account) |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| Scoping the consultation periods and the level of detail to be included in the Environmental Report for the Main Issues Report | 2 July 2010 – 3 August 2010 | All advice has been taken into account |
| Outline and objectives of the PPS | September 2010 | Discussed with partners |
| Relationship with other PPS and environmental objectives | October 2010 | Updated using suggestions from consultation authorities |
| Environmental baseline established | October 2010 – February 2011 | Revised and updated particularly for air quality and waste data |
| Environmental problems identified | March 2011 | In conjunction with the main issues report |
| Assessment of future of area without the PPS | April 2011 | As part of the baseline data collection |
| Alternatives considered | May 2011 | Listed in the main issues report |
| Environmental assessment methods established | June 2011 | Based on the suggested methodology in the Scoping Report |
| Selection of PPS alternatives to be included in the environmental assessment | July 2011 | Circumscribed by currently planning legislation on modernised planning |
| Identification of environmental problems that may persist after implementation and measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects | August 2011 | Reviewed to identify any changes since the scoping report was consulted on |
| Monitoring methods proposed | September 2011 | Broad brush and tentative to be revised when the SDP is prepared |
| Preparation and Consultation on the Interim Environmental Report for the Main Issues Report | 7 October 2011 – 5 Jan 2012 | At the same time as the MIR |
| Taking account of the consultation outcome in formation of the final environmental report | June – July 2012 | As reported in Table 5.3 |
| Agreeing on the alternatives and options to be used in the final environmental report | July 2012 | Consider reasonable alternatives taking into account previous plans and the MIR |
| Assessing the effects of the SDP, mitigating effects, firming monitoring measures and strategic flood risk assessment. | July 2012 | Based on the methodology agreed and modified for cumulative effects assessment |
| Agreement of Environmental Report and | September - | Consideration by the SDPA, |

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|
| Proposed Strategic Development Plan for publication. | October 2012 | Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council |
| Publication of Environmental Report alongside the Proposed Strategic Development Plan for consultation | November – December 2012 | 7 Week period for representations on both documents, closing on 21 December 2012. |
| | | |

3. Outline and Objectives of the Aberdeen City and Shire SDP

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme”. The purpose of this section is to explain the nature, contents, objectives and timescale of the SDP. The content of the SDP report and its options are listed in Table 3.1 – Table 3.3 below .

3.1 Vision

Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more attractive, prosperous and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, visit and to do business. We will be recognised for:

- our enterprise and inventiveness, particularly in the knowledge economy and in high-value markets
- The unique qualities of our environment; and
- our high quality of life

We will have acted confidently and taken the courageous decisions necessary to further develop a robust and resilient economy and lead the way towards development being sustainable, including dealing with climate change and creating a more inclusive society.

3.2 Spatial Strategy and Options

The spatial strategy deals with the land use allocations and the way in which these will be delivered. In determining reasonable alternatives for the spatial strategy we have to look at the reasonable strategies developed in the north east over the past years and analysed them in light of the modernised planning system. The options/alternative available therefore include the spatial strategies for (i) Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan, (ii) North East Scotland Together (dispersal model) and (iii) Modification of (i) and (ii) with emphasis on development concentrated in the City. It is envisaged that 76.4% of all the developments (51,600 houses) will take place within the Strategic Growth Areas with the remaining 23.6% of developments (15,900 houses) reserved for Local Growth and Diversification Areas/Regeneration Priority Areas. 46.7% of all the developments are in the City while 53.3% of the developments are in the Shire.

The preferred option combines development in (a) Strategic Growth Areas where about half of the developments will take place within the Huntly to Laurencekirk road and rail transport corridor stretching 66 miles and other developments along the Aberdeen to Peterhead corridor with significant development potential. It also includes development in (b) local growth and diversification areas and (c) regeneration priority areas. Table 3.1 shows these strategic options. Two other alternatives considered are listed in the table below.

Table 3.1 Spatial Strategy

| Options and Alternatives | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Preferred Option | This option retains the proposals in the last Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan. This means that most developments will be in (i) the Strategic Growth areas, with further developments in (ii) the Regeneration Priority |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| | and (iii) Local Growth and Diversification areas. Around half of the developments will be in Aberdeen City. 46.7% of all the developments are in the City while 53.3% of the developments are in the Shire. |
| Alternative 1 | This option focuses the majority of development in Aberdeen City. This option will allocate around 60-75% of all developments in the City with fewer developments in the Shire. |
| Alternative 2 | This option disperses most of the developments (60-75%) in Aberdeenshire, and allows only a smaller proportion of allocations in the City. |

3.3 Alternatives within the Preferred Option

In the preferred option, most of the allocations are within Ellon - Blackdog, Portlethen – Stonehaven and Inverurie - Pitcaple corridors. For the Alternative 1, the bulk of the allocation is proposed for the Portlethen – Stonehaven corridor. There is no allocation for Ellon – Blackdog corridor in this alternative. In alternative 2, the developments are proposed to be concentrated within Inverurie – Blackburn and Portlethen – Stonehaven corridors. Table 3.2 below shows how housing and employment land will be allocated based the preferred option. From the assessments, the preferred option has the least effect on the environment.

Table 3.2 Alternatives to the preferred Option

| Aberdeenshire | Preferred Option | Alternative 1 | Alternative 2 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Housing (SGA) | | | |
| • Huntley - Pitcaple | 1000 | 800 | 1000 |
| • Inverurie - Blackburn | 6500 | 1000 | 10000 |
| • Portlethen - Stonehaven | 5600 | 13900 | 8000 |
| • South of Dumfries - Laurencekirk | 1000 | 1200 | 1200 |
| • Peterhead - Hatton | 2200 | 2200 | 2000 |
| • Ellon - Blackdog | 3800 | 0 | 500 |
| Housing (Other areas) | | | |
| • Local Growth Area | | | |
| • Regeneration Priority Areas | | | |
| Employment land (New/Reserve) | | | |
| • Huntley – Laurencekirk | 175 | 175 | 175 |
| • Blackdog - Peterhead | 88 | 88 | 88 |
| Aberdeen City | | | |
| Housing (SGA) | | | |
| • City Area | 31000 | 31000 | 31000 |
| • Regeneration priority areas | | | |
| Employment land (New/Reserve) | | | |
| • City Area | 175 | 175 | 175 |

3.4 SDP Objectives – Preferred Options and Alternatives

In choosing options and alternatives for the SDP objectives, we have taken into account the outcome of the consultation on the Main Issues Report and the relevance of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan for the future of the City region. Moreover, the National Planning Framework, Scottish Planning Policy and other national policies circumscribe the policy choices that can be made. Besides, because of the modernised planning system, we consider that the reasonable alternatives will revolve around changes in successive plans. Thus the preferred objectives are those proposed for the SDP. These versions are an improvement upon the objectives in the last plan. Alternatives referred to as “Alternative objective 1” are those in Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan. Table 3.3 below shows how new objectives for the SDP have been modified and/or differs from previous objectives.

Table 3.3: Preferred SDP Options and Alternative Objectives

| SDP Objectives | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Preferred Option | Economic growth - This covers employment land allocation, high-speed communication, innovation, retail and tourism, viability of town centres, regional shopping facilities, Energetica area, infrastructure needs protected and improved, supporting freight by rail and sea. <i>In addition it seeks to roll-out high-speed broadband throughout the area, improve high-speed digital communications networks and support regional assets such as Aberdeen airport and the region’s main ports as means of accessing international markets and providing services to Orkney and Shetland.</i> |
| Alternative Objective 1 | Economic growth (Structure plan). It covers employment land allocation, high-speed communication, innovation, retail and tourism, viability of town centres, regional shopping facilities, Energetica area, infrastructure which needs protected and improved, supporting freight by rail and sea. |
| Alternative 2 | Sustainable Economic growth – This is the Main Issues Report objective. This is essentially taken into account in the preferred option and considers that a low-carbon economy (providing renewable energy and associated infrastructure and wider energy-related initiatives) brings economic benefits. Connectivity, transport infrastructure and digital infrastructure are at the heart of the main issue. |
| Preferred Option | Sustainable development and Climate Change – Reducing carbon dioxide emissions, adapting to climate change effects and limiting the use of non-renewable resources – design and use of new development to be resource efficient having minimal environmental impacts, supply and demand management of energy, renewable energy use, upgrading grid, tackling flooding, managing waste according to waste hierarchy and proximity principles, managing water use. <i>In addition, it encourages</i> |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| | <i>increased energy efficiency in existing and new buildings, potential use of supplementary guidance to promote CO2 reductions in buildings through sustainability labelling, CHP in larger developments, reduced emissions from power stations, offshore wind, energy from waste, solar, biomass and ground/water/air source heat pumps, upgraded electricity grid, carbon capture, more emphasis on waste hierarchy, 75% of capacity in SGAs close to Aberdeen and the use of self sufficiency and time-extension, regional concentration options.</i> |
| Alternative objective 1 | Sustainable development and Climate Change (Structure Plan). Reducing carbon dioxide emissions, adapting to climate change effects and limiting the use of non-renewable resources – design and use of new development to be resource efficient having minimal environmental impacts, supply and demand management of energy, renewable energy use, upgrading grid, tackling flooding, managing waste according to waste hierarchy and proximity principles, managing water use |
| Alternative objective 2 | No specific topic on sustainable development and climate change but separate objectives under waste management (import, export, self sufficiency); Landfill (time extension, site extension, new sites); The Policy and Spatial Framework for waste covers the existing spatial strategy, regional concentration and identifying sites); carbon neutrality in new development (status quo, building regulations, labelling); water efficiency (do nothing, labelling silver, gold); carbon capture; high voltage lines. |
| Preferred Option Alternative | Population Growth – 500 000 |
| Preferred Option Alternative | Population Growth – 480 000 |
| Preferred Option Alternative | Quality of the Environment (SDP). Improved Quality of the urban environment resulting from additional measures taken in Sustainable Development and Climate Change such as improving the efficiency of the existing housing stock |
| Preferred Option Alternative | Quality of the Environment (Structure Plan) |
| Preferred Option Alternative | Sustainable Mixed Communities (SDP). To the extent that CHPs are being encouraged in larger developments, there is the possibility that mixed communities are likely to be more sustainable. |
| Preferred Option Alternative | Sustainable Mixed Communities (Structure Plan) |
| Preferred Option Alternative | Accessibility (SDP) Strategic Transport Fund has now been introduced to enable delivery of transport projects compared with the last structure plan. <i>A range of transport proposals to deal with the cumulative impact of new development on the transport network including bus service, priority and frequency measures; junction improvements on the A96, A944, A956, A90, Kingswells North and Parkhill; safety improvements on the access road to the A93; Parkway and Persley Bridge improvements; and a River Dee link</i> |
| Alternatives | Accessibility (Structure Plan) |

4 The Context of Aberdeen City and Shire SDP

4.1 Relationship with other PPS and environmental protection objectives

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes an outline of the relationships with other relevant PPS and how environmental protection objectives have been taken into account in the PPS preparation. This section covers these issues and describes the policy context within which the PPS operates, and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the PPS. The PPS's thought to have an influence on or be influenced by the SDP are identified in Table 4.1 and in more detail in Appendix 6.5

Consistent with Article 4(3) and Article 5(2) of Directive 2001/42/EC, if a higher level PPS and environmental protection objectives have fully been translated into UK and Scottish legislation, and no new objective is derived by maintaining the first PPS or objective, then the review in this Strategic Development Plan would be confined to latest and/or most comprehensive PPS so as to avoid duplication. In addition only those PPS and environmental protection objectives which are particularly relevant to the Strategic Development Plan have been reviewed as it is not meaningful to identify every possible plan or programme. Rather, the key plans only have been identified.

Table 4.1: Other relevant PPS & environmental protective objectives of the Strategic Development Plan

| International Level |
|--|
| 1. The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC |
| 2. The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC |
| 3. European Biodiversity Framework |
| 4. The Landfill Directive 99/31/EC |
| 5. The Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC |
| 6. Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC |
| National Level |
| 1. National Planning Framework for Scotland 2 (NPF2) (2009) |
| 2. Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (2010) |
| 3. Scotland's National Transport Strategy (2006) |
| 4. Strategic Transport Projects Review (2009) |
| 5. The Government Economic Strategy (2011) |
| 6. Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy (2005) |
| 7. Natural Resource Productivity (2009) |
| 8. Scottish Climate Change Delivery Plan (2009) |
| 9. Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007) |
| 10. Towards a Low Carbon Economy for Scotland: Discussion Paper (2010) |
| 11. The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2009) |
| 12. Designing Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland (2001) |
| 13. Scottish Executive (2006) People and Place: Regeneration Policy Statement |
| 14. The Scottish Soil Framework (2009) |
| 15. Scottish Landscape Forum' (2007) Scotland's living landscapes |

| |
|---|
| 16. Firm Foundations – The Future of Housing in Scotland – A Discussion Document (2007) |
| 17. Infrastructure Investment Plan (2011) |
| 18. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) |
| 19. The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 |
| 20. Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in Your Hands. A strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland (2004) |
| 21. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) |
| 22. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2007 |
| 23. All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population (2007) |
| 24. Scottish Executive Reaching Higher – Building on the Success of Sport 21(2007) |
| 25. Lets Make Scotland More Active: a strategy for physical activity (2003) |
| 26. Equality Act 2010 |
| 27. 'Making the Links: greenspace for a more successful and sustainable Scotland' (2009) |
| 28. Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 |
| 29. Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act (WEWS) 2003 |
| 30. The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 |
| 31. River Basin Management Plan for Scotland (2009) |
| 32. Scottish Water Strategic Asset & Capacity Development Plan (2009) |
| 33. SEPA Indicative Flood Map (2006) |
| 34. SEPA Groundwater Protection Policy for Scotland v3: Environmental Policy 19 (2009) |
| 35. Action Programme for Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (Scotland) Regulations 2008 |
| 36. Our Seas – a shared resource. High Level Marine Objectives (2009) |
| 37. Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 |
| 38. Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010) |
| Regional level |
| 39. Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 |
| 40. Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy 2021 (2008) |
| 41. 'Building on Energy Delivering the Vision for 2025' - The Economic Action Plan for Aberdeen City and Shire (2008) |
| 42. North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2000) |
| 43. Forest and Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen (2005) |
| 44. River Dee Catchment Management Plan (2007) |
| 45. The North East Area Management Plan (2010) |
| 46. Tay Area Management Plan (draft) |
| Local Level |
| 47. Core Paths and Access Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aberdeen City Council b. Aberdeenshire Council |
| 48. Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012 |
| 49. Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2012 |
| 50. Aberdeen City Air Quality Action Plan 2011 |
| 51. Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2010-2025 |

The key points relevant for the Strategic Development Plan and the SEA, drawn from identifying common themes arising in the objectives of these plans and programmes are to:

- Promote sustainable development within the Strategic Development Plan area;
- Support strategies that aim to limit or reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases;
- Focus on the sustainable use of natural resources and encourage increased use of renewable energy resources and more efficient use of energy;
- Promote sustainable economic development and regeneration;
- Encourage sustainable transport, waste management, regeneration of previously developed land and rural development;
- Promote sustainable alternatives to car and reduce congestion and traffic pollution through walking, cycling and the location of facilities;
- Promote good design, safe environment, clean environment and good quality services;
- Protect and enhance biodiversity, species and habitats. Avoid adverse effects on biodiversity, including protected sites and species, but also in relation to wider ecological networks;
- Promote the sustainable management of soils. Explore scope to achieve enhancement of soil resources, including through derelict and contaminated land remediation and redevelopment;
- Maintain, protect and enhance landscape character, including character of the built environment. Protect designated and less formally recognised historic buildings, sites and landscapes;
- Promote sustainable and efficient use of water and enhance the environmental quality of water and the biodiversity it supports;
- Avoid adverse effects on the water environment or add to or create any significant flood risks and actively promote sustainable flood risk management;
- Promote strategies that do not degrade the coastal environment
- Promote mitigation and adaption to the effects of climate change;
- Set the framework for development consents for major residential, commercial, retail, employment, infrastructure and sports developments;
- Reduce social exclusion and inequalities;
- Address housing need and demand, including affordable housing.

4.2 Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment

Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the Environmental Report to include a description of “*the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without the implementation of the Plan or Programme*”, and “*the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected*”. The provision of this information allows a description of the relevant environmental context within which the Strategic Development Plan will

operate and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the PPS. The detailed analysis of the baseline data is presented in Appendix 6.6.

4.3 Environmental problems & likely evolution of the environment

Environmental problems that affect the PPS were identified through an analysis of baseline data relevant to Aberdeen City and Shire and previous SEAs. Most of the problems emerging from the analysis of baseline data and discussions are being addressed through the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan and other lower-tier PPS like core path plans and local transport strategies. The remaining strategic problems relevant to this Strategic Development Plan are those summarised in Table 4.2 below.

Without this PPS it is envisaged that the likely future changes to the environmental baseline are inevitable due to natural processes but also due to human interventions that are unconnected with the strategy. A number of the PPS listed in Table 4.1 will involve physical development which will have environmental consequences; both positive and adverse. It should be noted that the existing environmental problems described in the previous section would persist in the absence of the strategy being introduced. Potential changes to the environmental baseline without the strategy discussed under the environmental issues are listed in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Environmental Problems & likely evolution of the environment without the SDP

| Environmental Issues/Trends | | Likely evolution without the SDP | | Possible role of SDP | |
|-----------------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|--|
| Biodiversity, flora & fauna | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential disturbance to and loss of biodiversity from development. Continuing need to protect internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, and enhance where possible. Decrease and/or fragmentation of semi-natural habitats. Potential impacts on protected and non protected species from development. Potential loss of green space, green linkages and wildlife corridors to developments. Pressure on River Dee SAC from further abstraction of water and impact on species within the SAC. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential protection offered through the SDP would not occur. May result in further defragmentation of habitats, loss of biodiversity due to unplanned development in potentially sensitive and/or designated areas. Other PPS may reduce the impact of current trends and issues. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SDP could protect biodiversity through minimising the impact on protected and non protected designations and species. The spatial strategy may assist with this. The SDP can only indirectly influence the condition of designated and protected sites through partnership working and controlling land use changes around these sites. The SDP can help to achieve biodiversity action plan targets by including supportive policies. The SDP can contribute to biodiversity within development e.g. through requiring greenspace provision. | | |
| Landscape | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coalescence of communities through urban expansion/ribbon development. Loss of diversity in the landscape and its character. Capacity of landscapes to absorb development and change. Impact on undeveloped, remote and wild countryside and coasts. Erosion of rural character through suburbanisation and the intrusion of noise and light pollution. Potential of large scale windfarms to adversely impact on landscape. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenfield sites may be built on rather than brownfield sites thus affecting landscape character and not addressing the issue of regenerating brownfield sites which may have land contamination issues. There would be a greater risk of unplanned and sporadic development potentially affecting sensitive landscape characters and diluting rural character. Sporadic development would result in pockets of noise and light pollution. The absence of a design policy could affect the quality of the built environment and affect sense of place. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SDP should take landscape setting into consideration when determining the spatial strategy and setting the direction for planned development. The SDP could continue to require the use of green belt to protect the landscape setting of Aberdeen. The SDP could consider the priority given to the development of brownfield land. The SDP has the opportunity to include requirements for greenspace provision and consideration of design/sense of place. The SDP will consider how it could address the issue of windfarms in conjunction with LDP's. | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| <p>Cultural Heritage</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability of historic and cultural heritage assets to insensitive developments. • Loss of heritage resources of regional and national significance. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The absence of design policies could affect the built environment. • Negative and positive effects on the historic environment may not occur if the plan is not in place (this includes regeneration and preservation). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SDP will take into account urban form, settlement patterns and the desire to protect diversity and identity throughout the region. |
| <p>Climatic Factors</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenhouse gas emissions – related to transport and energy demands. • The need to adapt to predicted climate change and its potential impacts (e.g. extreme weather events and sea level rises). • Coastal flood risk and coastal erosion. • New development in floodplains alongside increase in flood risk arising from predicted climate change. • Continuing reliance on the car to travel to work and growing travel distances. • Potential need for strategic waste management facilities. • Opportunities to support development of renewable energy (including off-shore). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments could occur in inappropriate locations and result in increased commuting and greenhouse gas emissions. • Without a strong policy framework energy efficiency measures in new developments may not occur. • Other PPS will affect climatic factors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SDP should encourage the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures in new development. • The SDP should take account of requirements for reduction in waste to landfill and the need for alternative waste management facilities. • The SDP can consider the effects of climate change on new development, including the location of development, building design, reducing flood risk and reducing storm damage. • The SDP should consider the potential greenhouse gas impact when determining the spatial strategy. |
| <p>Air Quality</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of NO2 and PM10 increasing and resulting in poorer air quality particularly in Aberdeen City, as a result of road transport, increasing traffic flows and congestion. • Increased area emissions of air pollutants in city/ town centres caused by increased development of city/ town centres for retail, business and leisure, without adequate provision of new public transport infrastructure. • Need to encourage more sustainable forms of transport. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without the plan air quality may continue to decrease in Aberdeen City. • Other PPS will affect air quality issues such as the regional and local transport strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SDP should identify the means to reduce reliance on the car and direct development to accessible locations which can be served by modes of public transport. The implementation of the SDP should minimise car dependence, air pollution and nuisance. |

| | | | |
|------------|---|--|--|
| Water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water bodies in close proximity to main roads are at risk from pollution caused by the impacts of contaminated surface water run-off from roads. Agriculture, forestry and sewage disposal can increase levels of nutrients in the water environment Over-abstraction in an area of relatively low water productivity in the area leading to environmental impacts on river reaches, groundwater sources and lakes/ lochs. Historical soil contamination, in and around previous industrial areas in the area, is a key source of groundwater pollution. Region has fragile river systems of international importance which are sensitive to pollution and hydrological changes. There is some alteration to beds, banks and shores of rivers, lochs and coastal waters (such as straightening, culverting and modifying riparian habitats). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse effects on water quality would remain in the absence of the strategy. The pressure for water abstraction is directly linked to the level of development proposed. Construction associated with other plans would still occur and agricultural run-off would continue to cause pollution of water bodies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SDP can only indirectly influence the condition of the water resource through partnership working and controlling land use changes. The SDP should minimise water pollution and avoid disturbance to qualifying features of the River Dee. The implementation of the SDP should improve water quality and ensure sustainable use of water. |
| Population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of place making through design quality including secure by design and open space. Lack of affordable housing and variety of house types to suit various needs throughout the region. Changing demographics – ageing population. Continuing trend of losing young educated adults – “brain drain”. The population is increasing and this trend is projected to continue. This may assist in economic growth and protection of existing services but will impact on the built and natural environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population of the region would continue to grow in the 65+ age group. Without development and positive action there will be a falling demand on schools and an increase of pressure on health facilities. Continuation of current trend leading to higher house prices, lack of availability of affordable homes and increasing pressure on infrastructure, the built and natural environment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the area of which the SDP has the most direct influence as it sets the housing allocation taking population change, house type, tenure, specific needs and affordable housing into consideration. The SDP will set the framework and direction for future sustainable economic growth across the region. The SDP should take into account the needs of all sectors of society. |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|---|---|
| Human Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to greenspace and active travel opportunities • Opportunity for Core Path Plans throughout the area to link with new developments and assist in creating accessible communities with reduction in need for car travel. • Elevated levels of NO2 and PM10 have a negative impact on human health, particularly among vulnerable groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sporadic and unplanned development may limit or restrict access to greenspace and active travel opportunities. • Without the plan air quality may continue to decrease in Aberdeen City. • Other PPS will affect air quality issues such as the regional and local transport strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SDP will set the framework for the provision of open space and sporting facilities through implementation of the local development plans. • The SDP should identify means to reduce reliance on the car and direct development to accessible locations which can be served by public transport, cycling and walking. The implementation of the SDP should minimise car dependence, air pollution and nuisance. |
| Soil | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased development of land on the fringes of urban areas resulting in soil sealing/loss. • Agriculture and forestry can lead to soil erosion. Soil pollution due to use of pesticides. Potential for misuse or leakages resulting in pollution incidents. • Contaminated land and its impacts on land use and soil quality. Need to prevent future land contamination. • Loss of prime agricultural land through development. • Loss of land to permanent development. • Soil erosion is a continuing problem in Scotland and there are concerns about loss of soil organic matter and soil sealing by impermeable surfaces associated with buildings and roads. Loss of soil organic matter (which acts as a carbon store) will result in increased carbon dioxide emissions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on soil caused by development of the strategy may not occur although impacts on soils and agricultural land with proposals within other plans and human activities would remain. Other PPS such as the Local Housing Strategies are likely to affect soils. • Continuation of current trend/issues with no remediation leading to loss of ground water resource, soil resource and adverse effects on public health. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation of the SDP should avoid soil contamination. • The SDP will set the framework for ensuring that new developments contain the appropriate drainage methods such as SUDS. • The SDP can set the agenda for remediation of contaminated land thereby improving the environment and well-being. |

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| <p>Material Assets</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing need to reduce reliance on landfill sites. • Brownfield sites vacant within the region. • Continuing demand for mineral extraction. • Capacity and use of existing road and rail infrastructure. • Pressure to expand Aberdeen Airport. • Desire to protect and expand ports/harbours in the region. • Pipelines throughout the region constraining land for development. • Pressure on water infrastructure to cope with new development. • Opportunity to promote sites for renewable energy and the need to upgrade electricity transmission networks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of current trend although other PPS may have an impact on reducing reliance on landfill. • Without planned development and a strategic approach to infrastructure shortfalls may occur in the level of facilities to meet the needs of the population. • Other PPS such as regional transport strategy may have an impact on material assets. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SDP should promote the waste hierarchy and reduce reliance on landfill sites through implementation of the Waste SPG and provision of alternative waste processing and treatment facilities, including recycling. • The SDP should take existing and future infrastructure requirements (schools, roads, hospitals, community facilities etc) into consideration when consulting on the Main Issues Report and developing the spatial strategy. • The SDP should promote the development of renewable energy sources. |
|------------------------|---|--|---|

4.4 Characteristics of Areas likely to be significantly affected

The analysis of the baseline information indicates that the strategy is likely to have more significant effects on certain areas than others. This is due to the sensitivity of those areas in terms of international, national and local designation. Although other areas may not be designated, the effects on those sites from the SDP could be cumulative. In Appendix 7.1.1 – Appendix 7.4.5, we have presented information relating to the type and number of sites which are likely to be significantly affected.

5 Assessment Mitigation and Monitoring

5.1 Alternatives to which SEA was applied

We have listed alternatives as part of this strategic environmental assessment in Table 3.1, Table 3.2 and Table 3.3 above. We have considered three levels of alternatives in this plan. These alternatives include the spatial strategy, strategic options and alternatives within the SDP objectives. We have not assessed the vision as it is a repeat of the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan. Those consulted on the Main Issues Report have supported a repeat of the vision for the proposed SDP. There is no alternative vision to assess and a repeat of the past assessment will not add any value to the exercise. We have also not assessed the proposals as each project has been assessed through EIAs in other plans or projects. An assessment at this level will only duplicate other assessments.

Spatial Strategy:

- Three alternatives considered include the Preferred Option (Structure Plan Option), Alternative 1 (Concentrating developments in the City) and Alternative 2 (Concentrating developments in the Shire – dispersal alternative). The preferred option retains proposals in the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan. This option concentrates developments in the Strategic Growth areas, with further developments in the regeneration priority and local growth and diversification areas. Alternative 1 will allocate about 60-75% of all developments in the City with fewer developments in the Shire. Alternative 2 will disperse most of the developments (60-75%) in Aberdeenshire, and allow only a smaller proportion of allocations in the City.

Strategic Options

- We have considered three alternatives within the preferred spatial strategy. The Preferred Option (balanced concentration north and south of Aberdeen and Energetica), Alternative 1 (south of Aberdeen concentration) and Alternative 2 (north-west & south of Aberdeen concentration). The preferred option will have a larger concentration of developments (i.e. within Ellon - Blackdog, Portlethen – Stonehaven and Inverurie - Pitcaple corridors). Alternative 1 will have a larger proportion of the developments within Portlethen – Stonehaven corridor while Alternative 2 will have a larger proportion of the developments within Inverurie – Blackburn and Portlethen – Stonehaven corridors.

Alternatives within the SDP objectives

- The SDP is being prepared following the approval of the last structure plan. In the transition from the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan, which is in many respects consistent with the current planning legislation, to a new SDP, this plan seeks to add value to and reshape the last plan using the outcome of the consultation on Main Issues Report. The changes identified between the last structure plan and the proposed SDP have therefore shaped the choice of alternatives. For this reason, the most reasonable approach has been to pitch the last plan against the Main Issues Report and the proposed plan. The outcome of the consultation on the Main Issues Report indicates overwhelmingly that the objectives of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure

Plan are still very relevant to the proposed SDP. Thus the alternatives we have considered are the changes between the two regional plan objectives. In Table 3.2, we have set out the alternatives within the objectives of “Economic growth,” “Sustainable development and Climate Change,” “Population Growth,” “Quality of the Environment,” “Sustainable Mixed Communities” and “Accessibility.”

5.2 Framework for assessing environmental effects

We have assessed the strategic, policy and spatial strategies developed under the Strategic Development Plan against SEA topics. We have predicted whether these effects are negative, positive, uncertain, mixed or neutral effects. We have further evaluated their significance on the receptors in relation to reversibility or irreversibility of effects, risks and duration (permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term and medium-term). We have also assessed cumulative effects in a separate table. Comments from the Consultation Authorities (SNH, SEPA and The Scottish Ministers (Historic Scotland)) have been taken into account regarding the methods, scope and level of detail in this Environmental Report. In Appendix 6.1 – Appendix 6.3 below, we have shown the full assessments and our reasons.

5.3 Cumulative Effect Assessment

Paragraph 6 (e) of Schedule 3, of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that we assess the likely significant effects on the environment, including secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects. We have assessed cumulative effects of the SDP taking into account the information available to us. In doing so have considered the evolution of the environment without the plan, environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected as well as the assessment undertaken for this SDP. In this report, we have assessed direct/indirect/secondary, time crowding, time lag, space crowding, cross-boundary, nibbling and synergistic effects in gauging cumulative effects. We have presented the detailed assessment in Appendix 6.4 below.

5.4 Proposed Mitigation Measures

The SEA Directive requires that through mitigation measures, recommendations will be made to prevent, reduce or compensate for the negative effects of implementing the strategy. The proposed framework to be adopted to mitigate significant environmental effects is at Table 5.2. We have not presented information on any environmental issues for which we have not identified significant effects.

Table 5.2 Proposed Mitigation Measures

| Effects | | Mitigation Measures | | Who is responsible for mitigation? | |
|---------|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Issue | Effects | Mitigation Measures | When should mitigation be considered? | Who is responsible for mitigation? | |
| Air | <p>No significant effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development will have a negative impact on water quality and will increase water abstraction from the River Dee. Significant negative impact on water due to an increased possibility of leachate and contamination. | <p>No mitigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future LDP should have policies on flooding and drainage, SG on SUDS, Drainage Impact Assessment and on Buffer Strips to provide mitigation for the effects of development. All allocations that have been identified as having a significant impact on water quality should be required to comply with these policies. All sites substantially at risk from flooding should be removed from future LDPs. Sites included in LDPs should serve to protect areas likely to be at risk from flooding (i.e. as buffer strips) LDPs should impose conditions for EIAs before developments are allowed where appropriate. Habitats Regulation Assessment of sites that may impact on the River Dee SAC and other protected sites should be required by LDPs We will ensure that new infrastructure is put in place to avoid having to increase the amount of water we take from the River Dee to service new development” through water efficient technologies and using other measures agreed with relevant bodies Future plans should have policies to improve the ecological status of water. Consider with relevant bodies the preparation of a water shortage plan as an adaptation measure to future climate impacts | <p>N.A</p> <p>Through LDPs, SG Through the development management and EIA process.</p> <p>During the Habitats Regulation Assessment</p> | <p>N.A</p> <p>SDP and LDP Teams</p> | |
| Water | | | | | |

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|-------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Soil | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term irreversible impacts on soil quality, soil structure, soil morphology and potential for development on peat soils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future LDP should have policies to reduce waste to landfill by providing a spatial framework for new waste facilities such as: recycling, composting and thermal treatment. This could be done through Supplementary Guidance. Future LDP should have policies for developers to make use of construction waste to reduce landfill. Future allocation of land should be directed away from peat soils | Through the LDP and SG as well as through subsequent development management process including the use of EIAs and planning conditions. | SDP and LDP Teams, Development Management, Environmental Health. |
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term irreversible impacts on biodiversity through land take, habitat loss, habitat fragmentation or disturbance to species that use the site as a habitat. Long-term positive impacts through improvements to poor-quality bio-diverse land. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future LDP and SG should have policies protecting the natural environment and open space Future LDP and SG should have policies ensure that land is not allocated on sites likely to have significant effects on biodiversity. Future LDP should have management the risk of significant effects through EIAs, Masterplanning and Habitat Regulations Assessment Future nature conservation strategies and open space strategies should contain enhancement strategies that enable people to experience and enjoy the natural environment without damaging it. Future LDPs should consider the need to protect or enhance existing green networks | Through the LDP and SG as well as through subsequent development management process including the use of EIAs and planning conditions, Masterplanning and Habitats Regulation Assessment | SDP and LDP Development Management, and Masterplan teams. |
| Climatic factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term significant negative effects on climate change through increased use of fossil fuel and energy in developments as well as flooding in low-lying areas Long-term positive effects on low-carbon measures in the SDP such as sustainable development and Climate Change as well as Sustainable Mixed Communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future regional and local transport strategies should encourage modal hierarchy with the motor car at the bottom. The SDP and LDP teams should work to ensure that sustainable mixed communities and the proposals in the sustainable development and climate change section of the plan are delivered, as well as the use of higher densities to reduce travel distances. All sites substantially at risk from flooding should be removed from future LDPs. Sites included in LDPs should serve to protect areas likely to be at risk from flooding (i.e. as buffer strips) Future LDP's should aim to make the most efficient use of infrastructure to reduce the need for additional facilities and associated emissions. Future local transport strategies and masterplans should have scope for enhancing positive aspects of the SDP proposals | When developing masterplans, local housing strategy and LDP policies and SG. | LDP Team, Development Management, Building Standards, Transportation teams and NESTRANS |

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|-----------------|--|--|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future allocation of land should be directed away from peat soils • Land should not be allocated for forestry activities and windfarms unless the benefits from those activities save more carbon than the peat soil displaced. | | |
| Material Assets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term positive effects through acquisition of assets, development of new and energy efficient developments, new infrastructure, improving the efficiency of the existing housing stock, efficient waste management, and for reusing building materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enhance the positive effects of the SDP, more emphasis should be placed on ensuring quality of developments through LDPs, SGs and masterplans. | Through LDP, SG, masterplanning processes | LDP, Masterplanning Team, Development Management, |
| Population | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term positive effects for the people living in Aberdeen City and Shire through the quantity and quality of developments and employment opportunities for most people of all ages. The number of houses, the sustainable development and climate change options as well as sustainable mixed community options ensure that these positive effects are likely | To enhance the positive effects of the SDP, the SDP and LDP teams should there is adequate supply of housing and employment land at all times so that the needs of the projected population of the City and the Shire would be met. | Through housing and employment land audit. Short falls should be addressed through LDPs | SDP and LDP Team |

5.5 Monitoring

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) is required to monitor the significant environmental effects when the plan is implemented. In doing so, the SDPA is required to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage; and undertake appropriate remedial action. A monitoring report will be prepared to constantly monitor the significant effects. The framework for monitoring significant effect of the implementation of the plan is shown in the Table 5.3 below. A monitoring framework will be incorporated into the PPS.

Table 5.3 Monitoring Plan

| Effects | What sort of information is required? (Indicators) | Where will information be obtained from? | Are there gaps in the existing information and how can it be resolved? | When should the remedial action be considered? | Who is responsible for undertaking the monitoring? | How should the results be presented? | What remedial actions could be taken? |
|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Water | <p>Sufficiency of River Dee to support future allocations</p> <p>Effects of water level on qualifying features such fresh water pearl mussel</p> <p>The amount of water abstracted from the River Dee and the impacts on water quality and flow rate.</p> <p>No of water bodies (percentage of water bodies) attaining high/good/moderate ecological potential</p> | Scottish Water, SNH and SEPA | Knowing the optimum level of the survival of qualifying features are at risk | <p>When Scottish Waters, SNH and SEPA inform Aberdeen City and Shire</p> <p>When data from SNH indicate that the threshold of water level is being reached</p> <p>When the ecological potential of water bodies are becoming poor or bad</p> | SEPA, SNH, Scottish Water and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils | As part of SDP monitoring report | Review the action programme of the SDP and LDPs |

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|------------------|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Soil | Relationship between waste management/industrial activities and land contamination | Waste management licenses | No as SEPA monitors this regularly | When informed by SEPA | Contaminated Land Units, SEPA | As part of SDP monitoring report | Review the action programme of the SDP and LDPs |
| Biodiversity | Condition of qualifying features and habitats of European sites Habitat fragmentation | SNH SiteLink under site condition | No | When sites/habitats with favourable or unfavourable conditions are likely to worsen | SDP and LDP Teams, SNH | Annually | Review management plans for the sites |
| Climatic factors | Increase in car use and energy consumption in developments | Monitoring reports of regional transport strategy Annual report from DECC | The only gap is that DECC data are released in areas | When DECC data shows that CO2 emissions are consistently rising When transport monitoring report shows increases in congestion and a modal shift is not occurring, i.e. use of the car is increasing. | SDP, LDP and regional transport teams | Annually | Review regional transport strategy and carbon management programmes for the City and Shire |

5.6 An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with

The preferred options are chosen because of their conformity with the modernised planning system and the fact that their effects on the environment are slightly less than the alternatives considered. Further details are also listed in Sections 3.2 – 3.4 and assessment sections in Appendices 6.1 – 6.3

5.7 General Difficulties, Weaknesses and Limitations

One difficulty relates to how the SDP differs in format and content from the Main Issues Report. The result is that while some comments relating to data can be taken on board, because the alternatives and content of the SDP are somewhat different from those of the MIR, there is some lack of continuity. Another difficulty of this Environmental Report is that the SDP is a high level document and therefore could not go into details of every development and leaves that assessment at a high strategic level. It does not consider issues relating to implementation and as a result the full impact of the strategy will not be fully understood until lower-tier plans are developed. There is little scope for enhancements. However, where potential significant negative environmental effects have been identified, this Report has enabled consideration to be given to potential negative impacts at the low level planning stage.

5.8 Next Steps and Anticipated Milestones

Table 5.4 shows the remaining steps needed for the SEA of Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan and how these steps would be carried out and described in the final environmental report.

Table 5.4 Proposed consultation timescale and methods

| Expected time frame | Milestone | Comments |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| November 2012 to December 2012 | Consulting on the Environmental Report and Proposed SDP. | We will consult over a 7 week period. |
| January 2013 to June 2013 | Collating views on the consultation and take the appropriate action on the Environmental Report and the plan. | Engagement will take place throughout this period with the Consultation Authorities in their role as Key Agencies in the development plan process. |
| June 2013 to December 2013 | Examination of Proposed SDP | This process could take between 6 and 12 months. |
| Early 2014 | Ministers publish revised Environmental Report if modifications are proposed. | This will be done by Scottish Ministers |
| | Publishing a Post-Adoption Statement and submitting to SEA Gateway. | This will be done within 3 months of the SDP being approved by Scottish Ministers. |

In Table 5.5 below we show how we have analysed the consultation responses.

Table 5.5 Analysis of Comments on the Main Issues Report Interim Environmental Report (received January 2012)

| Consultation Authority | Issue | Concern / Comments | Action proposed |
|---------------------------|---|--|--|
| Historic Scotland | General Comments | Clear report, easy document to understand and follow and happy for considering comments on the scoping report. thorough and transparent assessment Welcome the use of lower-tier plans for mitigation | Noted |
| Historic Scotland | Non-Technical Summary | Include the term 'built heritage features' in the cultural heritage section of Table 1 consistent assessments in Appendix 1 to show that the assessment has predicted mixed impacts on other aspects of the historic environment, not just special or old buildings. | Added |
| Historic Scotland | Relationship with other PPS - Table 4.1 | Since responding at scoping stage the SHEP has been updated to take into account recent additions including the Historic Environment (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2011 ("the 2011Act"); the Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act"); the adoption of a UK Marine Policy Statement; and, Scottish Ministers' policies for the designation and management of Historic Marine Protected Areas. The updated SHEP can be found at this link HUhttp://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/shep-dec2011.pdfU | Noted |
| Historic Scotland | Baseline | Since responding at scoping stage an Inventory of Historic Battlefields has been launched by Historic Scotland. And there are currently 4 historic battlefield sites listed on the Inventory in the Aberdeen City and Shire area. Historic Battlefields should therefore be included in the baseline data. | Added |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Non-Technical Summary | We appreciate that the writing style is an attempt to help the public engage with some of the issues. However, in some cases it simplifies the issues to a degree that is unhelpful and misleading. | NTS is not only written in an attempt to help the public engage with some of the issues. It is required under Section 4.33 of PAN 1/2010. Besides it is a "NON-TECHNICAL" rather an "EXECUTIVE" summary and conforms to Plain Language standards. However, rendering do not convey the meanings well enough, we will amend them. |

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| Scottish Natural Heritage | Non-Technical Summary | We suggest that Table 1 and 2 are therefore combined, so it is easier to see how the mitigation, in practice, will address some of the potential theoretical impacts of the proposals. | Noted. |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Non-Technical Summary | Further, we suggest the following mitigation measure should be inserted into the table: "We will ensure that new infrastructure is put in place to avoid having to increase the amount of water we take from the River Dee to service new development." | Suggestion added. Through water saving technologies in the plan |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Green Networks | We are pleased to see an update in Table 4.2 addressing the possible role of the plan in contributing to biodiversity within development e.g. through greenspace provision. | Noted |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Green Networks | A future revision of this ER could include this as part of the mitigation for the possible impacts of the plan that has been identified. | Included |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Green Networks | Of course, it is important to show that green networks are not just about biodiversity, but if well planned, can provide access opportunities, cycling routes to work, safe routes to school and so on. | Noted |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Cumulative and Synergistic Effects – "Sustainable Economic Development"? | Table 5.6 is titled "Assessment of Cumulative and Synergistic effects of the plan options/alternatives". However it does not appear to assess alternatives or options, indeed it isn't clear quite what is being assessed. Is it the preferred option for each policy area in the plan? | Narrative added and the alternatives are clearly spelt out in Table 3.1- Table3.3 |
| | | The table itself does not allow the reader to make straightforward conclusions about synergistic or cumulative effects. We would recommend that there is some narrative here that draws out the most important cumulative/synergistic effects and that there is some further explanation of how the impacts were assessed. | Explanation notes added in Appendix 6.4 |
| | | Table 5.6 would appear to suggest that the 'Sustainable Economic Growth' policy approach will have major negative (-) effects on Air, Water, Soil, Biodiversity, Climatic Factors, Cultural Heritage, Landscape and Human Health. It would be reasonable to conclude that if that assessment was accurate, then there must be something seriously wrong with the policy and that it should be changed. It may be more likely though that the method used in the SEA or the way the information is presented is misleading. If that is the case, we would welcome further discussion about how a revised Environmental Report might be improved. | The policy is revised following the consultation on the MIR and the reassessed Appendix 6.1- Appendix 6.4 |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Assessment | The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the assessment must include an analysis of short, medium and long-term effects; permanent and temporary effects; positive and negative effects; and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects. Positive and negative effects must not be assumed to cancel each other out. Please reconsider this with reference to table 5.6 and any additional mitigation measures that may be required. One way of doing this would be to have a table (or series of paragraphs) which list the various types of impacts (short, medium, long etc.) and briefly state what the main impacts of the plan will be. It is not clear how Appendix 1 relates to Table 5.6. For example the assessment of the proposals in Appendix 1 would suggest that each of the 4 proposals and also NRIP would have a negative effect on Biodiversity. However, Table 5.6 suggests a positive impact under the cumulative assessment. It would be useful to explain how Table 5.6 was derived, whether or not it takes into account mitigation and if not, where we can look in the | Assessment method is revised. See Appendix 6.1- Appendix 6.4. |
| | | | Assessment has been revised to link Appendix 1 to Table 5.6 |

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| Scottish Natural Heritage | Framework for assessing environmental effects | ER to find out how these negative impacts will be mitigated. It is difficult to determine for some of the preferred MIR options if an assessment has been carried out for significance of effect on receptors in relation to reversibility or irreversibility of effects, risks, duration (permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term, medium-term). If this has been done, then some kind of straightforward summary of the important impacts would be helpful. | Assessment has been revised to explain the significance of effect. See Appendix 6.1- Appendix 6.4 |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Soil | The importance of carbon-rich soils has been raised previously in our scoping response yet it does not seem to have been addressed sufficiently in the ER. Given that significant areas of peat exist in the SDP area, we recommend that the soil section of table 5.7 should be amended to include the possible effects development may have on peat. Appropriate mitigation measures should be included to ensure impacts on this resource are minimised. | We have included peat soils in the baseline, the assessment and mitigation measures |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Monitoring | The monitoring programme does not yet set out a comprehensive set of indicators against which to measure success for many of the topics in table 5.8. We would hope to see much more tightly defined indicators in the next revision of the ER and would be keen to explore this with you. | Noted |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Monitoring | In terms of landscape change, Table 4 of Landscape Considerations in Strategic Environmental Assessment http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/environmental-assessment/sea/ provides a number of suggested indicators for landscape change for plans and programmes that may be helpful to you. | Landscape is not a significant issue in the assessment. It is therefore not monitored |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Monitoring | In terms of impacts on water, we would like to see much more specific indicators for the amount of water abstracted from the River Dee and the impacts on water quality and flow rate. In terms of impacts on Freshwater Pearl Mussel (FWPM) from too much abstraction, remedial action would be needed before levels were reached that could impact on them. | Included |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Monitoring | These indicators should be agreed with Scottish Water and SEPA as part of a working group considering impacts of the Plan on the River Dee SAC and a programme of work to explore these impacts. | On-going discussion with them |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Monitoring | One of the most important indicators in terms of the Biodiversity of the River Dee SAC is the condition of the interests of the SAC. Currently, the condition of the FWPM is 'unfavourable no change'. | See monitoring table |
| Scottish Natural Heritage | Assessment of Proposals | Carbon Capture and Storage facilities & Electricity Infrastructure Upgrades We would consider that these developments would cause more than a neutral effect on landscape. Due to the nature and scale of these facilities, existing infrastructure on site and also considering the potential for the development of a large transformer plant at Peterhead, we would ask the SDPA to reconsider the cumulative landscape impacts of all these developments on the landscapes around Peterhead. It would be helpful if more specific mitigation measures to ensure no adverse impact were stated in table 5.7. For example the MIR at para. A6.25 suggests a masterplan will be prepared for this area and an 'environmental improvement plan' is currently being prepared. Will these mitigate the landscape impacts? If so, in what way? | As SNH has rightly indicated in their comment on the HRA, these projects from part of another assessment in NPF2, p122. We have little control over them The appropriate place for meaningful |

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| | | | | | mitigation will be at EIA level |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | General Comments | | | We are pleased to note that many of the comments we made at the scoping stage have been acted upon. We consider that generally the ER provides a comprehensive assessment on the Main Issues Report (MIR) and for this you are to be commended. Some suggestions are made for improving other parts of the report | Noted |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Relationship with other Plans, Policies and Strategies (PPS) | | | <p>On the whole the list of PPSs is comprehensive, we suggest you check and ensure that everything is up to date before including in your ER.</p> <p>For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The North East Area Management Plan has now been finalised (2010), and the Water Environment (controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 have been amended and are now the Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011. In addition we bring the following PPS to your attention: Aberdeen City Air Quality Action Plan 2011 Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2010-2025 | Updated and additional PPSs added. |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Baseline information | | | As indicated at the scoping stage you should recognise in the baseline and throughout the assessment that flood risk is an existing problem (not just an issue in relation to climate change). We are pleased to note that the framework for a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been developed; when the SFRA itself has been produced we recommend that reference is made to the findings of this in the revised ER. | The SDP recognises that flood risk is an existing problem. The SFRA has been prepared as a separate document. |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | | | | We recommend that the soils section specifically includes information on peatland. The Soil Survey of Scotland 1:250 000 maps provides general information on soils. This and other information on Scottish soils is available from www.Macaulay.ac.uk . | Baseline updated and maps added |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | | | | Also in relation to the information provided on waste management in the soils section you may also wish to refer to the waste site capacity and infrastructure reports available on our website: national capacity reports - www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/site_capacity_infrastructure/national_capacity_report.s.aspx and landfill capacity reports - www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/site_capacity_infrastructure/landfill_capacity_report.aspx and municipal waste annual report www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/waste_data_reports/local_authority_annual_reports.aspx | |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | | | | Table 4.2 sets out a clear role for the SDP on water quality, and highlights the key issues which have been identified in the River Basin Management Plan for Scotland. We suggest that the reference to the SDP role as 'improve water quality and ensure sustainable use of water' should be broadened to 'improve the ecological status of water'. This reflects the range of water issues identified, and makes a clear link to Water Framework Directive requirements. | Added to the SDP |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Alternatives | | | It states in 3.1 that the alternatives have been listed in Table 4.1 however Table 4.1 relates to Other PPS and Environmental Protection objectives of the SDP. We note that the ER makes an assessment of both the preferred options and alternative options considered in the MIR, this is welcomed. | Table numbering amended |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Assessment Methodology | | | You have gone to significant effort to assess individual elements of the MIR in some detail and for this you are to be commended. We note that the assessment has been carried out against the SEA environmental topics | Noted |

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| Protection Agency | General Comments | rather than SEA Objectives. | |
| | | We are satisfied that the vision and spatial strategy have been assessed as part of the SEA for the Structure Plan, however should the MIR consultation lead to any changes to the vision or spatial strategy then these will need to be assessed in the revised ER. | MIR consultation did not change vision. So the is not assessed. |
| | | We are pleased to note that you have provided an assessment of cumulative effects an aspect of the assessment which is often overlooked. However we note there is some uncertainty over the effects with Table 5.6 identifying a number of effects as being both significantly negative and positive. Perhaps in the revised ER you could provide additional commentary as to the reasons for the assessments to improve clarity. | Comprehensive comments have been made for cumulative effects |
| | | In Table 6.3 you set out clearly how the comments made by the Consultation Authorities at the Scoping Stage has been taken into consideration in the preparation of this Interim ER, we consider this to be good practice | Noted |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Assessment of Main Issues | It would be helpful if the main body of the ER included some text to explain exactly what has been assessed in Appendix 1 and that both used the same wording, identifying preferred options and alternatives in the interests of clarity and transparency. | This has now been clarified in Tables 6.1- Table 6.4 |
| | | In general, we are satisfied with the assessments presented with the exception of the following suggestions. Waste: You have assessed Option 1 (Net Importer of Waste) as having a negative effect on water, it is not clear why you consider that an increase in waste facilities will lead to negative impacts on the water environment, as you state in the assessment, modern waste facilities are licensed and require to operate to high standards which will minimise impact on the environment (including water) as well as human health and population, this assessment should be clearly explained. | Report amended to reflect licensing regime and improvement in waste technology In General Assessment sections of Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 |
| | | Similarly you have also assessed this option as having a significantly negative impact on soils; it is not clear why this is the case. We would again highlight modern waste facilities are licensed and require to operate to high standards, this will minimise impacts on the <u>environment</u> as well as human health and population. We request that you clarify your reasoning for this assessment. | Report amended to reflect licensing regime and improvement in waste technology In General Assessment sections of Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 |
| | | Landfill: you have assessed Option 3 (Identify strategic need for additional landfill) as having a negative impact on soils and water, again we highlight modern waste facilities are licensed and require to operate to high standards, this will minimise impacts on the <u>environment</u> as well as human health and population. We request that you clarify your reasoning for this assessment. | Report amended to reflect licensing regime and improvement in waste technology In General Assessment sections of Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 |
| | | Policy and Spatial Framework: you have assessed all options as having a negative impact on soils and water, we again highlight modern waste facilities are licensed and require to operate to high standards, this will | Report amended to reflect licensing |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|--|
| | | minimise impacts on the <u>environment</u> as well as human health and population. We request that you clarify your reasoning for this assessment. | regime and improvement in waste technology In General Assessment sections of Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 |
| | | 4.2.6 Strategic Transport Interventions: You have assessed these as having positive effects on air quality. However, you state in the assessment comments section that increased infrastructure can lead to increased development and traffic and thereby increased use of fossil fuels. We agree that generally new development will result in more road traffic, which is the main contributing factor to poor air quality in the City and so there may be some (perhaps localised) negative effects on air quality as a result of the package of measures. While we acknowledge that some of the measures will lead to positive effects on air quality, clarification should be provided on those aspects which could have a negative effect and captured more effectively in the assessment (perhaps an uncertain effect). | The report has been clarified. The effect is now mixed. |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Additional Comments | We welcome the reference in the ER to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). We have provided further comment on the SFRA in our response on the MIR itself. We welcome the recognition of issues relating to pressures from abstraction from the River Dee related to development. Discussion on this issue with you, SNH and other relevant parties is ongoing. | Noted |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Mitigation | We support the strong emphasis on mitigation and the clear table showing the summary of effects, proposed mitigation measures and the stages at which they should be considered. | Noted |
| Scottish Environment Protection Agency | Monitoring | We note that you have identified that many of the policies in the LDPs act as mitigation for the negative effects from allocations; this is often overlooked. We also welcome the fact that the table outlines those allocations which were found to have significant negative effects on the environment were removed. We welcome the inclusion of a Monitoring Plan set out in Table 5.8 and the use of indicators and on the whole we support the indicators identified. | Noted |
| | | However, we would welcome a specific indicator on ecological status of water bodies, which reflects water quality and a range of additional indicators . SEPA can supply information on this indicator. | Added |
| | | As a minor point, we note that under the Water category, how the results should be presented column, it states "as and when <i>flood risk and pollution increases</i> ", as one of the aims of the PPS is to minimise flood risk and contribute towards improving water quality we would suggest that the presentation of the results should not only be triggered by negative environmental effects but perhaps on an annual basis which would allow the reporting of positive or neutral effects through the monitoring plan too | We will monitor it annually |

Appendices: Assessments, PPS Context & Baseline
Appendix 6.1: Assessment of Spatial Strategy

| SEA Topics | Comment | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|-------|------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------|--------------|---|
| | Air | Water | Soil | Biodiversity | Climatic Factors | Cultural Heritage | Landscape | Material Assets | Population | Human health | Comment |
| General impacts of each of the three impacts | . | + | + | +/- | +/- | - | +/- | ++ | ++ | +/- | <p>Nature of effects: negative, positive, uncertain, mixed, neutral, reversibility or irreversibility of effects, risks, duration (permanent, temporary, long-term, short-term and medium-term) and cumulative (direct, indirect, secondary and synergistic)</p> <p>The SDP has set the framework for the development of over 70, 000 new houses. These developments will be supported by the allocation of 255ha of employment land to meet the needs of the City and the Shire in the next 25 years. The developments proposed are phased between now between the 2035. This means that any effects on the environment are likely to persist from now in the short-term, through the medium term to the long-term. Whether the effects are temporary and reversible or permanent and irreversible depends on how they are implemented. An assessment of cumulative effects (direct, indirect, secondary and synergistic) also depends on how the plan is implemented and how the effects of the SDP interact with the effects of other plans, programmes and projects are being implemented. In general however, housing development and construction is likely to have short-term adverse effects on soil through soil erosion, desegregation, compaction and pollution during construction phases. Depending on how completed buildings are managed and operated, the plan is likely to have short to medium-term mixed effects on soil (through loss, sealing, erosion and compaction). It needs to be stated that the strict regime of waste regulation and the use of modern facilities ensures that contamination is minimised through land fill or other forms of waste management. Housing and industry or retail facilities' development could potentially have short-term negative impacts on water through a change in water table, stream flows, site water budgets, localised flooding, silt deposition and water-borne pollution. Inevitably, some localised impacts on watercourses would occur due to the development. Without the assessment and approval of Scottish Water, the scale of housing development proposed in the SDP can have a long-term effect on water abstraction, particularly during periods of unexpected prolonged drought. On the general water environment in the City and Shire, there is the potential for diffuse run-off from agricultural practices, excessive underwater noise from increased economic activity in the City Region causing disturbance to dolphin populations and commercial and sewage effluent causing deterioration of water quality. Greenfield development is likely to have long-term irreversible adverse impact on biodiversity through the loss of habitats, habitat fragmentation or disturbance to species that use the site as a habitat. The development of degraded agricultural land may be enhanced through landscaping and structure planting and become more species rich than monoculture and degraded agricultural land. The scale of development to be accommodated on sites could have a long-term negative impact on climate due to increased use of resources and increased emissions. Operation and management of existing built environment and new buildings will increase resource use. On the other hand, new buildings are more efficient than existing stock of buildings. Therefore if degraded housing stock is redeveloped through regeneration, the impact on climate is likely to have long-term positive effects. The scale of developments proposed is likely to have long-term effect on travel and air quality, particularly in towns and Aberdeen City where air quality is an issue. Development of employment land is likely to influence air quality if manufacturing industries are developed for heavy and chemical processing. Moreover, quarrying for aggregates, construction and demolition, generation, storage and disposal of waste as well as vehicular movement could contribute to release of particulate matter, point-source pollution and nuisance.</p> |
| General impacts of each of the three impacts contd. | . | + | + | +/- | +/- | - | +/- | ++ | ++ | +/- | <p>Equally, if the scale of developing biomass plants increase, it is likely to release particulate matter. For population, human health and material assets, large-scale housing development is likely to have long-term positive affects. Provision of new housing in conformity with new building standards can enhance good health and social justice for people with no access to housing now gaining access to housing. Since new homes are more energy efficient than the existing stock; they reduce</p> |

Appendix 6.2 Housing and Employment Land Allocations

| SEA Topics | | Comment | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---------|-------|------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| Policy Options | | Air | Water | Soil | Biodiversity | Climatic Factors | Cultural Heritage | Landscape | Material Assets | Population | Human health |
| General impacts of each of the three impacts | | . | . | . | +/- | ++/+- | . | +/- | ++ | ++ | +/- |
| <p>The SDP has set the framework for the development of over 70, 000 new houses. These developments will be supported by the allocation of 255ha of employment land to meet the needs of the City and the Shire in the next 25 years. The developments proposed are phased between now between the 2035. This means that any effects on the environment are likely to persist from now in the short-term, through the medium term to the long-term. Whether the effects are temporary and reversible or permanent and irreversible depends on how they are implemented. An assessment of cumulative effects (direct, indirect, secondary and synergistic) also depends on how the plan is implemented and how the effects of the SDP interact with the effects of other plans, programmes and projects are being implemented. In general however, housing development and construction is likely to have short-term adverse effects on soil through soil erosion, desegregation, compaction and pollution during construction phases. Depending on how completed buildings are managed and operated, the plan is likely to have short to medium-term mixed effects on soil (through loss, sealing, erosion and compaction). It needs to be stated that the strict regime of waste regulation and the use of modern facilities ensures that contamination is minimised through land fill or other forms of waste management. Housing and industry or retail facilities' development could potentially have short-term negative impacts on water through a change in water table, stream flows, site water budgets, localised flooding, silt deposition and water-borne pollution. Inevitably, some localised impacts on watercourses would occur due to the development. Without the assessment and approval of Scottish Water, the scale of housing development proposed in the SDP can have a long-term effect on water abstraction, particularly during periods of unexpected prolonged drought. On the general water environment in the City and Shire, there is the potential for diffuse run-off from agricultural practices, excessive underwater noise from increased economic activity in the City Region causing disturbance to dolphin populations and commercial and sewage effluent causing deterioration of water quality. Greenfield development is likely to have long-term irreversible adverse impact on biodiversity through the loss of habitats, habitat fragmentation or disturbance to species that use the site as a habitat. The development of degraded agricultural land may be enhanced through landscaping and structure planting and become more species rich than monoculture and degraded agricultural land. The scale of development to be accommodated on sites could have a long-term negative impact on climate due to increased use of resources and increased emissions. Operation and management of existing built environment and new buildings will increase resource use. On the other hand, new buildings are more efficient than existing stock of buildings. Therefore if degraded housing stock is redeveloped through regeneration, the impact on climate is likely to have long-term positive effects. The scale of developments proposed is likely to have long-term effect on travel and air quality, particularly in towns and Aberdeen City where air quality is an issue. Development of employment land is likely to influence air quality if manufacturing industries are developed for heavy and chemical processing. Moreover, quarrying for aggregates, construction and demolition, generation, storage and disposal of waste as well as vehicular movement could contribute to release of particulate matter, point-source pollution and nuisance.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| General impacts of each of the three impacts contd. | | . | . | . | ++/+- | + | + | +/- | ++ | ++ | +/- |
| <p>Equally, if the scale of developing biomass plants increase, it is likely to release particulate matter. For population, human health and material assets, large-scale housing development is likely to have long-term positive affects. Provision of new housing in conformity with new building standards can enhance good health and social justice for people with no access to housing now gaining access to housing. Since new homes are more energy efficient than the existing stock; they reduce</p> | | | | | | | | | | | |

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|--|---|---|-----|---|-----|-----|---|---|-----|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | running costs and assist in decreasing fuel poverty. However, poor air quality is likely to have long-term of effect on human health. Greenfield development is likely to have a negative impact on landscape. These effects may weaken the sense of place, the identity of existing settlements and landscape character in places. Depending on implementation strategies, housing development proposed on these sites could positively or adversely affect the built features, their context, pattern of past historic use, and associations of the historic environment, which encompasses built heritage features (ancient monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes, historic buildings, townscapes, parks, gardens and designed landscapes, as well as marine heritage) and the context or setting in which they sit, and the patterns of past use, in landscapes and within the soil (archaeology), and also in our towns, villages and streets. The planning and design of developments, which conforms, substantially to the City's existing design, layout, material and quality is likely to have long-term positive affects. But new developments that deviate from existing designs could adversely affect the setting of historic settlements in the long-term. New housing provides the scope for creation of fixed assets, the use of natural and material assets, promoting waste minimisation, recycling and composting. Development and use of the allocated employment land is also like to have similar impacts. In addition, industrial activities can additional adverse impact on climatic activities, waste discharge through manufacturing and retail activities and vehicular movements. |
| | | | | | | | | | | The general assessment applies to this option except that the following differences will occur. Because developments are more evenly spread than other options the effects are not likely to differ from the general assessment. The advantage of this option is that the effects of the developments are not likely to put pressure on any critical resources in any particular area. Pressure on air quality and health problems that will increase or be exacerbated in towns and cities will be distributed to other areas. Again encroachment on the landscape will be evenly distributed in this option and so will the effects on cultural heritage be less severe. The overall effect on biodiversity will be the same for all options. |
| | | | | | | | | | | The general assessment applies to this option except that the following differences will occur. This option is likely to put pressure on any critical resources in this particular area. Pressure on air quality and health problems will increase or be exacerbated in towns in this corridor. Again encroachment on the landscape will not be evenly distributed in this option and so will the effects on cultural heritage be more severe. Because development is likely to be concentrated within Portlethen – Stonehaven corridor, the developments are likely to have long-term effects on Red Moss of Netherly, and Garon Point. Moreover air quality issues are likely to increase Portlethen and Stonehaven. |
| | | | | | | | | | | The general assessment applies to this option except that the following differences will occur. Pressure on air quality and health problems will increase or be exacerbated in towns in this corridor. Again encroachment on the landscape will not be evenly distributed in this option and so will the effects on cultural heritage be more severe. Developments in Inverurie – Pitcaple corridor is likely to have negative effects on River Don and its tributaries. The additional effect will be on water quality. The air quality issue will be around Inverurie. |
| Preferred option: Even spread of developments in all corridors. | + | + | -/+ | - | -/+ | -/+ | + | + | +/+ | |
| Alternative 1: The bulk of the allocation is proposed for Portlethen – Stonehaven corridor with no allocation for Ellon – Blackdog corridor. | + | + | -/+ | - | -/+ | -/+ | + | + | +/+ | |
| Alternative 2: Developments are proposed to be concentrated within Inverurie – Blackburn and Portlethen – Stonehaven corridors | + | + | -/+ | - | -/+ | -/+ | + | + | +/+ | |
| | | | | | | | | | | + = positive effect ++ = significant positive effect |

Key

- = negative effect -- = significant negative effect
0 = neutral effect ? = uncertain effect

Appendix 6.3: Assessment of Policy Options

| SEA Topics | | Comment | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---------|-------|------|--------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------|---|
| Policy Options | | Air | Water | Soil | Biodiversity | Climatic Factors | Cultural Heritage | Landscape | Material Assets | Population | Human health |
| Preferred Option: (SDP Economic Growth Option) | Economic Growth | . | . | . | +/- | . | +/- | ++ | ++ | +/ | <p>This option essentially covers employment land allocation, high-speed communication, innovation, retail and tourism, viability of town centres, regional shopping facilities, protection and improvement of infrastructure, supporting freight by rail and sea. In addition it seeks to roll-out high-speed broadband throughout the area, improve high-speed digital communications networks and support regional assets such as Aberdeen airport and the region's main ports as means of accessing international markets and providing services to Orkney and Shetland. It is also reasonable to state that housing development will create an enabling environment for the economy to grow. For this reason, the assessment will be the same as the general assessment in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 above. The emphasis on digital and broadband technology is likely to promote remote working and increase that value of material asset in urban and rural areas. For this reason, this option is likely to be more sustainable than the other options in terms of climate change.</p> |
| | | . | . | . | +/- | . | +/- | ++ | ++ | +/ | <p>This option essentially covers employment land allocation, high-speed communication, innovation, retail and tourism, viability of town centres, regional shopping facilities, protection and improvement of infrastructure and supporting freight by rail and sea. It is also reasonable to state that housing development will create an enabling environment for the economy to grow in this option too. For this reason, the assessment will be the same as the general assessment in Tables 6.1 and 6.2 above. However unlike the SDP option, this option does not emphasise digital and broadband technology. It is therefore less likely to promote remote working and increase that value of material asset in urban and rural areas. For this reason, this option is likely to be less sustainable than the SDP option in terms of climate change.</p> |
| | | . | . | . | +/- | . | +/- | ++ | ++ | +/ | <p>Sustainable Economic growth is the main issues objective. This is essentially taken into account in the preferred option and considered that a low-carbon economy (providing renewable energy and associated infrastructure and wider energy-related initiatives) brings economic benefits. Connectivity, transport infrastructure and digital infrastructure are at the heart of the main issue. Since this is the option translated into the SDP, this assessment is the same as the SDP option.</p> |

| Sustainable Development and Climate Change | |
|--|---|
| Preferred Option: (SDP Sustainable Development and Climate Change Option) | This option is about reducing carbon dioxide emissions, adapting to climate change effects and limiting the use of non-renewable resources – design and use of new development to be resource efficient having minimal environmental impacts, supply and demand management of energy, renewable energy use, upgrading grid, tackling flooding, managing waste according to waste hierarchy and proximity principles, managing water use. <i>In addition it encourages increased energy efficiency in existing and new buildings, potential use of supplementary guidance to promote CO2 reductions in buildings through sustainable labelling, CHP in larger buildings, reduced emissions from power stations, offshore wind, energy from waste, solar, biomass and ground/water/air source heat pumps, upgraded electricity grid, carbon capture, more emphasis on waste hierarchy, 75% of capacity in SGAs close to Aberdeen and the use of self sufficiency and time-extension, regional concentration options.</i> Solar panels in conservation areas and wind farms are likely to have adverse effects on biodiversity (birds), landscape and cultural heritage. Major biomass plants may be an issue for air quality depending on how they are implemented. Sustainable development and efficient homes are likely to have long-term positive effects on human health. Savings from energy efficiency is likely to increase people's disposable income and thereby have a positive effect on material asset. Equally have and upgrading infrastructure is likely to have positive effects on material assets. |
| Alternative objective 1: (Structure Plan Sustainable Development and Climate Change Option) | This option seeks to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, adapt to climate change effects and limit the use of non-renewable resources – design and use of new development to be resource efficient having minimal environmental impacts, supply and demand management of energy, renewable energy use, upgrading grid, tackling flooding, managing waste according to waste hierarchy and proximity principles, managing water use. The major difference between this option and the SDP option is the lack of emphasis on improving efficiency in existing building stock. Besides, there is less emphasis on renewable energy. For this reason, this option is less likely to have positive effects on climate change, material asset and human health than the SDP option |
| Alternative objective 2: (Main issues objective not discussed under Sustainable Development and Climate Change) | No specific topic on sustainable development and climate change but separate objectives under waste management (import, export, self sufficiency); Landfill (time extension, site extension, new sites); Policy and Spatial Framework (Waste) existing spatial strategy, regional concentration, identifying sites); carbon neutrality in new development (status quo, building regulations, labelling); water efficiency (do nothing, labelling silver, gold); carbon capture; high voltage line. Since the preferred options in the Main Issues Report have been transferred into the SDP, the assessment is the same as the one for the SDP |
| Preferred Option: 500000 | Population Growth |
| Alternative 480000 | |
| | The driving force for economic growth and housing allocation is population projections. On the other hand housing provision and economic growth are drivers of population growth in their right. This projection has had an indirect impact how and where houses are built and employment land is allocated. For this reason, the assessment is likely to be the same as that of the general assessment in Tables 6.1 and 6.2) |
| | Like the SDP, the driving force for economic growth and housing allocation is population projections. On the other hand housing provision and economic growth are drivers of population growth in their right. This projection has had an indirect impact how and where houses are built and employment land is allocated. However, because the population target is lower in this option than that of the SDP, the impacts are less likely to be positive for population and material asset than for the SDP. |

| Sustainable Mixed Communities | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|-----|----|-----|-----|----|---|--|
| Preferred Option: Enhanced with CHP | -/+ | + | 0 | -/0 | ++ | -/0 | -/0 | ++ | + | This option is about sustainable Mixed Communities (SDP). This option place more emphasis on the use CHPs in larger buildings. To the extent that CHPs are being encouraged in larger buildings, there is the possibility that mixed communities are likely to be more sustainable in terms of climate change. Thus the assessment will be similar to the assessment for sustainable development and climate change. |
| Alternative: No CHP | -/+ | + | 0 | -/0 | ++ | -/0 | -/0 | ++ | + | Sustainable Mixed Communities (Structure Plan). Since this option places less emphasis on CHP's in larger development, it is slightly less positive on climate change. |
| Quality of the environment | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preferred Option: Housing Stock efficiency | -/+ | + | 0 | -/0 | ++ | -/0 | -/0 | ++ | + | This option is about the quality of the environment (SDP). It will place emphasis on improving the quality of urban environment resulting from additional measures taken in Sustainable Development and Climate Change such as improving the efficiency of the existing housing stock. Thus this assessment is the same as that of sustainable development and climate change. |
| Alternative: New build efficiency | -/+ | + | 0 | -/0 | ++ | -/0 | -/0 | ++ | + | This option is about the quality of the environment. It does not place emphasis on improving the quality of urban environment as it is in the SDP. Thus this assessment is slightly less positive for climate change than that of the SDP. |
| Accessibility | | | | | | | | | | |
| Preferred Option: STF | -/+ | ' | ' | ' | ' | ' | ' | ' | ' | This option is about accessibility. The main idea is that it introduces Strategic Transport Fund to enable delivery of transport projects compared with the last structure plan. Indirectly this option is likely to affect how, where and when infrastructure is provided. The likely effects are varied. On air, in the short term, congestion will be reduced on the roads leading to better air quality. In the long terms, the more roads are built, the more vehicles are used thereby leading to worse air quality problems. If road projects avoid water bodies and courses, they are likely to have neutral effects on water. On the other hand, roads way transverse water courses during their construction phases and pollute water. Short-term flooding from construction works may also impact negatively on water. In general however, housing development and construction is likely to have short-term adverse effects on soil through soil erosion, desegregation, compaction and pollution during construction phases. There might be issues with land take, land fragmentation and effects on qualifying features depending on where road works take place. Road works close to the Dee are likely to be included in such impacts. If this leads to more motor cars in the future, the effects are likely to be negative for climate in the long term. Cultural heritage and landscape may be adversely impacted on depending on where the projects are located. For material assets, population and human health the effects are likely to be positive in the long term except that worsening of air quality in the long term will adversely affect human health. |
| Alternative: No STF | i | o | o | o | i | o | o | o | i | The option here excludes the use of strategic transport fund. Transport projects are less likely to be delivered or delayed. The implication is that if the projects do not go ahead, the existing roads will be choked with traffic creating serious air quality and related health issues. There will also be less positive benefits in terms of material asset. The effects are likely to be neutral for other receptors. |
| Key | + = positive effect ++ = significant positive effect - = negative effect -- = significant negative effect 0 = neutral effect ? = uncertain effect | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix 6.4 Cumulative Effects of the Preferred Options

| Policy Options | Comment | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| | Strategic Options | Housing Allocation | Economic Growth | Sust. Dev & C. C. | Population Growth | Sust Mixed Comm | Qual. of the env. | Access. policy | Cumulative Effects |
| Air | . | . | . | -/+ | . | -/+ | -/+ | -/+ | -/+ |
| <p>There are areas in the City which are AQMA, so the large number of houses proposed in the City is likely to create incremental air quality hotspots in other areas of the City, through time-crowding effects, if the proposed transport improvements do not go ahead. In the longer term, improvement of transport facilities can encourage more vehicles on the roads leading to future air quality issues through time lag. Depending on the timing of the developments, there is the possibility that dust nuisance will be generated by several developments or demolition works (in regeneration priority areas) leading elevated levels of particulate matter. The same argument is relevant if many biomass development activities go on in different areas, through space crowding effects. But the present proposals seem to suggest a phasing of developments which will prevent this from happening. Most of the developments will take place away from the structure plan boundary; there is therefore no possibility of cross-boundary effects. Synergistic effects of developments on air quality are unlikely. Although there NOx continue to exceed national objectives, these are limited to AQMA in Aberdeen City and the combination of rainfall with NOx is not likely to be so significant as to cause acid rain in the whole SDP area. Again it is not considered that there will be a significant and indirect air pollution issues for the City and the Shire arising from the deposition of air pollutants on other receptors. If the proposed transport improvements do not go ahead, small additional traffic pressures will act cumulatively in the long-term to increase overall emissions of air pollutants through nibbling effects.</p> <p>Specifically, the plan consists of two conflicting ideas. First, the housing and employment land developments as well as accessibility options are likely to have negative implications for this receptor. Second, sustainable development and mixed development objectives, on the other hand, are likely to have positive benefits for this receptor in the long-run. Sustainability issues do not necessarily neutralise air quality issues, through neutralising effects since some aspects of that provision (such as biomass) has air quality issues inherent in it. Overall, the strategic, housing allocation, economic growth and population options are likely to have negative effects on air in the grand scheme of development in the City and Shire. For LDP areas, this effect might be different. Sustainable economic growth/climate change, sustainable mixed development, quality of the environment and access options have mixed effects. This is because of the positive effects in measures such as sustainable development and renewables as well as negative effects from indirect long-term traffic build up and biomass.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

Water

Water: In the future numerous water abstractions are possible under the phased SDP because of the large number of houses proposed in the City and Shire. If agreements are not reached with SNH, SEPA and Scottish Water on future solutions, the SDP is likely to create incremental burden on water resources, through **time-crowding effects**. If water technologies and new ways of harvesting water are not resolved, it is likely that water requirement for water abstraction will lead to adverse effects on River Dee as well as protected species through **time lag effects**. The reasons given for time lag effects are still relevant to **space crowding effects**. Most of the developments will take place away from the structure plan boundary; there is therefore no possibility of **cross-boundary effects**. The long-term survival of the City and the Shire depend on the health of their built and natural environment. Water resources could be over-exploited if a combination of measures is not in place to tackle it. For this reason, **synergistic effects** of developments on water are likely. The essence of this SDP is to promote sustainable economic growth while addressing climate change issues. It is therefore not envisaged that unsustainable planning will be allowed to affect our water environment causing **secondary, induced or indirect effects** on this receptor. The implementation of the SDP will not permit incremental adverse effects on the water environment to go without appropriate mitigation measures. The SDP is not emphasising agricultural development. It promotes housing developments and most development is around in towns and the City. Nutrient loading from agricultural activities will not be an outcome of this plan. It is therefore not envisaged that nibbling effects are likely.

The scale of development envisaged is so large that the SDP is likely to have long-term implication for water abstraction, water pollution, run-offs, localised flooding and morphology depending on how the plans flowing from the SDP will implement the SDP proposals. Although the SDP promotes water efficiency technologies, the scale of water efficiency technologies envisaged may not be able to compensate for the volume and quality of water resources needed to support the allocations. Overall, the strategic, housing allocation, economic growth and population options are likely to have significant negative effects on water in the grand scheme of development in the City and Shire. Access will have minor negative effects. For sustainable economic growth/climate change, sustainable mixed development, and quality of the environment options, the effect are likely to be positive because of the positive effects of measures such as water technologies.

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| <p>Soil</p> | <p>Soil: repetitive housing activities over 25 years in the City and Shire providing over 72,000 homes and supporting employment land phased over these years is likely to cause repetitive development activities affecting soil compaction, loss, sealing and erosion; some of which are likely to short-term in nature. However, given that much of the peat soils are located in local growth areas (to the south west), the effect are likely to be time-crowding effects. If conditions are not set in application for development in these local growth areas of peaty soil over time the effects are likely to be cumulative in terms of time lag. The reasons given for time lag effects are still relevant to space crowding effects. But also, large scale infrastructure needed to accommodate the housing numbers is likely to compound soil sealing effects. Most of the developments will take place away from the structure plan boundary; there is therefore no possibility of cross-boundary effects. If safeguards are not in place effects of soil sealing, compaction and loss in places will combine with loss of peat soils elsewhere to lead to potential adverse effects on the soils in Aberdeen City and Shire through synergistic effects. For this reason, synergistic effects of developments on soil are likely. Equally developments in areas without peat could lead to synergistic effect if vegetation removal, soil compaction, sealing causes surface runoffs and erosion of soils indirectly affecting the aquatic ecosystems. It might lead pollution through sediment loadings particularly near water bodies and coastal towns. Incremental sealing, erosion, compaction through continuous development activities in the next 25 years could cause nibbling effects unless safeguards are place. From our assessment, the scale of development envisaged is so large scale that the SDP is likely to have a long-term implication for soil in terms soil loss, soil sealing, soil structural degradation and compaction and perhaps potentials for contamination if more industrial developments take place. Overall, the strategic, housing allocation, economic growth and population options are likely to have significant adverse effects on soil in the grand scheme of development in the City and Shire. Access option is likely to have minor negative effects. Effects of other parts of the SDP are neutral</p> | <p>++ +/- 0 0 0 +/- 0 +/- +/- +/- +/-</p> |
| <p>Biodiversity</p> | <p>Biodiversity: the proposed housing number is large scale over 25 years; this is likely to affect biodiversity through land take, habitat fragmentation, disturbance to species, and habitat loss through time-crowding effects since the developments are phased to continue over all that period. There is also the possibility that there will be long delays for the land taken for development to affect other uses of land say for agricultural purposes. Positively, any poor bio-diverse land could enriched in biodiversity through future improvements through time lag. Large scale developments taking place in the land which was otherwise undeveloped could face recreational pressure from people and thereby causing disturbance to protected species. This is a space crowding effect. Most of the developments will take place away from the structure plan boundary; there is therefore no possibility of cross-boundary effects. While adverse synergistic effects of developments on biodiversity are likely, the combined effects of improving biodiversity through urban landscape, structure planting and improving the quality of poor biodiverse land can have positive synergistic effects. While increased recreational activity will arise from tourism promotion, development of houses in the natural environment will indirectly increase the prospects of recreational activity likely to cause disturbance to protected species if safeguards are not in place. Piece meal allocations in the local growth areas could compound over time to have a nibbling effect on biodiversity. The scale of development envisaged is so large that the SDP is likely to have long-term implication for biodiversity in terms land take, habitat fragmentation, disturbance to species through increased recreational use and habitat loss. On the plus side, the possibility that species-and-habitat-poor bio-diverse land (such as agricultural land) can be enhanced through development makes it possible to have some positive effects. The scoring reflects our reasoning.</p> | <p>++ +/- 0/- 0/- +/- 0/- +/- +/- +/- +/-</p> |

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| <p>Climatic Factors</p> | <p>+/ -</p> <p>+/ -</p> <p>+/ -</p> <p>++</p> <p>+/-</p> <p>++</p> <p>++</p> <p>0/-</p> <p>.</p> <p>-/++</p> | <p>Climate: Already the footprint of Aberdeen City and Shire is among the highest in Scotland through high consumption of fossil fuel from travel and domestic consumption of energy, particularly for the housing stock. Without reversing this trend, the housing numbers proposed in the SDP over the next 25 years is likely to have negative time-crowding effects. Given that much of the peat soils in Aberdeen City and Shire are located towards the south-west of the region and will be affected by developments in local growth areas, any development in and around peat soil are likely to have long-term effect on climate change. If longer term, improvement of transport facilities encourages more vehicles on the roads, this will lead to future consumption of more fossil fuels and thereby adversely affecting climate through time lag. Similarly, there is a time lag between development on peat soils and the change in climate. High density and mixed developments reduces the need to travel long distances. On the other hand if people's travel habit between the City and the Shire remain unchanged fuel consumption through travel will persist. Thus in terms of space crowding, the effects are likely to be mixed. Given developments in the local growth areas are more measured, these aspects of the SDP are not likely to have significant space crowding effects. Most of the developments will take place away from the structure plan boundary; but the effects of climate change transcend regional and national boundaries and for this matter some cross-boundary effects are possible. The effects of the plan from different perspectives are likely to have positive synergistic effects. For example, the efficiency of the existing housing stock, efficiency standards for new housing and mixed development are cases in point. On the other hand energy consumption through increased travel and potential effects on peat soils are likely to have adverse synergistic effects. Indirectly housing development will induce more energy consumption. And the combined effects of energy use in new houses and the existing housing stock (no matter how efficient they are) can accumulate to large impacts for climate. The fact that although a large proportion of house building takes place in the strategic growth areas, allowance is given for some developments in local growth areas. The combined effects of housing development in all these areas can be nibbling in effect. Specifically, the plan consists of two conflicting ideas. First, the housing and employment land developments as well as accessibility options are likely to have negative implications for this receptor. Second, sustainable development and mixed development objectives, on the other hand, are likely to have positive benefits for this receptor in the long-run. Sustainability issues do not necessarily neutralise climate change issues, through neutralising effects since some aspects of that provision (such as biomass) has air quality issues inherent in it. Overall, the strategic, housing allocation, economic growth and population options are likely to have negative effects on air in the grand scheme of development in the City and Shire. For LDP areas, this effect might be different. Sustainable economic growth/climate change, sustainable mixed development, quality of the environment and access options have mixed effects. This is because of the positive effects in measures such as sustainable development and renewables as well as negative effects from indirect long-term traffic build up and biomass. The scoring reflects our reasoning</p> |
| <p>Cultural Heritage</p> | <p>.</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p> <p>0/-</p> <p>.</p> <p>0/-</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p> <p>.</p> | <p>The developments are proposed along the transport corridors and around towns and Aberdeen City. Since historic remains are more likely to be concentrated in built environment than the natural environment, it is possible that some negative effects on the historic environment are likely. Although large scale housing will take place in the region, the protection for built features and the fact the fewer developments will take place outside the settlements means that the SDP is unlikely to have significantly negative effect on this receptor through time-crowding, time lag, space crowding effects, synergistic and nibbling effects. The effects of the SDP in relation to context, pattern of past historic use and associations of the historic environment, and the context or setting in which they sit, and the patterns of past use, in landscapes and within the soil (archaeology), and also in our towns, villages and streets are likely to be negative.</p> |

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| Landscape | +/- | +/- | 0/- | 0/- | +/- | 0/- | +/- | +/- | +/- | +/- | +/- |
| Material Assets | | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ |
| Population | | ++ | 0 | 0 | ++ | 0 | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ | ++ |
| <p>Landscape: Repetitive housing activities over 25 years in the City and Shire providing over 72,000 homes and supporting employment land phased over these years is likely to cause repetitive development activities affecting land form, land use and land cover, water; forests, woodlands and trees; agriculture; relationship between land form and land use; buildings and structures in the landscape; urban landscape/settlement pattern; linear and/or point features, openness, scale, colour, texture, visual diversity, line, pattern, movement, solitude, naturalness, historical and/or cultural associations. On the other hand new forms of land cover could be created through the developments. Because of these potential improvements to the landscape; the effects in terms of time-crowding are mixed. The phasing of the developments over the next 25 years is likely to be cumulative in terms of time lag for how the landscape is shaped in the future. The reasons given for time lag effects are still relevant to space crowding effects. But also, large scale infrastructure needed to accommodate the housing numbers is likely to affect land form, land use and land cover of the City and the Shire. Most of the developments will take place away from the structure plan boundary; there is therefore no possibility of cross-boundary effects. If safeguards are not in place effects of loss of landscape features will lead to potential adverse effects for Aberdeen City and Shire's landscape in terms of synergistic effects. Continuous development activities in the next 25 years could cause nibbling effects unless safeguards are place. The developments in the SDP are proposed along the transport corridors and around towns and Aberdeen City. It is therefore possible that some negative effects on the landscape are possible in areas where development will take place. On the plus side, the possibility that areas of poor landscape quality can be enhanced through development and structure planting makes it possible to have some positive effects. The assessment reflects our reasoning.</p> | <p>Repetitive housing activities over 25 years in the City and Shire providing over 72,000 homes and supporting employment land phased over these years is likely to cause repetitive development activities affecting the acquisition of new assets and improvement of the existing infrastructure. New housing, employment land, infrastructure and sustainable mixed communities provide the scope for creation of fixed assets. The use of natural and material assets, promoting waste minimisation, recycling and composting is encouraged. Development and use of the allocated employment land is also likely to have similar impacts. In that sense it is not envisaged that there will be any adverse effects accumulating through time-crowding, time lag, space crowding effects, synergistic and nibbling effects. On the other hand the SDP is likely to have significant positive effects overall.</p> | <p>Repetitive housing activities over 25 years in the City and Shire providing over 72,000 homes and supporting employment land phased over these years is likely to cause repetitive development activities affecting acquisition of new assets by most people living in Aberdeen City and Shire. New housing, employment land, infrastructure and sustainable mixed communities in the size proposed in the SDP are likely to meet the needs of many people and enhance their quality of life. In that sense it is not envisaged that there will be any adverse effects accumulating through time-crowding, time lag, and space crowding effects, synergistic and nibbling effects. The SDP is likely to have significant positive effects overall.</p> | | | | | | | | | |

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| <p>Human health</p> | <p>+/-</p> | <p>+/-</p> | <p>+</p> | <p>+/-</p> | <p>+</p> | <p>+</p> | <p>+/-</p> | <p>+/-</p> | <p>+/-</p> | <p>Human Health. This in part is related to air quality issues. As already mentioned under air quality, there are air quality issues in parts of Aberdeen City and much less in other towns of Aberdeenshire. The effects of large scale housing and the use of biomass has been assessed to have cumulative effect through time-crowding, time lag, space crowding effects, synergistic and nibbling effects. Since respiratory disease are related to the quality of the air breathed, there is a potential for adverse or beneficial human health effects related to how air quality improves or deteriorates. However, the number and quality of development proposed, energy efficiency measures in the existing and new housing stock as well as the air quality measures ensured through accessibility and green networks are likely to be significantly positive for the health and wellbeing of the people of Aberdeen City and Shire. In the long term, negative effects of traffic and biomass are likely to have adverse effects on people living around polluted areas. For this reason the cumulative effects on air is mixed overall. There is the potential of some mixed effects arising from the SDP including exposure to high noise levels and transport-induced vibration; reducing health inequalities and improving access to health facilities. If safeguards are not in place there is a risk of road accidents; (particularly in deprived areas) and accidents on public transport and pavements. Cumulatively if older run-down areas are regenerated and the streets are lighted the SDP will likely reduce crime and/or fear of crime as well as address employment issues related to people with low incomes. Besides the elements of the plan such as sustainable mixed communities are likely to provide accessibility of goods, opportunities and services to all, particularly those in disadvantaged communities. These positive effects will accumulate through time and space. Besides if people living in Aberdeen City and Shire are encouraged to make use of the green networks through vigorous recreational activities, as well as walking and cycling opportunities, health issues such as obesity, high blood pressure and other cardiovascular diseases will be reduced.</p> |
| <p>Key</p> | <p>+ = positive effect ++ = significant positive effect - = negative effect -- = significant negative effect 0 = neutral effect ? = uncertain effect</p> <p>Direct (SDP → Impact A) Indirect (SDP → Impact A → Impact B) Induced (SDP → other PPS → Impact A) Additive (Impact A + Impact B = Impact A+B) Neutralising (Impact A + Impact B < Impact A+B) Synergistic (Impact A + Impact B > Impact A+B)</p> | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix 6.5: Links to other PPS & Environmental Protection Objectives

| Name of PPS / Environmental protection objective | | Main requirements of the PPS | | Relationship with PPS |
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| INTERNATIONAL | | | | |
| Nature Conservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC European Biodiversity Framework | Protection of habitats and species. Protection of wild birds and their habitats. Promotes the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. | Plan should protect identified habitats and species. Strategies and policies should not hinder protection, management and control of species and should support the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. | | |
| Waste <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Landfill Directive 99/31/EC The Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC | Sets framework for waste management. Consideration of the whole life cycle of landfilled waste Includes targets to reach by 2020. Aims to prevent or reduce the pollution potential and negative effects on the environment | Plan should consider necessary infrastructure requirements in consistency with the PPS. This includes the possible identification of suitable locations for large-scale waste management facilities whilst safeguarding the natural and built environment. | | |
| Water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC | Safeguards the sustainable use of water systems; Supports the status of aquatic ecosystems and environments; Addresses groundwater pollution; flooding and droughts; river basin management planning. | The Strategic Development Plan should consider sustainable use of water and mitigate the effects of floods and droughts. | | |
| NATIONAL | | | | |
| Overarching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Planning Framework for Scotland 2 (NPF2) (2009) Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (2010) | Guides Scotland's development to 2030, Sets out strategic development priorities to support the Scottish Government's central purpose of sustainable economic growth. Sets out the main purpose and tasks for land use planning, development planning and control for Scotland. | The Plan must take account of NPF2, its key aims and the 3 National Developments identified within the SDP area. Underpins the development and implementation of the SDP. | | |
| Cross Sectoral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scotland's National Transport Strategy (2006) Strategic Transport Projects Review (2009) The Government Economic Strategy (2007) Choosing Our Future: Scotland's | Sets out a long term vision for transport. Identifies reduction of emissions, improved quality, accessibility and affordability Sets out recommendations for land-based strategic transport interventions in Scotland's national transport network from 2012. Identifies strategic priorities critical to achieving sustainable economic growth. Sets out a vision and commitment to build a more sustainable | The SDP should seek to integrate with the aims of the strategies. Implementing the SDP should reduce the need to use private transport and assist in the reduction of emissions. It should support sustainable economic growth whilst meeting the differing needs of a diverse population. It should aim to conserve Scotland's biodiversity whilst reducing resource depletion and encouraging responsible | | |

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| <p>Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Resource Productivity (2009) | <p>Scotland. Sets out a vision for the future direction of agriculture in Scotland in a way which is sustainable but delivers the maximum economic and public benefit.</p> | <p>use of our natural resources. SDP should take into account the need to reduce impact on, and adapt to, climate change. The SDP should consider the impact on Scottish agriculture when considering its strategy or development proposals.</p> |
| <p>Air & Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Climate Change Delivery Plan (2009) Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007) Towards a Low Carbon Economy for Scotland: Discussion Paper (2010) | <p>Sets out high level measures required to meet Scotland's statutory climate change targets, to 2020 and in the long term. Provides a clear, long-term vision for improving air quality in the UK in line with the Environment Act (1995) setting out associated air quality objectives and policy options. Sets out the Scottish Government's plans to move towards a low carbon economy in Scotland.</p> | <p>SDP should include measures to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases considering methods of adaptation, diversification and mitigation. This may include policies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote sustainable alternatives to car and reduce congestion traffic pollution; and encourage sustainable development and land use. <p>Implementation of the SDP should not result in a deterioration of air quality. The SDP must contribute to the promotion of development which helps to reduce Scotland's carbon footprint and help meet carbon saving targets for Scotland.</p> |
| <p>Cultural Heritage & Built Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2009) Designing Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland (2001) Scottish Executive (2006) People and Place: Regeneration Policy Statement | <p>Provides a framework for more detailed strategic policies and operational policies in managing the historic environment. Sets out the overarching policy on design in order to make successful places. Sets out a forward-looking strategic framework and priorities for regeneration in Scotland encouraging proactive and integrated approaches.</p> | <p>The Plan should promote the management of the historic environment in a sustainable way which avoids adverse impacts as a result of new development. The plan should set out concisely the local authorities priorities in relation to design, leaving the detail to be provided in guidance documents. The plan should take account of changing regeneration priorities and provide support where possible.</p> |
| <p>Landscape & Soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Scottish Soil Framework (2009) | <p>The main aim of the Framework is to promote the sustainable management and protection of soils consistent with the economic, social and environmental needs of Scotland. A key aspect is the protection of soil as an asset – for the future of the Scottish economy, as well as a contribution to challenges set by climate change.</p> | <p>The SDP should promote the sustainable management of soils.</p> |
| <p>Material Assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firm Foundations – The Future of Housing in Scotland – A Discussion Document (2007) Building a Better Scotland Infrastructure Investment Plan: Investing in the Future of Scotland (2005) | <p>Sets out the Scottish Governments vision for the future of housing in Scotland:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increased supply of housing across all tenures, all of which is delivered on the basis of higher environmental and design standards; More choice of housing that those on lower incomes can afford; Housing developments that contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities; and Social housing that provides better value for public expenditure. | <p>The SDP will set the housing requirement for the region over a 20 year period. The spatial strategy will provide a statement of proposals as to the development and land use of land in the area considering housing numbers, types, tenure and promotion of sustainability. The SDP should consider necessary infrastructure requirements in order to achieve sustainable economic growth in the region.</p> |

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| | <p>Sets out the Scottish Governments intentions to improve Scotland's infrastructure. The objectives for this Infrastructure Investment Plan are to improve the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • efficiency of how services are being delivered; • standard of our infrastructure, such as our transport network and school building estate; • business environment, promoting research and development and enabling employment and training opportunities for Scotland's workforce; • co-ordination of our infrastructure investment by geographical area and between portfolios in order to secure extra value from our existing investment and infrastructure programmes; and • co-ordination with the private sector and secure a mixed economy and mixed tenure of investment. | |
| <p>Nature Conservation & Biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) • The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 • Scotland's Biodiversity: It's in Your Hands. A strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland (2004) • The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) • The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2007 • Scottish Landscape Forum' (2007) • Scotland's living landscapes <p>Population & Human Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population (2007) • Scottish Executive <i>Reaching Higher – Building on the Success of Sport 21(2007)</i> • Lets Make Scotland More Active: A strategy for physical activity (2003) • Equality Act 2010 | <p>Gives protection to wildlife and countryside from disturbance, injury intentional destruction or sale.</p> <p>Duties are placed on public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity and sets out measures to protect and enhance the biological and geological natural heritage of Scotland.</p> <p>Protects individual sites and promotes conservation on a broader scale.</p> <p>Aims to halt loss and reverse decline of species and habitats.</p> <p>Specific measures set out how to</p> <p>Includes measures for designated sites, habitats and species.</p> <p>Promotes good management of landscapes.</p> | <p>The Strategic Development Plan should avoid disturbance to wildlife and the countryside through the implementation of the plan.</p> <p>The Strategic Development Plan should restore, maintain, conserve, promote and protect biodiversity, habitats and species.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lets Make Scotland More Active: A strategy for physical activity (2003) • Equality Act 2010 | <p>Provides a strategic approach which considers how best to respond to and plan for a Scotland with an ageing population.</p> <p>Sets out the long-term aims and objectives for sport and plans for its delivery and evaluation.</p> <p>Aims to increase and maintain the proportion of physically active people in Scotland setting out targets to 2022.</p> <p>Sets a framework which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.</p> <p>Sets out the key actions that are needed to ensure that greenspace delivers for people, communities and places across the whole of</p> | <p>The SDP should consider the needs of an ageing population into its strategic actions.</p> <p>The SDP should increase opportunities for provision of physical activities infrastructure. The plan will consider the needs of the society in the region.</p> <p>The SDP should take account of the actions required to deliver quality greenspace to shape better places and increase quality of life for those working and living in the SDP area.</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Making the Links: greenspace for a more successful and sustainable Scotland' (2009) | <p>urban Scotland.</p> | |
| <p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2011 • Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act (WEWS) 2003 • The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 • River Basin Management Plan for Scotland (2009) • Scottish Water Strategic Asset & Capacity Development Plan (2009) • SEPA Indicative Flood Map (2006) • SEPA Groundwater Protection Policy for Scotland v3: Environmental Policy 19 (2009) • Action Programme for Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (Scotland) Regulations 2008 • Our Seas – a shared resource. High Level Marine Objectives (2009) • Marine (Scotland) Act 2010 | <p>Protects the water environment that integrates the control of pollution, abstractions, dams and engineering activities in the water environment.</p> <p>Ensures that all human activity that can have a harmful impact on water is controlled.</p> <p>Creates a framework in which organisations involve in flood risk managed can coordinate actions to delivery sustainable and modern approaches to flood risk management.</p> <p>Details the strategy for River Basin Management Planning in Scotland.</p> <p>Provides a description of Scottish Waters processes and systems for calculating capacity available, at the 1981 waste water treatment works (WWTW) and 294 water treatment works (WTW) serving Scotland.</p> <p>Provides an estimate at the national scale of areas at risk from river and coastal flooding (areas with a 0.5% (1 in 200) or greater probability of being flooded in any given year) and is to be used as a strategic flood management tool.</p> <p>Aims to provide a sustainable future for Scotland's groundwater resources by protecting legitimate uses of groundwater.</p> <p>Establishes revised action programmes for nitrate vulnerable zones which aim to reduce water pollution caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and prevent further pollution.</p> <p>Expresses outcomes for the UK marine area and underpins the development of the joint Marine Policy Statement (MPS) (due for completion by 2011) and will guide development of national and regional marine plans.</p> <p>Provides a framework which will help balance competing demands on Scotland's seas and introduces duties for sustainable development, protection and enhancement of marine areas, mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, marine planning and conservation and measures to encourage economic investment.</p> | <p>The plan should not promote development that would have adverse impacts on the water environment or risk failure of water bodies not achieving at least good ecological status by 2015.</p> <p>The SDP should not create flood risks (from the sea or rivers) and should actively promote sustainable flood risk management without conflicting with river basin management plans.</p> |
| <p>Waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010) | <p>The plan outlines Scotland's key objectives in relation to waste prevention, recycling and reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill on the journey to a Zero Waste Scotland. The plan proposes targets for Scotland's waste and delivering these targets will be supported by the land-use planning system.</p> <p>Provides a vision for Scotland where all waste is seen as a</p> | <p>SDP should support measures to manage waste in the SDP area.</p> |

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| | resource; Waste is minimised; valuable resources are not disposed of in landfills, and most waste is sorted, leaving only limited amounts to be treated. | |
| REGIONAL Cross Sectoral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 Regional Transport Strategy 2021 (RTS) (2008) 'Building on Energy Delivering the Vision for 2025' - The Economic Action Plan for Aberdeen City and Shire (2008) | <p>Guides the development of the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire region for the next 25 years. Sets the strategic context for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Councils Local Development Plans which in turn set the framework for land use development.</p> <p>Sets out what needs to happen over the period to 2021 to provide a transport system that ensures continued economic growth, improves accessibility and protects the environment and our quality of life in Aberdeen City and Shire.</p> <p>Sets out a 5 year life plan identifying actions to be undertaken towards the longer term economic ambitions for Aberdeen City and Shire.</p> | <p>The SDP should be compatible with the existing structure plan.</p> <p>SDP should seek to integrate with and complement the aims of the RTS in relation to reducing congestion, improving human health, tackling climate change and provision of public transport to reduce dependency on cars.</p> <p>The SDP should support sustainable economic growth.</p> |
| Nature Conservation & Biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2000) Forest and Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen (2005) | <p>Ensures the protection and enhancement of the biodiversity in the north east through the development of effective, local, working partnerships;</p> <p>Ensure that national targets for species and habitats, as specified in the UK Action Plan, are translated into effective local action.</p> <p>Provides a framework for woodland development and management.</p> | <p>The Strategic Development Plan should promote and protect biodiversity.</p> <p>The spatial strategy should not result in conflict with forest and woodland priorities.</p> |
| Population & Human Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core Paths and Access Strategies for Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council | <p>Core Paths Plans and Access Strategies look to promote themes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green spaces Human health and well being Accessibility Inclusion Biodiversity | <p>SDP should contribute towards improving the health and well being of the SDP area by promoting core paths and accessibility to the countryside and green places.</p> |
| Waste and air <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scotland's Zero Waste Plan Aberdeen City Waste Strategy 2010-2025 Aberdeen City Air Quality Action Plan 2011 | <p>See above. The Zero Waste Plan revoked the Area Waste Plans.</p> | <p>The SDP should promote the aims of the waste hierarchy and may identify new and emerging regional waste facilities. It must ensure that those waste-management facilities can be delivered in a sustainable manner and effects on surrounding communities, the environment and transportation systems are minimised as much as practicable.</p> |
| Water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> River Dee Catchment Management Plan (2007) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records the current state of the Dee catchment, including water quality, the type and extent of habitats and species in the | <p>The Plan should contribute to delivering the actions proposed in the Catchment Management Plan.</p> <p>The SDP should not adversely impact on the water</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North East Scotland Area Management Plan (2010) • Tay Area Management Plan (draft) | <p>catchment, and important land management activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies key issues and puts forward potential solutions through a series of actions. | <p>environment covered by the area management plans.</p> |
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Appendix 6.6: Baseline data, targets & trends for Aberdeen City & Shire

Appendix 6.6.1: SEA Topic: Air & Climatic Factors

| SEA Indicator | Quantified information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/constraint | Data source(s) |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| Carbon dioxide (CO ₂) emissions | <p>Scotland in 1990 emitted 70.1 mt CO₂e and in 2006 this figure had dropped to 57.6mt CO₂e. To meet the interim target (by 2020) Scotland's emissions will need to drop to 40.5mt CO₂e which is a reduction of -42% from the 1990 baseline and -30% from the 2006 figure.</p> <p>An average household in Aberdeen produces 5175 kg of CO₂ per annum.</p> <p>An average household in Aberdeenshire produces 6318 kg CO₂ per annum.</p> | <p>The UK has both international (Kyoto Protocol) and domestic (Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009) targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Scotland's targets to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 80 per cent lower than the baseline by 2050 • Interim target for 2020 of at least 42 per cent lower than the baseline <p>The average Scottish household produces 5,505 kg CO₂ per annum.</p> | <p>Overall greenhouse gases are decreasing.</p> <p>Latest estimates produced for the UK government suggest that Aberdeen City and Shire released approximately 4.4 million tonnes of CO₂ in 2007, with Aberdeenshire accounting for 59% and Aberdeen City 41%. The high per capita emissions for Aberdeenshire result from high emissions from industrial and commercial gas users, as well as greater transport and landuse emissions.</p> <p>Over the three years that figures have been estimated the totals have not fluctuated greatly with the City figures showing a slight decline, and Aberdeenshire no clear pattern.</p> | <p>New development should consider energy efficiency and conservation as an issue as development will increase the areas carbon footprint. Materials with high CO₂ levels are still popular (e.g. concrete and tarmac). The region has a high energy dependence on fossil fuels for heat and electricity and for transportation.</p> <p>Aberdeen consumes more resources per person than any other Scottish city and it has the largest footprint in Scotland, which cannot be sustained in the long-term</p> | <p>Source: Scottish Government (2009) Climate Change Delivery Plan http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/276273/0092934.pdf</p> <p>Aberdeen City (2007) State of the Environment Report http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=15960&sID=883</p> |
| Natural resources consumption (footprint) | <p>Aberdeen's City annual ecological footprint is 5.80 global hectares per person (gha/person).</p> <p>Aberdeenshire's annual ecological footprint is 5.64 gha/person.</p> | <p>The North East of Scotland exceeds Scotland ecological footprint of 5.37 global hectares per person.</p> | <p>The main contributors to the North East's ecological footprint remain energy consumption, food and drink, and transport.</p> | <p>Aberdeen consumes more resources per person than any other Scottish city and it has the largest footprint in Scotland, which cannot be sustained in the long-term</p> | <p>Aberdeen City (2007) State of the Environment Report http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=15960&sID=883</p> |

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| Properties at risk within inland and coastal areas | <p>Aberdeen City: 309 inland floodplain 571 coastal (below 5m OD)</p> <p>Aberdeenshire 2,219 inland floodplain 1,743 coastal (below 5m OD)</p> | <p>Scotland: 77,191 inland floodplain 93,830 coastal (below 5m OD)</p> <p>Compared with the rest of Scotland, far fewer properties in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are at significant risk from flooding.</p> <p>Between 1990 and 2006, UK emissions of PM10 fell by 50%.</p> | <p>The impact of climate change and flooding in the North East is unpredictable. However there may be increased duration and frequency of storms and rising sea levels. Weather throughout the year is predicted to change resulting in longer wetter winters and shorter drier summers with implications for flooding.</p> <p>While more air quality management areas are declared in the City. There are no air quality management areas in the Shire.</p> | <p>There may be an increasing need to implement flood defence systems.</p> | <p>Office of Science and Technology (2005) Foresight report: <i>Future Flooding Scotland</i> http://www.foresight.gov.uk/Scotland/Final_Scotland.pdf</p> |
| Air Quality | <p>Since 2001 Air quality continues to be an issue in Aberdeen City. Aberdeen was designated as an AQMA in 2001 for continuously exceeding the 2005 annual objective level for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) of 40 µg m⁻³. In 2008 the annual mean standard of NO₂ in Union St was 54 micrograms per cubic metre (µg m⁻³) and in Market St 73 µg m⁻³, principally from HGVs and buses. The AQMA includes Market St, Union St, King St, Guild St, and Virginia St. Air quality continues to be an issue into 2010. In addition to the existing monitoring stations NO_x, NO, PM10 are now monitored at Anderson Drive, Errol Place, Wellington Road where there are air quality exceedances.</p> <p>NO₂ is the main air quality issue monitored</p> | | | <p>There is an increasing need to increase energy efficiency and reduce our reliance on private transport to improve air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and health.</p> <p>Traffic growth may be a constraining factor in the future.</p> | <p>Scottish Government High Level Summary of Statistics Trends for Environment (2010 as amended) http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Environment/TrendPDF</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment (2009) Aberdeenshire Council (2005) <i>Local Air Quality Management Progress Report</i> Aberdeenshire Council (2006) <i>Updating and Screening Assessment</i> Aberdeenshire Council Aberdeenshire Council (2007) <i>Local Air Quality Management: Progress Report 2007</i>. Aberdeen: Aberdeenshire Council</p> |

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| | <p>in Westhill, Inverurie, Peterhead, Stonehaven, and Mintlaw. The Annual Mean ugm-3 for NO2 in 2004 ranged between 9.4 (Stonehaven 3) and 34.1 (Inverurie 1); in 2005, it ranged between 9.2 (Stonehaven 3) and 26.5 (Inverurie 1); in 2006 it ranged from 10 (Inverurie 4) to 33 (Inverurie 1) and in 2010 it is estimated that it will range between 8.8 (Inverurie 4) and 28.1 (Inverurie 1).</p> | | | | |
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Appendix 6.6.2: SEA Topic: Water

| SEA Indicator | Quantified information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/constraints | Data source(s) |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| Ground water and river levels | <p>Scottish Water are currently permitted to abstract up to 145 megalitres per day (MLD) from the River Dee, however, the average amount taken is around 90MLD. It is not anticipated that this license will reduce the permitted abstraction level prior to 2014.</p> <p>Data on ground water in Scotland was not available.</p> | <p>By the 2080s, summer precipitation decreases of 10-20% under the low emissions (Global Sustainability), and 20-30% under the high-emissions World Markets scenario are predicted in the north of Scotland.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rainfall levels are predicted to decline during the summer months, which may affect a rivers yield rate, but this will be less severe further north. Rainfall in winter months is predicted to increase. Increase in water consumption from industrial consumers and from increased residential development. Increase in leakages from pipe infrastructure as it 'ages' however Scottish Water continue to make progress on leakage reduction. | <p>There is a need to start reducing water abstraction by incorporating water efficient technologies into new development (industrial and domestic) in light of the predicted decrease in summer rainfall.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City (2007) State of the Environment Report http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/hmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=15960&slID=883</p> <p>Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i></p> |
| Quality of water bodies (Ground water) | <p>2010: high status – 0 2010: good status – 42 2010: moderate status – 0 2010: poor status – 8 2010: bad status – 0</p> | <p>The Water Framework Directive states that all water bodies are of good ecological status, or similar objective, by 2015.</p> | <p>Currently there are 121 water bodies achieving 'good' or 'high' standards, representing 46% of the total. 34% of water bodies are in the 'moderate' category and 21% are of 'poor' or 'bad' quality.</p> | <p>It is important that development does not prevent water bodies in the SDP area achieving at least 'good' ecological status in order for the area to reach the targets.</p> | <p>SEPA (09 February 2010) Data from River Basin Management Plan for the Scotland River Basin District 2009</p> |
| Quality of water bodies (Coastal) | <p>2010: high status – 6 2010: good status – 8 2010: moderate status – 1 2010: poor status – 0 2010: bad status – 0</p> | <p>Same as above</p> | <p>Same as above</p> | <p>Same as above</p> | <p>Same as above</p> |

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| Quality of water bodies (Transitional) | 2010: high status – 4 2010: good status – 1 2010: moderate status – 1 2010: poor status – 0 2010: bad status – 0 | Same as above | Same as above | Same as above | Same as above |
| Quality of water bodies (Loch) | 2010: high status – 0 2010: good status – 1 2010: moderate status – 0 2010: poor status – 2 2010: bad status – 1 | Same as above | Same as above | Same as above | Same as above |
| Quality of water bodies (River) | 2010: high status – 5 2010: good status – 54 2010: moderate status – 87 2010: poor status – 31 2010: bad status – 12 | Same as above | Same as above | Same as above | Same as above |

Appendix 6.6.3: SEA Topic: Soil

| SEA Indicator | Quantified information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/constraints | Data source(s) |
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| Land contamination | <p>There are no statutorily identified contaminated sites in Aberdeen, although there are 900 potentially contaminated sites, which are being considered for investigation.</p> <p>There are 4 statutorily identified contaminated sites in Aberdeenshire. Aberdeenshire Council's Contaminated Land Strategy is currently under review.</p> <p>In Aberdeenshire, there are other potentially contaminated sites, including landfill sites, former gasworks, stations and goods yards, petrol stations and garages, distilleries, smithy's and infilled Coastal.</p> | <p>The total number of sites affected by contamination within Scotland is difficult to judge accurately as individual local authorities use a variety of assessment methods. However, it is estimated that approximately 67,000 sites (82,034 hectares) could be affected by land contamination.</p> | <p>Although only 4 contaminated sites are on the public register in the North East, this may increase as many sites are still to be investigated. Legal regime is in place to deal with contaminated sites therefore this position should improve in the future.</p> | <p>Contaminated land places financial and technological constraints on development. These constraints may dictate the type of development: the feasibility of remedial works may determine that a site is only suitable for industrial use; the cost of remedial works may determine that high density development is the only viable economic option. Contaminated land impacts on the water environment, i.e. coastal surface and coastal waters, and the wider environment including for instance local ecology.</p> <p>In preparing development plans, the Scottish Government</p> | <p>Aberdeen City Council (2001) <i>Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy</i> http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/Pollution/ContaminatedLandInspectionStrategy.pdf</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Council (2009) <i>Public Register of Contaminated Land</i> http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/environment/allstrategy/PublicRegisterofContaminatedLandAug2009.pdf</p> <p>SEPA (2009) <i>Dealing with Land Contamination in Scotland: A review of progress 2000-2008</i> http://www.sepa.org.uk/land/land_publications.aspx</p> |

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| <p>Prime agricultural land (Grades 1 to 3.1)</p> | <p>Aberdeenshire's prime agricultural land is concentrated in central and southern Aberdeenshire. Grade 2 near Laurencekirk (approx 950ha)</p> <p>Aberdeen contains very little prime agricultural land (300ha).</p> | <p>Net loss of Scottish agriculture land from roads, housing and industry has doubled from 588ha in 1989 to 1,402ha in 2003.</p> | <p>Climate change could increase the level of prime agricultural land in Scotland, however this may cause conflicts with sites of high biodiversity value, sensitive or designated sites.</p> | <p>expects planning authorities to encourage and promote the reuse of brownfield land including sites affected by contamination. National planning policy encourages the reuse of previously developed land in preference to Greenfield land. However NPF2 recognises that the concentration of previously used land is not in the North East therefore a higher proportion of new development will have to be on greenfield sites.</p> <p>Potential impacts of climate may constrain prime agricultural land available in the future.</p> <p>Prime agricultural land may require further protection from development as demand for development rises and as land for food production rises.</p> | <p>Scottish Executive Statistics (2005): Economic Report on Scottish Agriculture http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/06/22290402/05121</p> <p>Scottish Government (2009): The Scottish Soil Framework http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/05/20145602/6</p> |
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| <p>Biodegradable Municipal waste landfilled (tonnes):</p> <p>Aberdeen City: 2004/05 – 74,927 2005/06 – 68,936 2006/07 – 69,931 2007/08 – 67,322 2008/09 – 63,333 2009/10 – 55,654 2010/11 – 49,277</p> <p>Aberdeenshire: 2004/05 – 83,686 2005/06 – 81,092 2006/07 – 69,204 2007/08 – 70,286 2008/09 – 68,355 2009/10 – 65,864 2010/11 – 68,832</p> | <p>Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010) aims for a recycling and composting rate of 70% by 2020.</p> <p>Scotland</p> <p>2010/11 – 1,103,956</p> | <p>Over the last 6 years both councils have made progress in increasing levels of recycling, increasing the level from 11% to 27% in Aberdeen City and 13% to 33% in Aberdeenshire. This progress should be viewed in the context of national targets set within Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010).</p> <p>There was not a substantial fall in municipal waste sent to landfill in Aberdeen City compared with Aberdeenshire for a number of years until 2009/10 when Aberdeen experienced a significant fall.</p> | <p>Not enough sites for recycling or composting biodegradable municipal waste (large, medium or small scale) to help the local authorities achieve their recycling and landfill targets.</p> <p>Housing, schools, and employment uses (e.g. retail and offices) are of inadequate design to maximise the storing and collection of waste to be recycled.</p> <p>Opposition from the community in relation to energy from waste plants.</p> <p>There has been no substantial drop in municipal waste sent to landfill which will have cost implications for the City in terms of Landfill Tax.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i></p> <p>Scotland's Zero Waste Plan (2010)</p> <p>SEPA (2009) Waste Data Digest 11</p> <p>SEPA (2008) Waste Data Digest 10</p> <p>SEPA (2007) Waste Data Digest 9</p> <p>SEPA (2006) Waste Data Digest 8</p> <p>SEPA (2005) Waste Data Digest 7</p> <p>www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/site_capacity_infrastructure/landfill_capacity_report.aspx and municipal waste annual report</p> <p>www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/waste_data_reports/local_authority_annual_reports.aspx</p> |
| <p>Municipal waste landfilled (tonnes):</p> <p>Aberdeen City: 2005/06 – 23,080</p> | <p>Scotland 2010/11 – 1,200,230</p> | <p>Municipal Waste recycling is</p> | | |

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| recycled (tonnes): | 2006/07 – 20,005 2007/08 – 19,527 2008/09 – 19,519 2009/10 – 19,728 2010/11 - 37,471* Aberdeenshire: 2005/06 – 18,449 2006/07 – 26,978 2007/08 – 38,432 2008/09 – 38,941 2009/10 – 40,614 2010/11 - 49,933* | | falling in Aberdeen City in contrast with Aberdeenshire. | | |
| Municipal waste composted (tonnes): | Aberdeen City: 2005/06 – 8,825 2006/07 – 10,327 2007/08 – 11,274 2008/09 – 11,423 2009/10 – 13,439 2010/11 - Aberdeenshire: 2005/06 – 6,816 2006/07 – 6,061 2007/08 – 9,549 2008/09 – 9,684 2009/10 – 9,622 2010/11 – *include those composted | | There has been an improvement in the amount of waste composted in both districts | | |
| Total municipal waste arising (tonnes): | Aberdeen City: 2005/06 – 140,064 2006/07 – 141,296 2007/08 – 138,459 2008/09 – 132,078 2009/10 – 123,966 2010/11 - 118,049 | 2010/11 - 3,141,202 | Things are improving | | |

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| <p>Industrial waste arisings (tonnes):</p> | <p>Aberdeenshire: 2005/06 – 155,123 2006/07 – 143,342 2007/08 – 153,731 2008/09 – 150,372 2009/10 – 151,010 2010/11 - 154,167</p> <p>North East Scotland</p> <p>2005 – 300,000 2006 – 420,000 2007 – 430,000 2008 - 315,525 2009 – 226,326</p> | <p>Scotland</p> <p>2005 – 2,350,000 2006 – 2,720,000 2007 - 2,760,000 2008 - 2,206,017 2009 – 1,818,343</p> | <p>At both regional and national level there were reductions in the amount of C&D waste and Commercial waste but there has been an increase in industrial waste. However, this position reversed in 2009.</p> | | |
| <p>Construction and demolition waste arisings (tonnes):</p> | <p>2005 – 621,254 2006 – 493,590 2007 - 526,013 2008 - 437,146 2009 – 448,602</p> | <p>2005 – 6,412,378 2006 – 6,010,193 2007 - 6,212,857 2008 - 5,492,158 2009 - 8,125,388</p> | | | |
| <p>Commercial waste arisings (tonnes):</p> | <p>2005 – 710,000 2006 – 580,000 2007 – 650,000 2008 - 672,986 2009 – 480,261</p> | <p>2005 – 6,060,000 2006 – 4,920,000 2007 - 5,330,000 2008 - 5,600,647 2009 – 4,747,214</p> | | | |
| <p>Waste capacity Annual capacity (Tonnes)</p> | <p>North east 2007 - 3,845,306 2008 - 3,741,977 2009 - 3,500,370* 2010 - 3,516,494*</p> | <p>Scotland 2007 - 39,987,613 2008 - 37,843,490 2009 - 38,022,367 2010 - 38,009,045</p> | | | <p>www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/site_capacity_infrastructure/national_capacity_report.s.aspx and landfill capacity reports -</p> |
| <p>Quantity of waste accepted (tonnes)</p> | <p>2007 - 3,899,260 2008 - 1,748,964 2009 - 1,464,247* 2010 - 1,409,272*</p> <p>* Aberdeen City and Shire total</p> | <p>2007 - 16,392,335 2008 - 17,684,064 2009 - 14,023,400 2010 - 15,966,129</p> | | | |

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| <p>Landfill capacity</p> <p>Inert waste Landfilled</p> | <p>Northeast</p> <p>2007 - 164,824</p> <p>2008 - 77,067</p> <p>2009 - 41,867*</p> <p>2010 - 26,077*</p> | <p>Scotland</p> <p>2007 - 518,899</p> <p>2008 - 453,990</p> <p>2009 - 295,895</p> <p>2010 - 318,350</p> | | <p>www.sepa.org.uk/waste/waste_data/site_capacity_infrastructure/national_capacity_report_s.aspx and landfill capacity reports -</p> |
| <p>Inert landfill capacity</p> | <p>2007 - 2,226,950</p> <p>2008 - 2,597,185</p> <p>2009 - 2,556,637*</p> <p>2010 - 2,524,156</p> | <p>2007 - 9,570,931</p> <p>2008 - 10,867,340</p> <p>2009 - 7,181,875</p> <p>2010 - 13,609,135</p> | | |
| <p>Non hazardous landfilled</p> | <p>2007 - 606,999</p> <p>2008 - 552,750</p> <p>2009 - 451,001**</p> <p>2010 - 383,899**</p> | <p>2007 - 4,894,935</p> <p>2008 - 4,541,536</p> <p>2009 - 4,110,480</p> <p>2010 - 4,043,451</p> | | |
| <p>Non hazardous landfill capacity</p> | <p>2007 - 7,383,167</p> <p>2008 - 6,782,674</p> <p>2009 - 2,743,062 **</p> <p>2010 - 6,651,349 **</p> <p>* Aberdeenshire data</p> <p>**Aberdeen City and Shire total</p> | <p>2007 - 62,302,806</p> <p>2008 - 70,192,059</p> <p>2009 - 65,619,910</p> <p>2010 - 63,977,097</p> | | |
| <p>Peat soils</p> | <p>4 types of peaty soils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blanket peat • Peaty podsols • Peaty gleys • Organic soils rich in peat | <p>With respect of the rest of Scotland Aberdeen City and Shire seem to be at the fringes of peat soils</p> | <p>Blanket peat is moderately distributed to the southwest of Aberdeen City and Shire and with a few dots in the northeast of the region</p> <p>Peaty podzol is densely distributed to the southwest of Aberdeen City and Shire and with a few dots in the northeast of the region</p> <p>Peaty gleys is sparsely distributed to the southwest of Aberdeen City and Shire and with a few dots in the northeast of the region</p> <p>Organic soils rich in peat is moderately distributed to the southwest of Aberdeen City and</p> | <p>Because of the relationship between peat and climate change development must be directed away from peat soils</p> |
| | | | | <p>www.macaulay.ac.uk</p> |

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| Soil Erosion | From Berwick to Aberdeen, the coastline is eroding, but is stable where there are rocky coasts or coastal defences. From Aberdeen to Inverness the coastline is largely eroding, but parts are being replenished with sand and gravel from larger rivers. | The north of Scotland is mostly stable with little erosion, but south of Mallaig, towards Carlisle, the coastline is predominantly eroding but stable where there are rocky coasts or coastal defences. Precipitation will be greater in the west due to the west-east precipitation gradient. | Shire and with a few dots in the northeast of the region | Coastal erosion mostly where there are no rocks or coastal defences Increase silt of rivers from fluvial flooding. Increase in soil erosion from wind and water, which may also be exacerbated by bad land use practices, such as locating tracks/access roads on steep/upland areas. Increasing use of motorised vehicles on sand dunes is contributing to coastal erosion. | Aberdeen City (2007) State of the Environment Report http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/inmsruntime/sa/yearsdatalog.asp?IID=15960&sID=883 SEPA (2006) State of Scotland's Environment Report 2006 http://www.sepa.org.uk/science/state_of_the_environment/data_and_reports/state_of_the_environment.aspx |
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Appendix 6.6.4: SEA Topic: Biodiversity (natural heritage designations)

| SEA Indicator | Quantified information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/ constraints | Data source(s) |
|--|---|-------------------------|--------|--|--------------------------------|
| International natural heritage designations (Ramsar) | <p><u>Aberdeenshire</u> – sites – 3 Hectares - 1051 <u>Aberdeen City</u> site – 0 hectare - 0</p> | | | <p>The environment of the north east is an important resource and is recognised internationally for its value. However, biodiversity and habitats can be vulnerable to the potentially harmful effects of development and so the policies and allocations that result from the strategic development plan must focus on maintaining and improving natural, built and cultural assets. There are many nature designations of international, national and local importance throughout the region that must be protected and improved.</p> <p>New development has the potential to put pressure on built, natural and cultural sites, consequently development must be appropriately planned to ensure that there is no loss or damage to these important assets. It is important to note that a designated site may be protected by more than one designation.</p> | <p>Source: <u>SNH 2009</u></p> |
| International natural heritage | <p><u>Aberdeenshire</u> – sites – 8</p> | | | | <p>Source: <u>SNH 2009</u></p> |

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| designations (Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)) | Hectares - 5545 <u>Aberdeen City</u> site - 1 hectare - 155 | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |
| International natural heritage designations (Special Protection Areas (SPA)) | <u>Aberdeenshire</u> - sites - 7 Hectares - 2227 <u>Aberdeen City</u> site - 0 hectare - 0 | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |
| National natural heritage designations - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) | <u>Aberdeenshire</u> - sites - 69 Hectares - 15,655 <u>Aberdeen City</u> site - 4 hectare - 47 | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |
| National natural heritage designations National Nature Reserve (NNR) | <u>Aberdeenshire</u> - sites - 2 Hectares - 1072 <u>Aberdeen City</u> site - 0 hectare - 0 | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |
| Local natural heritage designations - Sites of Interest of Natural Science (SINCS) | <u>Aberdeenshire</u> - sites - 79 <u>Aberdeen City</u> site - 16 | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |
| Local natural heritage designations Local Nature Reserve (LNR) | <u>Aberdeenshire</u> - sites - 2 Hectares - 28 <u>Aberdeen City</u> site - 4 hectare - 126 | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |
| Local natural heritage designations - Scottish Wildlife Trust Reserves | <u>Aberdeenshire</u> - sites - 4 Hectares - N/A <u>Aberdeen City</u> site - 0 hectare - N/A | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |
| Local natural heritage designations - | <u>Aberdeenshire</u> - sites - 3 Hectares - N/A | | | | | Source: <u>SNH 2009</u> |

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| RSPB Reserves | Aberdeen City site – 0 hectare – N/A Aberdeenshire – sites – 0 Hectares – N/A Aberdeen City site – 70 hectare – N/A Aberdeenshire – sites – 2,584 Hectares - 45,000 Aberdeen City site – 140 hectare – N/A | | | | | Source: SNH 2009 Source: SNH 2009 |
| Local natural heritage designations - District Wildlife Site | | | | | | |
| Local natural heritage designations - Ancient Woodland | | | | | | |
| Quality and availability of public open space in urban and rural areas | The Aberdeen City audit identified 3471 hectares of open space (not including private gardens or sites under 0.2 hectares). The quality of open space varies across the city with public parks and gardens rating the highest and allotments and business amenity open space scoring the lowest rating. Data for Aberdeenshire Councils Open Space Audit was not available. | | The poorest quality parks and open spaces tend to be found within the regeneration priority areas. It is more difficult to provide open space within densely populated areas. | Development pressure to build on urban open spaces. Developer contributions may require to be sought for brownfield developments to assist in provision of open space. Revised standards for open space could encourage the development of more useful, publicly desirable and efficient types of open space, such as natural areas, green corridors, play spaces and allotments. This detail is likely to be taken forward through the local development plan and supplementary guidance. | Aberdeen City Council (2010) Open Space Audit | |

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|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Quality of life in currently deprived areas</p> | <p>The 2009 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) found that the strategic development plan area has 42 datazones classified as the 20% most deprived by the Scottish government, representing 7.5% of the total.</p> <p>Deprivation is concentrated in Aberdeen City with 13% of all datazones being classified as in the most deprived 20%, while although only 2% of Aberdeenshire is in this group, these are concentrated in the coastal towns of Fraserburgh and Peterhead. In Aberdeen the zones are situated in the North and South of the city.</p> | <p>Aberdeenshire has most of its datazones in the least deprived in terms of SIMD ranks. Aberdeenshire has Scotland's least deprived datazone in Banchory.</p> <p>The 25% most deprived datazones in Aberdeen City all rank in the 30% most deprived nationally.</p> | <p>Positive steps have been made to ensure everyone has access to sport, leisure and recreation facilities, however limited progress has been made to provide.</p> | <p>Poor access to services in rural areas. Centralisation of service provision has and will continue to affect marginalised areas. Pockets of deprivation through low job opportunities and income could be adversely affecting people's mental health.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i></p> |
| <p>Sport and recreation facilities in areas of identified need</p> | <p>Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire both require sporting facilities ranging from badminton courts and golf courses to swimming pools</p> | | | <p>Local facilities will be addressed through the Local Development Plans although if regional sporting facilities are identified these may come through the SDP.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City Council (2002) Active Aberdeen 2002-2007: A sport, recreation and physical activity strategy for Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire Council (2005) Sports Facility Study Updated Report</p> |

Appendix 6.6.5: Human Health

| SEA Indicator | Quantified information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/ constraints | Data source(s) |
|--|---|-------------------------|--|---|--|
| Quality and availability of public open space in urban and rural areas | <p>The Aberdeen City audit identified 3471 hectares of open space (not including private gardens or sites under 0.2 hectares). The quality of open space varies across the city with public parks and gardens rating the highest and allotments and business amenity open space scoring the lowest rating.</p> <p>Data for Aberdeenshire Councils Open Space Audit was not available.</p> | | <p>The poorest quality parks and open spaces tend to be found within the regeneration priority areas. It is more difficult to provide open space within densely populated areas.</p> | <p>Development pressure to build on urban open spaces.</p> <p>Developer contributions may require to be sought for brownfield developments to assist in provision of open space.</p> <p>Revised standards for open space could encourage the development of more useful, publicly desirable and efficient types of open space, such as natural areas, green corridors, play spaces and allotments. This detail is likely to be taken forward through the local development plan and supplementary guidance.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City Council (2010) Open Space Audit</p> |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Quality of life in currently deprived areas</p> | <p>The 2009 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) found that the strategic development plan area has 42 datazones classified as the 20% most deprived by the Scottish government, representing 7.5% of the total.</p> <p>Deprivation is concentrated in Aberdeen City with 13% of all datazones being classified as in the most deprived 20%, while although only 2% of Aberdeenshire is in this group, these are concentrated in the coastal towns of Fraserburgh and Peterhead. In Aberdeen the zones are situated in the North and South of the city.</p> | <p>Aberdeenshire has most of its datazones in the least deprived in terms of SIMD ranks. Aberdeenshire has Scotland's least deprived datazone in Banchory.</p> <p>The 25% most deprived datazones in Aberdeen City all rank in the 30% most deprived nationally.</p> | <p>Positive steps have been made to ensure everyone has access to sport, leisure and recreation facilities, however limited progress has been made to provide.</p> | <p>Poor access to services in rural areas. Centralisation of service provision has and will continue to affect marginalised areas. Pockets of deprivation through low job opportunities and income could be adversely affecting people's mental health.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i></p> |
| <p>Sport and recreation facilities in areas of identified need</p> | <p>Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire both require sporting facilities ranging from badminton courts and golf courses to swimming pools</p> | | <p>Local facilities will be addressed through the Local Development Plans although if regional sporting facilities are identified these may come through the SDP.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City Council (2002) Active Aberdeen 2002-2007: A sport, recreation and physical activity strategy for Aberdeen City Aberdeenshire Council (2005) Sports Facility Study Updated Report</p> | |

Appendix 6.6.6: SEA Topic: Population

| SEA Indicator | Quantified information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/constraints | Data source(s) |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| Life expectancy at birth | <p>Aberdeen: Men 75.4 years Women 80.4 years</p> <p>Aberdeenshire: Men 77.5 years Women 81.1 years</p> | <p>Scotland: 75.0 years for men and 79.9 years for women</p> | <p>Compared with 10 years ago in 1996-1998: Life expectancy at birth for Scotland has increased by 2.6 years for men (from 72.4 years to 75.0 years) and 1.9 years for women (from 78.1 years to 79.9 years); The gap between men and women continues to close, dropping from 5.6 years to 4.9 years over the period; There are no areas that have experienced a drop in life expectancy The gap between men and women is closing in relation to life expectancy at birth.</p> | <p>Aging population will create demand for certain types of facilities e.g. sheltered housing, low level housing, access to healthcare facilities.</p> | <p>General Register Office for Scotland (2009) <i>Life Expectancy for Administrative Areas within Scotland, 2006-2008</i></p> |
| Healthy life expectancy at birth | <p>Aberdeen Men 67.8 years Women 72.1</p> <p>Aberdeenshire Men 70.8 years Women 74.5</p> | <p>Scotland Men 66.3 years Females 70.2 years</p> | <p>The gap between men and women is closing in relation to healthy life expectancy at birth.</p> | <p>A population that lives longer but lives healthier will not require as much assistance as a population that lives longer but lives unhealthily.</p> | <p>Scottish Public Health Observatory http://www.scotpho.org.uk/home/PopulationDynamics/hle/hle_data/hle_scotland.asp</p> |
| Population Change | <p>Aberdeen City 1998 – 215,650 2004 – 205,490 2008 - 210,400</p> <p>Aberdeenshire 1998 – 226,220 2004 – 231,570 2008 - 241,460</p> <p>SDP Area: 1998 - 438,689 2004 - 434,160</p> | <p>Scotland 1998 – 5,077,070 2004 – 5,078,400 2008 - 5,168,500</p> <p>The population change in the SDP area has increased at a rate (3.35%) double to that of the Scottish average (1.77%) in the last ten years.</p> | <p>The population of Aberdeen City declined between 1998 and 2004, but over the first half of the period, however this trend has reversed, and since 2004 both the City and the Shire populations have been increasing.</p> | <p>General Register Office for Scotland http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/population-estimates/index.html</p> <p>Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i></p> | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|---|
| | 2008 - 448,693 | As at June 2008, the average age was: Aberdeen – 38 (m) 40 (f) Aberdeenshire – 39 (m) 41 (f) | In line with much of Scotland the population structure of Aberdeen City and Shire has aged over the last ten years. | The 2008 based projections (probable) suggest that by 2033 the population of the SDP area will increase by 14%. The number of people of pensionable age will increase by 32% much in line with Scottish figures. The population of working age is projected to rise by 11.4%, well above the Scottish figure of 2.2%. Additionally, while at a Scottish level the number of under 15's is projected to decline by 1.5% over the period, in Aberdeen City and Shire this age group could increase by 4.1%. | A rapidly aging population has significant implications for both service provision and the economic performance of the region, and results in the need to attract and retain people of working age to the region. Aberdeenshire has the largest projected rise in the pensionable age group in Scotland and this will have major implications for the region. More homes may be required which suit the needs of an ageing population e.g. bungalows, sheltered housing etc. | General Register Office for Scotland http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/population-estimates/index.html Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i> |
| Population Structure | | | | | | |
| Change in households Household growth | Aberdeen City 1991 - 89,949 2001 - 95,265 2003 - 96,944 2008 - 97,424 2001 – 2008 – 2,159 % change – 2.3% Aberdeenshire (inc Cairngorms National Park) | Scotland 1991 – 2,042,809 2001 – 2,125,577 2003 – 2,195,033 2008 – 2,211,025 2001-2008 – 85,448 % change – 4.0% | During the last decade there has been a sustained increase in numbers of households and a significant fall in average household size. This is a trend that is expected to continue, with average household size dropping to under two in the SDP area by 2021. | Decreasing household size and increasing number of households will result in constraints in the level of houses that can be built to demand. If this trend continues there may be serious issues in relation to infrastructure requirements. Possibility that the need | | General Register Office for Scotland http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/population-estimates/index.html Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i> |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| <p>Forecast household size</p> | <p>1991 - 80,473 2001 - 87,077 2003 - 90,902 2008 - 92,317</p> <p>2001 – 2008 – 5,240 % change – 6.0%</p> <p>Aberdeen City and Shire (inc Cairngorms National Park)</p> <p>1991 - 170,422 2001 - 182,342 2003 - 187,846 2008 - 189,741</p> <p>2001-2008 – 7,399 % change – 4.1%</p> <p>Aberdeen City forecast household size:</p> <p>2006 – 2.00 2011 – 1.93 2016 – 1.86 2021 – 1.82 2026 – 1.78 2031 – 1.74</p> <p>Aberdeenshire forecast household size:</p> <p>2006 – 2.36 2011 – 2.30 2016 – 2.23 2021 – 2.16 2026 – 2.09 2031 – 2.03</p> <p>Aberdeen City and Shire forecast</p> | | <p>for more development land could put pressure on or near sensitive natural heritage areas as demand for housing and land increases.</p> <p>Smaller households tend to produce more waste and use more energy per person than larger ones.</p> | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|--|--|--|
| | household size: | | | | |
| | 2006 – 2.18 | | | | |
| | 2011 – 2.12 | | | | |
| | 2016 – 2.04 | | | | |
| | 2021 – 1.99 | | | | |
| | 2026 – 1.94 | | | | |
| | 2031 – 1.89 | | | | |

Appendix 6.6.7: SEA Topic: Cultural Heritage

| SEA Indicator | Quantified information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/constraints | Data source(s) |
|--|---|-------------------------|--------|--|--|
| Built and Cultural Heritage Designations | <p>Aberdeen City</p> <p>Listed buildings – 1,212 Listed buildings at risk – 26 Conservation Areas – 11 Scheduled Ancient Monuments – 44 Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record – 699 Gardens and designed landscapes - 1</p> <p>Aberdeenshire</p> <p>Listed buildings – 3,715 Listed buildings at risk – 228 Conservation Areas – 49 Scheduled Ancient Monuments – 581 Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record – 17,631 Gardens and designed landscapes - 27</p> <p>Aberdeen City and Shire</p> <p>Listed buildings – 4,927 Listed buildings at risk – 254 Conservation Areas – 60 Scheduled Ancient Monuments – 625 Archaeological Sites and Monuments Record – 18,330 Gardens and designed</p> | | | <p>Development is putting pressure on these features. There is also a threat of adverse impacts to and the loss of unknown or locally known (and not formally designated) architectural and archaeological remains from new development, vandalism and coastal erosion.</p> <p>New development has the potential to put pressure on, or be constrained by, built and cultural sites. Consequently development must be appropriately planned to ensure that there is no loss or damage to these important assets.</p> | <p>Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2009) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i></p> |

| | | | | | |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|---|
| Battlefields | landscapes - 28 Aberdeenshire Alford 1645 Barra 1308 Fyvie 1644 Harlaw 1411 | | | | http://data.historic-scotland.gov.uk/pls/htmldb/f?p=2500:10:0 |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|---|

Appendix 6.6.8: SEA Topic: Landscape

| SEA Indicator | Quantified Information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/constraints | Data source(s) |
|---------------------|--|---|-----------------|--|--|
| Landscape character | <p>There are 42 landscape character areas in Aberdeenshire, including 9 within the CNP.</p> <p>In Aberdeen there are 27 landscape character areas.</p> | <p>The four Landscape Character Assessments that cover the North East provides a brief overview of past land use practices and discusses potential land uses for existing landscapes.</p> | <p>No trend</p> | <p>The inappropriate scale and insensitive siting of future new development may adversely affect landscape characteristics (e.g. changing its landscape character type, not respecting local topography/contours). New development not fitting in with the landscape's capacity to absorb further developments (e.g. design, layout and sense of place) – need to promote suitable development capacity.</p> | <p>Scottish Natural Heritage (1997) <i>National programme of landscape character assessment: Banff and Buchan</i>, Review No 37. Scottish Natural Heritage (1996) <i>Cairngorms landscape assessment</i>, Review No 75. Scottish Natural Heritage (1996) <i>Landscape character assessment of Aberdeen</i>, Review No 80 Scottish Natural Heritage (1998) <i>South and Central Aberdeenshire: landscape character assessment</i>, Review No 102.</p> |

Appendix 6.6.9: SEA Topic: Material Assets

| SEA Indicator | Quantified Information | Comparators and targets | Trends | Issues/constraints | Data source(s) |
|---|---|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| Existing flood defences | There are 3 flood prevention schemes in Aberdeenshire and 2 in Aberdeen City. | | Flood defence schemes will progressively be affected by soil/sand erosion from increasing rainfall and storm events, which will affect their stability and effectiveness. As a result, there will be a need to increase the maintenance these defences, and possibly relocate them. | Predicted rise in sea level may result in existing flood defences being inadequate. The predicted rise in storm events and winter precipitation is likely to increase soil/sand erosion from the wind and rain/water, which may prevent flood defence schemes functioning properly and result in their failure (e.g. collapse). | Office of Science and Technology (2005) Foresight report: <i>Future Flooding Scotland</i> http://www.foresight.gov.uk/Scotland/Final_Scotland.pdf SEPA (2006) Indicative River & Coastal Flood Map (Scotland) Aberdeenshire Council (2007) <i>Flooding in Aberdeenshire: Sixth Biennial Report</i> http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/floodin g/report/6th_biennial_report.pdf |
| Supply/delivery of Affordable Housing | Aberdeen City and Shire: 2004/05 – 246 2005/06 – 213 2006/07 – 130 2007/08 – 168 2008/09 – 312 5 year average – 214 (average of 10% of annual completions) | | The supply of affordable homes in the North East is not meeting the demand but the latest data shows an increase of supply. | There is a need to review the proportion of affordable housing in new build. | Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i> |
| Employment Land supply (see tables below) | The supply of immediately available employment land in Aberdeen is dispersed over six sites and is currently around 30% of the marketable supply. The marketable supply of employment land in Aberdeen City currently stands at 91ha. However, only 31ha of this is immediately available. The marketable supply of employment land in the | | Aberdeen City has shown a trend of diminishing established supply of land for business use as allocations are built out. However, the marketable supply has recovered following the inclusion of the significant site at Murcar in the adopted Aberdeen Local Plan 2008. For Aberdeenshire, (within the strategic growth areas), there has been a trend of diminishing established | Uneven supply of employment land has impacts on ability to work and live within a close proximity thus increasing the likelihood of people travelling to work by private means. Economic growth will be constrained without a reasonable supply of land which is immediately available. | Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA (2010) <i>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Monitoring Report</i> |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Quality of Life | <p>Aberdeenshire SGAs currently stands at 146ha. Of this total, only 20ha is immediately available.</p> <p>In 2007 Aberdeenshire was top overall for the best quality of life of 32 local authorities in Scotland.</p> <p>In May 2008 Aberdeenshire had the best quality of life amongst rural areas in Scotland.</p> <p>November 2008 Aberdeenshire came second in the list of areas enjoying the best overall quality of life.</p> <p>In March 2009 Aberdeenshire came out top amongst ten other rural local authorities.</p> | <p>On several indicators, Aberdeenshire ranks above the Scottish average, including employment rate (82.6% compared to the national average of 76.6%) and school qualifications (84% achieve five or more SCQF level 4 awards compared to the Scotland average of 79%).</p> <p>Residents also enjoy a relatively good climate; there is, on average, less rainfall per year (999mm against the Scotland average of 1,295mm) and slightly more weekly sunshine hours (25.5 hours against the Scotland average of 24.9).</p> | supply of land for business use. The marketable supply has remained around a consistent level. | | Bank of Scotland's Rural Quality of Life Survey 2009 |
|-----------------|---|--|--|--|--|

Appendix 6.6.10 Employment Land Supply additional information:

Aberdeenshire SGAs

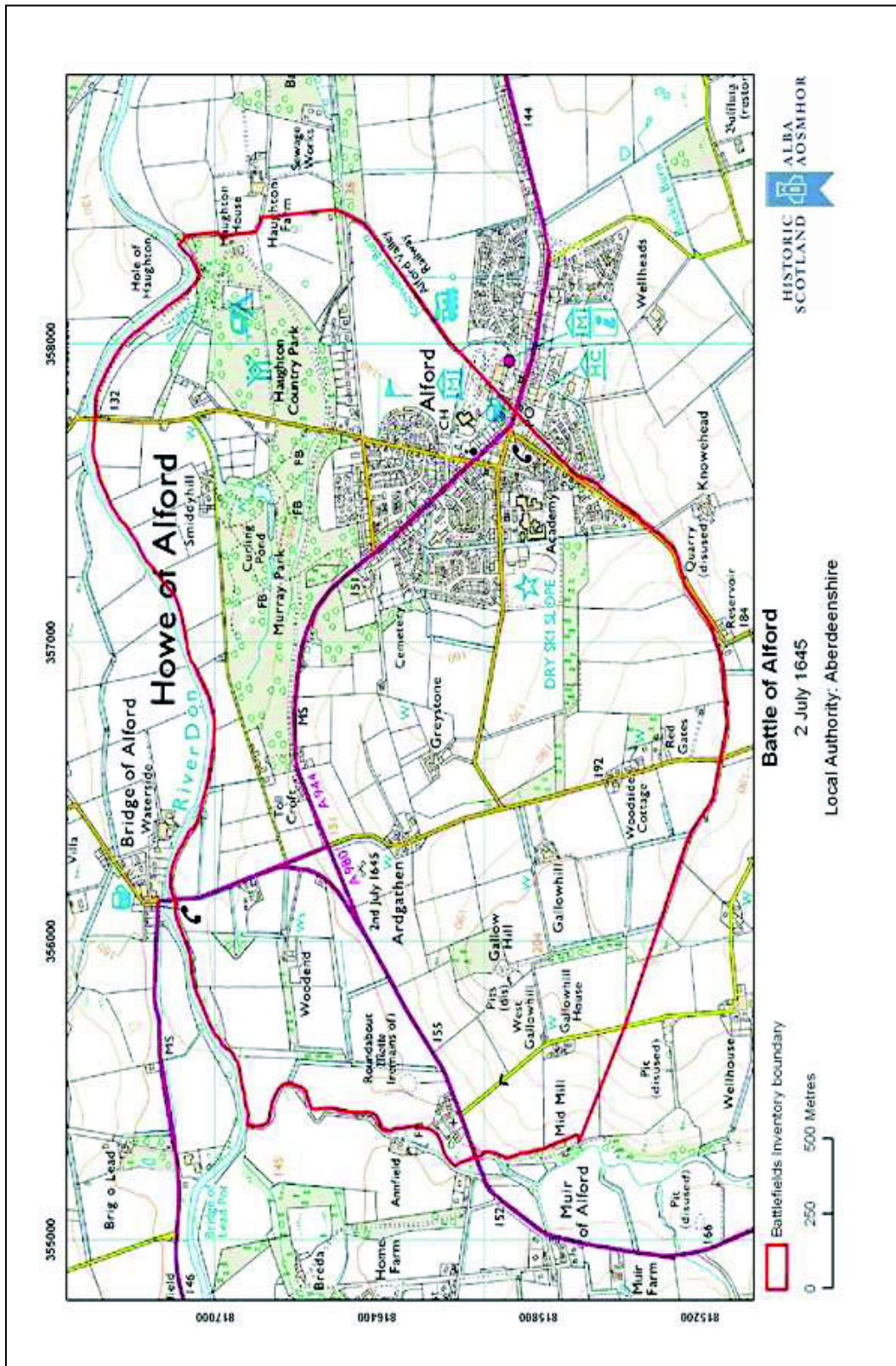
| | Established | Constrained | Marketable | Immediately Available | Under Construction |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 2006 | 272 | 118 | 155 | 39 | 10 |
| 2007 | 271 | 112 | 157 | 30 | 8 |
| 2008 | 266 | 104 | 162 | 24 | 3 |
| 2009 | 246 | 99 | 146 | 20 | 2 |

Aberdeen City SGA

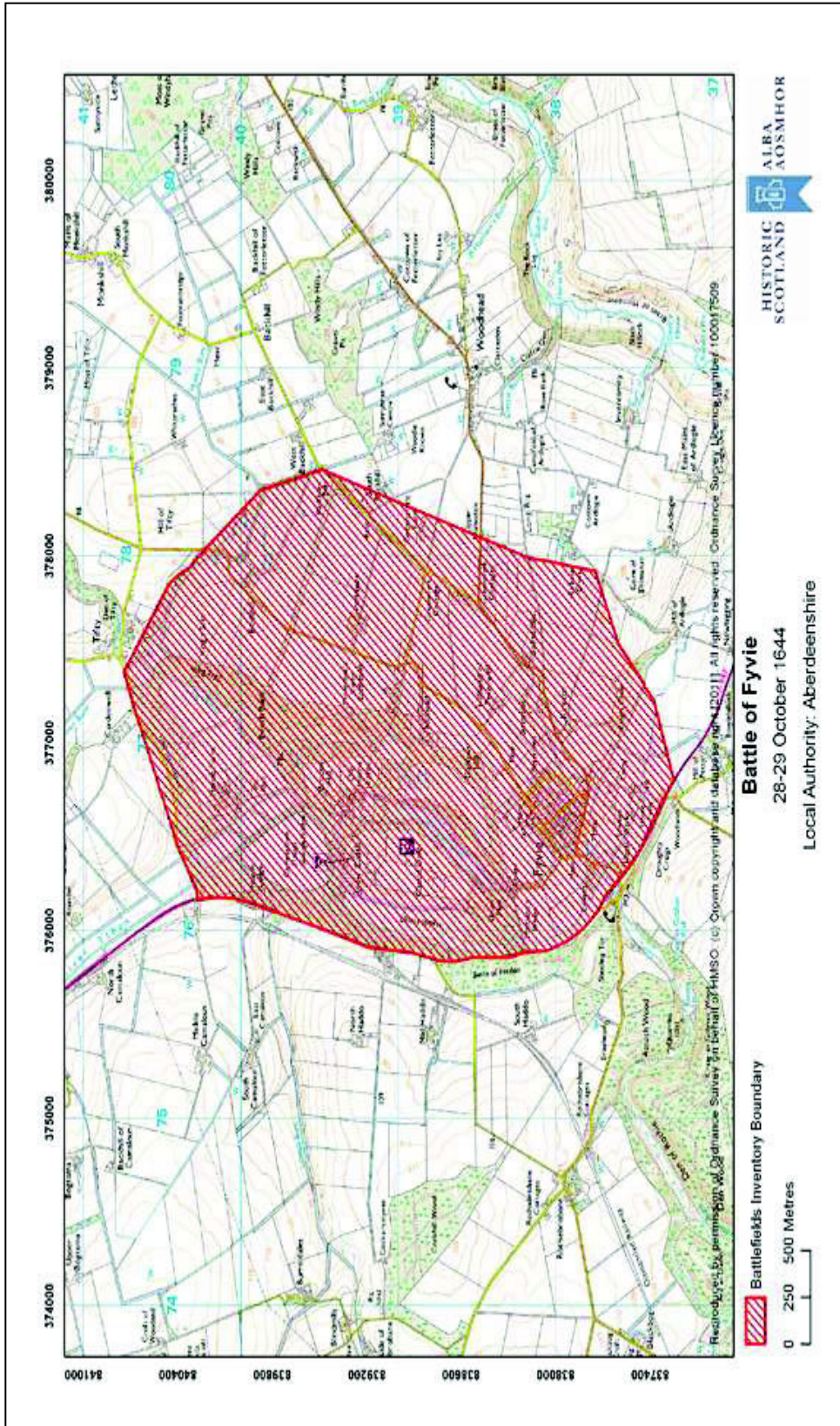
| | Established | Constrained | Marketable | Immediately Available | Under Construction |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 2006 | 239 | 181 | 40 | 34 | 1 |
| 2007 | 235 | 171 | 53 | 27 | 7 |
| 2008 | 225 | 171 | 42 | 24 | 10 |
| 2009 | 217 | 103 | 91 | 31 | 2 |

N.B Data only covers those areas within Strategic Growth Areas within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

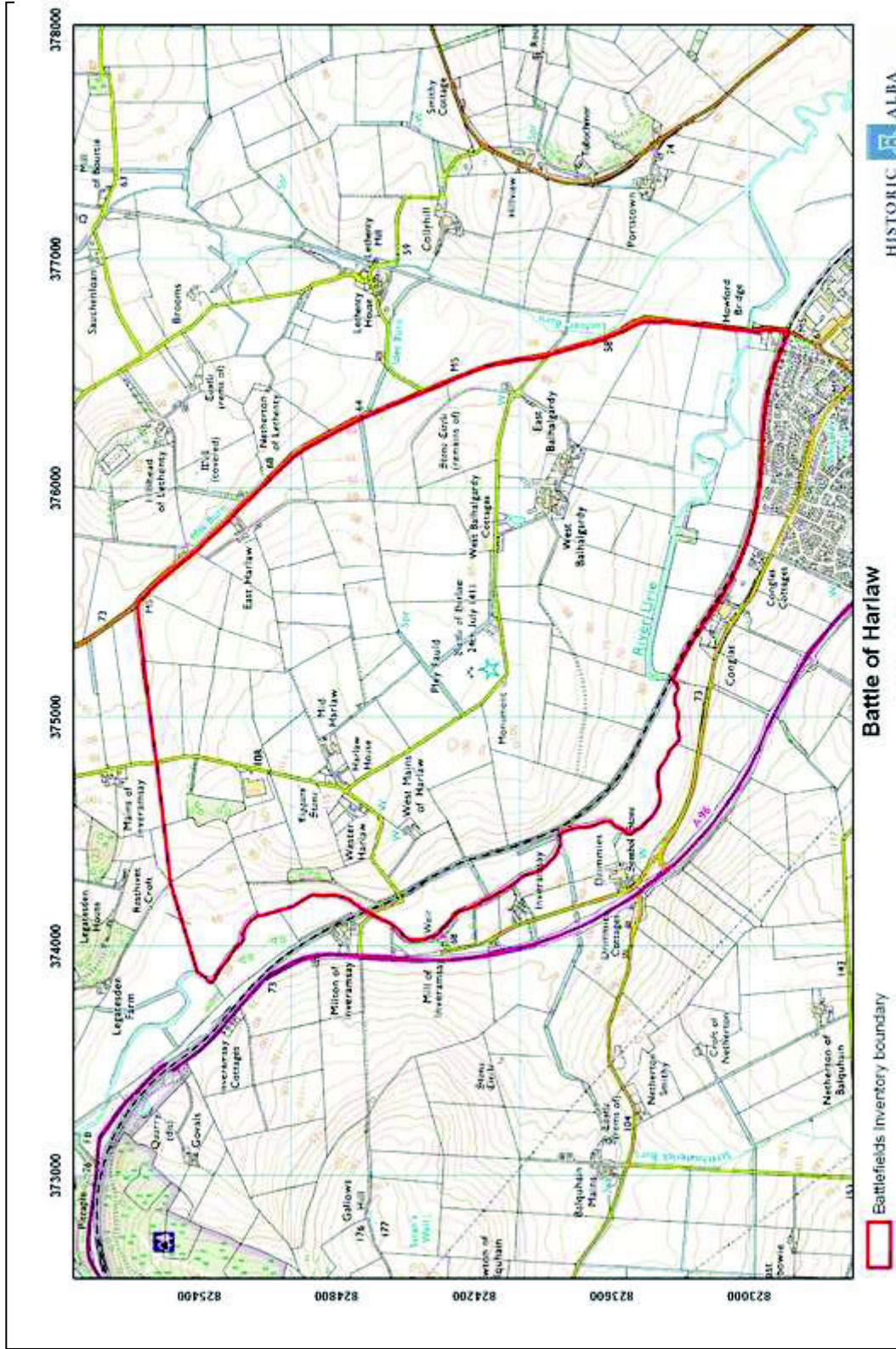
Appendix 7.1.1 Battle of Alford



Appendix 7.1.3 Battle of Fyvie



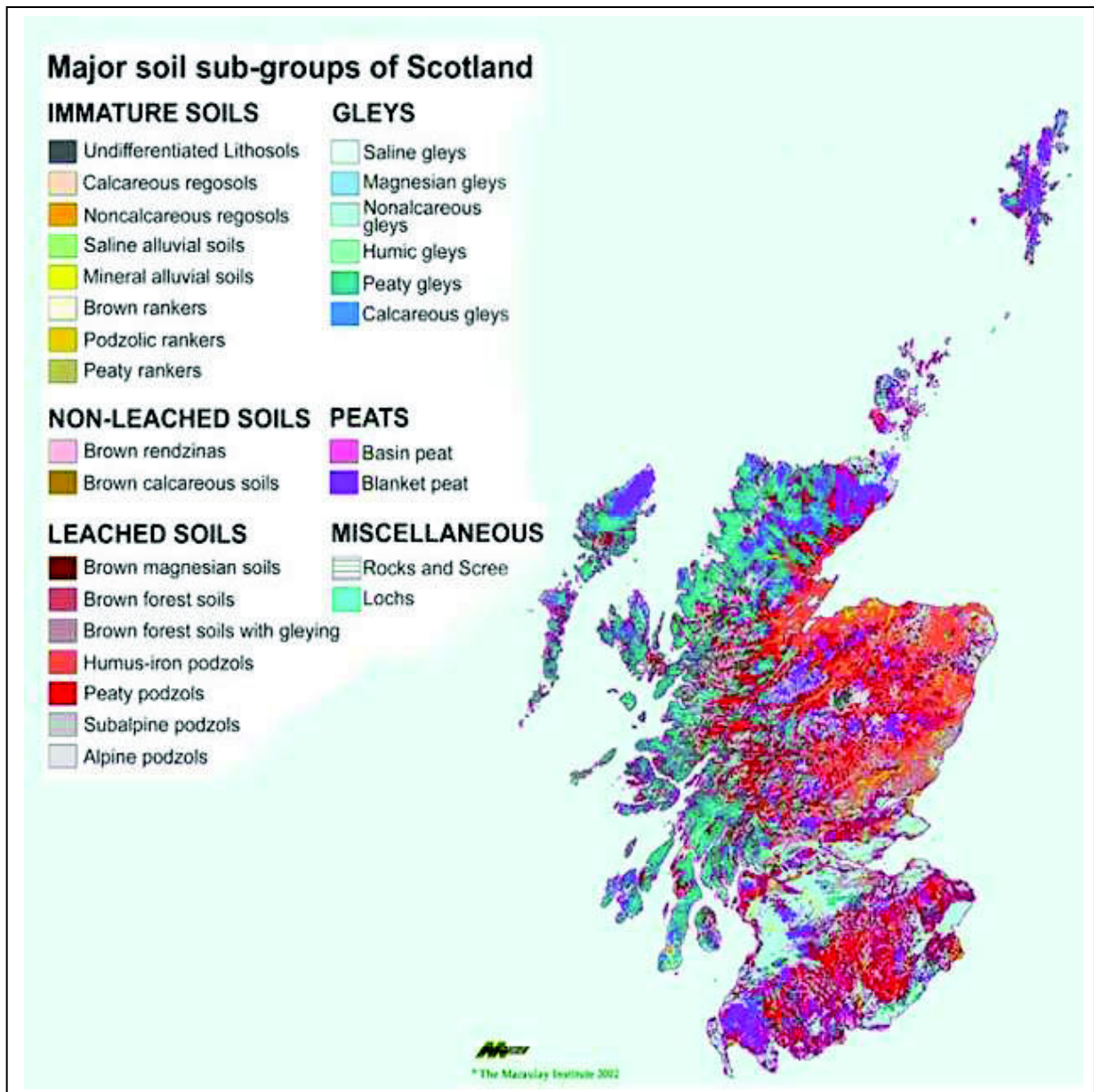
Appendix 7.1.3 Battle of Harlaw



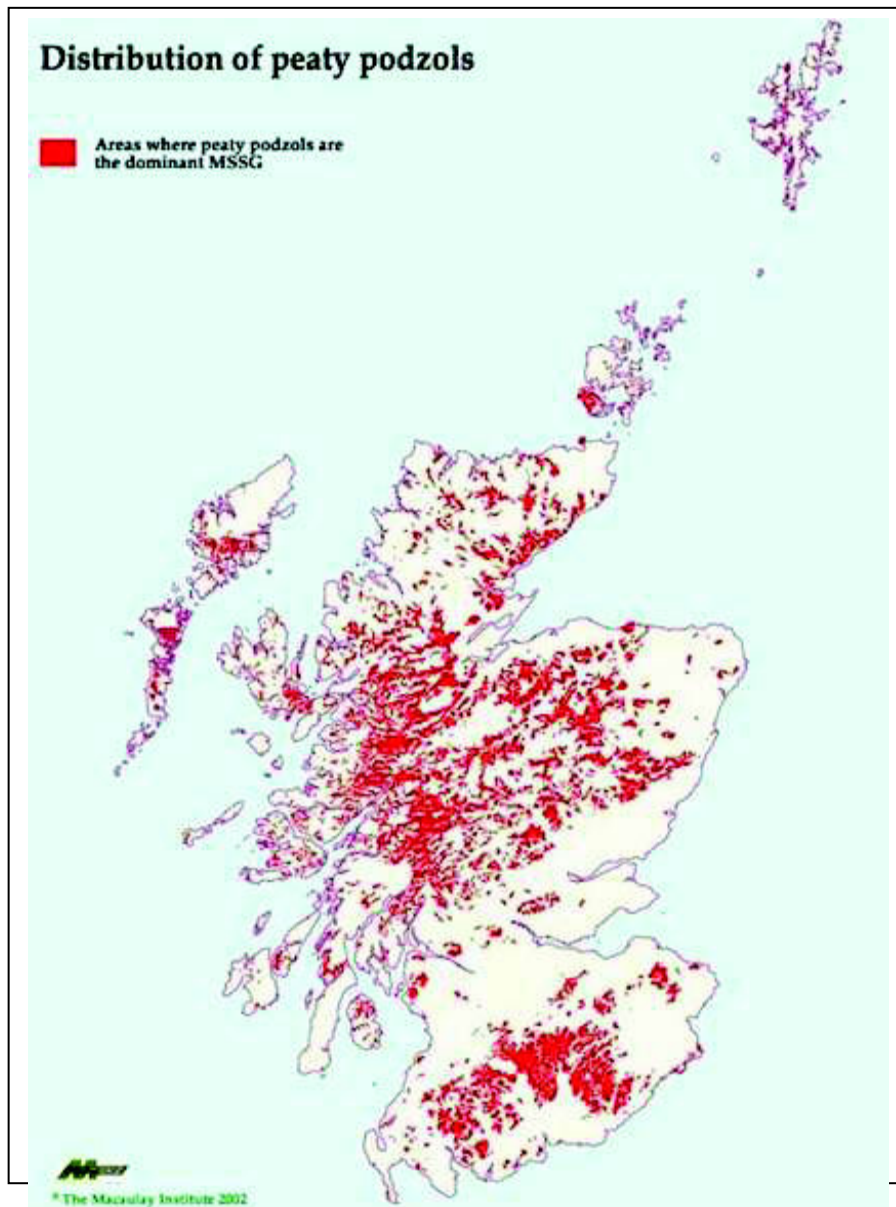
HISTORIC SCOTLAND
ALBA AOSMHOR

Battle of Harlaw
24 July 1411
Local Authority: Aberdeenshire

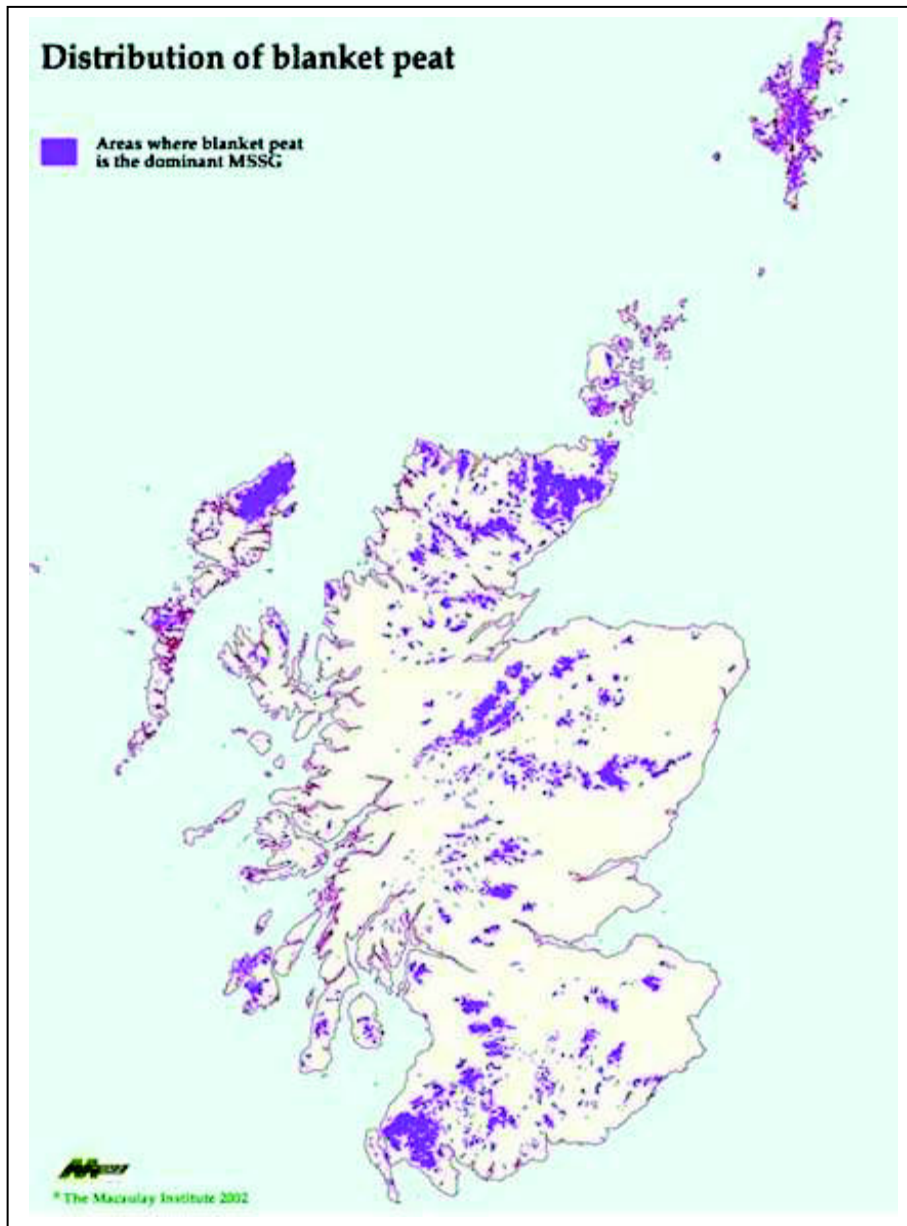
Appendix 7.2.1 Major Soil sub-groups



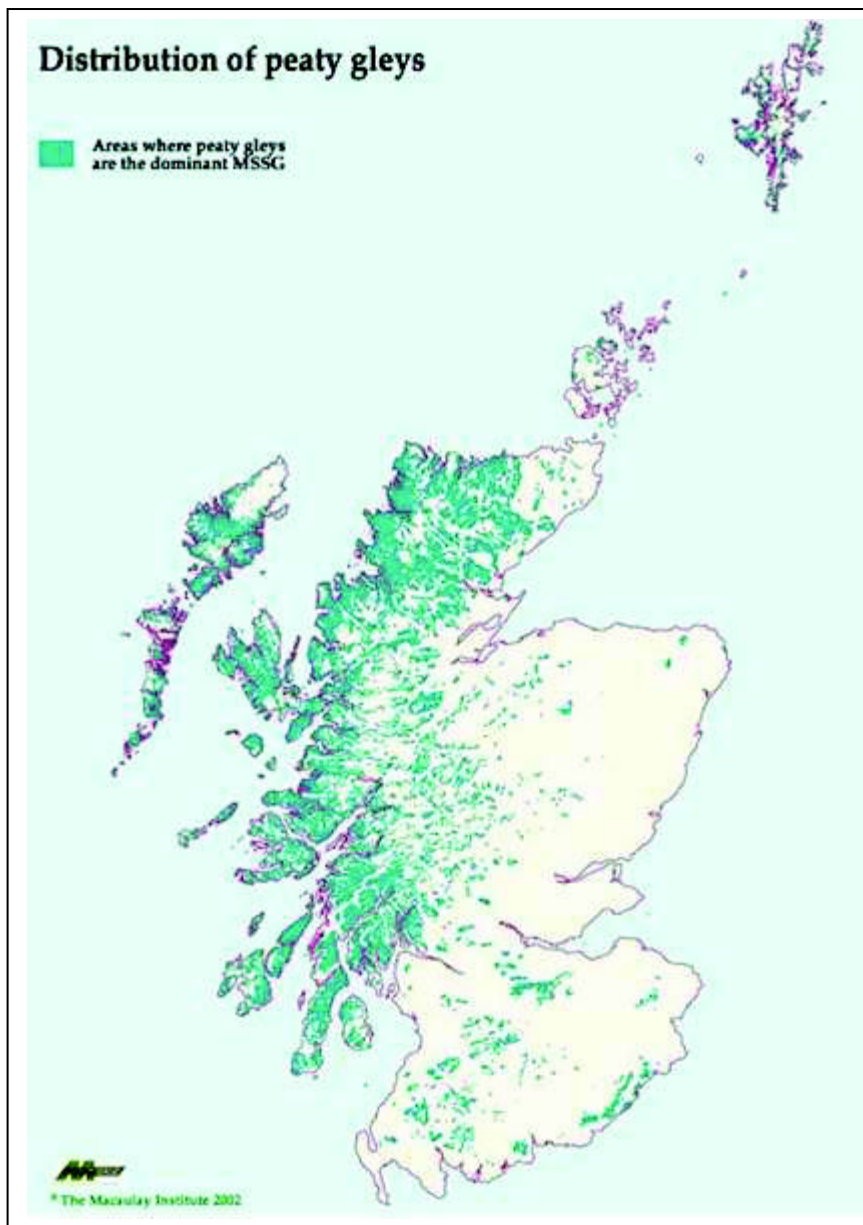
Appendix 7.2.2 Peaty Podzols



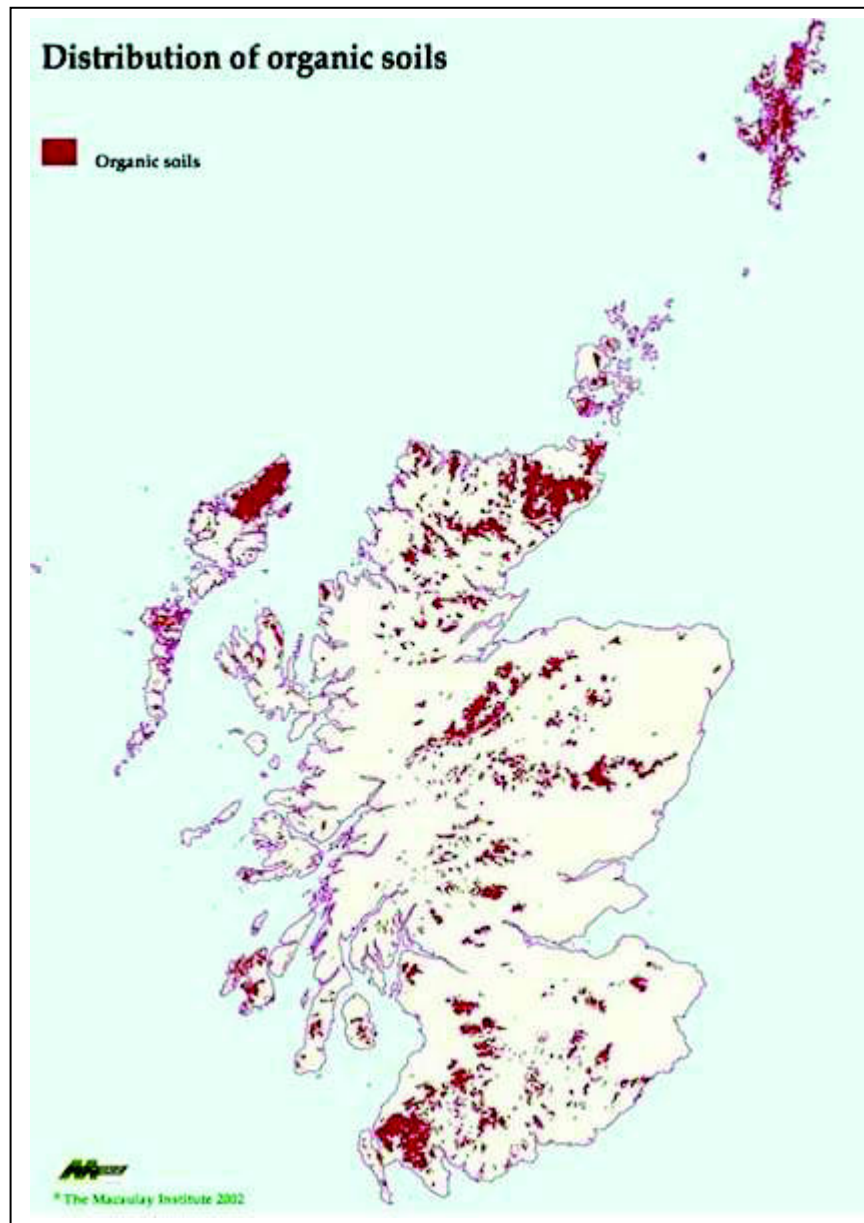
Appendix 7.2.3 Blanket Peat



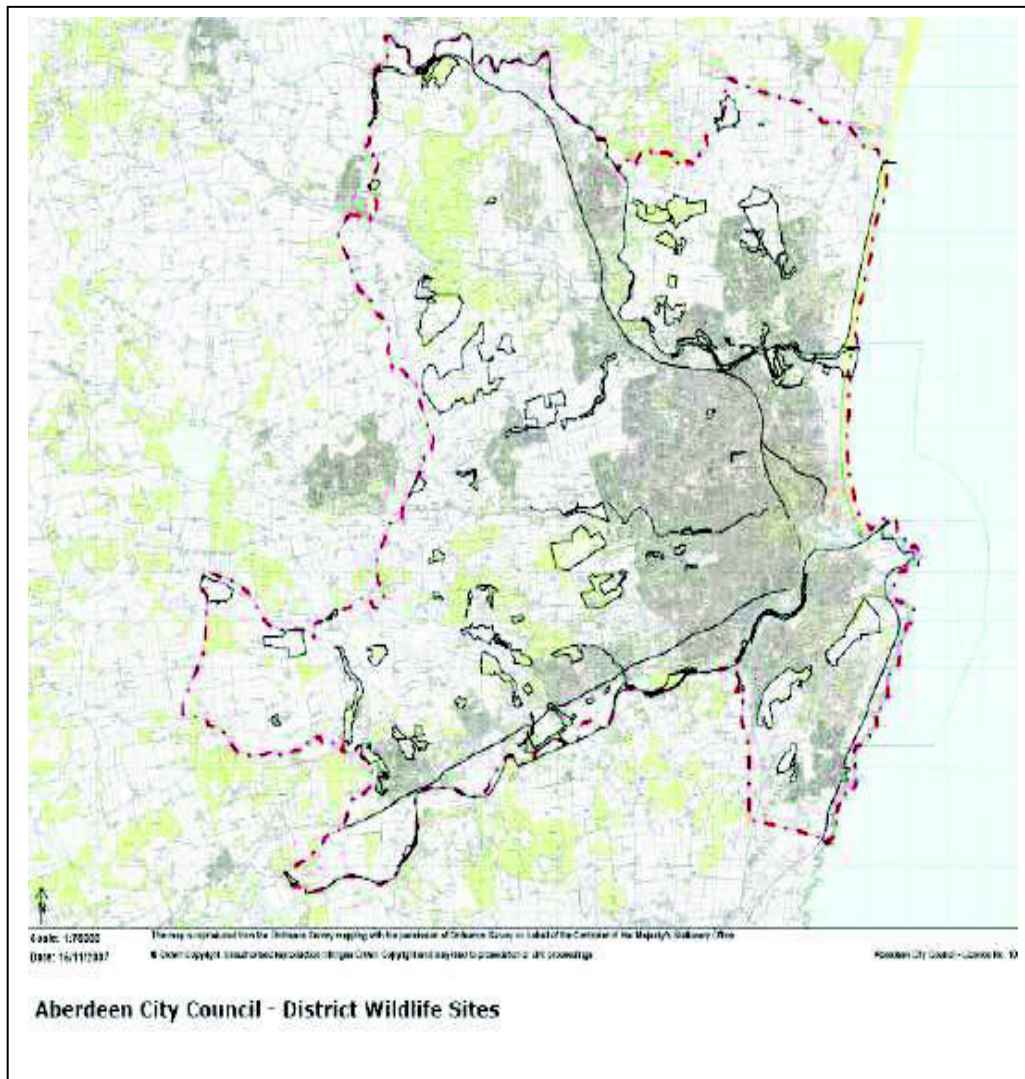
Appendix 7.2.4 Peaty Gleys



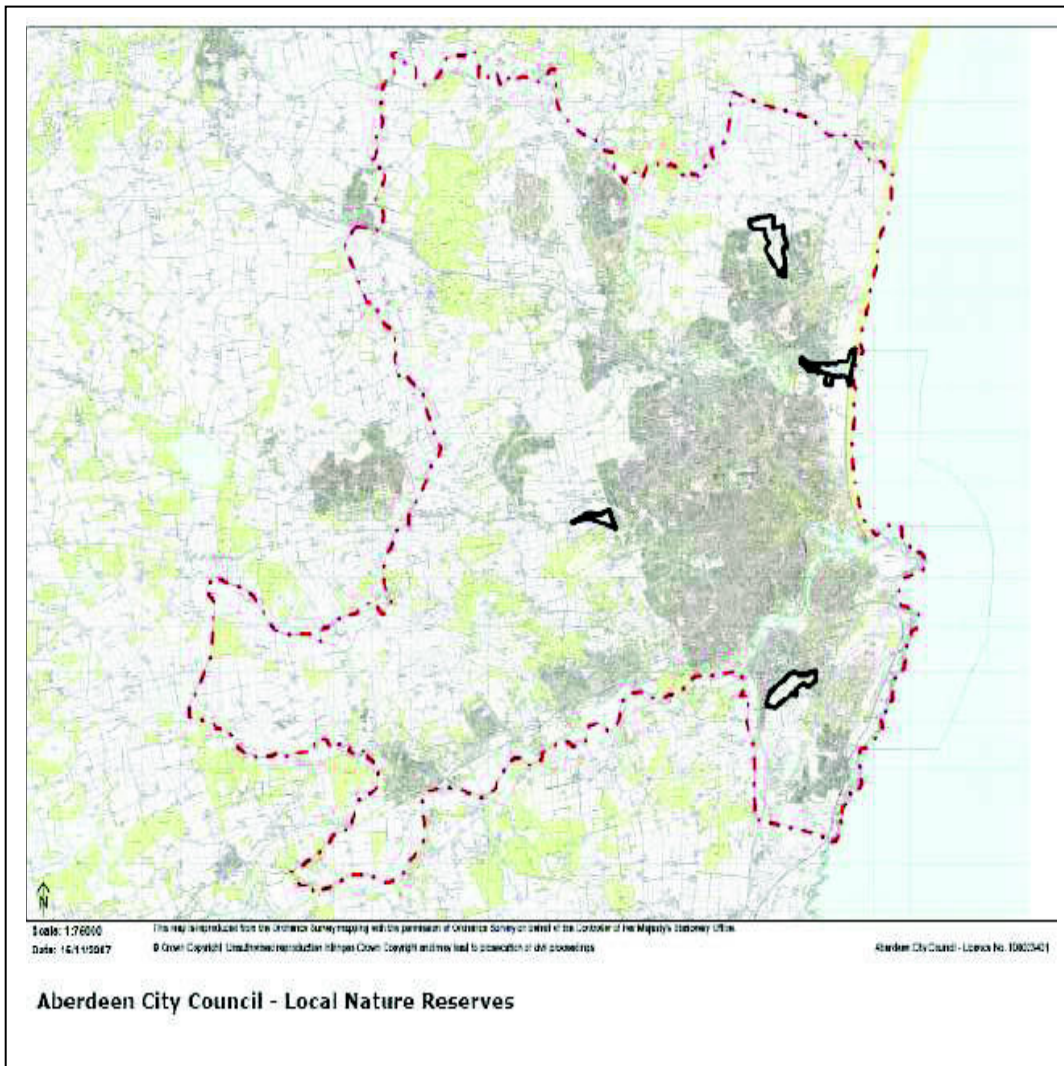
Appendix 7.2.5 Organic Soils



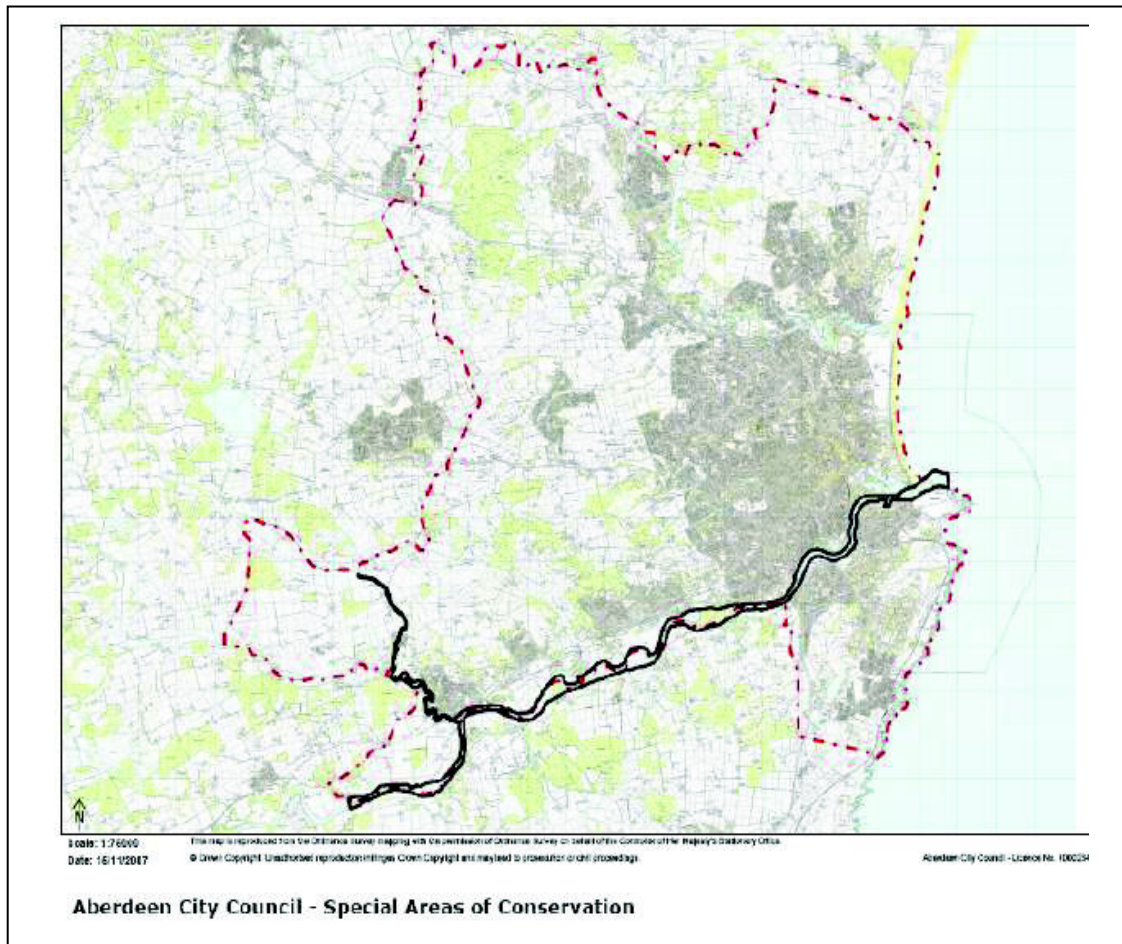
Appendix 7.3.2 District Wild Life Sites



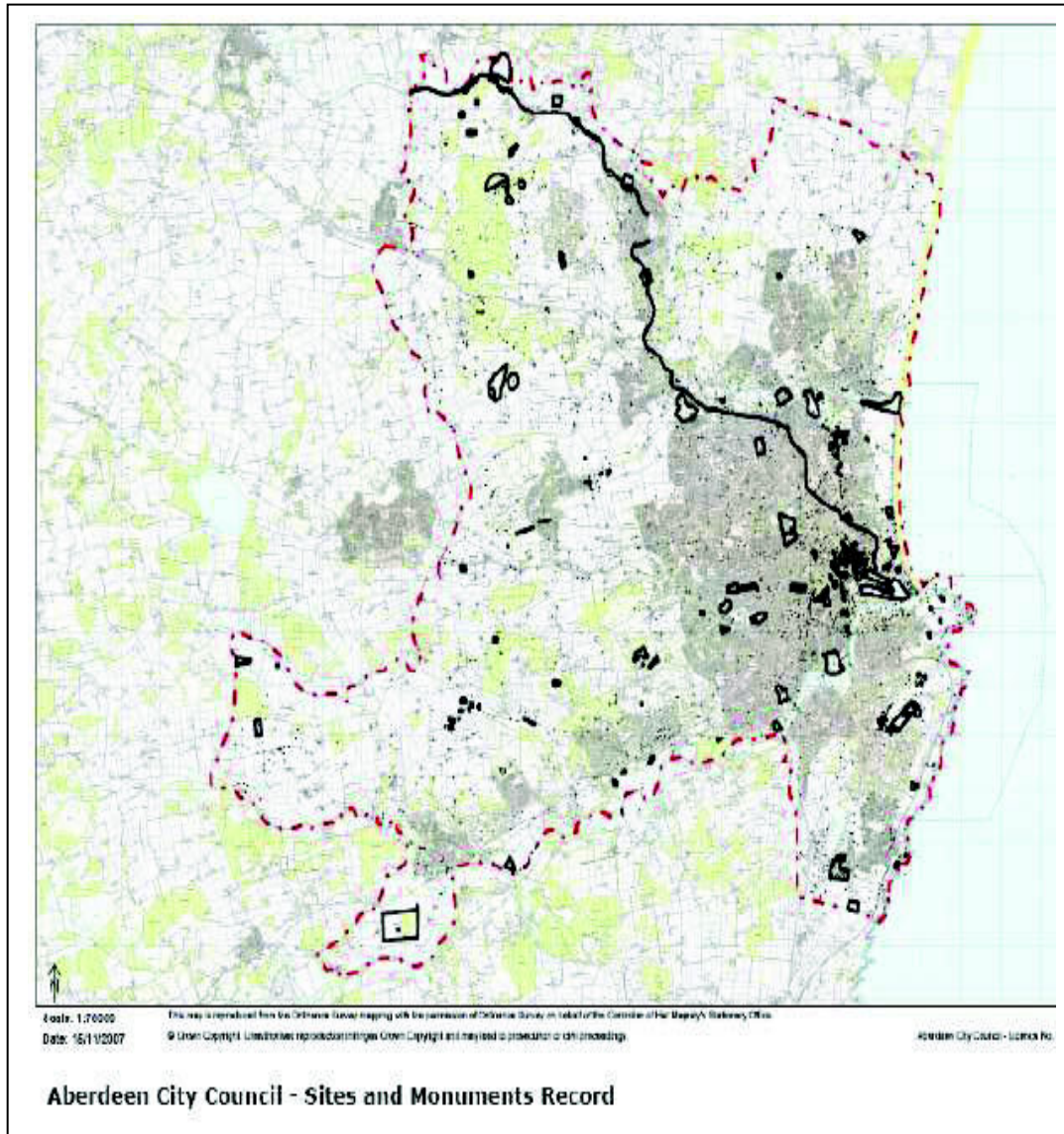
Appendix 7.3.3 Local Nature Reserves



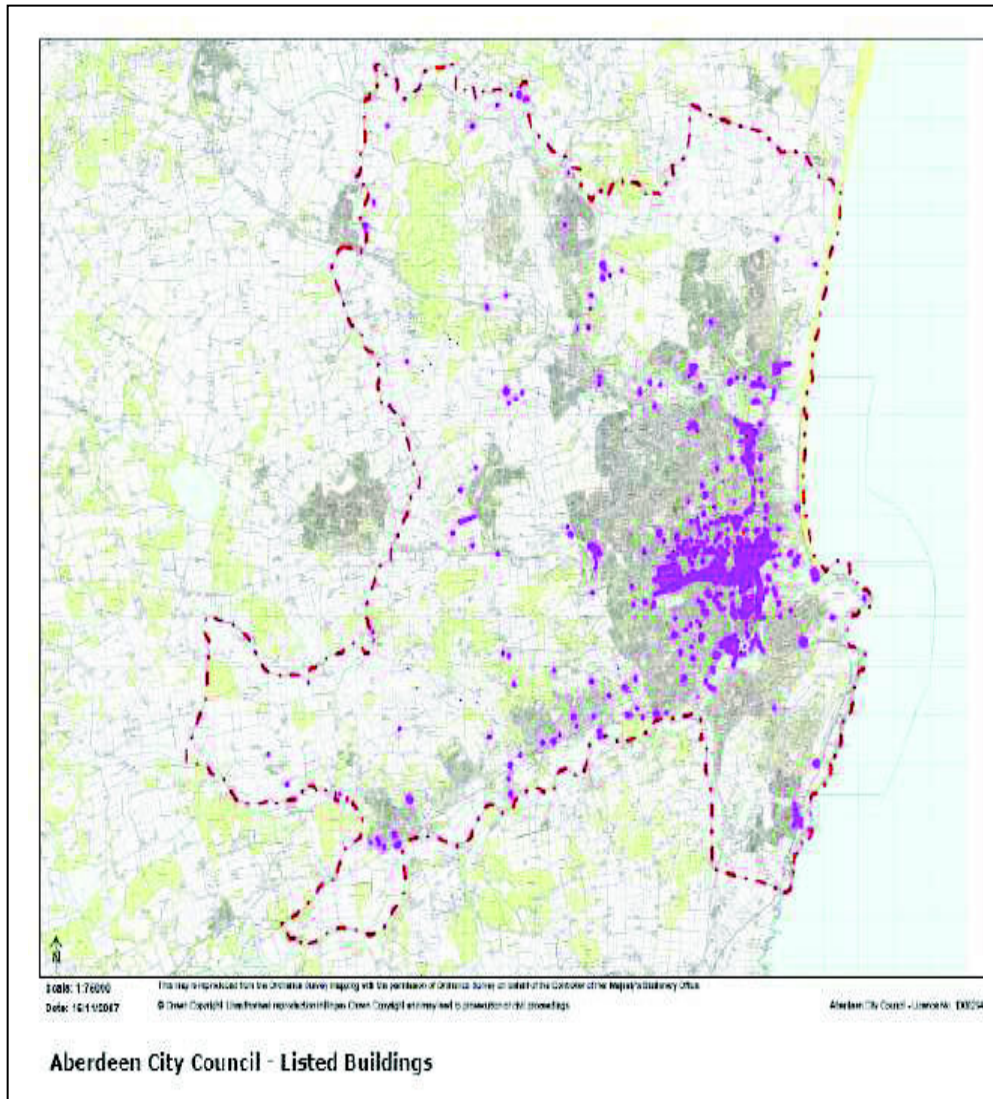
Appendix 7.3.4 Special Area of Conservation



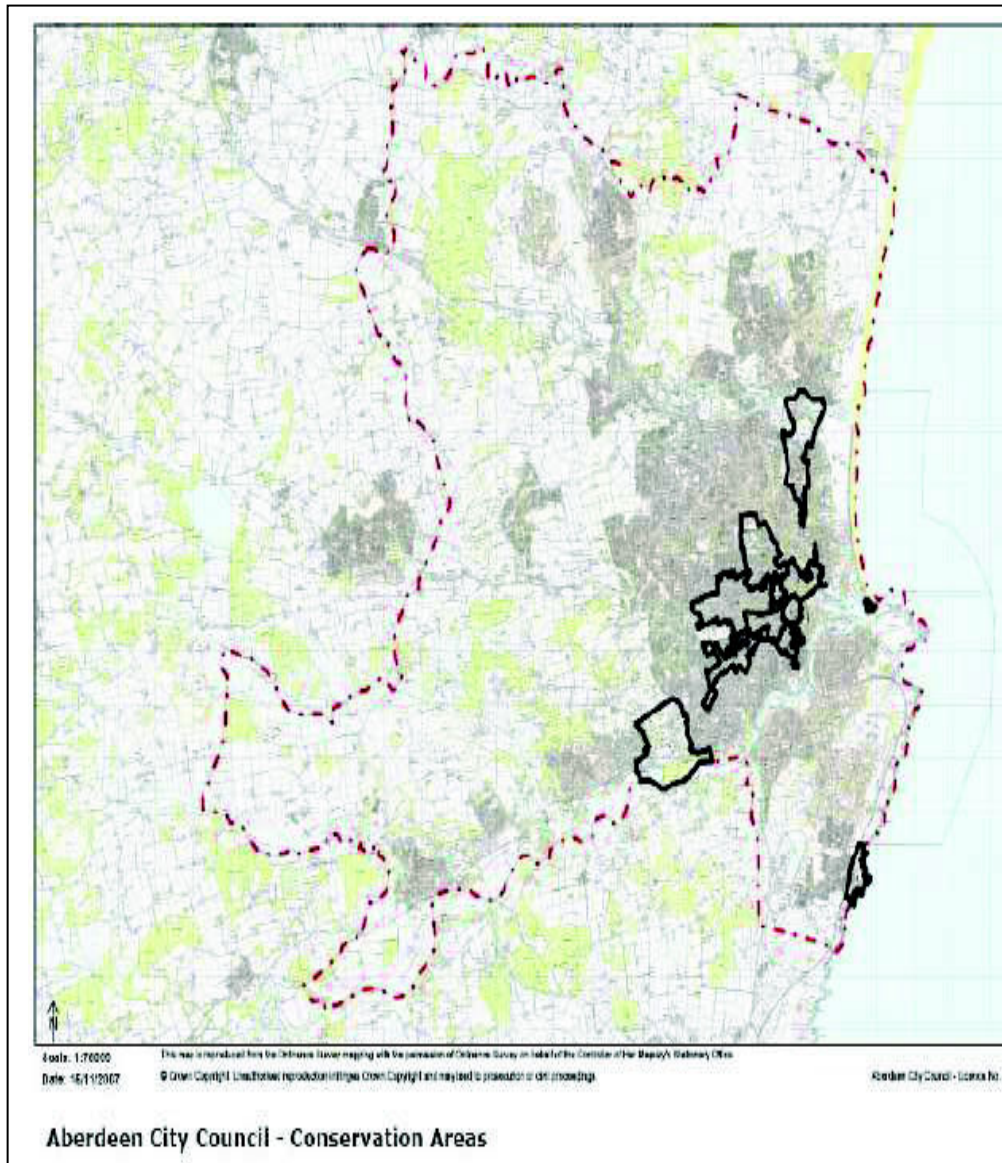
Appendix 7.3.5 Sites and Monuments Record



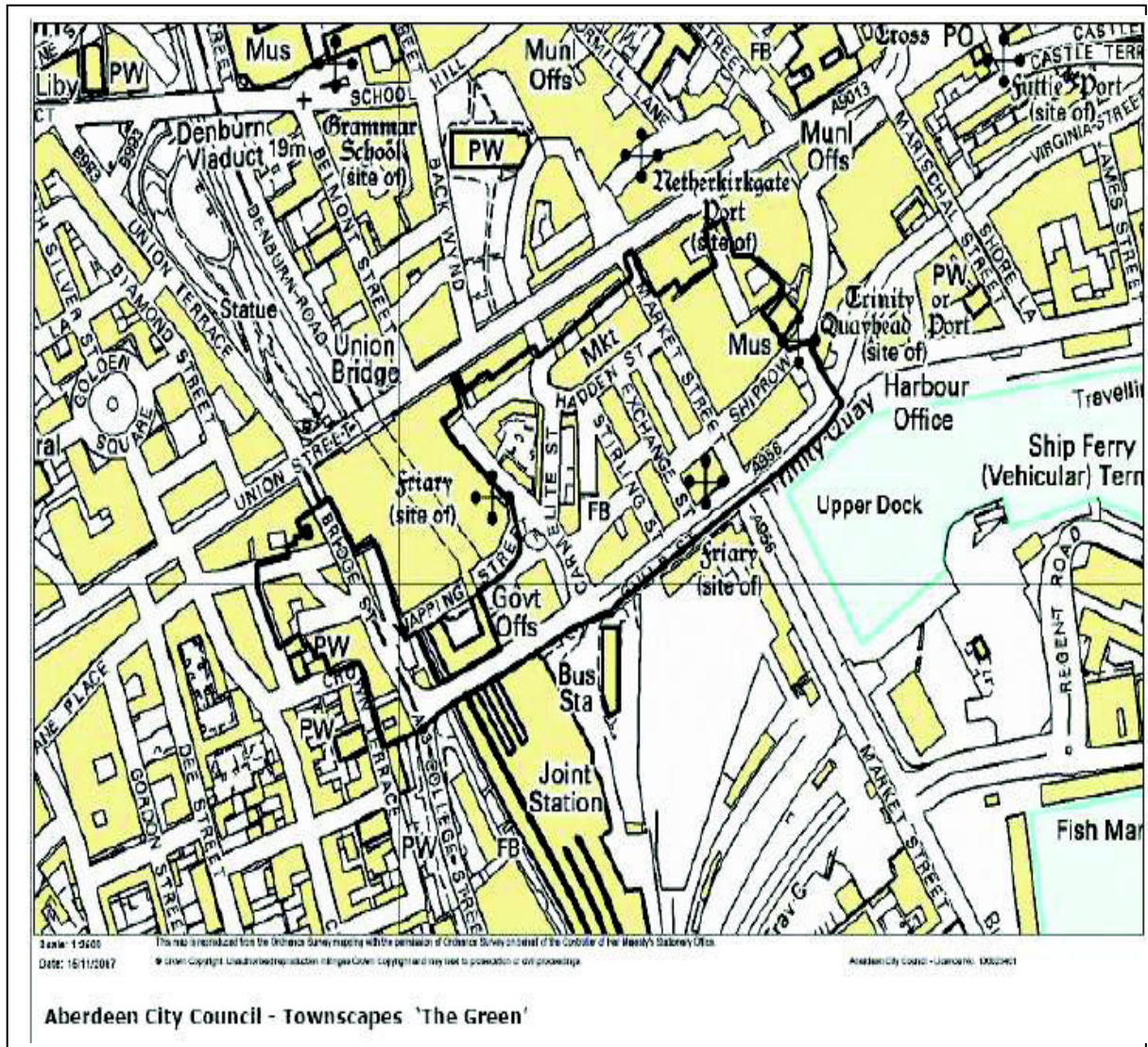
Appendix 7.3.6 Listed Buildings



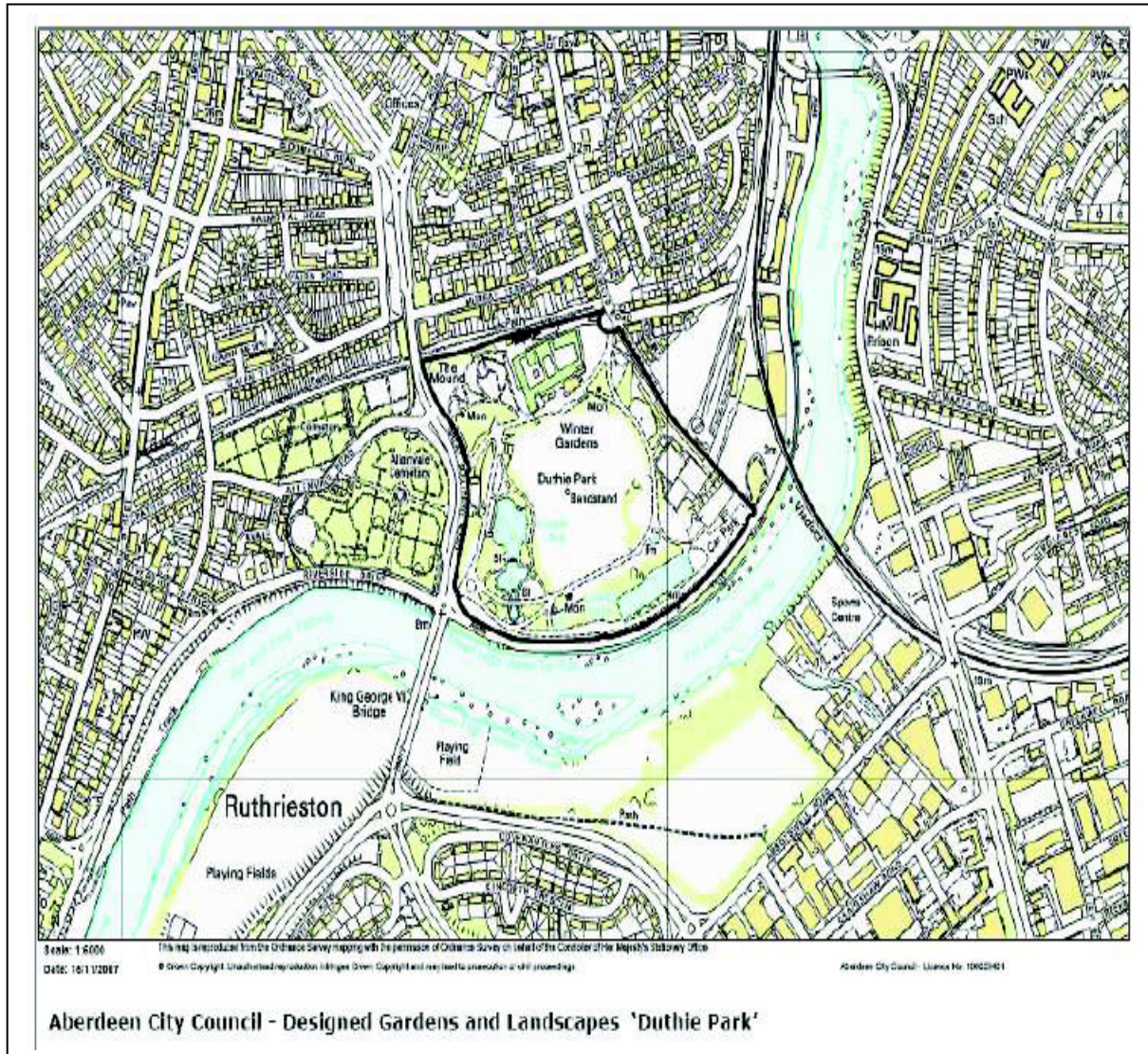
Appendix 7.3.7 Conservation Areas



Appendix 7.3.8 Townscapes – The Green



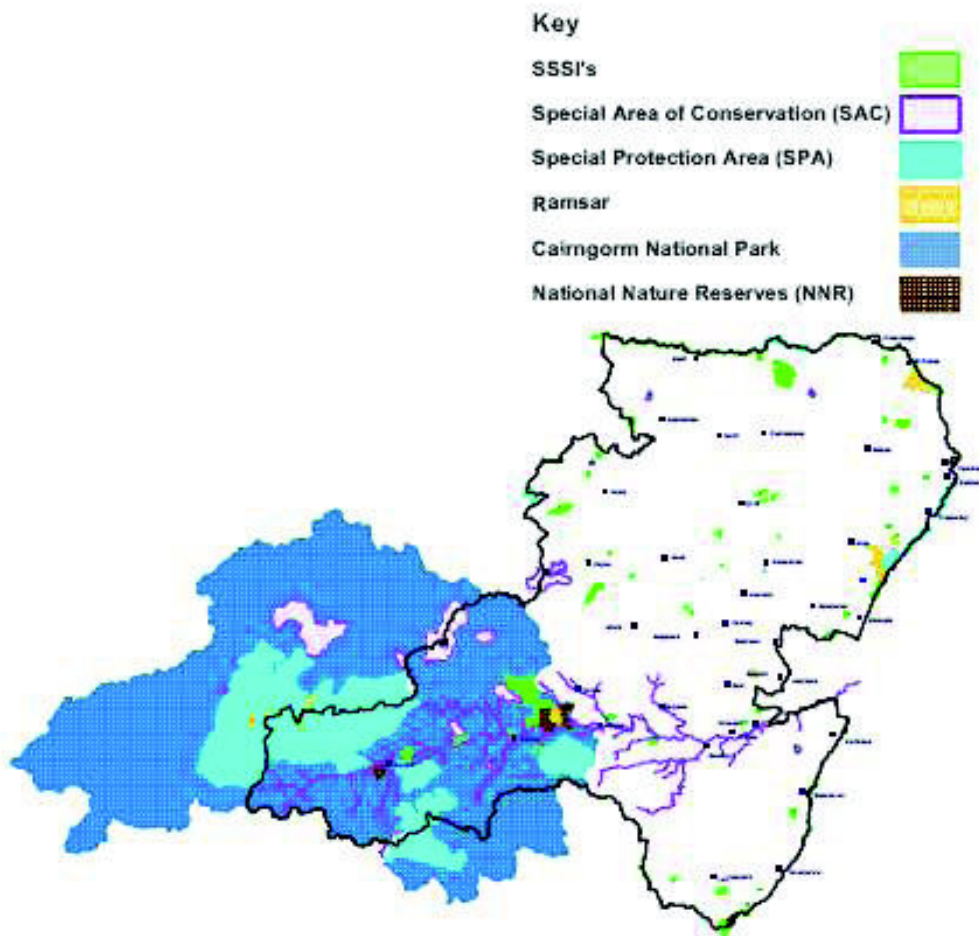
Appendix 7.3.9 Designed Garden and Landscapes – Duthie Park



Appendix 7.4.1 International and National Heritage Designations

Aberdeenshire Maps

International and national natural heritage designations



Appendix 7.4.2 Landscape Designations

Landscape designations: Areas of Landscape Significance, Cairngorms National Park, and National Scenic Areas

Key

Areas of Landscape Significance



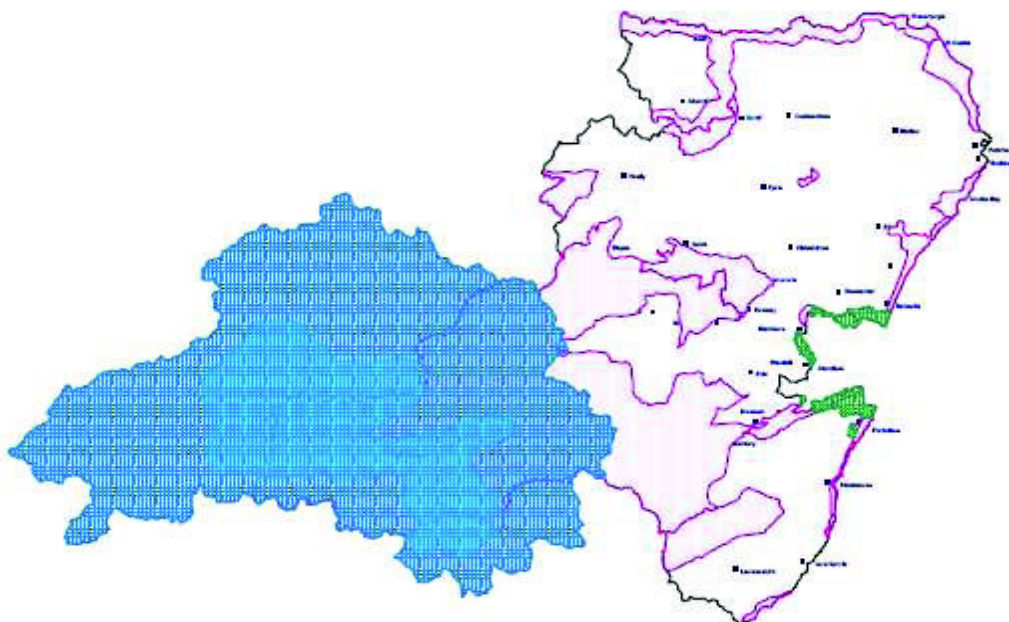
Green Belt



National Scenic Areas (NSA)

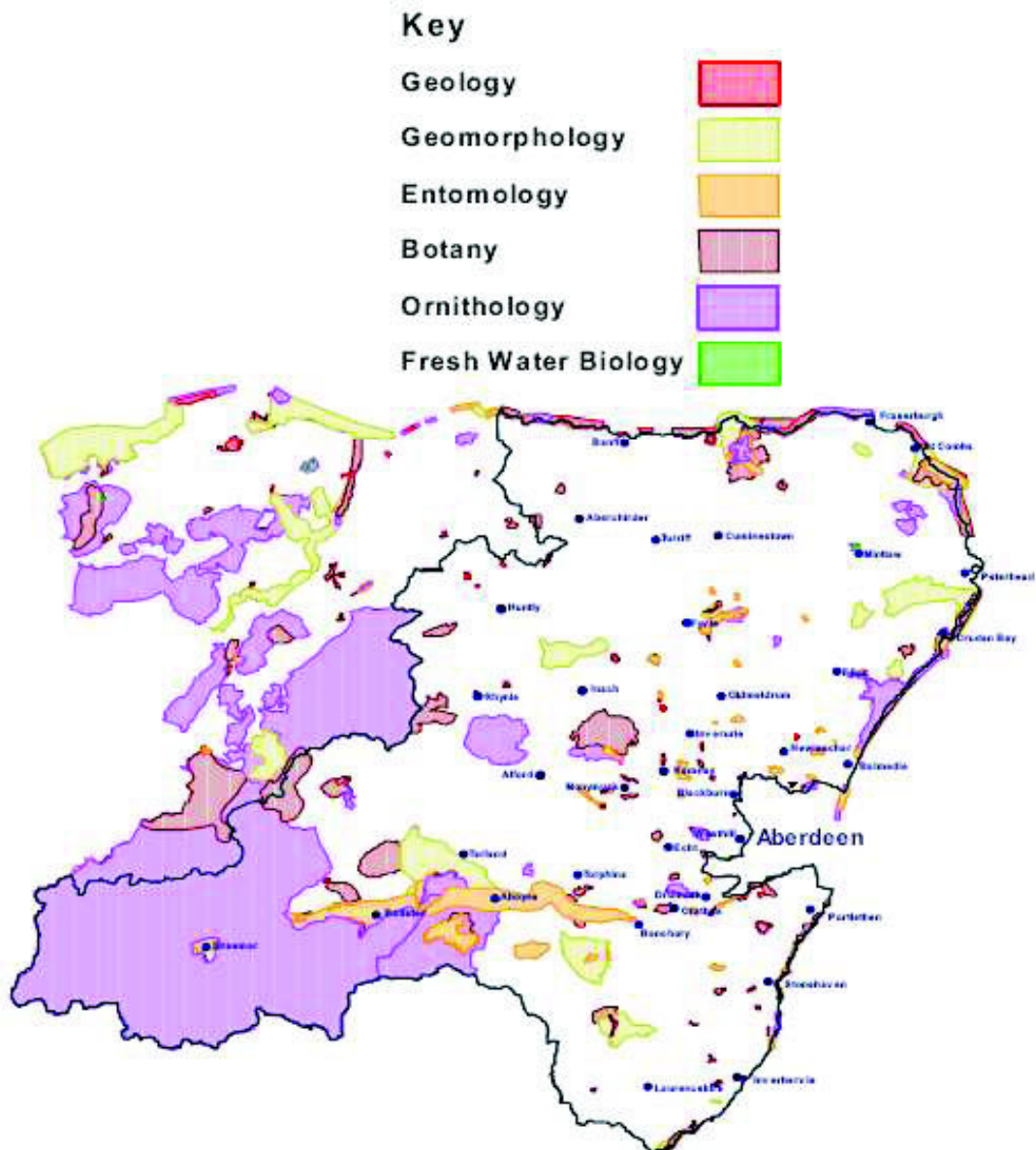


Cairngorms National Park

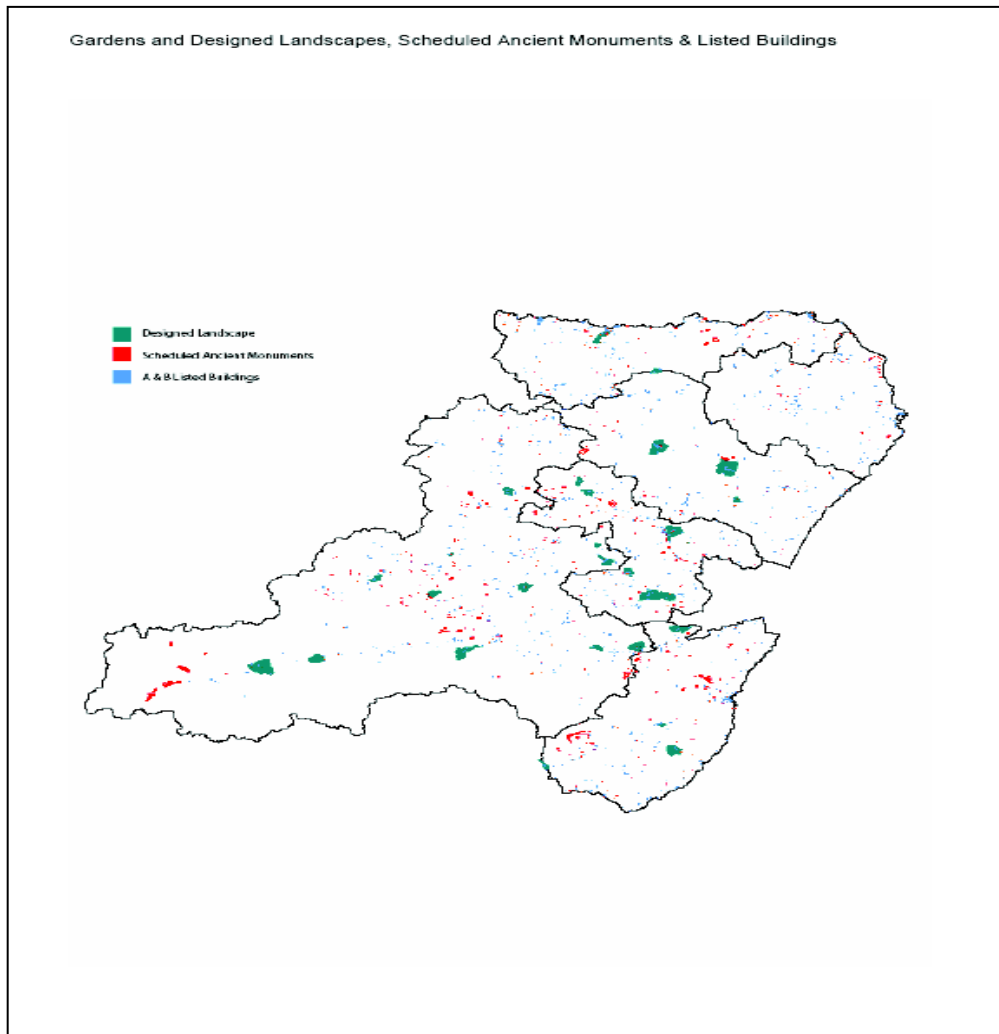


Appendix 7.4.4 Local natural heritage designations

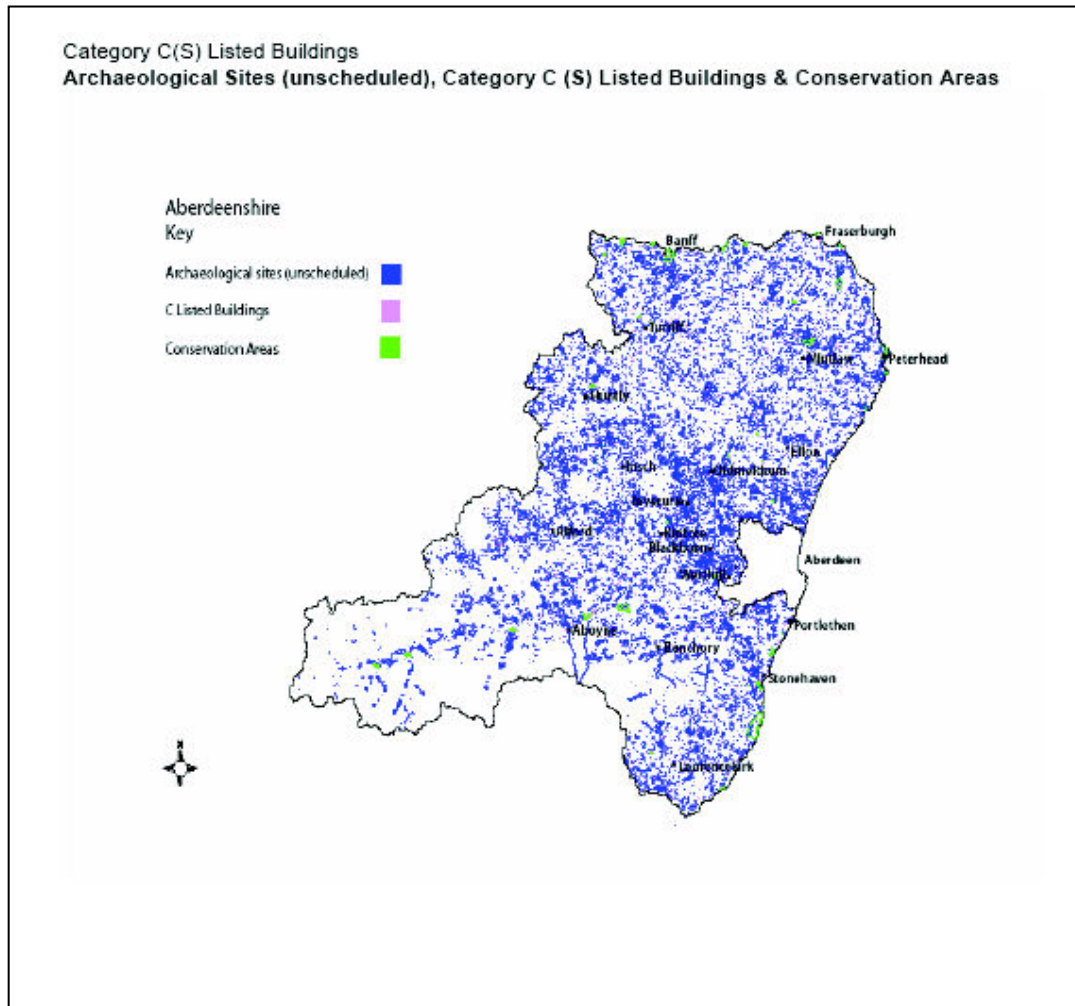
Local natural heritage designations: Sites of Environmental Sensitive Areas / Sites of Interest to Natural Science



Appendix 7.4.4 Scheduled Ancient Monuments



Appendix 7.4.5 Category C(S) Listed Buildings



Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

This Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is designed to inform the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan. A SFRA involves the collection, analysis and presentation of existing and readily available flood risk information (from any source) for the area of interest. It constitutes a strategic overview of flood risk, without necessarily meeting the reporting requirements of a detailed Flood Risk Assessment and has been executed as a desk top study. However, in some instances, greater detail may be required (if appropriate) to inform the Strategic Development Plan. Part of a SFRA could be the identification of priority areas for more detailed analysis.

Sources of information on SFRA for the Main Issues Report came from Appendix 1 of the Technical Flood Risk Guidance for Stakeholders which was produced by SEPA. This has now been superseded by new Technical Guidance to support Development Planning which was issued by SEPA in June 2012. Those sources of information considered appropriate to Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are briefly set out below.

1. Biennial Flood Reports

These reports specify the measures that Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils have undertaken to meet their duties under the Flood Prevention (Scotland) Act 1961 as amended by the Flood Prevention and Land Drainage (Scotland) Act 1997. They detail flood prevention measures and strategies for preventing and mitigating flooding, including proposals and expenditure for the future. Flood and road drainage incidents are reported and measures which dealt with them are outlined. Both Councils have produced a 7th Biennial Report which covers the period up to November 2009. Under the Flood Risk (Scotland) Management Act 2009, Biennial Flood Reports will no longer be produced. Instead, Flood Risk Management Strategies will be prepared for 14 local plan districts in Scotland, of which Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire form one.

2. Flood Prevention Schemes and other studies

Over the last few years there have been a number of studies that have either been carried out or are proposed in Aberdeen.

- Glashieburn, Bridge of Don. This is located on the Glashieburn close to Lochside Drive. Works here are now complete.
- West Cults Farm, Cults. Aberdeen City Council has investigated the need to carry out a Flood Prevention Scheme in this area but decided not to proceed. It is understood that residents have proceeded with their own scheme.
- Fraser Road. This is part of the built up area to the north of Hutcheon Street and flood prevention works were successfully completed there in 2004.
- Hydrological studies were commissioned in 2007 to investigate flooding problems in Northfield, Middlefield, Cummings Park and Logie. This may lead to the development of flood mitigation measures and ways to improve the drainage of the area.

- The 7th Biennial Flood Report proposed the promotion of a scheme to tackle flooding issues on the Den Burn at Jacks Brae in Rosemount.

Aberdeenshire's 7th Biennial Flood Report outlines a number of actions and proposals.

- Flood studies have been carried out at the following locations:
 - Burn of Cauldcotts, Fettercairn
 - Ythan Estuary, Newburgh
 - Tarland Burn, Tarland and Aboyne
 - Johnshaven (coastal flood / erosion assessment)
 - Extreme coastal water levels assessment
 - Coastal landslip studies at Stonehaven and Pennan

Where appropriate, the studies will generate cost benefit analyses which will be used to justify proposals for Flood Protection Schemes and Coast Protection Works.

- Johnshaven Coast Protection Works. Properties and the road at Beach Road, Johnshaven were being threatened by coastal erosion. The erosion, if left unchecked would have led to an increase in flood risk to a number of properties. Following investigations and a public meeting, a 100 metre long rock revetment was installed at a total cost of £101,000. This will provide long term benefits to residents in terms of reduced risk from flooding and erosion.
- Flood Alleviation Works at Whinnyfold, Cruden Bay and Alford. Aberdeenshire Council completed a flood relief scheme at Whinnyfold, Cruden Bay at a cost of £12,000. A number of properties were being flooded on a frequent basis. A flood alleviation scheme, also costing £12,000, was completed to prevent repeated flooding to properties in Alford.
- Landslides. Following major mudslides at Pennan in August 2007, which resulted in the inundation of a number of properties, the Scottish Government agreed in December 2008 to fund £500,000 of a £600,000 scheme to reduce the risk of a repeat occurrence. This scheme is currently being developed and it is anticipated that the works will be implemented during the summer of 2010.

Concerns have existed for a number of years about the stability of the Bervie Braes, Stonehaven. The Braes are privately owned but a public road runs across the slope and approximately 65 houses are located at its base, many of them Council owned. As a result of heavy rainfall on 1 November 2009 a localised area of road edge and embankment failed causing material to be washed down towards the harbour, affecting private properties. Options for stabilising the wider slope had already been examined and a request made to the Scottish Government for assistance to fund a major remediation project.

Over the last two years localised landslides have also occurred at Newtonhill, Banff, Boddam and Cruden Bay. With the exception of Banff, the slips have all occurred on private land. In each case the cause has been a combination of water run off or seepage from above acting on overly steep coastal slopes. The Council has provided limited technical advice on each occasion. As a general rule, it will only undertake remedial action if it owns the land, if its assets are affected or where it has in some way contributed to the problem.

In addition the following proposals are outlined;

- Further flood studies will be undertaken at Stonehaven (Carron), Huntly (Meadow Burn / Deveron), Portsoy (Soy Burn), Marykirk (in conjunction with restoration funding from SEPA).
- Flood Protection Schemes are proposed on the Cauldcotts Burn at Fettercairn, and the Tarland Burn at Aboyne and Tarland. It is likely that flood alleviation schemes will also be drawn up in Huntly and Stonehaven subject to the outcome of the flood studies.
- Flood Alleviation Works at Boddam, Peterhead - the problem caused by surface water coming off the Trunk Road at Boddam and flooding domestic property has advanced to the stage where agreement from Scottish Water has been obtained recently to undertake the necessary connections to the surface water sewer of the former RAF Buchan site, and the adjacent Army Cadets' property.
- Coast Protection Works at Scotstown, Banff will be progressed to strengthen and repair damage to the existing seawall.

3. British Hydrological Society

This website contains a historical chronology of British hydrological events largely taken from documentary evidence. A number of flood events are noted from the 18th century to the present, mainly concerning flood damage along the Rivers Deveron, Don, Dee and Ythan. A search facility is available here <http://www.dundee.ac.uk/geography/cbhe/>

4. Flood Events

Flood and drainage problems are highlighted in the Biennial Flood Reports. In addition two flood events on the Rivers Don and Dee have been mapped on Aberdeen City Council's Geographic Information System. These took place in September 1995 and November 2002 and are generally confined to the River Dee and Don valley floors.

5. SEPA Flood Maps

SEPA's Flood Maps are available on their website and show areas of land which are at risk of river and coastal flooding. They formed an important part of both Council's assessment of development options and of the SEA of sites in the Local Development Plans. Any potential flood risk is identified in these assessments. Both Council's Geographic Information Systems hold this data. Map 1 show the high level flood risk areas of the Rivers Dee, Don, Ythan and Ugie catchements. Map 2 shows a more detailed representation of the 1:200 flood risk area for both pluvial (river) and coastal flooding. SEPA's Flood Maps can be viewed online here;

http://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/flood_extent_maps/view_the_map.aspx

6. Aberdeen Beach Recharge

To protect the revetment and area around Aberdeen beach from continued erosion and failure, a programme of beach recharge took place in July and August 2006. This programme protected property and infrastructure and provided an enhanced beach for recreational use. To ensure the stability of the new beach and to protect the area from further erosion, rock t-head extensions to the present timber groynes were constructed to keep the sand in place. Computer modelling of the coastline,

experience gained from elsewhere, and an economic analysis of the cost of the options, indicated that this was the best option for protecting the beach.

7. Future Issues

The City Council gave a response to the Rural Affairs and Environment Committee of the Scottish Parliament on an inquiry into Flooding and Flood Management which focussed on climate change issues. A full response can be found on the internet at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S3/committees/rae/inquiries/flooding/AberdeenCityCouncil.htm>

8. National Flood Risk Assessment

The National Flood Risk Assessment is the first step of the new risk-based approach to managing the impacts of flooding, introduced by the [Flood Risk Management \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#). It represents a significant milestone in our understanding of flood risk by bringing together the latest information on the sources and impacts of flooding across Scotland.

From the National Flood Risk Assessment we have found that one in 22 of all residential properties and one in 13 of all non-residential properties are at risk of flooding from rivers, the sea or heavy rainfall in urban areas. The outcomes of the National Flood Risk Assessment will help us to target actions for flood risk management in those areas where we can have the greatest impact.

SEPA is now building on the National Flood Risk Assessment by producing the '*Flood Risk Management Planning in Scotland: Arrangements for 2012 -2016*' document which provides further explanation of how and when Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans will be produced. This publication, which has been jointly produced by SEPA and the Scottish Government outlines the new approach to flood risk management which will help us to co-ordinate the involvement of local partnerships and advisory groups by defining sustainable policies and actions for Flood Risk Management.

SEPA has published the following documents to accompany the National Flood Risk Assessment:

- [The National Flood Risk Assessment](#) (📄 774Kb): This document provides further detail on the National Flood Risk Assessment and how its outcomes support Flood Risk Management Planning.
- [Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans](#) (📄 463Kb): Provides detail on the content and production of Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans.
- [Flood Risk Management Planning in Scotland: Arrangements for 2012 -2016](#) (📄 1.29Mb): This document provides further detail of how and when Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management plans will be produced.

Information on the main sources of flooding in Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City and the associated impacts identified through the National Flood Risk Assessment are identified. It also provides a summary of Potentially Vulnerable Areas within the area and how they are spread between the local authorities. These are shown in Map 3. More detailed information on the sources and impacts of floods, including past events and catchment characteristics will be developed as part of the Flood Risk Management Strategies for each area. For instance the National Flood Risk

Assessment Risk Grid shows a more detailed gradation of flood risk based on 1km squares. This can indicate potential issues at a strategic level, and is shown in Map 4.

The North East Local Plan area covers all of Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City including part of the Cairngorms National Park. It has a total area of 6,780km². The National Flood Risk Assessment identified approximately 4,800 residential properties and 880 non-residential properties as at risk of flooding in this area. This equates to approximately 1 in 45 of all residential properties and 1 in 21 of all non-residential properties located within the area. The Weighted Annual Average Damages for properties and agricultural land at risk of flooding is estimated at £57.5million.

Conclusions

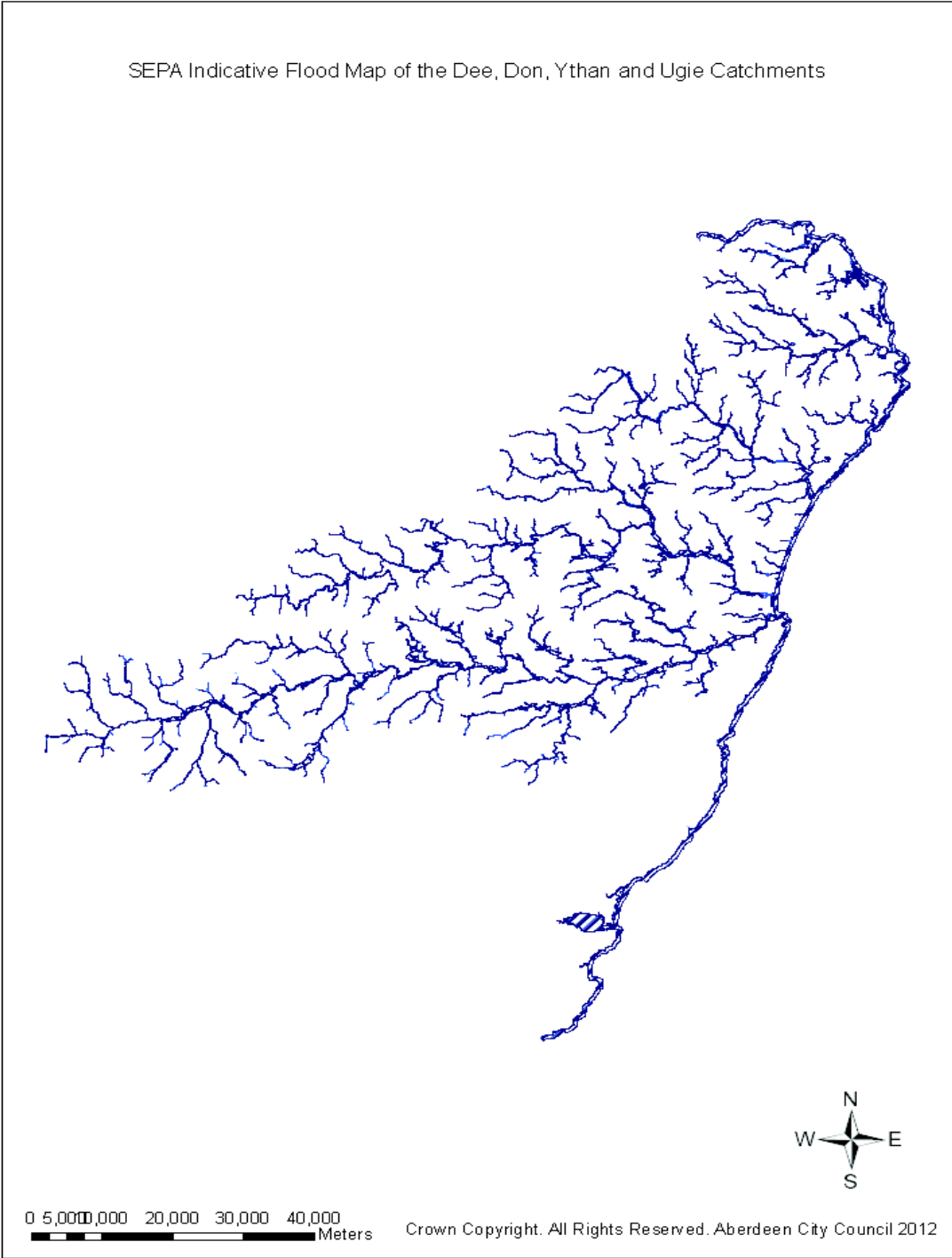
Clearly, some parts of the Strategic Development Plan Area are affected by flooding from a number of sources (fluvial, coastal, groundwater and surface water). The largest potential source of flood risk in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire is from rivers, closely followed by surface water flooding.

Most growth in the Strategic Development Plan is directed towards the Strategic Growth Areas and at a strategic level, the maps below show that particular attention needs to be given to areas around Huntly, Inverurie-Kintore, Ellon, Aberdeen and Stonehaven. Within the Local Growth and Diversification Areas, the maps highlight risks at Banff and Macduff, Fraserburgh, Peterhead, Turriff and Mintlaw.

The Strategic Development Plan recognises the risks of flooding that already exist but that climate change is likely to increase these risks. The plan notes that avoiding flood risk is an important means of adapting to climate change and that taking account of flood risk is vital when local development plans identify sites for development.

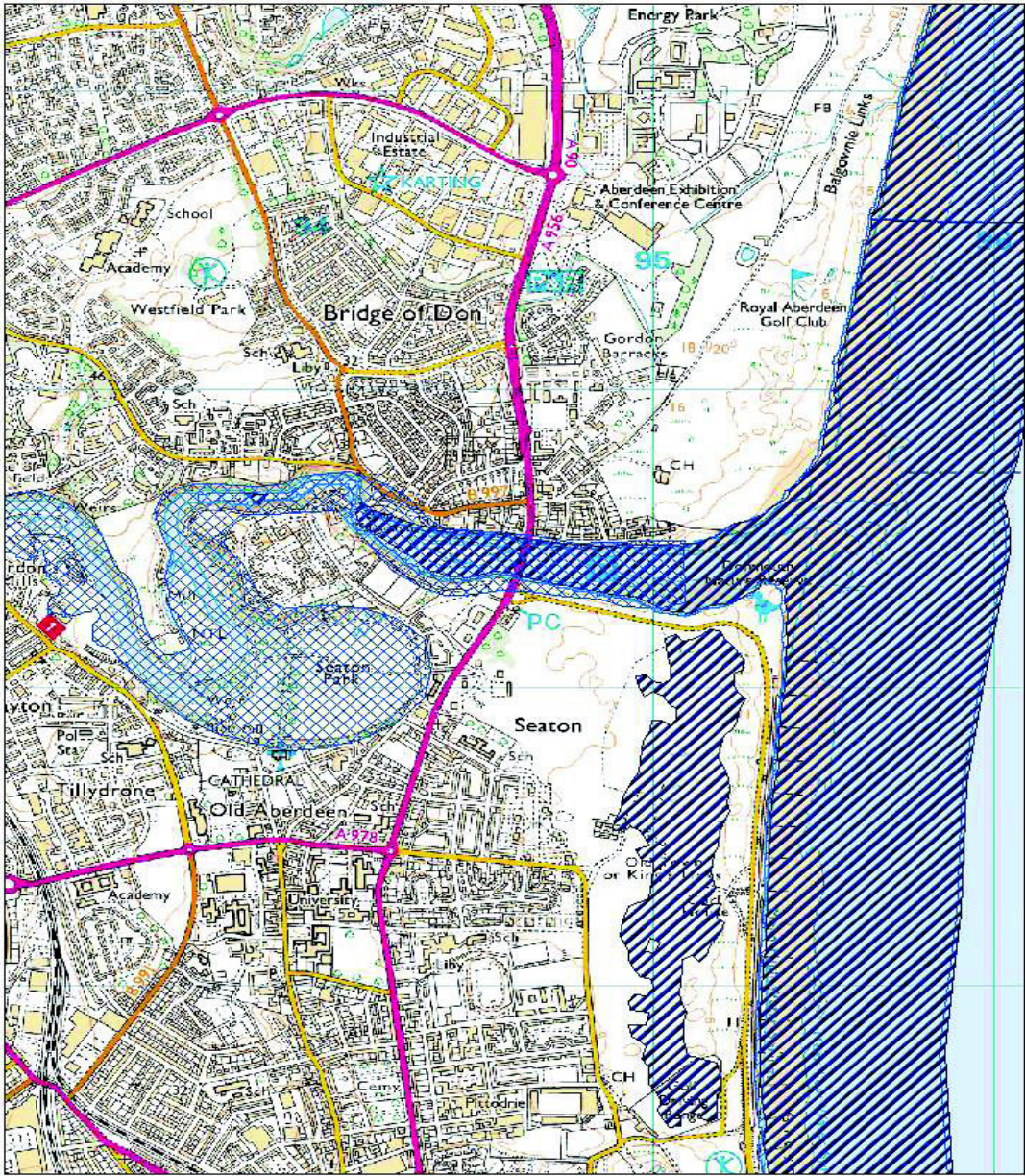
Flood risk will be avoided and managed in line with the Scottish Planning Policy risk framework and through local development plan policies and detailed allocations. In doing so, local development plans should avoid development on land which is at unacceptable risk of coastal or river flooding (as defined by the 'Indicative River and Coastal Flood Map for Scotland' or through detailed flood risk assessment), except in exceptional circumstances. This is one of the targets of the Strategic Development Plan. In doing so it should be recognised that this SFRA has considered flood risk across the region at a strategic level and should not be used to assess individual sites. More detailed assessments of specific areas and allocations will be undertaken at an early stage to inform next round of local development plans.

Map 1: SEPA Indicative Flood Map



Map 2: Detailed example of 1 in 200 year flood risk area map

SEPA Indicative 1:200 Fluvial and Coastal Flood Map of Donmouth



0 115 230 460 690 920 Meters

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Map 3: Potentially Vulnerable Areas



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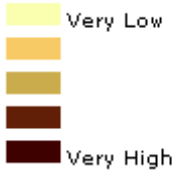
For further information see the following link;

<http://map.sepa.org.uk/nfra/map.htm>

MAP 4: National Flood Risk Area Risk Grid



Key – Flood Risk



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For further information see the following link;

<http://map.sepa.org.uk/nfra/map.htm>

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Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment

Introduction

Section 270B of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, requires planning authorities to “*perform their functions...in a manner which encourages equal opportunities*”. This complements a range of legislation which applies to public and private sector organisations to underpin equal opportunities and human rights.

This Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment assesses the Proposed Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan, with an overall purpose to help ensure that the plan does not discriminate and that where possible, opportunities are taken to promote equality, as well as all other human rights and good relations between groups.

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan is an evolution of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009). That plan went through an Equalities and Human Rights Assessments as well, so this assessment builds on that experience.

All Equalities and Human Rights Assessments involve three stages:

1. Assessing the impact of proposed or existing policies or functions on different equalities groups including collecting and analysing relevant data;
2. Consulting people who are likely to be affected by the policies; and
3. Reviewing and revising the policies in the light of the consultation and assessment.

An Equalities and Human Rights Assessment involves thinking through the potential consequences of policies and functions on both the identified equality target groups and society at large, making sure that as far as possible, any negative impacts are minimised or eliminated and that opportunities for promoting equality and respect for all other human rights are maximised. The assessment follows the process adopted by Aberdeen City Council.

Process

The initial (Stage I) assessment was conducted in September 2011 on basis of the changes envisaged to the Structure Plan by the Main Issues Report. The Main Issues Report and its Equalities and Human Rights Assessments were published for consultation on 7 October 2011.

Stage II (consultation) was undertaken between October and December 2011. No responses were received to the Equalities and Human Rights Assessments.

Stage III of the process was carried out in 2012 as the proposed strategic development plan was prepared. In late 2012 there will be further opportunity to respond to the proposed strategic development plan which will be accompanied by this revised Equalities and Human Rights Assessment.

The proposed strategic development plan will be submitted to Scottish Ministers in mid-2013 who will approve it with or without modifications on the basis of an ‘examination’ into unresolved objections. The impact of any modifications to the plan prior to approval would be for Scottish Ministers to determine. However, if modifications are proposed, the SDPA will request that this assessment is updated prior to approval.

STEP 1: Identify essential information

1. Name of proposal.

2. Officers completing this form.

| Name | Designation | Service |
|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| David Jennings | Strategic Development Plan Manager | Aberdeen City and Shire SDPA |

3. Date of Impact Assessment.

4. When is the proposal next due for review?

5. Committee Name.

6. Date the Committee is due to meet.

7. Identify the Lead Council Service and who else is involved in the delivery of this proposal. (for example other Council services or partner agencies)

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority. Planning and Sustainable Development (Aberdeen City Council) as well as Planning and Building Standards (Aberdeenshire Council) will have a very important role to play in delivery, along with a range of other services of the two councils including housing, economic development and transportation. A range of partnerships, agencies and the private sector will also have an important role to play.

9. Please summarise this Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment, (EHRIA). This must include any practical actions you intend to take / have taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse negative impacts.

The assessment has identified positive impacts on a range of equality target groups, along with neutral impacts on the others.

10. Where will you publish the results of the Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment?

- ✓ Full EHRIA will be attached to the committee report as an appendix.
- ✓ Full EHRIA will be available on the SDPA website, at all public libraries and on request from the SDPA.

STEP 2: Outline the aims of the proposal

11. What are the main aims of the proposal?

To guide the future development of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire over the period to 2035 in such a way that it becomes more prosperous, sustainable and inclusive.

12. Who will benefit most from the proposal?

The strategic development plan is intended to be of benefit to the whole of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire - residents, businesses and visitors.

13. Tell us if and how the proposal will increase equality of opportunity by permitting positive action to redress disadvantage?

N/A

14. What impact will the proposal have on promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

Sustainable mixed communities are a key component of the way development is envisaged to take place – meeting the needs of all in the community through the provision of a wide range of housing options with high quality design and community facilities.

STEP 3: Gather and consider evidence

15. What evidence is there to identify any potential positive or negative impacts in terms of consultation, research officer knowledge and experience, equality monitoring data, user feedback and other?

The 'Monitoring Statement' identifies the scale of change in Aberdeen City and Shire over recent years, particularly focusing on the targets in the current structure plan. This identifies the scale and nature of population growth across the area.

The 'Housing Need and Demand Assessment' seeks to identify the housing needs of the various equalities groups (p103 – 143). The assessment identified for example an increasing percentage of the population in older age groups (a 200% increase in the over 85 age group for example between 2008 and 2033) and that ethnic minorities generally require homes with more bedrooms. At the strategic planning level, need is generally generic (with a few exceptions), but it is at the delivery phase where services and individual products need to be tailored to the needs of individual groups. It will be local housing strategies in particular which focus on these individual needs but the role of the strategic development plan is to ensure that the framework is in place to be best able to meet these needs in land use planning terms. The main exception relates to the housing needs of the gypsy/traveller community which are already identified explicitly in the structure plan (and there is no proposal to change this). In a few cases, such as within the LGB community, it was not possible to identify particular housing needs due to a lack of data – but it is thought unlikely that any need would require a distinctive response in the strategic development plan.

Customer feedback has expressed concern over a lack of progress with dealing with the housing needs of the gypsy/traveller community on the ground. However, the structure plan saw local development plans as the main delivery mechanism to help meet their housing needs. Both local development plans have responded positively to this and have recently been adopted by both councils. As a consequence, it is too early to tell whether there is a need to change the framework in the strategic development plan. However, early indications are that sites are being identified through the masterplans prepared for some of the larger housing allocations in line with these policies.

No additional impacts were identified in response to the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment published alongside the Main Issues Report in 2011.

Any unresolved objections to the Proposed Strategic Development Plan will be considered by an independent Reporter who will prepare a report with recommendations for Scottish Ministers outlining if and how the plan should be changed. Scottish Ministers are responsible for the final approval of the plan.

STEP 4: Assess likely impacts on equality strands

16. Which, if any, equality target groups and others could be affected positively or negatively by this proposal? Place the symbol in the relevant box.

(Positive +, neutral 0, - negative)

| Equality Target Group | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------|-----|----------|---|
| Race* | + | Disability | + | Gender** | 0 |
| LGB*** | 0 | Belief | 0 | Younger | + |
| Older | + | Others e.g. poverty | +/0 | | |

- * Race includes Gypsies/Travellers
- ** Gender includes women, men, Transgender
- ***LGB: Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual

17. Please detail the potential positive and/or negative impacts on the groups you have highlighted above? Detail the impacts and describe the groups affected.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Positive impacts (describe groups affected)</p> <p>Race – explicit recognition in the structure plan of the specific housing needs of gypsies / travellers. Improved quality of life and life chances in regeneration areas.</p> <p>Disability – increased accessibility to new developments by non-car modes of transport, including buses.</p> <p>Young People – economic growth will increase employment opportunities. Increased affordability and availability of housing. Increased accessibility of new development by non-car modes of transport. Reduced energy demand from new homes will reduce costs.</p> <p>Older People – Increased accessibility of new development by non-car modes of transport. Reduced energy demand from new homes will reduce costs.</p> <p>Other (poverty) – affordable housing for low income groups / young people / people with families / single people. Economic growth will increase employment opportunities. Regeneration will increase the quality of life and life chances.</p> | <p>Negative Impacts (describe groups affected)</p> |
|--|--|

STEP 5: Apply the three key assessment tests for compliance assurance

18. Does this policy/procedure have the potential to interfere with an individual’s rights as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998? State which rights might be affected by ticking the appropriate box(es) and how. **If you answer “no”, go to question 22.**

| |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Article 3 – Right not to be subjected to torture, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment <input type="checkbox"/> Article 6 – Right to a fair and public hearing <input type="checkbox"/> Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence <input type="checkbox"/> Article 10 – freedom of expression <input type="checkbox"/> Other article not listed above |
| How? |
| No |

Legality

19. Where there is a potential negative impact is there a legal basis in the relevant domestic law?

| |
|-----|
| N/A |
|-----|

Legitimate aim

20. Is the aim of the policy a legitimate aim being served in terms of the relevant equality legislation or the Human Rights Act?

| |
|-----|
| N/A |
|-----|

Proportionality

21. Is the impact of the policy proportionate to the legitimate aim being pursued? Is it the minimum necessary interference to achieve the legitimate aim?

| |
|-----|
| N/A |
|-----|

STEP 6: Monitor and review

22. How will you monitor the implementation of the proposal? (For example, customer satisfaction questionnaires)

Monitoring is an essential part of the implementation of the strategic development plan. The plan will contain a monitoring framework directly related to the targets in the plan (as well as changes to the context) which will include a monitoring statement as well as more regular reports to the SDPA on individual subjects.

23. How will the results of this impact assessment and any further monitoring be used to develop the proposal?

This impact assessment has been produced to accompany the proposed strategic development plan, building on the assessment of the main issues report and previous structure plan. Any response to this assessment will be taken into account in the assessment of representations to the proposed plan itself. Any modifications to the proposed plan will be assessed by Scottish Ministers before approval of the strategic development plan (expected in late 2013 or early 2014). Monitoring will inform the review of the plan in 5 years' time.

Local development plans are a key means of implementing the strategic development plan. These are also subject to Equalities and Human Rights Assessments so the detailed implementation of the plan will also be subject to assessment by both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

STEP 7: SIGN OFF

The final stage of the EHRIA is formally to sign off the document as being a complete, rigorous and robust assessment. At this stage the assessment is interim in nature and subject to consultation.

Person(s) completing the impact assessment.

| Name | Date | Signature |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------|
| David Jennings | 14 September 2012 | |

Aberdeen City Council

Annual report on the 2011/12 audit



Prepared for Members of Aberdeen City Council and the Controller of Audit
October 2012

Audit Scotland is a statutory body set up in April 2000 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. It provides services to the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission. Together they ensure that the Scottish Government and public sector bodies in Scotland are held to account for the proper, efficient and effective use of public funds.

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Key messages

2011/12 audit findings

We have given an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of Aberdeen City Council and its group.

In 2011/12, the council spent £748 million on the provision of public services, with £678 million on revenue services and the remainder on its capital programme. In recent years there has been an improving trend by services in managing their budgets. For 2011/12, there was an overall surplus of £3.9 million. At 31 March 2012, the general fund balance was £31.4 million of which unallocated balances amounted to £11.3 million.

The Explanatory Foreword to the council's financial statements includes a range of nationally agreed indicators which show that the council can evidence effective financial management of its budget and collection of in-year council tax debt, is maintaining unallocated reserves in line with its agreed strategy and is managing capital within the constraints of the prudential code.

The council generally has satisfactory governance arrangements in place but in relation to the administration of housing benefits, further improvement is required. This will be challenging for the council alongside the implementation of welfare reform.

The council also needs to give more consideration to its scrutiny role in relation to the companies and other organisations within its group structure. This will be an important governance aspect for the council in taking forward its plans to create two companies to manage adult social care services and property maintenance. These plans have important implications for staff, service users and the delivery of balanced budgets.

The council has a monitoring framework linked to its five-year business plan with regular reporting to the management team. It has reported stable or improving performance across the majority of its local performance indicators, along with improvements in the majority of reported statutory performance indicators.

Outlook

Looking ahead, the financial outlook for public spending for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15 remains challenging. The high level figures for Scotland announced in the UK Comprehensive Spending Review indicate significant funding reductions in these years and effective planning will be required from councils to address this.

The council recently concluded an extensive Priority Based Budgeting exercise which is the basis for its five-year business plan, approved in August 2011 and covering the period 2011-16. The plan set out £71.5 million of essential savings which need to be achieved if the council is to deliver a balanced budget in the coming years. While there has been some reduction in future financial pressures arising from the Scottish Government's implementation of a funding floor, the council also needs to respond to national reform of services such as police, fire, the integration of social work and health care and welfare benefits.

Introduction

1. This report is the summary of our findings arising from the 2011/12 audit of Aberdeen City Council. The nature and scope of the audit were outlined in the Audit Plan presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 28 February 2012 and follow the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice prepared by Audit Scotland in May 2011. The purpose of the annual audit report is to summarise the auditor's opinions (i.e. on the financial statements) and conclusions, and to report any significant issues arising. The report is divided into sections which reflect the extent of our public sector audit model.
2. A number of reports have been issued in the course of the year in which we made recommendations for improvements (Appendix A). We do not repeat all of the findings in this report, but instead we focus on the financial statements and any significant findings from our wider review of Aberdeen City Council.
3. Appendix B is an action plan setting out the high level risks we have identified from the audit. Officers have considered the issues and are taking the specific steps in the column headed "management action". We do not expect all risks to be eliminated or even minimised. What we expect is that Aberdeen City Council understands its risks and has arrangements in place to manage these risks. Members should ensure that they are satisfied with the proposed management action and have a mechanism in place to assess progress.
4. This report is addressed to members and the Controller of Audit and should form a key part of discussions with the Audit and Risk Committee, either prior to, or as soon as possible after, the formal completion of the audit of the financial statements. Reports should be available to the Scottish Parliament, other stakeholders and the public, where appropriate. Audit is an essential element of accountability and the process of public reporting.
5. This report will be published on our website after consideration by the council. The information in this report may also be used for the Accounts Commission's annual overview report on local authority audits. The overview report is published and presented to the Local Government and Regeneration Committee of the Scottish Parliament.
6. The management of Aberdeen City Council is responsible for preparing financial statements that show a true and fair view and for implementing appropriate internal control systems. The auditor is responsible for auditing and expressing an opinion on the financial statements. Weaknesses or risks identified by auditors are only those which have come to their attention during their normal audit work, and may not be all that exist. Communication by auditors of matters arising from the audit of the financial statements or of risks or weaknesses does not absolve management from its responsibility to address the issues raised and to maintain an adequate system of control.
7. The co-operation and assistance given to us by Aberdeen City Council members, officers and staff is gratefully acknowledged

Financial statements

8. Audited bodies' financial statements are an essential part of accounting for their stewardship of the resources made available to them and their performance in the use of those resources.
9. Auditors are required to audit financial statements in accordance with the timescales set by Audit Scotland, which may be shorter than statutory requirements, and give an opinion on:
 - whether they give a true and fair view of the financial position of audited bodies and their expenditure and income
 - whether they have been properly prepared in accordance with relevant legislation, the applicable accounting framework and other reporting requirements.
10. Auditors review and report on, as appropriate, other information published with the financial statements, including the explanatory foreword, annual governance statement and the remuneration report. Where required, auditors also review and report on the Whole of Government Accounts return. This section summarises the results of our audit on the financial statements.

Audit opinion

11. We have given an unqualified opinion that the financial statements of Aberdeen City Council for 2011/12 give a true and fair view of the financial position and expenditure and income of the council and its group for the year. We also certify that the accounts have been prepared properly in accordance with the relevant legislation, applicable accounting standards and other reporting requirements.

Legality

12. Through our planned audit work we consider the legality of the council's financial transactions. In addition the Head of Finance has confirmed that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, the financial transactions of the council were in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. There are no legality issues arising from our audit which require to be brought to members' attention.

Annual Governance Statement

13. The financial statements contain an Annual Governance Statement (the statement) signed by both the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive. As part of our annual audit, we review the disclosures made in the statement and the process for obtaining sufficient assurance to inform its content.
14. Following discussions during the audit process, the statement was revised to give wider consideration of group governance. The quality of the statement has improved and the council continues to strengthen governance arrangements in respect of the group. We noted that it would be good practice to require group entities to provide the council with regular

performance monitoring information against targets alongside annual assurances on the operation of their internal controls.

Refer Action Plan No. 1

15. In line with good practice, arrangements should be put in place to ensure the Audit and Risk Committee considers and approves the statement in June each year before the financial statements are submitted for audit. The committee should also scrutinise group performance arrangements on a regular basis, thus increasing awareness and understanding of the council's group financial statements.

Refer Action Plan No. 2

16. We were satisfied with the disclosures made in the revised statement and the adequacy of the process put in place by the council to obtain assurances from its service directors.

Remuneration Report

17. We are satisfied that the remuneration report has been prepared in accordance with the Local Authority Accounts (Scotland) Act 1985 and Scottish Government finance circular 8/2011. The disclosures within the 2011/12 financial statements include all eligible remuneration for the relevant council officers and elected members.

Accounting issues

18. Local authorities in Scotland are required to follow the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2011/12 (the Code). We are satisfied that the council prepared the 2011/12 financial statements in accordance with the Code.

Accounts submission including whole of government accounts (WGA) return

19. The unaudited financial statements were submitted to the Controller of Audit in advance of the target date of 30 June. The working paper package to support the financial statements was however, provided for audit over a number of weeks. We experienced some delay in receiving explanations to clarify the audit trail between working papers and key financial statements. There were also occasions where audit resources were reallocated to other tasks pending receipt of working papers. These factors increased the pressure on both audit and finance teams to ensure the necessary assurances were collated to deliver the audit opinion on schedule.
20. However, finance and audit worked together to conclude the audit and the financial statements were certified by the target date of 30 September 2012. The financial statements are now available for presentation to members and for publication.
21. The UK Government's aim in respect of WGA is to develop a fully audited set of accounts covering virtually all of the UK public sector. For 2011/12, Scottish local authorities were required to submit an audited WGA return to the Scottish Government by 5 October 2012. In view of the time required to resolve issues and make adjustments to the pack to reflect the council's audited accounts, we submitted the audited consolidation pack on 19 October 2012.

22. We have agreed with the Head of Finance that it will be useful to reflect on our respective processes for the preparation and audit of the financial statements and WGA return to identify improvements for the 2012/13 audit. We plan to contribute to the council's '2012/13 Accounting Guidance Information Pack' to provide a shared understanding of working paper requirements and increase awareness of scheduling of audit activity. This will assist in prioritising for the timely availability of supporting evidence.

Refer Action Plan No. 3

Presentational and monetary adjustments to the unaudited accounts

23. In line with International Standards on Auditing 260 *Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance*, we reported the conclusions of our audit to the Audit and Risk Committee on 25 September 2012.
24. Several errors were identified during the audit and the most significant were corrected in the accounts. In overall terms, the corrected amounts had a net effect of decreasing net cost of services and increasing earmarked balances within the General Fund by £2.951 million. This largely related to amendments for unspent grant balances incorrectly included as creditors and future commitments wrongly included as provisions. A number of presentational amendments were also processed to improve the disclosures within the accounts.
25. Adjustments were not made for other errors identified during the audit. These errors, while more than clearly trivial, are immaterial to the accounts as a whole. Had an adjustment been made, there would have been an increase on net cost of services by £0.196 million and a decrease in the general fund balance of £0.343 million. Following discussions with the Head of Finance, we concurred with officers' proposals not to adjust the accounts for these amounts.

Exceptional Items

26. The council's comprehensive income and expenditure account includes material amounts which were categorised as Exceptional Items. These related to a reduction in provisions of £10.5 million which increased resources available and a charge of £26.2 million to recognise the likely non-collection of debt from Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre (AECC).
27. During 2011/12, the council reviewed provisions held at 31 March 2011 and consequently decided they could be reduced by £10.5 million. This included a reduction of £5.9 million in respect of potential equal pay claims and a reduction of £1.4 million for anticipated penalties connected with the Landfill Allowance Scheme. We reviewed the methodology and documentation provided by officers and were satisfied that the council had adopted a reasonable approach in estimating the level of provisions required.
28. AECC is included in the council's group accounts as a wholly owned subsidiary. Historically, AECC has relied on an annual subsidy from the council and has also received loans of £26.2 million which were due for repayment between 2017 and 2021. In 2010, the council decided to bring land around the centre and any proposed development plans for the area within council control and restrict AECC's business to that of managing and running

conferences and events. During 2011/12, new arrangements were formalised within a service level agreement and AECC set out future aims within a business plan. The financial element of this plan did not include provision for repayment of the £26.2 million loans.

29. As part of the council's review of AECC business, plans were put in place to remove its debt burden and transfer land to the council. In June 2012, the council approved in principle to write off amounts owed by AECC and therefore 100% provision for non-collection of the £26.2 million was made within the council's 2011/12 accounts. We were in agreement with the council's accounting treatment in respect of this matter.
30. There is strong council support for the exhibition centre and the need for the local economy to continue to have such a facility. Independent economic impact assessments for the area have estimated AECC's contribution to the local economy as being in excess of £100 million per annum. The financial support provided to AECC has been a regular feature of council business since local government reorganisation and we have noted that, whenever decisions have been taken about AECC, members were generally provided with appropriate economic results including the contribution provided by the facility in supporting the oil industry. In making its decision regarding the write off, the council received robust information and can demonstrate that value for money was one of the factors considered.

Prior year adjustments (Heritage assets)

31. For the first time in 2011/12, the Code required local authorities to account for tangible heritage assets in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 30 Heritage assets. Heritage assets are those that are intended to be preserved in trust for future generations and are held and maintained principally for their contribution to knowledge and culture. The council identified heritage assets of £128.668 million largely representing the city art gallery's fine art collections. With the exception of Glasgow City Council who reported £1,400 million, Aberdeen identified and reported the highest value of heritage assets across Scottish local government. We were satisfied with the approach adopted by the council in the identification of heritage assets and its implementation of FRS 30 requirements. As this is a change in accounting policy, the previous year's balance sheet figures have been appropriately restated in accordance with International Accounting Standard (IAS) 8.

Pension costs

32. Aberdeen City Council is a scheduled body of North East Scotland Pension Fund which is a multi-employer defined benefit scheme. In accordance with pensions accounting standard IAS19 'Retirement Benefits', the council has recognised its share of the net liabilities for the pension fund in the balance sheet. The valuation at 31 March 2012 provided by the scheme's actuaries increased the council's share of the deficit from £228.255 million as at 31 March 2011 to £257.577 million as at 31 March 2012. The large increase is due to changes in actuarial assumptions such as salary increases, mortality levels and rates of inflation. Actuarial assumptions in general were lower this year with the result that scheme liabilities increased.

33. Exhibit 1 shows Aberdeen's net liability compared to previous years. This deficit does not require an immediate cash injection but is intended to be funded by increased contributions over the long term.

Exhibit 1: IAS19 Net Pension Liability/Deficit

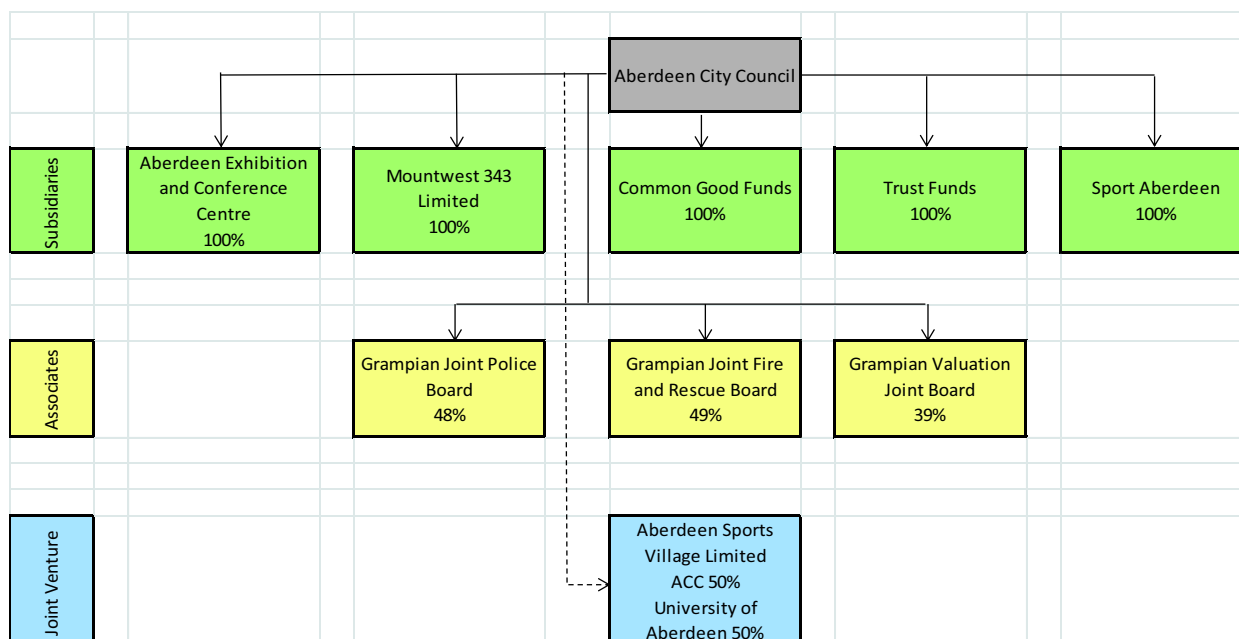
| | 2011/12 £000 | 2010/11 £000 | 2009/10 £000 |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Fair Value of Assets | 744,506 | 846,722 | 738,366 |
| Liabilities - present value of defined benefits obligations | (1,002,083) | (1,074,977) | (1,014,493) |
| Net Pension Liability/Deficit | (257,577) | (228,255) | (276,127) |
| Discount rate | 4.9% | 5.5% | 5.5% |

Source: Aberdeen City Council Statement of Accounts 2011/12

Group accounts

34. The diversity of service delivery vehicles used by local authorities means that consolidated group financial statements are required to give a true and fair view of the activities of the council. To enable the preparation of group financial statements, councils are required to consider their interests in all entities including companies, joint ventures and statutory bodies.
35. The council has interests in 5 subsidiaries, 3 associates and one jointly controlled entity which are consolidated in the group accounts. These interests have been included in group accounts in accordance with the Code and are shown in Exhibit 2.
36. International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 600 'Using the work of another auditor' requires us to consider a number of matters relating to the audit of group entities included within the financial statements of the council. As part of this process we issue questionnaires to auditors of material group entities and obtain audited accounts for all subsidiaries and associates. Based on this work we draw members' attention to the following matters:
- in accordance with recommended accounting practice, key policies for component bodies such as pension costs and the valuation of non-current assets at market value have been aligned with the council's accounting policies. Where this was not possible, we were satisfied that the amount was not material to the group accounts.
 - all bodies within the group received unqualified audit opinions on their 2011/12 financial statements.

Exhibit 2 – Aberdeen City Council Group Structure



Source: Aberdeen City Council Statement of Accounts 2011/12

Trust Funds

37. Aberdeen City Council has 50 registered charitable trusts. Charitable bodies are required to comply with the requirements of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 meaning a full set of financial statements is required for each trust fund. However, the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR) has deferred full implementation until 2013/14 allowing the council to continue to rely on existing disclosures for trust funds in the council's financial statements supplemented with additional working papers. The council is currently going through an exercise to amalgamate the trust funds to reduce the overall number.

Common Good Fund

38. As at 31 March 2012, the value of the Common Good Fund stood at £73.853 million, an increase of £6.670 million from the value in the previous financial year. This increase was largely attributable to the increase in the value of the investment property held by the fund.
39. In December 2007, the Local Authority (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee (LASAAC) issued guidance covering the common good. The council complies with this guidance as it prepares a separate disclosure in the council's financial statements and the assets are separately identified in the council's asset register.
40. The guidance note also states that local authorities should take reasonable steps to ensure that common good asset registers support the assets shown in the common good balance sheet. In common with other councils, Aberdeen's view is that reviewing the title deeds at point of sale represents "reasonable steps" for maintaining the asset register as a title deeds search of all council assets would be time consuming and prohibitively expensive.

41. Restrictions over the alienation or disposal of common good assets continue to be governed by the law of common good. No issues were identified through our routine audit activity during 2011/12 in relation to the treatment of common good asset.

Outlook

42. The council is considering establishing a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC) for Adult Social Care services as an option to deliver £2.5 million of savings to the council over a 5 year period. The company would be a wholly owned subsidiary of the council and around 600 staff would transfer from the council to the company. If implemented, changes could start from 1 April 2013. In respect of the financial statements, there will be range of issues to consider and resolve in terms of separately identifying and disclosing the transactions and outstanding liabilities for the services to be transferred and any potential workforce reduction and early retirement costs.

Refer Action Plan No. 4

Financial position

43. Audited bodies are responsible for conducting their affairs and for putting in place proper arrangements to ensure that their financial position is soundly based.
44. Auditors consider whether audited bodies have established adequate arrangements and examine:
 - financial performance in the period under audit
 - compliance with any statutory financial requirements and financial targets
 - ability to meet known or contingent, statutory and other financial obligations
 - responses to developments which may have an impact on the financial position
 - financial plans for future periods.
45. These are key areas in the current economic circumstances. This section summarises the financial position and outlook for the organisation.

Financial results

46. In 2011/12, Aberdeen City Council spent £747.6 million on the provision of public services including £69.1 million on its capital programme. In delivering these services the council generated an accounting loss of £64.7 million. Adjustments are, however, required to this accounting deficit to reflect the statutory funding arrangements in place. Once these are taken into account, the council increased its usable (cash backed) reserves by £4.1 million during 2011/12. This is set out in Exhibit 6.

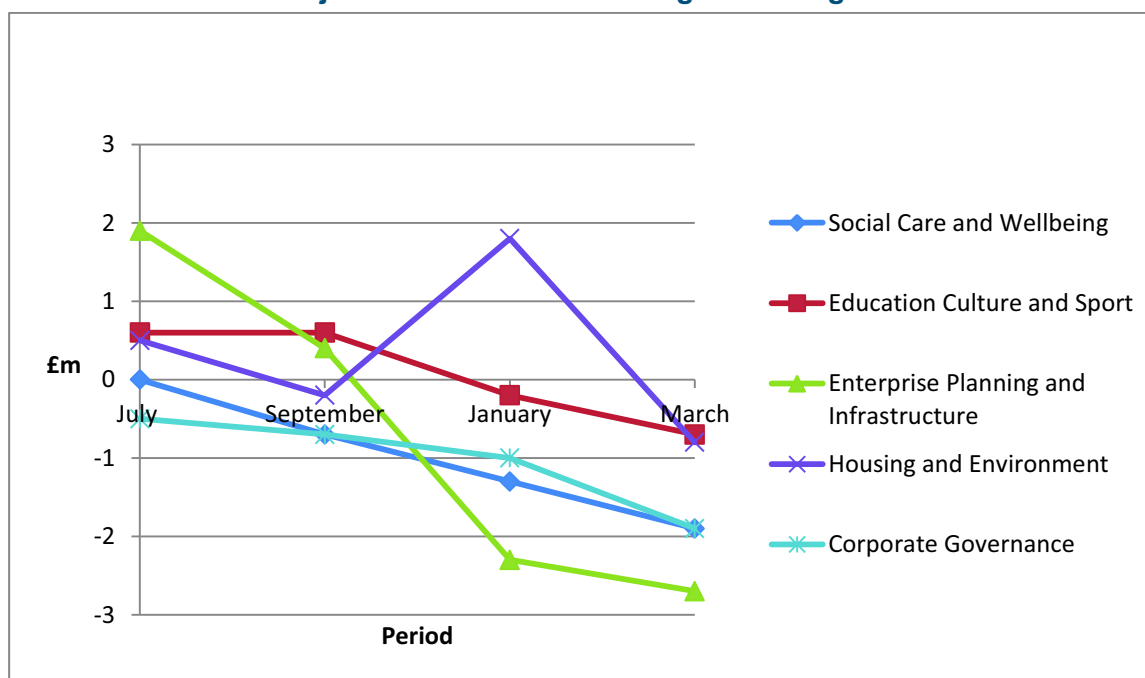
Budgetary control

47. Overall, a favourable outturn of £3.9 million was achieved by the council for 2011/12 and further explanation is provided throughout this section of the report. In relation to the council's key frontline services, Exhibit 3 shows an increasing trend towards underspends in recent years.
48. Exhibit 4 shows the departmental projected results as reported on a regular basis to members and highlights the on-going attention to savings during the year. It should be noted however, that the level of variance is low in percentage terms for each department.
49. Corporate Budgets were overspent by £6.8 million having taken account of a planned contribution of £8.8 million from surpluses delivered by significant trading operations. The main reason for the overspend was the exceptional item mentioned earlier in paragraph 26 in respect of the non-collection of AECC debt.

Exhibit 3 - Service (underspend)/ overspend

| | 2011/12 £ million | 2010/11 £million | 2009/10 £ million |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Key Services | | | |
| Education, Culture and Sport | (0.7) | 1.8 | 1.3 |
| Housing and Environment | (0.8) | (0.6) | (0.1) |
| Social Care and Wellbeing | (2.2) | (7.8) | 1.5 |
| Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure | (3.0) | 2.6 | 0.5 |
| Corporate Governance | (2.8) | (1.4) | (2.0) |

Source: Aberdeen City Council Revenue Monitoring 2009/10, Statement of Accounts 2010/11 & 2011/12

Exhibit 4 - 2011/12 Projected Outturn Variance against Budget

Source: Aberdeen City Council Revenue Budget Monitoring

50. During the year, architectural services transferred from Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure (EP&I) to Housing and Environment. In addition, internal recharges were removed from service budgets which in effect transferred budgets from Education into EP&I. This largely explains the reasons for the movements between revised budgets for key front-line services shown in Exhibit 5

51. As set out in Exhibit 5, the council received additional government funding of £0.5 million between setting its budget in February 2011 and its revised budget position in June 2011. The outturn position shows that funding subsequently increased by a further £3 million represented by additional Scottish Government funding of £1 million and the balance relates to council tax income from second homes earmarked for affordable housing projects.

Exhibit 5 - Outturn against budget 2011/12

| | Approved Budget - February 2011 | Revised Budget – June 2011 | Revised Budget after service changes | Outturn | Outturn variance |
|---|--|----------------------------------|---|----------------|---------------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Key Services | | | | | |
| Education, Culture and Sport | 182,775 | 180,551 | 173,409 | 172,212 | 1,197 |
| Housing and Environment | 44,542 | 44,195 | 41,198 | 39,318 | 1,880 |
| Social Care and Wellbeing | 125,665 | 121,810 | 120,060 | 117,823 | 2,237 |
| Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure | 30,986 | 31,479 | 44,679 | 41,268 | 3,411 |
| Corporate Governance | 26,724 | 28,091 | 28,532 | 25,801 | 2,731 |
| Total General Fund Services | 443,350 | 443,834 | 444,904 | 443,035 | 1,869 |
| Funding | 443,350 | 443,834 | 444,904 | 446,944 | 2,040 |
| General Fund Surplus | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,909 | 3,909 |

Source: Aberdeen City Council Revenue Budget 2011/12, Revenue Budget Monitoring

52. At 31 March 2012, the council had total usable funds of £60.3 million and as Exhibit 6 demonstrates, this is an increase of £4.1 million compared to the previous year largely due to an increase in the capital fund which is held within statutory reserves. The unallocated general fund balance was held at £11.3 million. The council's policy is to maintain free balances at £11.3 million which is approximately 2.5% of revenue expenditure. This was achieved in respect of 2011/12.

Exhibit 6: Reserves

| Description | 31 March 2012 | 31 March 2011 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| | £ million | £ million |
| General Fund (unallocated) | 11.3 | 11.3 |
| General Fund (earmarked balances) | 20.1 | 24.2 |
| Housing Revenue Account (unallocated) | 4.3 | 4.5 |
| Housing Revenue Account (earmarked balances) | 2.7 | 2.4 |
| Statutory and other reserves | 21.8 | 13.6 |
| Capital grants unapplied | 0.1 | 0.3 |
| Total | 60.3 | 56.2 |

Source: Aberdeen City Council Statement of Accounts 2011/12

53. CIPFA's Directors of Finance Group has developed a suite of financial indicators for councils. The indicators will assist in evaluating a council's financial sustainability and the affordability of financial plans and could be used to compare financial performance across comparator councils. The indicators also demonstrate the effectiveness of the financial management arrangements. We were pleased to note that the Head of Finance had incorporated the indicators in the Explanatory Foreword to the annual accounts. These show that the council can evidence effective financial management of its budget and collection of in-year council tax debt, is maintaining uncommitted reserves in line with its agreed strategy and is managing capital within the constraints of the prudential code.

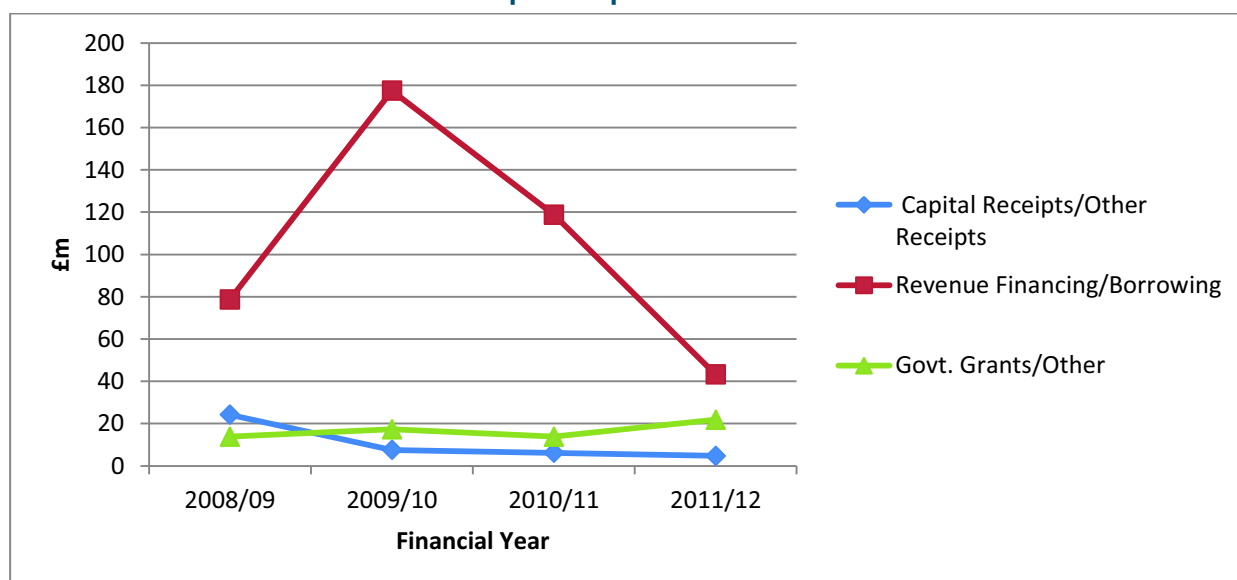
Capital investment and performance 2011/12

54. The financial statements show additions to the council's property, plant and equipment of £69.1 million, the majority of which relates to roads and other infrastructure. Including other asset categories and non-asset creating expenditure, this produces a total for capital expenditure in 2011/12 of £73.8 million. Although this is a reduction from £116.4 million in 2010/11, the outcome is in line with plans implemented by an officer led capital asset management group for the council to have a more affordable capital programme.
55. The trend in sources of funding for capital financing is reflected in Exhibit 7. In recent years, the council's flagship capital project has been the re-development of Marischal College as the council's new headquarters. The council has also developed plans for a significant capital expenditure project to regenerate Union Terrace Gardens in the city centre, known as the City Gardens Project (CGP). The estimated costs of the CGP were around £120 million, to be met by private contributions and Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) funding. A local referendum, held

on 1 March 2012, resulted in a majority in favour of the City Gardens Project. However in August 2012, the council voted to reject the CGP in favour of a package of smaller regeneration projects within the city centre. Options to finance these latest plans are currently being considered.

56. During 2011/12, the Marischal College was brought into use as the council's new headquarters. Consequently, the former main office building, St Nicholas House, was earmarked as a prime city centre location for redevelopment and was placed on the market. A sub-committee of the Finance and Resources Committee was set up to consider the options arising from initial stage of marketing the site. It is too early to determine what the disposal proceeds might be and/or what additional cost the council will incur should it decide to contribute or be a partner in the future development.

Exhibit 7 - Sources of finance for capital expenditure 2008/09 – 2011/12



Source: Aberdeen City Council Statement of Accounts

Treasury management

57. Treasury management activities are reported twice a year to the council and the strategy is updated annually. As at 31 March 2012, Aberdeen City Council held short term investments of £42 million (£20 million at 31 March 2011). The increase was largely due to temporary deposits held on behalf of the North East Scotland Pension Fund as a result of additional employer contributions received from scheduled bodies at the year end.
58. All borrowing undertaken by the council should be in accordance with the Prudential Code which requires the council to demonstrate that it is affordable and sustainable. For 2011/12, the council demonstrated tighter control of its capital programme and consequently, it was in a position to maintain its net borrowing at £558 million from 31 March 2011 to 31 March 2012.

59. When the affordability of the current level of borrowing is considered, PFI borrowing needs to be included. On this basis, overall net borrowing amounts to £666 million. This is 29.6% of total assets, which compared to other Scottish authorities, is below the median figure of 34.5%.

Financial planning to support priority setting and cost reductions

60. The Aberdeen City Council Business Plan was approved by the council in August 2011 and covers a five-year planning cycle from 2011-16. As part of the development of the business plan, the council undertook an extensive Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) exercise that reviewed all costs incurred, considered all services being delivered and, having defined strategic priorities, developed a change programme which included a package of service options to deliver £71.5 million of savings by 2015/16. This is an essential savings programme to assist the council to deliver a balanced budget in the years ahead.
61. Stage 1 within Exhibit 8 shows the council's projections when the 2011/12 budget was agreed in February 2011. On the assumption that there were no changes in service provision, the cumulative budget shortfall estimated at that point for the 5 years to 2015/16 was £105 million of which £71.5 million was to be delivered through the agreed package of savings leaving a balance of £33.8 million to be funded by other means.
62. During 2011, officers concluded their current PBB activities and consequently amended the future 5-year projections. In December 2011, revised 2011/12 figures reduced the shortfall from £33.8 million to £15.8 million.
63. As part of the development of the 2012/13 revenue budget the council was able to revise the future estimates for funding and expenditure. Summary figures are set out in Stage 2 within Exhibit 8. Funding levels were forecast to rise as a result of the Scottish Government's implementation of the 85% funding floor, while overall cost pressures were reduced following a further review of forecast assumptions and an assessment of progress in delivery of the agreed savings packages. This revised forecast reflected a reduced cost base having taken service reduction identified through the savings packages into account. In February 2012, a further savings package of £2.5 million was agreed to deliver a balanced budget for 2012/13 and the revised shortfall position at 2016/17 was estimated at £10.2 million. Financial forecasts and progress against savings packages are routinely reviewed and monitored as part of regular monitoring reported to the management team and members.

Refer Action Plan No. 5

Asset management

64. A corporate asset management group was established in 2010 to ensure the capital programme was developed in line with council priorities and was affordable. Bids for funding are now more carefully considered before inclusion in the capital plan. The group has senior representation from services and reports to management team on a regular basis.

65. A Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP) was under development during 2012. This is an overarching plan covering property, fleet, open space, housing, ICT and infrastructure assets. Asset Management Plans for each of these asset groups will support the CAMP and provide a link between the management of assets and the council's strategic priorities. For example, a plan was implemented for property assets in 2009 and is updated annually and during 2012 a roads asset plan was approved by members. This is referred to further in paragraph 109.

Exhibit 8: Movement in Financial Position 2011/12 – 2016/17

| | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Stage 1 Assumptions – No change in services | | | | | | |
| Funding | (460,587) | (441,662) | (434,959) | (431,560) | (431,354) | |
| Expenditure | 476,164 | 491,655 | 511,500 | 526,276 | 536,717 | |
| Shortfall 10/02/11 | 15,577 | 49,993 | 76,541 | 94,716 | 105,363 | |
| Savings Agreed 10/02/11 | (15,577) | (39,735) | (57,195) | (65,308) | (71,575) | |
| Revised Shortfall 10/02/11 | 0 | 10,258 | 19,346 | 29,408 | 33,788 | |
| Increase Income Projections 06/12/11 | | (3,559) | (750) | (1,480) | (6,060) | |
| Reduced Cost Projections 06/12/11 | | (3,099) | (10,867) | (18,906) | (19,629) | |
| Revised Shortfall 06/12/11 | | 3,600 | 7,729 | 9,022 | 8,099 | 15,714 |
| Stage 2 Assumptions – Reduced cost base taking agreed service reduction into account | | | | | | |
| Funding | | (459,600) | (461,821) | (465,244) | (471,908) | (475,947) |
| Expenditure | | 462,198 | 466,902 | 469,327 | 474,883 | 485,877 |
| Shortfall 09/02/12 | | 2,598 | 5,081 | 4,083 | 2,975 | 9,930 |
| Savings Agreed 09/02/12 | | (2,598) | (2,435) | (2,426) | (2,418) | 293 |
| Revised Shortfall 09/02/12 | | 0 | 2,646 | 1,657 | 557 | 10,223 |

Source: Aberdeen City Council Revenue Budget 2011/12 and 2012/13, Report to Finance & Resources 06/12/12.

Workforce reduction

66. Between 2009 and 2011, the council implemented significant organisational restructuring in response to the financial crisis it experienced at that time. This included workforce reduction and early retirement. Although the council has the occasional number of staff taking exit packages, there is no major programme of workforce reduction currently required to balance the budget. The council does however deliver regular savings through vacancy management.

67. The implementation of single status was several years ago and the management of equal pay claims was largely addressed through the use of compromise agreements. The council has a relatively low number of outstanding equal pay claims and therefore reduced the amount of the equal pay provision included in its financial statements at 31 March 2012. This was referred to earlier at paragraph 27.

Partnership working

68. In response to a request from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth, the Accounts Commission, with scrutiny partners, has led development work on how audit and inspection can support the delivery of better outcomes by Community Planning Partnerships. Initial audits are being undertaken in Aberdeen, North Ayrshire and Scottish Borders with reports due to be published in Spring 2013. These early audits will inform the evolving methodology and approach for the audits of subsequent partnerships.
69. The Priority Based Budgeting process identified an Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) as a means of working with an external strategic partner. The model involved outsourcing various functions of the Corporate Governance service as a potential efficiency saving. However, in March 2012, the council's Finance and Resources Committee cancelled the ADM project in favour of taking forward an internal transformation programme to deliver a similar level of savings.

Outlook

2012/13 budget reporting and financial forecasts beyond 2012/13

70. In August 2012, the 2012/13 outturn forecast reported to members was an underspend of £2.182 million, around 0.5% of budget. This position has arisen due to increased income from shared buildings, vacancy management and reduced waste disposal costs.
71. The council's 5 Year Business Plan 2012/13 – 2016/17 sets out its strategic objectives and priorities for the period. As detailed in paragraphs 60 to 63, the council is forecasting a budget shortfall each year. Comprehensive savings packages have been agreed and need to be delivered to enable the council to be in a position to balance budgets. Included in those packages are options to set up 2 wholly owned companies to deliver council services. Plans are being progressed to set up a local authority trading company to deliver adult social care while a Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) is being considered for managing property repairs. These plans have important implications for staff, service users and in the delivery of balanced budgets.
72. In the short term, the council expects relative financial stability as savings packages in 2012/13 and 2013/14 are anticipated to deliver an outturn in line with a balanced budget. Beyond that, however, the medium to long term outlook for public sector finance remains significantly challenging so councils will need to plan accordingly,

Governance and accountability

73. The three fundamental principles of corporate governance – openness, integrity and accountability – apply to all audited bodies, whether their members are elected or appointed, or whether they comprise groups of people or an individual accountable officer.
74. Through its chief executive or accountable officer, each body is responsible for establishing arrangements for ensuring the proper conduct of its affairs including the legality of activities and transactions, and for monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements. Audited bodies usually involve those charged with governance (including audit committees or similar groups) in monitoring these arrangements.
75. Consistent with the wider scope of public audit, auditors have a responsibility to review and report on audited bodies' corporate governance arrangements as they relate to:
- corporate governance and systems of internal control
 - the prevention and detection of fraud and irregularity
 - standards of conduct and arrangements for the prevention and detection of corruption
76. In this part of the report we comment on key areas of governance.

Corporate governance

Processes and committees

77. After the local elections in May 2012, the administration of the council changed from a Scottish National Party/Liberal Democrat coalition to a Labour/Conservative/Independent Alliance coalition. There were 17 (40%) new members out of a total of 43 members. Each elected member has a personal development plan from which training can be tailored to an individual's needs. In addition, elected member briefing sessions are held when necessary to provide detailed information on complex issues.
78. Effective scrutiny is central to good governance, with a significant role for members to scrutinise performance, hold management to account and support the modernisation agenda. The Audit and Risk Committee provides the main scrutiny mechanism within the council. In line with good practice, the committee is chaired by the Leader of the main opposition party in the council. The remit of the committee is in line with good practice principles set out in CIPFA's Guidance Note 'Audit Committee Principles in Local Authorities in Scotland'.
79. While we are generally satisfied that the committee operates effectively, we would wish to work with officers to increase the committee's scrutiny of the council's financial statements. The link between the budget outturn and the financial statements is quite complicated but important for the committee to understand. The 'financial position' section of this report should

provide a helpful commentary on this matter. Although the accounts are submitted to full council in June, the cycle of committee dates was such that the Audit and Risk Committee did not consider them until September when the matters arising from the audit were discussed. This did not provide the right opportunity for scrutiny of the financial statements. We would suggest that steps are taken to enable the committee to have an opportunity to consider the unaudited accounts in the June cycle of meetings.

80. Training should be provided to enable elected members become more engaged with the content of the financial statements and the linkages with the budget monitoring outturn information. This would better equip members to challenge officers on reported figures.

Refer Action Plan No. 2

Internal control

81. While auditors concentrate on significant systems and key controls in support of the opinion on the financial statements, their wider responsibilities require them to consider the financial systems and controls of audited bodies as a whole. However, the extent of this work should also be informed by their assessment of risk and the activities of internal audit.
82. Internal audit for the council is provided by PricewaterhouseCoopers. Generally, we seek to rely on the work of internal audit wherever possible and in respect of 2011/12, we concluded that reliance could be placed on their work. International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) require evaluation of critical financial systems and testing of key controls on an annual basis. In reaching conclusions, audit work should be based on controls and transactions across the financial year. For 2011/12, reviews of financial systems by internal audit were largely completed in the early part of the financial year and while this provided some assurance, we were required to undertake additional testing to ensure coverage across the year. We have however agreed a strategy for 2012/13 which will ensure improved sharing of the work between internal and external audit and wider coverage of systems across the year by internal audit.
83. No material weaknesses in the accounting and internal control systems were identified during the audit which could adversely affect the ability to record, process, summarise and report financial and other relevant data so as to result in a material misstatement in the financial statements
84. The Head of Finance holds the council's statutory chief financial officer role. He attends council and management meetings and has direct access to members and other chief officers. For 2011/12, the council was able to demonstrate compliance with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government.

Prevention and detection of fraud and irregularities

85. Audited bodies are responsible for establishing arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularity. Auditors review and report on these arrangements.
86. The council has appropriate arrangements in place to help prevent and detect fraud and irregularity. These arrangements include, for example, a counter fraud strategy, a whistle blowing policy and codes of conduct for elected members and staff. Overall we concluded that arrangements for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities were generally satisfactory.

NFI in Scotland

87. Audit Scotland has coordinated another major counter-fraud exercise working together with a range of Scottish public bodies, external auditors and the Audit Commission to identify fraud and error. These exercises, known as the National Fraud Initiative in Scotland (NFI), are undertaken every two years as part of the statutory audits of the participating bodies. The latest exercise started in October 2010 and was reported upon in May 2012. The next round of NFI commenced in September 2012, and expands the range of data sets and bodies.

Housing and council tax benefits

- Performance audit

88. A risk assessment was previously carried out on Aberdeen City Council's benefits service in October 2009 when Audit Scotland identified ten risks to continuous improvement. These were reported to the Chief Executive in November 2009. The council submitted an action plan in January 2010 to address these risks. In Summer 2012, a follow up review was undertaken by Audit Scotland as part of a planned timetable of performance audits. The council submitted a revised self-assessment in August 2012 along with supporting evidence, and an updated action plan. The findings from the follow up review are due to be reported in November 2012.

- Housing benefit subsidy

89. In previous reports to members, Henderson Loggie reported on the level of errors found when examining cases in connection with the audit of the council's housing benefit subsidy claims. This meant that the council had overclaimed subsidy leading to a recovery of £0.849 million by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in respect of the 3 year period to 31 March 2010. The outcome of the 2010/11 audited claim has yet to be determined by DWP.
90. In 2011/12, we continued to find a significant number of errors in our case review of benefit claims. Consequently, further samples have been selected in order that focused work can be undertaken on the areas of specific concern. On conclusion of this additional work, errors will be extrapolated in consultation with benefits staff and reported to DWP who will then determine if there are financial implications for the council. The 2011/12 subsidy claim will be certified by 30 November 2012. Thereafter, we will provide management with an analysis of

the types of errors found in order that further steps can be taken to improve benefit processing arrangements.

Refer Action Plan No. 6

Standards of conduct and arrangements for the prevention/detection of bribery and corruption

91. Audited bodies are responsible for ensuring that their affairs are managed in accordance with proper standards of conduct and that they have proper arrangements in place for implementing and monitoring compliance with standards and codes of conduct, standing orders and financial instructions. Auditors consider whether bodies have adequate arrangements in place. We have concluded that the overall arrangements in Aberdeen City Council are satisfactory.

Complaints Handling Procedures

92. The council participated in the working group established in 2011 by the Complaints Standards Authority. This enabled the council to prepare an effective implementation programme for the introduction of the standardised local authority Complaints Handling Procedures (CHP). The council submitted details of the revised CHP confirming compliance with the Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman's Implementation Guide for Complaints Handling Procedures in August 2012. We will monitor the new arrangements as part of the 2012/13 audit.

Outlook

93. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 received royal assent in March 2012. The Act provides for the introduction of a 'Universal Credit' to replace a range of existing means-tested benefits and tax credits for people of working age, starting from 2013. Councils will face challenges in understanding and acting upon welfare reform changes. The introduction of Universal Credit will also have a significant impact on councils' strategies and plans in areas such as housing, asset management, finance, ICT and customer service. Councils will be challenged during this period of change to maintain service delivery and performance around housing benefit claims.
94. As part of our work on the 2012/13 audit, we will consider the council's preparedness for introduction of these changes, and how it is developing and taking forward its strategies and plans to address the risks arising from these changes.

Best Value, use of resources and performance

95. Audited bodies have a specific responsibility to ensure that arrangements have been made to secure Best Value. The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 places a duty on the auditors of local government bodies to be satisfied that proper arrangements have been made for securing Best Value and complying with responsibilities relating to community planning. Auditors of local government bodies also have a responsibility to review and report on the arrangements that specified audited bodies have made to prepare and publish performance information in accordance with directions issued by the Accounts Commission.
96. As part of their statutory responsibilities, the Accounts Commission may procure, through Audit Scotland, examinations of the use of resources by audited bodies and publish reports or guidance. Auditors may be requested from time to time to participate in:
- a performance audit which may result in the publication of a national report
 - an examination of the implications of a particular topic or performance audit for an audited body at local level
 - a review of a body's response to national recommendations.
97. Auditors may also consider the use of resources in services or functions, where the need for this is identified through local audit risk assessments
98. During the course of their audit appointment auditors should also consider and report on progress made by audited bodies in implementing the recommendations arising from reviews in earlier years.
99. This section includes a commentary on the Best Value and performance management arrangements within the council. Any headline performance outcomes and measures used by the council are also noted and we comment on relevant national reports.

Management arrangements

Performance management

100. The Aberdeen City Council Business Plan was approved by the council in August 2011 and covers a five-year planning cycle from 2011-16. The plan is subject to ongoing review and update. The business plan reflects the council's strategic priorities and details specific, priority-based actions. Performance monitoring sits alongside the business plan focusing on achievement of the plan and regular monitoring by elected members of progress in implementing the council's strategic priorities.
101. The overall responsibility for corporate monitoring lies with the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee (CPPC). There is also a Corporate Performance Management

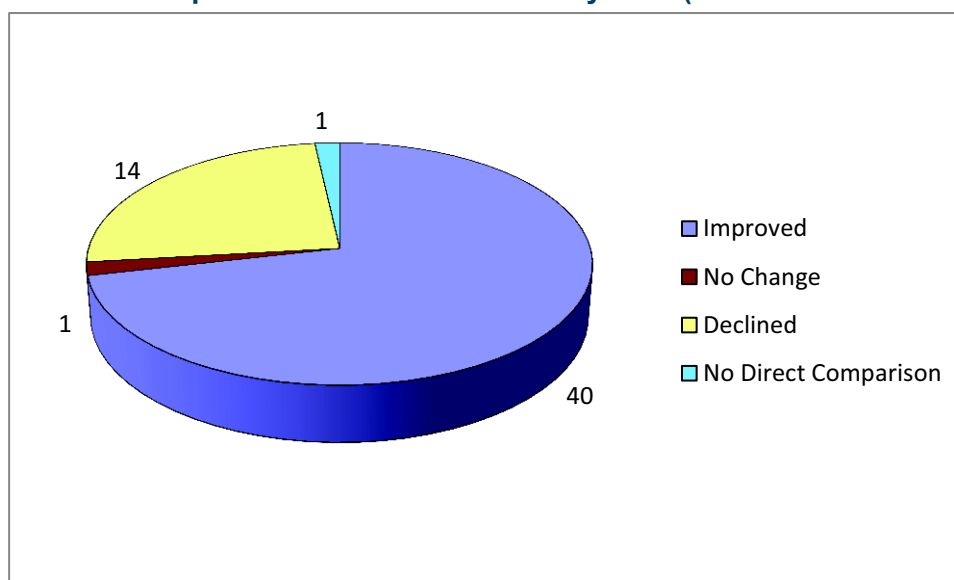
Group who is consulted on all changes to the framework. Regular performance exception reports are presented to each of the council's service committees highlighting performance outwith agreed target levels. A recent review confirmed that exception reporting is not consistent across services and required further development. This is being addressed by CPPC.

Overview of performance in 2011/12

Statutory performance indicators

102. In 2011/12, a total of 25 Statutory Performance Indicators, with 56 individual performance measures were required. The majority of these show improving performance as Exhibit 9 illustrates.

Exhibit 9: Improvements demonstrated by SPIs (Total 56 measures from 25 indicators)



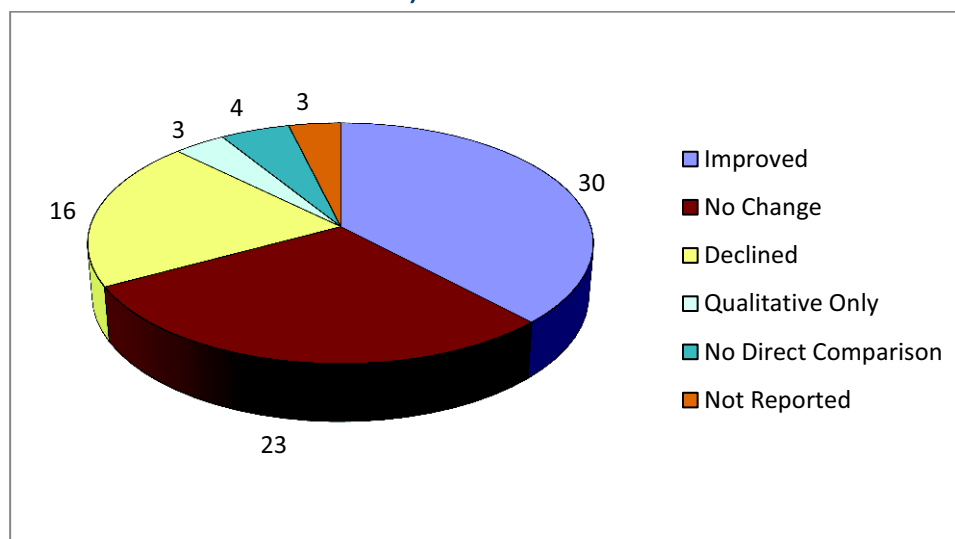
Source: Aberdeen City Council SPI data returns

103. The improved indicators include sickness absence levels, percentage of Council Tax income due which was received and processing time for planning applications. The measures which showed a decline included rent arrears and attendance at libraries and swimming pools.

Aberdeen City Council performance measurement outcomes

104. In addition to the Statutory Performance Indicators, councils are required to publish a range of performance information sufficient to demonstrate that they are securing Best Value across a defined range of services and criteria. Aberdeen City Council have therefore developed a further 48 local performance indicators including 74 performance measures and 3 qualitative assessments. The majority of these have remained stable or improved in 2011/12 as demonstrated in Exhibit 10.

Exhibit 10: Improvements demonstrated by local performance indicators (Total 74 measures from 48 indicators)



Source: Aberdeen City Council SPI data returns

- 105.** Examples of improving performance included the percentage of food hygiene visits completed by the due date, repairs to street lights and the number of children on the child protection register. The measures which declined during the year included the cost of the Accountancy and Human Resource services and the time to process new benefit claims and changes to existing claims.
- 106.** The 3 indicators which were not reported in 2011/12 were the council's carbon footprint, educational outcomes for looked after children and satisfaction with the council. In each case, no current data was available to calculate the indicator. The Corporate Performance Management Group is to review the non-specified indicators during 2013.

Local performance reporting

- 107.** In 2010, Audit Scotland agreed a targeted approach to following-up a small number of performance audit reports each year to promote local impact. During 2011/12 *'Maintaining Scotland's roads: a follow-up report'*, which was published in February 2011, was selected for follow up. The aim of the follow-up review was to assess the progress the council had made in improving the management of roads maintenance, focusing on road asset management planning, performance management and maximising value for money.
- 108.** Aberdeen City Council is responsible for a local road network of 913 km with a gross replacement value of over £1.014 billion. Funding required for routine maintenance is £2 million per annum with a further £200 million estimated for backlog repairs to reinstate carriageways to fully acceptable standards.
- 109.** A Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) was approved by the Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure Committee in September 2012. The RAMP describes the approach Aberdeen

City Council will use in managing its infrastructure network and provides a base-line from which improvements to the roads service can be measured.

National performance reports

110. Audit Scotland carries out a national performance audit programme on behalf of the Accounts Commission and the Auditor General for Scotland. Reports in the last year of direct interest are detailed in Exhibit 11. In most cases these are shared with elected members and the management team.

Exhibit 11: A selection of National performance reports 2011/12

- The National Fraud Initiative in Scotland
- An overview of local government in Scotland - challenges and change in 2012
- The role of community planning partnerships in economic development
- Arm's-Length External Organisations (ALEOs): are you getting it right?
- Transport for health and social care
- Commissioning social care
- Modernising the planning system
- Grampian Fire and Rescue Service Best Value Audit
- Scotland's public finances: addressing the challenges
- Community Health Partnerships

Source: www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

Progress against audit risks identified in the Shared Risk Assessment

111. The first Assurance and Improvement Plan (AIP) for Aberdeen City Council was published in July 2010. That document set out the planned scrutiny activity for the council for the period April 2010 to March 2013 based on a shared risk assessment undertaken by a local area network (LAN) of scrutiny partners.
112. The AIP has been updated twice since 2010 with the latest version being reported to the council's Audit and Risk Committee in June 2012. At that point, the LAN had reviewed progress in the attainment of the objectives in the Single Outcome Agreement. This assisted in the identification of future audit and scrutiny activity. In many cases, we said that we would monitor key service developments and further evidence of performance and comment within this report. The following paragraphs note the position against areas of uncertainty highlighted in the LAN's Audit and Improvement Plan Update (AIP) 2012 - 2015. The council, together with its Community Planning Partners is responsible for evidencing performance and each partner will have varying degrees of influence over each area.

Leadership and Culture

113. The LAN's 2011 AIP reported that *"All groups on the council need to work more productively together and demonstrate a clearer focus on the needs of the local area. In addition, improvements need to be made in member officer relations to create a position of mutual trust and respect founded on a clear understanding of the distinctive roles that officers and members play within the council. The current situation creates risks to the efficient and effective conduct of business."* In response to this the council undertook a self-evaluation activity which drew the Audit Scotland 'Roles and working relationships: are you getting it right?' report.
114. In order to take an independent approach to the self-evaluation, an independent consultant was engaged by the council to carry out the review in December 2011. A final report on the self-evaluation process was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in September 2012. While there has been a change in elected members as a result of the May 2012 elections, it was recognised that the key messages and recommendations from the review were relevant and valid.
115. The committee approved the recommendations to enhance further development of effective working relationships between elected members and officers. We will review the extent of improvement observed in this area as part of our 2013 AIP update.

Housing and Environment

116. At the time our assessment, the Scottish Housing Regulator continued to have concerns about the council's plans to meet homelessness targets and its management of gas safety and intended to monitor these areas through self-assessment activity. LAN colleagues will consider the outcome of this scrutiny activity as part of the next SRA refresh.

Social Care and Wellbeing

117. There has been significant service redesign, improved performance management and the introduction of a framework for self-evaluation in all areas of the Social Care and Wellbeing service. At the time of issue of the 2012 AIP, the LAN felt that it was too early to assess the level of impact of the changes on the services.
118. The Care Inspectorate undertook an Initial Scrutiny Level Assessment (ISLA) during 2012 which considered the impact of these changes on the service. The results of this review are expected to be published in December 2012 and will be considered as part of the 2013 AIP update.

Financial Position

119. The LAN considered the financial position of the council to be an area of uncertain scrutiny risk. Primarily, this was as a result of the overall uncertainty of funding levels despite the Scottish Government announcing proposed allocations for 2012/13 – 2014/15 in early 2012. We have commented on the council's financial position earlier in this report.

Outlook

120. There are currently no plans for Best Value work in Aberdeen City Council. However, the AIP did include activity by other scrutiny bodies over the next three years including:
- Care Inspectorate – Initial Scrutiny Level Assessment (ISLA) review (2011/12)
 - Scottish Housing Regulator – follow up on progress with SHQS, gas safety and homelessness and focused self-evaluation work in areas of uncertainty in the AIP (2011/12)
121. In April 2011, the Equality Act 2010 introduced a new public sector ‘General Duty’ which encourages equality to be mainstreamed into public bodies’ core work. The Scottish Government subsequently consulted on a set of ‘Specific Duties’ which came into force in May 2012. There is also a requirement to publish a set of equality outcomes no later than 30 April 2013. We will consider progress made by the council in implementing these requirements as part our 2012/13 audit.

Appendix A: audit reports

External audit reports and audit opinions issued for 2011/12

| Title of report or opinion | Date of issue | Date presented to Audit Committee |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Annual Audit Plan | 20 February 2012 | 28 February 2012 |
| Assurance and Improvement Plan | 20 April 2012 | 12 June 2012 |
| Report to those charged with governance on the 2011/12 audit | 19 September 2012 | 25 September 2012 |
| Audit opinion on the 2011/12 financial statements | 28 September 2012 | 27 November 2012 |
| Audit opinion on the 2011/12 Whole of Government accounts consolidation pack | 19 October 2012 | N/A |
| Report to Members on the 2011/12 audit | 31 October 2012 | 27 November 2012 |

Appendix B: action plan

Key Risk Areas and Planned Management Action

| Action Point | Refer Para No | Risk Identified | Management Action | Responsible Officer | Target Date |
|--------------|---------------|--|--|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | 14 | <p>Governance arrangements in respect of group entities should be strengthened.</p> <p>Risk:</p> <p><i>Risk - If group companies are not adequately monitored, this could lead to non-compliance with companies' legislation. The group may not be delivering on its objectives.</i></p> | <p>Following recent consideration by the Head of Finance, the council is developing its group reporting to ensure that regular financial and non-financial information is incorporated into the Corporate Performance Reporting arrangements. Internal Audit are engaging in a review of group entities that will provide additional findings and recommendations upon which to continue to strengthen group governance.</p> | Corporate Accounting Manager | 31 March 2013 |
| 2 | 15 & 80 | <p>There is scope to improve the effectiveness of the Audit and Risk Committee by clarifying its role in respect of scrutiny of the financial statements and group governance.</p> <p><i>Risk - Scrutiny arrangements within the council may be insufficient or do not comply with good practice.</i></p> | <p>As a consequence of the change in councillors following the May 2012 council elections the council has put in place a training programme with councillors on a range of subjects, which includes specific training in relation to the role of the Audit and Risk Committee. Further consideration will also be given to the practicalities of scrutiny of financial statements being undertaken prior to the completion of the Draft Statement of Accounts.</p> | Head of Finance | 30 June 2013 |

| Action Point | Refer Para No | Risk Identified | Management Action | Responsible Officer | Target Date |
|--------------|---------------|---|--|------------------------------|------------------|
| 3 | 22 | <p>A review of the arrangements for the preparation and audit of the financial statements and WGA return should be undertaken to identify improvements for 2012/13 and beyond.</p> <p>Risk: The target date for submission of audited accounts is not met. Delays in delivery of working papers impact on resources.</p> | <p>Review and feedback sessions with accounting staff and auditors will take place during November / December to identify the improvements that can be achieved in relation to the preparation and audit of the Statement of Accounts and to set out the timetable for year end close as at 31 March 2013.</p> | Corporate Accounting Manager | 31 December 2012 |
| 4 | 42 | <p>Early consideration should be given to the accounting requirements to be met within the council's accounts if the new LATC and LLP are established.</p> <p>Risk: Accounting requirements are not met leading to a qualified opinion on the financial statements.</p> | <p>A programme of work has been in place for a number of months to ensure the delivery of the financial support by the council.</p> | Chief Accountant | 31 March 2013 |

| Action Point | Refer Para No | Risk Identified | Management Action | Responsible Officer | Target Date |
|--------------|---------------|--|--|------------------------------|-------------|
| 5 | 63 | <p>The council has a significant programme of savings to implement in delivering its 5 year business plan.</p> <p>Risk: A balanced budget is not delivered</p> | <p>Continued development of financial monitoring and scrutiny continues on a regular basis, with a Finance Framework having been developed to improve the link between Finance and Budget Holders. A review of savings achievement / progress is controlled by the Programme Management Office and the early identification of changes, including change control procedures, are overseen by the Performance Boards, which includes the Chief Executive.</p> | Chief Accountant | Ongoing |
| 6 | 90 | <p>Improved arrangements should be implemented for benefit processing.</p> <p>Risk: Continued clawback of subsidy sought by DWP and increased reputational risk to the council.</p> | <p>The team has in place a regular checking regime for benefit processing and this is under review with the objective of tackling errors effectively and timeously by revising and tightening the checking arrangements and to enhance it. A focus on improving the speed of processing claims also has an impact and the council is actively managing the staffing resources it has to ensure claims are completed in a timely manner.</p> | Revenue and Benefits Manager | Ongoing |

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CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

29 NOVEMBER 2011

DRAFT

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE OLDER PEOPLE'S ADVISORY GROUP – CG/12/114

1. With reference to article 4 of the minute of its previous meeting, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Corporate Governance which requested that a decision be taken with regard to the remaining place on the Older People's Advisory Group as a result of the Liberal Democrat Group not wishing to take up their place on the Group at this time.

The report recommended:-
that Committee:-

- (a) keep the remaining place as a vacancy; or
- (b) suspend Standing Order 22(2) to revoke the decision taken in relation to the composition of the Older People's Advisory Group at the last meeting of the Committee, and appoint a member from another Group to take up the fifth place.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to instruct the Convener to write to Councillor Malone, Lead of the Liberal Democrats, reminding Councillor Malone that Council only operates successfully on the good will of all Councillors taking up positions on outside bodies and working groups, thus sharing the workload;
- (ii) to ask Councillor Malone to reconsider her Group's position and to appoint a Liberal Democrat Councillor to the Older People's Advisory Group; and
- (iii) to move this matter to full Council on 19 December 2012 for further consideration.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| COMMITTEE | Corporate Policy and Performance |
| DATE | 29 November 2012 |
| DIRECTOR | Stewart Carruth |
| TITLE OF REPORT | Appointment of Members to the Older People's Advisory Group |
| REPORT NUMBER: | CG/12/114 |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

Further to the decision taken at the last meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee, this report is before Committee to enable a decision to be taken with regard to the remaining place on the Older People's Advisory Group as a result of the Liberal Democrat Group not wishing to take up their place on the Group at this time.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee is asked to:-

- (i) keep the remaining place as a vacancy; or
- (ii) suspend Standing Order 22(2) to revoke the decision taken in relation to the composition of the Older People's Advisory Group at the last meeting of the Committee, and appoint a member from another Group to take up the fifth place.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

At the last meeting of the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee, it was agreed that the composition of the Older People's Advisory Group should be 1+1+1+1+1 to allow for cross-party representation. It was also agreed to appoint Councillors Donnelly and Jaffrey to the Group, with the remaining members to be advised to the Clerk outwith the meeting. The remaining members have been confirmed as Councillors Cooney and Reynolds.

Since the last meeting of Committee, the Liberal Democrat Group have advised that they do not wish to take up their place on the Older People's Advisory Group, and have indicated that they would be content for the place to be made available to another Group.

It is suggested therefore that the Committee may wish to keep the fifth place vacant, or fill the remaining place with a member from another Group. If the latter course of action was to be followed, the Committee would require to suspend Standing Order 22(2) to revoke its previous decision in relation to the composition of the Group.

There is no requirement for the Council to allocate places proportionally across Working Groups, and therefore it would be for the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee as parent Committee to the Group to decide how it wishes to proceed in this case.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Steph Dunsmuir
Committee Assistant
sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel:- 01224 522503

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| COMMITTEE | Finance & Resources Committee |
| DATE | 6 December 2012 |
| DIRECTOR | Stewart Carruth (Director of Corporate Governance); Pete Leonard (Director of Housing & Environment) |
| TITLE OF REPORT | Draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and Housing Capital Budget 2013/14 to 2015/16 |
| REPORT NUMBER: | CG/12/1023 |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1.1 To provide elected members with information to allow the setting of the rent level for the financial year 2013/14 as well as provisional rent levels for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16. In turn, this will allow a capital programme for 2013/14 as well as a provisional programme for 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 1.1.2 Elected members will be aware that the previous method of charging rent was based on a complicated and historical method. The Council has agreed to replace this methodology with a much simpler method. **As such it is vital that the rent level for 2013/14 is set by Council at its meeting in December to allow officers the time to update computer systems to allow suitable notification of rent levels for 2013/14 to tenants.**

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Committee consider the draft Housing Revenue Account Budget and refer it to Council on 19 December 2012 to:

- a. Approve the budget as attached in Appendix 1 of this report;
- b. Approve the weekly unrebated rents for municipal houses, as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report, to take effect from Monday 1 April 2013;
- c. Approve the level of revenue contribution to the Housing Capital budget for 2013/14 as well as a provisional contribution for the subsequent two financial years as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report;
- d. To agree the recommendation by the Head of Finance to increase working balances from 5% to 10% over a 3 year period to meet future contingencies;
- e. To agree the continuation of the practice that all capital receipts, from the disposal of Council houses, continue to be used to repay debt for 2013/14 and future years;

- f. Approve the level of miscellaneous rents and service charges, including Heat with Rent as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report;
- g. Agree to other adjustments Council may wish to make to the draft HRA for the financial years 2013/14 to 2015/16; and
- h. Set a capital programme for the financial year 2013/14 based on the rent strategy adopted as well as the indicative level of programme for the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Given this report is to set the HRA budget for 2013/14 the financial implications are contained within the report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Without adequate investment there is the possibility that the housing stock could fail to meet health and safety regulations as well as the Scottish Housing Quality Standard.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The Council is required to give its tenants 28 days notice of any change in the level of rent. Further, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 requires the Council to consult with tenants on any proposed rent increase. This consultation was in the form of a tenant questionnaire on the possible rent increase.
- 5.2 The tenants were asked if the rent policy of inflation plus 1% should continue in order to maintain investment in the housing stock and improve services.
- 5.3 The results are shown on page 23 of Appendix 1. The number of tenants who responded and agreed with this rent policy was 75%, 23% did not agree and 2% did not know.
- 5.4 Schedule 15 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 requires expenditure in the under noted main areas to be charged to the HRA:
 - Capital Financing Costs in respect of monies borrowed for the purpose of providing and improving the Council's housing stock;
 - Management, administration and maintenance of the Council's housing stock;
 - Other expenditure such as loss of rents for vacant periods, insurance, communal lighting and heating, cleaning and security.
- 5.5 Items of income that must be credited to the HRA are:

- Council house rents;
 - Other income attributable to the HRA. For example, income recovered from tenants for heating, interest on revenue balances and, when available, transfers from working balances generated by the HRA in previous years.
- 5.6 In the absence of any central or local authority financial support for the HRA, the HRA is regarded as “ring-fenced”. In addition, consideration of the level of capital to be financed from current revenue (CFCR) within the HRA budget will have an impact on the Housing Capital Budget. This report therefore, whilst indicating a possible HRA Budget, also comments on the Capital Budget.
- 5.7 Consideration of the out-turn on the HRA for 2012/13 and the 2013/14 budget is dealt with in detail in Appendix 1. **Based on the annual rent consultation and Council policy the budgeted figures have assumed a Council house rent increase of 4.1%** (RPIX at October 2012 of 3.1% plus 1%).
- 5.8 While this is in line with Council policy it is worth noting that, at this time, the economic climate within the United Kingdom is such that the UK economy continues to struggle to grow, with low confidence, relatively high inflation and high unemployment.
- 5.9 As the UK’s largest export partner, there is significant worry that the ongoing Euro zone uncertainty may have a further negative impact on the UK economy.
- 5.10 Given the continued Government’s austerity programme spending reductions remain on target although there remains some considerable distance still to travel before they are fully delivered. The cumulative nature of the challenge means that, inevitably, the hardest part of the challenge lies ahead.¹
- 5.11 Given the UK Government’s attempts to resolve the economic position it is worth looking at the future projections for inflation in setting the rent increase for 2013/14:

| FORECAST | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| End period % | Oct 2012 | Q1 2013 | Q2 2013 | Q3 2013 | Q4 2013 | Q1 2014 |
| RPI inflation | 3.2 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.1 |
| RPIX inflation | 3.1 | 1.2 | 1.9 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.1 |
| CPI inflation | 2.7 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.5 |

Source – Sector Treasury Services – Forecasts (Oct 2012)

¹ CIPFA: The long downturn: implications for public service organisations

5.12 The above table indicates that while we are currently experiencing a relatively high level of inflation it can be seen that this is projected to fall over the next financial year.

5.13 What the table demonstrates is that RPIX is currently at 3.1%. This is expected to fall by the end of the first quarter of 2013 to 1.2% and after an increase in the next quarter remain pretty stable thereafter.

5.14 **Welfare Reform and Working Balances**

The impact of Welfare Reform is at this time unquantifiable but we do need to ensure that adequate working balances are maintained to de-risk the HRA position for future years. There are currently 46% of HRA tenants on full or partial housing benefit. **It is therefore important that the Council begins preparing for the full impact of Welfare Reform.**

The Head of Finance must be confident that the level of working balances is adequate to meet any unforeseen contingencies during the financial year particularly with regard to the introduction of Welfare Reform.

Based on projected income and expenditure that is likely to be generated for 2012/13, this opening figure for 2013/14 should be approximately £3.935 million as detailed below:

| MOVEMENT IN WORKING BALANCES | £000 |
|--|-------------|
| Working Balances as at 1 April 2012 | 6,682 |
| Less: Ear marked sums | |
| Housing repairs | (2,172) |
| Scottish Secure Tenancy | (250) |
| Finance Lease Liability | (323) |
| | (2,746) |
| Projected Working Balances as at 31 March 2013 | 3,935 |

Given the inherent uncertainty it is proposed that working balances are increased from 5% to 10% over the 3 year period. This will also allow a buffer against current economic conditions. As such a potential profile of this may look like:

| BALANCE AS AT: | CURRENT | REVISED |
|----------------|---------|---------|
|----------------|---------|---------|

| | £M | £M |
|------------|-------|-------|
| 31-03-2012 | 4.000 | 4.000 |
| 31-03-2013 | 4.000 | 4.200 |
| 31-03-2014 | 4.008 | 5.200 |
| 31-03-2015 | 4.157 | 6.200 |
| 31-03-2016 | 4.310 | 7.200 |
| 31-03-2017 | 4.310 | 8.200 |

This would be achieved through managing the level of capital investment through additional borrowing. The cost of this would be met through lower investment levels in future years (by virtue of SHQS having been delivered) and future efficiency savings in line with the 30 year business plan.

5.15 **Capital Expenditure**

The draft budget for 2013/14 (and the subsequent two financial years) is attached as Appendix 1 of this report. This shows gross expenditure of £47 million financed through £17.9 million of borrowing, £1.5 million of SEE grant funding and £22.1 million by way of a revenue contribution to fund the net programme of £41.5 million.

5.16 This capital budget reflects and includes a proposed rent increase of 4.1%. The details of the potential projects to be included in this programme are contained in Appendix 1 – pages 30 to 33.

5.17 **Miscellaneous Rents**

The budget attached in Appendix 1 also requires the miscellaneous rents and service charges to be set. As way of indication on possible increases, pages 19 to 22 gives indicative increases and decreases that the Council may wish to consider. **The Council will have to decide on any possible increment to these charges in line with their rent setting strategy.**

5.18 **Prudential Code**

From 1 April 2004, Councils are required by Regulation to have regard to the Prudential Code when carrying out their duties under Part 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003.

5.19 In setting a capital programme, members will be aware that under the Prudential Code, the level of capital investment is determined at a local authority level. The base programme for consideration, subject to final rent levels is £46.930 million. This is attached in Appendix 1 at pages 30 to 33.

5.20 As part of the rent setting process of determining the average rent payable for a Council house, the Council must ensure that this is affordable and sustainable over the long term.

- 5.21 The fundamental objective, in the consideration of the affordability of the Council's capital programme, is to ensure that the total capital investment of the authority remains within sustainable limits and in particular to consider the impact on the "bottom line". That is, affordability is determined by a judgement about acceptable levels of rent.
- 5.22 **2014/15 to 2015/16 Budget**
Included within Appendix 1 is an indicative budget for 2014/15 and 2015/16 with an assumed rent increase of 3.5% for both years. There is also an analysis of the management and administration, the repairs and maintenance and capital budgets.
- 5.23 In setting a 3 year rent strategy, Council must pay cognisance to the level of capital investment required to maintain and improve the overall housing conditions available to the citizens of Aberdeen. The Council is required to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015.
- 5.24 Summary**
The Council is required to determine the average weekly unrebated rents (and other miscellaneous rents and service charges) for municipal houses to take effect from Monday 1 April 2013 which in turn will allow decisions to be taken on the level of capital investment.

6. IMPACT

The City Council will operate within overall financial constraints taking into account recommended accounting practice and policies. Rent increase will be notified to tenants providing them with 28 days notice.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

HRA 30 Year Business Plan
CIPFA: The long downturn: implications for public service organisations

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Aberdeen City Council
Draft Housing Revenue Account
2013/14 – 2015/16 Budget

Our vision is
for Aberdeen
to be an ambitious,
achieving, smart city.



Barry Jenkins
Head of Finance

Pete Leonard
Director of Housing and Environment

DRAFT HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

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Section 1 – HRA Budget 2013/14

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Section 2 – HRA Budget 2014/15 – 2015/16

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Revenue Assumptions

In preparing the information for the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for the financial year 2013/14, a number of assumptions have been made and these are given below.

Should you require an electronic version of the budget contained within this documentation, please contact Gill Mutch, Finance Manager (Projects) on (52)2556 or e-mail gmutch@aberdeencity.gov.uk. The budget information is available as a set of Excel spreadsheets.

Inflation

In preparing the budget no general inflationary uplift has been added which is in line with the base assumptions used in preparing the General Fund Budget for 2013/14, (there are some exceptions to this rule such as utility costs and contractual uplifts etc. and these are stated in the variance notes). Inflation is currently running at approximately 3.1% (RPIX at October 2012). (Source: Office of National Statistics)

Housing Stock

The number of Council houses owned by the Council, as at 31 August 2012, is 22,735. It has been assumed that there will be a further 61 sales during the financial year 2012/13, bringing total sales for the year to 100. The average selling price for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 August 2012 is approximately £50,000.

Set Aside Rules

For the financial year 2012/13 the Council budgeted for 100% of all Council house sales to be utilised to repay debt. The Council is free to decide on how the proceeds from the disposal of Council houses are used. **The Head of Finance recommends that all capital receipts continue to be used to repay debt for the financial year 2013/14 and future years.**

Council House Sales

It has been assumed that the level of house sales will be 50 in 2013/14. The average selling price for 2012/13 is currently estimated at £50,000. The average number of houses for the financial year 2013/14 is therefore estimated to be 22,649 properties.

Rental Income

The income available in 2013/14 to fund the proposed budgeted level of expenditure has been calculated by taking the projected income under the revised rent structure plus 4.1% (RPIX at October 2012 + 1% which is the Council's current rent strategy/policy).

Heat with Rent

A detailed analysis has been carried out on the utility bills for Heat with Rent to ensure that the charging policy introduced in the 2006/07 budget setting process can be continued into 2013/14. No increase of income has been built into the proposed budget.

Welfare Reform and Working Balances

The impact of Welfare Reform is, at this time, unquantifiable but with 46% of current HRA tenants on full or partial housing benefit its effect on arrears, under occupancy etc could be substantial:

- Current Tenant Arrears at the end of March 12 were £2.6M (prior to the introduction of Welfare reform).
- There are 2,199 tenancies (approx 10% of all tenancies) which are effected by the under occupancy policy, these are tenants of working age and currently in receipt of Housing Benefit. This is actively being managed by Housing but there are a limited number of suitable properties for people to move to.

In developing a rent setting strategy it is important to ensure that there are adequate working balances. The Head of Finance must be confident that the level of working balances is adequate to meet any unforeseen contingencies particularly as regards the uncertainty surrounding welfare reform and the impact this could have on viability of the business plan of the Housing Revenue Account. Given this inherent uncertainty it is **proposed that the working balances are increased from 5% to 10% over a 3 year period.**

Rent Setting Strategy

On 28th August 2012 the Housing & Environment Committee approved a proposed new rent structure. The new rent model will be phased in over a 5 year period from April 2013 to April 2017. The increases and decreases are capped at a maximum of £3 per week during this period. Any rents that have not achieved the model rent by April 2018 will do so on that date. It was also agreed that any annual rent increases would be applied to the revised rent.

The new rent structure is consistent, fair, efficient and transparent and is detailed below:

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| BASE RENT | £42.00 |
|------------------|---------------|

| CRITERIA 1 - BEDROOM | ADDITIONAL RENT |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Number of Bedrooms | £ |
| 0 | 0.00 |
| 1 | 10.00 |
| 2 | 15.00 |
| 3 | 20.00 |
| 4 | 25.00 |
| 5 | 30.00 |
| 6 | 35.00 |
| 7 | 40.00 |

| CRITERIA 2 – DWELLING TYPE | ADDITIONAL RENT |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| | £ |
| Multi/Flat/Maisonette | 10.00 |
| Four in a Block | 15.00 |
| Cottage/House | 20.00 |

| CRITERIA 3 - GARAGES | ADDITIONAL RENT |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| | £ |
| Garage | 10.00 |
| No Garage | 0.00 |

Rent is equal to Base Rent + Criteria 1 + Criteria 2 + Criteria 3

So, for example, rent for 2 bedroom house with a garage:
 $£42.00 + £15.00 + £20.00 + £10.00 = £87.00$

The budget has been calculated using the above rent structure plus an increase of 4.1%.

Business Plan

During 2012 the 30 year business plan model, which sets out the current and future financial position of the Council's HRA, its ability to meet and maintain the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and manage, repair and invest in tenant's homes has been updated with the financial information from the financial year 2011/12 which continues to show a business plan which is sustainable in the long term. However if there were to be increases in, for example, interest rates this would impact on the long term viability of the plan. No account has been taken of any potential impact of welfare changes as, at this stage, these are unknown but could dramatically change the cash flow of the plan.

A sustainable rent policy must be adhered to in order to secure the long term financial position of this 30 year business plan. The Council policy for maintaining sustainable rents is for a rental increase of RPIX plus 1%.

Housing Capital Expenditure Programme

Housing Investment Programme

2013/14 will see continued major investment in tenants' homes to make sure that they meet their needs and expectations as well as the requirements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). Aberdeen City continues to make steady progress towards SHQS compliance with 81% of our stock now meeting the standard (as at June 2012) rising to an anticipated 90.8% by March 2014.

Whilst it is unclear as to any future obligations beyond the SHQS completion date of 2015 it is likely that this will dramatically reduce the current level of capital investment as this is not sustainable in the longer term.

The Council will continue to provide funding for the provision of combined heat and power in our multi storey stock. These actions will improve the energy performance of the council housing stock and prevent potentially hundreds of tenants from falling into or remaining in fuel poverty.

The Council has started work on a major over-cladding scheme for High Rise buildings and it is anticipated that those in Seaton will be completed by 2013/14 with work commencing on the blocks at Balnagask in November 2012.

To ensure that the Council can meet its priorities in terms of its housing stock the capital programme for the next three years (inclusive of slippage) is proposed as follows:

2013/14 - £46.930 Million

2014/15 - £39.330 Million

2015/16 -£37.949 Million (this is indicative at this stage but is likely to be considerably less)

The capital investment programme will begin to diminish in 2014/15 as a result of the reduced work required on the SHQS and this will have significant savings in the revenue account as the borrowing levels will begin to reduce.

Tenants Charter

The Tenants Charter¹ was published by the Scottish Government in March 2012. The purpose of the Charter is to improve the quality and value of the services that social landlords provide, and supports the Scottish Government's long term aim of creating a safer and stronger Scotland.

The Charter has seven sections covering:

- equalities;
- the customer/landlord relationship;
- housing quality and maintenance;
- neighbourhood and community;
- access to housing and support;
- getting good value from rents and service charges;
- other customers.

The objective of the section on rents and service charges is that Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that:

- A balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and other customers can afford them
- Tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including any details of individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.

Each landlord must decide, in discussion with tenants and other customers, whether to publish information about expenditure above a particular level, and in what form and detail. It is important that discussions do take place and the decisions made reflect the views of tenants and other customers.

¹ A copy of the Charter can be found at www.housingcharter.scotland.gov.uk

| Housing Revenue Account Draft 2013/14 Budget | | Budget | Out-turn | Budget | Notes |
|---|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------|
| | | 2012/13 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | |
| | | £000 | £000 | £000 | |
| Premises Costs | | | | | |
| 1 | Rates | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| 2 | Rent – Other | 135 | 115 | 138 | 1 |
| 3 | Repairs and Maintenance | 23,264 | 23,092 | 22,042 | 2 |
| 4 | Maintenance of Grounds | 2,560 | 2,866 | 3,045 | 3 |
| 5 | Gas | 714 | 714 | 674 | 4 |
| 6 | Electricity | 2,361 | 2,361 | 2,420 | 5 |
| 7 | Cleaning Service | 476 | 476 | 542 | 6 |
| 8 | Security Service | 444 | 372 | 372 | 7 |
| 9 | Window Cleaning | 19 | 19 | 19 | |
| 10 | Refuse Collection | 240 | 320 | 325 | 8 |
| 11 | Cleaning – Sheltered Housing | 475 | 449 | 453 | 9 |
| 12 | Premises Insurance | 56 | 56 | 57 | 10 |
| 13 | Other Property Costs - Council Tax | 115 | 122 | 122 | 11 |
| | | 30,862 | 30,965 | 30,212 | |
| Administration Costs | | | | | |
| 14 | Downsizing Grants/Direct Debit Incentives | 52 | 15 | 52 | 12 |
| 15 | Legal Expenses | 222 | 201 | 201 | |
| 16 | Office Tel / Rent | 88 | 88 | 88 | |
| 17 | Former Tenants Arrears | 1,379 | 1,379 | 1,379 | 13 |
| 18 | Charges - Services Admin & Management. | 8,556 | 7,968 | 8,582 | 14 |
| 19 | General Consultancy | 55 | 55 | 55 | 15 |
| 20 | Training for Front Line Staff | 100 | 100 | 100 | 15 |
| 21 | Benefits Staff | 94 | 94 | 95 | 15 |
| 22 | Charges - Tenants Participation | 238 | 238 | 206 | 16 |
| 23 | Charges for Environmental Health | 213 | 227 | 227 | |
| | | 10,997 | 10,365 | 10,985 | |
| Supplies & Services | | | | | |
| 24 | Provision of Meals | 177 | 166 | 168 | 17 |
| 25 | Equipment Purchase | 55 | 55 | 55 | |
| 26 | Television Licence | 5 | 5 | 5 | |
| 27 | Integrated Housing System | 338 | 338 | 314 | 18 |
| | | 575 | 564 | 542 | |
| Agencies | | | | | |
| 28 | Mediation Service | 98 | 98 | 98 | 19 |
| 29 | Energy Advice | 81 | 81 | 81 | 20 |
| 30 | Citizens Advice Bureau | 14 | 14 | 14 | 15 |
| 31 | Disabled Persons Housing Service | 38 | 38 | 38 | 15 |
| | | 231 | 231 | 231 | |

| | Housing Revenue Account | Budget | Out-turn | Budget | |
|----|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----|
| | Draft 2013/14 Budget | 2012/13 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | |
| | | £000 | £000 | £000 | |
| | Transfer Payments | | | | |
| 32 | Aberdeen Families Project | 400 | 400 | 414 | 21 |
| 33 | Loss of Rent - Council Houses | 722 | 754 | 722 | 22 |
| 34 | Loss of Rent - Garages, Parking etc | 153 | 211 | 211 | |
| 35 | Loss of Rent - Modernisation Works | 86 | 50 | 50 | |
| 36 | Supporting People Contribution | 406 | 406 | 406 | 23 |
| 37 | CFCR | 17,675 | 21,484 | 22,116 | |
| | | 19,442 | 23,305 | 23,919 | |
| | | | | | |
| | Capital Financing Costs | | | | |
| 38 | Loans Fund Instalment | 4,260 | 3,168 | 3,903 | |
| 39 | Loans Fund Interest | 10,819 | 8,889 | 9,559 | |
| 40 | Heating Leasing Payment | 131 | 131 | 131 | |
| | | 15,210 | 12,188 | 13,593 | 24 |
| | | | | | |
| | Expense Total | 77,317 | 77,618 | 79,482 | |
| | | | | | |
| | Income | | | | |
| 41 | Government Grant - General | (420) | (234) | (234) | 25 |
| 42 | Ground Rentals | (25) | (25) | (27) | |
| 43 | Dwelling Houses Rent Income | (73,144) | (73,748) | (76,589) | 26 |
| 44 | Housing - Heat with Rent Income | (1,534) | (1,459) | (1,459) | 27 |
| 45 | Housing - Garages Rent Income | (1,096) | (1,087) | (1,087) | 28 |
| 46 | Housing - Parking Spaces Rent | (167) | (187) | (187) | 28 |
| 47 | Housing - Insurance Income | (8) | (8) | (2) | |
| 48 | Housing - Other Service Charge | (479) | (489) | (489) | 28 |
| 49 | Legal Expenses | (323) | (260) | (260) | |
| 50 | Revenue Balance Interest | (121) | (121) | (148) | 29 |
| | | | | | |
| | Income Total | (77,317) | (77,618) | (80,482) | |
| | | | | | |
| | Net Expenditure | 0 | 0 | (1,000) | |
| | | | | | |
| | Projected Working Balance at 1 April 2013 | | | 4,200 | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2013/14 BUDGET

Variance Notes Comparing Draft Budget 2013/14 to Estimated Out-turn 2012/13

Expenditure Movements

1. Rent

This budget is for the rent of police houses, accommodation for community groups and housing offices.

2. Repairs and Maintenance

An analysis of the proposed budget is included within this booklet (pages 14 to 15). The budget has reduced from 2012/13 as there have been year on year reductions in repairs and maintenance costs.

3. Maintenance of Grounds

Maintenance of Grounds budget has two elements: ground maintenance and cleansing/weed control. Both budgets for 2013/14 have been calculated by uplifting the anticipated outturns for 2012/13 by 1% (the budgeted salary uplift) and also includes an additional £150K for ad hoc grass cutting requests from Housing Managers.

4. Gas

The Council moved on to the Scottish Government National Procurement for Gas Supply on 1 April 2010 with the contract price reviewed on an annual basis. The budget has been calculated using the actual consumption from 2011/12 and an anticipated rates increase in the contract price as advised by the Council's energy unit.

5. Electricity

This is the third year of a four year electricity contract. The budget has been calculated by using information provided for the 2012/13 budget process as the updated figures are not yet available.

6. Cleaning Service

This budget is for communal cleaning. The cleaning contract commenced on 5 July 2010 and runs for three years. To date the contract has not been agreed for July 2013 onwards therefore the budget has been based on actual expenditure for 2011/12 plus 2.6% (RPIX for September 2012). The Contracts Managers costs are also contained within this budget.

7. Security Service

This budget is for the security service which started in 2012/13 and runs for three years. The cost of the security included in the budget for 2013/14 is £372,000, and includes the control room team.

8. Refuse Collection

This budget has been based on the actual expenditure for 2011/12 plus 1% potential wage increase.

9. Cleaning – Sheltered Housing

This is the budget for the cleaning of sheltered housing and has been calculated by using the actual expenditure for 2011/12 plus 1%.

10. Premises Insurance

The budget for 2013/14 has been maintained at the 2012/13 level.

11. Other Property Costs – Council Tax on void properties

This budget is for the cost of Council Tax due on void properties. The actual expenditure for 2011/12 has been used and is based on the assumption that there will be no increase in Council Tax for 2013/14 based on the terms and conditions of the award of the General Revenue Grant.

12. Downsizing Grants/Direct Debit Incentives

There are currently two schemes within this budget line which are Downsizing grants (£50,000) and Direct Debit Incentives (£2,000). Budgets have been maintained at the 2012/13 level.

The Downsizing Scheme provides assistance and a financial incentive to Council tenants occupying 3+ bedroom family properties in high demand areas to move to smaller more suitable housing in order to increase the supply of large family housing. This budget is being maintained at the current level as there could be a potential rise in demand when the welfare reforms are introduced and tenants are penalised for under occupation.

The Direct Debit Incentive scheme was introduced on 5 April 2010. Each month there is a draw for all new and existing direct debit payers for a chance to win a week free rent period, to encourage more people to switch to paying by direct debit.

13. Former Tenants Arrears

The budget has been maintained at the current budgeted level to allow for potential costs of the welfare reforms being introduced by the Government. Aberdeen City Council had 29.6% tenancies in arrears at 31 March 2012 compared to the Scottish Average of 26%.

14. Management & Administration

The staffing budget is based on the current structure of the Housing Revenue Account. A pay award of 1% has been allowed for which is in line with the assumptions contained within the Council's General Fund.

15. General Consultancy, Training for Front Line Staff, Benefits staff, Citizens Advice Bureau, Disabled persons Housing Service

All of the above budgets have assumed no uplifts.

General consultancy allows the Housing Revenue Account to fund one off projects. An example of this type of expenditure would include work on the Housing Business Plan.

Training for front line staff allows, for example, housing assistants to participate in professional staff development programmes with the opportunity of gaining membership of the Chartered Institute of Housing.

The costs of the benefits staff are recharged from the benefits team for the time spent with council house tenants on maximising income and tackling financial exclusion.

The contribution to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) provides funding to the service at ARI/Woodend hospitals.

Disabled Persons Housing Service (Aberdeen) (DPHS) is a charitable organisation that provides specialist information, advice and advocacy on housing matters to disabled people, their families and carers and professionals working in housing, social work, health and the voluntary sector.

Grant funding has previously been provided to DPHS and it was agreed in 2010/11 that funding would run for a three year period and would cover core funding for the development officer's post, plus an allowance for running costs. This will enable the DPHS to continue to develop and expand the range of services that it offers to people of Aberdeen in line with the objectives set out within the Disability Action Group (DAG), DAG Homes Sub-Group Action Plan, the Local Housing Strategy and the Community Care Housing Strategy.

16. Tenants Participation

This is the budget allocated for the provision of tenants participation and includes the employment costs of two tenant participation officers, Newsbite and training for tenant representatives.

17. Provision of Meals

The actual expenditure for 2011/12 plus 1% is the basis for the 2013/14 budget. This budget is for the provision of meals at Denmore and Kingswood extra care housing. The income for this service is contained in line 48 of the budget statement above which is shown as "Housing Other Service Charge". No increase to this charge is being recommended (this is contained in miscellaneous rents page 19) as there is currently a review ongoing on Housing for Varying Needs which will consider these charges for the future. Currently there is a shortfall of £34,000 between income and expenditure for meals.

18. Integrated Housing System

This budget is based on the IT requirements for 2013/14 which includes all the support and maintenance costs.

19. Mediation Service

For 2013/14 budget has been maintained at 2012/13 levels.

20. Energy Advice

The energy advice budget is currently a payment to SCARF (Save Cash and Reduce Fuel). SCARF encourage the sustainable use of energy, achieving affordable warmth, eradicating fuel poverty and extending the life of natural energy resources across the North East of Scotland.

21. Aberdeen Families Project

This budget is used to fund the Aberdeen Families Project. The Families Project is based in the Torry area and provides intensive support and supervision to families (mainly council tenants) who are involved in serious antisocial behaviour which could result in their eviction and subsequent homelessness. The service aims to reintegrate tenants or former tenants who are homeless and have a history of not sustaining a satisfactory tenancy, back into a tenancy without requiring intensive housing management. The budget is based on the 2011/12 actual expenditure.

22. Loss of Rent Council Houses

No uplift has been assumed therefore setting a target for savings in 2013/14. The void trend in 2012/13 is still showing a small increase.

23. Supporting People Contribution

This budget is a contribution to cover the costs of providing the former wardens salaries for people who were not in receipt of housing benefit as at 31 March 2003. The contribution in 2013/14 is based on the actual expenditure for 2011/12.

This does not reflect the costs associated with the former warden's salaries as this forms part of the General Fund.

The contribution is being considered as part of the review for Housing for Varying Needs and therefore will be subject to change.

24. Capital Financing Costs

The budget for capital financing costs is based on the likely level of capital spend in 2012/13 as at the end of August 2012 and a possible future programme for 2013/14 of £41.533 million, as well as the level of historic debt that has to be financed. It also assumes that the consolidated loans pool rate (the rate used to calculate debt charges) is 4.5%.

Income

25. Government Grant – General

This budget is grant income from the Scottish Government for the Hostel. The grant previously funded any deficit generated from the running of this service but since 2012/13 is a fixed amount. There is a provision held in the balance sheet to cover the shortfall for the next 2 years.

26. Dwelling Houses Rent Income

The budgeted income from Dwelling House Rent has been calculated using the anticipated income from the new rent structure and increased by the potential

rent increase of 4.1% (RPIX at October 2012 +1%) which is in line with current Council policy on rent setting.

27. Housing – Heat with Rent Income

A review was undertaken of the income and expenditure of Heat with Rent.

- **Gas**
The projected energy consumption and contract rates were provided by the Council's Energy Management Unit for each sheltered complex. As from 1 April 2011 the gas supply is through Scottish Government National Procurement and is reviewed on an annual basis. The energy used in the common rooms and guest rooms has been removed from the calculation as these costs are funded by rent pooling. The revised consumption has been multiplied by the agreed rate to be paid on the gas contract.
- **Electricity**
The projected energy consumption and rates were provided by the Council's Energy Management Unit for each sheltered complex. The four year electricity contract started on 1 April 2011, reductions in the consumption were made for the common rooms and guest rooms as these costs are funded by rent pooling. The consumption has been multiplied by the agreed rate on the electricity contract.
- **Combined Heat & Power (CHP)**
Aberdeen Heat and Power are to advise the Council of the rate increase in November, indications are that the maximum increase will be 5%.

Page 21 of this document shows the recovery of these costs

28. Housing – Garages Rent Income, Housing Parking Spaces Rent, Housing – Other Service Charges

This line will move depending on the level that miscellaneous rents are set at, as covered on page 19. The current budget therefore assumes that there will be no increase at present.

29. Interest on Revenue Balances

This is akin to bank interest received on the HRA's cash flow during the year. Budget is based on the income received in 2011/12 and current economic conditions.

| HOUSING REPAIRS DRAFT BUDGET | | Approved Budget 2012/13 £000 | Projected Spend 2012/13 £000 | Base Budget 2013/14 £000 |
|---|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| PLANNED AND CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE | | | | |
| 1 | External Joiner work Repairs including external painter work etc. | 1,500 | 1,613 | 1,500 |
| 2 | Boiler Maintenance – Sheltered Housing | 175 | 350 | 300 |
| 3 | Controlled Entry Systems – Maintenance | 450 | 367 | 370 |
| 4 | Fire Precautions - Servicing & Renewal of Equipment inc. Smoke Detectors & Dry Risers | 340 | 218 | 220 |
| 5 | Flat Roofs/Dormers – Renewal & Insulation | 50 | 14 | 50 |
| 6 | Common Rooms – Replacement of Furniture | 70 | 28 | 40 |
| 7 | Gas Servicing, Maintenance and Repair | 2,825 | 2,882 | 2,885 |
| 8 | Laundry Equipment Replacement & Maintenance | 85 | 48 | 60 |
| 9 | Legionella Testing incl. Repair/Renewal of Tanks | 100 | 43 | 60 |
| 10 | Lift Maintenance | 315 | 339 | 350 |
| 11 | Mutual Repairs outwith Housing Action Areas | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| 12 | Pumps & Fans - Maintenance & Renewal | 90 | 131 | 120 |
| 13 | Sheltered Housing - Replacement of Carpets, furnishings etc | 70 | 22 | 40 |
| 14 | Standby Generators – Maintenance | 90 | 122 | 120 |
| 15 | Warden call systems- maintenance and Repair | 90 | 90 | 90 |
| 16 | Provision of Community Alarm | 125 | 230 | 230 |
| 17 | Environmental Improvements (including internal communal areas) | 1,500 | 1,059 | 1,200 |
| 18 | Void Properties | 4,500 | 3,616 | 3,550 |
| 19 | Asbestos | 200 | 238 | 200 |
| Planned/Cyclical Maintenance Sub Total | | 12,600 | 11,435 | 11,410 |
| DAY TO DAY RESPONSE MAINTENANCE | | | | |
| 20 | Blacksmith General incl. Renewing & Repairing Rotary Driers/Handrails | 280 | 147 | 160 |
| 21 | Car Park Repairs | 10 | 14 | 15 |
| 22 | Chimney heads - Repointing and Rebuilding | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| 23 | Condensation - Treatment of Walls | 160 | 37 | 100 |
| 24 | Electrical Work - General Repairs | 1,100 | 1,071 | 1,100 |
| 25 | Emergency Work - Out of Hours Service | 620 | 571 | 620 |
| 26 | External/Internal Response Paintwork | 350 | 222 | 250 |
| 27 | Fire Damage Repairs | 200 | 267 | 300 |
| 28 | Garage Repairs | 30 | 40 | 50 |
| 29 | Glazier work | 200 | 129 | 150 |
| 30 | Joiner work - General Repairs | 2,000 | 2,370 | 2,400 |
| 31 | Mason work and Water Penetration Repairs | 620 | 324 | 350 |
| 32 | Minor Environmental Services | 520 | 547 | 560 |
| 33 | Plasterwork – General | 320 | 256 | 270 |
| 34 | Plumber work – General | 1,100 | 1,126 | 1,150 |
| 35 | Slater work | 800 | 720 | 800 |
| 36 | Snow Clearance | 52 | 52 | 52 |
| 37 | TV Aerial | 220 | 110 | 150 |
| 38 | Rubbish Removal | 200 | 126 | 140 |
| 39 | Vandalism | 200 | 88 | 100 |
| 40 | Water Services Charges | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Day to Day Response Maintenance Total | | 8,997 | 8,227 | 8,732 |
| 41 | Chargeable Repairs | 0 | 1,550 | 0 |
| 42 | Fees | 1,667 | 1,880 | 1,900 |
| TOTAL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET | | 23,264 | 23,092 | 22,042 |

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET 2013/14

General

The projected spend figures have been taken from invoicing up to the end of August 2012 and the committed cost for jobs yet to be invoiced as at the middle of September.

Projections are based on the average monthly spend, updates from surveyors and, in the case of the general trades, historical information has been taken from previous spend patterns.

Projected spend in 2012/13 is currently anticipated to be lower than budget however this can be subject to change as this budget is demand led.

Specific Items

Planned and Cyclical Maintenance

Item 2 Boiler Maintenance – Sheltered Housing

Expenditure is above budget due to the increasing number of call-outs regarding faults involving radiators in flats, cottages and common areas. There has also been a significant increase in recent call-outs to replace calorifiers, boilers and water heaters.

Item 17 Environmental Improvements

This line includes crime prevention measures, bird proofing including the removal of nests, area fencing, security doors, sound insulation, security lighting and other estate management improvements identified by housing officers.

Item 18 Void Properties (Relets)

The projected decrease reflects actual expenditure to date.

Day to Day Response Maintenance

The items listed under day to day response are more susceptible to weather /climate/fluctuations in costs from year to year. The projected and budget costs are in part based on historical data taken from previous years.

Chargeable Repairs

Chargeable repairs are those repairs which are completed on blocks which contain owners, the spend cannot be split between tenants and owners, the projected spend figure has been reduced by 25% to take account of this.

Fees

The fees have increased as a result of the inclusion of the recharge for the call centre who receive the repairs calls. Also uplifted by 1% for wage inflation.

| | Management & Admin | | Proposed | |
|----|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| | | Budget 2012/13 | Budget 2013/14 | Notes |
| | | £000 | £000 | |
| | Staff Costs | | | 1 |
| 1 | Salaries | 6,409 | 6,003 | |
| 2 | Overtime | 69 | 70 | |
| 3 | Superannuation | 1,118 | 1,063 | |
| 4 | N.I | 511 | 481 | |
| 5 | Other Staff Costs | 253 | 245 | |
| | | 8,360 | 7,862 | |
| | Premises Costs | | | 2 |
| 6 | Rates | 107 | 104 | |
| 7 | Rent | 30 | 30 | |
| 8 | Insurance | 2 | 2 | |
| 9 | Electricity/Gas | 70 | 63 | |
| 10 | Void Properties | 10 | 10 | |
| 11 | Rubbish Removal | 21 | 21 | |
| 12 | Cleaning | 114 | 114 | |
| 13 | Repairs and Maintenance | 45 | 34 | |
| 14 | Security | 51 | 51 | |
| | | 450 | 429 | |
| | Administration Costs | | | 2 |
| 15 | Printing | 82 | 89 | |
| 16 | Photocopying | 19 | 19 | |
| 17 | Stationery | 30 | 31 | |
| 18 | Subscriptions | 16 | 22 | |
| 19 | Postages | 87 | 101 | |
| 20 | Telephones | 35 | 50 | |
| 21 | Bank Charges(inc Cash in transit | 76 | 77 | |
| 22 | Advertising | 49 | 44 | |
| 23 | Course Expenses | 93 | 100 | |
| 24 | Legal Expenses | 18 | 1 | |
| 25 | Former Tenants Arrears | 3 | 1 | |
| 26 | Tenants Participation Expenses | 0 | 20 | |
| | | 508 | 555 | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

| | | | | Proposed |
|----|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| | | Budget | | Budget |
| | | 2012/13 | | 2013/14 |
| | | £000 | | £000 |
| | | | | Notes |
| | Transport Costs | | | 2 |
| 27 | Travel Costs | 94 | | 99 |
| | | 94 | | 99 |
| | Supplies & Services | | | 2 |
| 28 | Equipment Purchases | 57 | | 69 |
| 29 | Computer Software Support | 18 | | 15 |
| 30 | Sundry Outlays | 110 | | 153 |
| | | 185 | | 237 |
| | Corporate/Directorate Recharge | | | |
| 31 | Corporate/Directorate Recharges | 2,020 | | 2,366 |
| | | 2,020 | | 2,366 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | Expense Total | 11,617 | | 11,548 |
| | | | | |
| | Income | | | |
| | Recharges:- | | | |
| 34 | Management & Admin – HRA | (8,453) | | (8,582) |
| 35 | Tenants Participation – HRA | (238) | | (206) |
| 36 | Other Housing | (289) | | (330) |
| 37 | Homeless Persons | (160) | | (149) |
| 38 | Housing Capital | (1,232) | | (1,044) |
| | | (10,372) | | (10,311) |
| | | | | |
| 39 | Hostel - Rents | (1,245) | | (1,237) |
| | | | | |
| | Income Total | (11,617) | | (11,548) |
| | | | | |
| | Net Expenditure | 0 | | 0 |
| | | | | |

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION BUDGET

Variances and Notes

The 2013/14 budget for management and administration is based on the updated structure of Housing.

1. Staff Costs

Staff costs have been increased to reflect annual salary increments and increases in employers' superannuation and national insurance costs. The element for the Corporate Director and Heads of Service for Housing and Environment previously included within this budget has been moved to the Corporate/Directorate Charges. This has resulted in a reduction in the staff costs budget.

2. Premises Costs, Fees & Charges, Administration Costs, Transport Costs, Supplies and Services

All the above budgets have been reviewed with certain costs being adjusted based on current service provision.

3. Corporate/Directorate Charges

This budget is based on the current services being provided to Housing and may be subject to change. It covers services such as Legal, Finance, Office Accommodation, IT, Corporate Director and Heads of Service (as per note 1) etc.

Miscellaneous Rents

| Heat with Rent – 48 week basis | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Previous | Proposed |
| Gas Heated Properties | £ | £ |
| Bedsits | 8.25 | 9.05 |
| 1 bed roomed flats | 8.95 | 9.85 |
| 2 bed roomed flats | 9.25 | 10.25 |
| 3 bed roomed flats | 10.35 | 11.45 |
| | | |
| Electrically Heated Properties | | |
| Bedsits | 9.25 | 10.05 |
| 1 bed roomed flats | 9.95 | 10.85 |
| 2 bed roomed flats | 10.65 | 11.65 |
| 3 bed roomed flats | 11.35 | 12.45 |
| | | |
| CHP Properties | | |
| All 1 Bed roomed Properties | 8.90 | 9.80 |
| All 2 Bed roomed Properties | 9.40 | 10.40 |
| All 3 Bed roomed Properties | 10.10 | 11.20 |
| | | |

**ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**

Proposed Increase to be included in the HRA budget – Miscellaneous Rents

| | | 2013/2014 | | | | |
|------|---|---------------|---------------|----------|------------|----------------|
| | | Current | Proposed | Increase | Percentage | Additional |
| | | Rental | Rental | Per Week | Increase | Income |
| Note | Miscellaneous Increases | £ | £ | £ | % | £ |
| 1 | Garages | 9.10 | 10.00 | 0.90 | 9.89 | 89,078 |
| | Denburn and West North Street Spaces | 4.40 | 4.55 | 0.15 | 3.41 | 4,514 |
| | Garages Sites | 3.70 | 3.85 | 0.15 | 4.05 | 1,771 |
| | Car Ports | 4.10 | 4.25 | 0.15 | 3.66 | 1,037 |
| 2 | Car Parking Spaces – Local Residents | 3.40 | 3.40 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | Parking Spaces Non Local Residents | 35.00 | 35.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Window Cleaning | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3 | Meals at Denmore & Kingswood | 35.00 | 35.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Mortgage Reference Fees | 60.00 | 62.00 | 2.00 | 3.33 | 56 |
| 4 | Guest Rooms | 10.00 & 15.00 | 10.00 & 15.00 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5 | Owners Administration fees | 16.13 | 38.59 | 22.46 | 139.24 | 11,544 |
| | | | | | | 108,001 |
| | General Services | | | | | |
| | Housing – Homeless Account | | | | | |
| | Clinterty Caravan Site | 79.00 | 82.00 | 3.00 | 3.80 | 5,040 |
| | | | | | | 5,040 |
| | Accommodation Units (Grant Funded) | | | | | |
| | Adult (first2) | 54.00 | 56.00 | 2.00 | 3.70 | 27,500 |
| | Child | 36.00 | 37.00 | 1.00 | 2.78 | 6,875 |
| | | | | | | 34,375 |

The above proposed prices for 2013/14 have been increased broadly in line with the proposed rental increase subject to:

Note 1 This increase was agreed as part of the revised rent structure on 28th August 2012 but has yet to be implemented.

Note 2 These charges will be part of the overall review by EP&I on Parking.

Note 3 These charges are being considered as part of the overall review of Housing for Varying Needs. In 2011/12 there for a shortfall of £34K from the provision of meals

Note 4 These charges were agreed at H& E Committee on 28 August 2012 therefore do not require review.

Note 5 This is an annual charge per owner and the increase reflects the Property Factors Act which was introduced on 1st October 2012, revised fees have not been introduced to date.

Heat with Rent calculations for 2013/14

It was agreed in the 2012/13 budget process to apply an **increase of 50p per week for bedsits, 60p per week for 1 bed roomed dwellings, 70p per week for 2 bed roomed dwelling and 80p per week for 3 bed roomed dwellings** across all the Council's Heat with Rent properties. Similar increases will be required for the next three years to cover the costs.

It was noted that a review of consumption and costs would be required each year especially as only the electric contract was fixed for four years. There would also be revised costs for CHP and gas each year. As a result the above increases would be subject to change for the next 3 years.

The Bank of England anticipates that gas prices may rise by 15% & electricity by 10% during this winter. Tenants with Heat with Rent have been protected from these market increases as the Council can buy these fuels at lower contract prices than would be available to individual domestic customers. These fuel price savings are then passed on to tenants who are on Heat with Rent.

In addition as the charge is the same every week, tenants on Heat with Rent are not faced with the problem of having to pay large gas or electric bills during the colder winter months which have been extreme in the last two years.

It is proposed to apply an **increase of 80p per week for bedsits, 90p per week for 1 bed roomed dwellings, £1.00 per week for 2 bed roomed dwelling and £1.10 per week for 3 bed roomed dwellings** across all the Council's Heat with Rent properties in 2013/14.

For 2013/14 revised rates will result in **increases of between 8.6% and 10.8%**.

This would generate sufficient income to ensure the Housing Revenue Account would break even between the costs to the Council of providing electricity and gas through Combined Heat with Power charges for the heating in these dwellings over a four year period.

| | Estimated 4 year cost to Council £000 | Estimated 4 year income to cover costs £000 |
|--------------|--|--|
| Total | 6,200 | 6,200 |

This would equate to the following weekly Heat with Rent charges for 2013/14:

for electrically and oil heated properties:

| | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| Bedsits | 10.05 | Increase of 8.6% |
| 1 bed roomed dwellings | 10.85 | Increase of 9.04% |
| 2 bed roomed dwellings | 11.65 | Increase of 9.38% |
| 3 bed roomed dwellings | 12.45 | Increase of 9.6% |

for gas heated properties:

| | | |
|------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Bedsits | 9.05 | Increase of 9.6% |
| 1 bed roomed dwellings | 9.85 | Increase of 10.05% |
| 2 bed roomed dwellings | 10.25 | Increase of 10.8% |
| 3 bed roomed dwellings | 11.45 | Increase of 10.6% |

for CHP heated properties:

| | | |
|------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| 1 bed roomed dwellings | 9.80 | Increase of 10.1% |
| 2 bed roomed dwellings | 10.40 | Increase of 10.6% |
| 3 bed roomed dwellings | 11.20 | Increase of 10.89% |

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL Tenants Consultation

Aberdeen City Council is committed to ensuring that tenants' views are both sought and listened to. As part of the review on the future of the Council housing stock, a tenant referendum was held to determine what the views of tenants were.

The tenants voted overwhelmingly to retain the Council as their landlord in 2002, provided that continued improvements were made to the housing stock. In 2004, the Council adopted a Housing Business Plan approach. This has allowed us to plan for the future. This has meant that the rent increases over the last four years has allowed the Council to speed up the Capital Programme and build a foundation for future investment in Council homes.

Furthermore, a questionnaire was sent out to tenants in July 2012 to ascertain views on the possible rent increase of inflation plus 1%. The table below shows the results of the questionnaire.

ANNUAL RENT CONSULTATION – Feedback

Do you agree that the rent policy, inflation + 1%, should be continued to maintain investment in our housing stock and improve services?

| | Returns | Percent |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Yes | 266 | 75 |
| No | 84 | 23 |
| Don't know | 6 | 2 |
| Total | 356 | 100 |

Presentations and question and answer sessions were also held with tenants to discuss the budgets.

| Housing Revenue Account | | Budget | Budget | Budget | Notes |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------|
| | | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | |
| | | £000 | £000 | £000 | |
| Premises Costs | | | | | |
| 1 | Rates | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| 2 | Rent | 138 | 141 | 145 | 3 |
| 3 | Repairs and Maintenance | 22,042 | 22,564 | 23,100 | 1 |
| 4 | Maintenance of Grounds | 3,045 | 3,075 | 3,106 | 2 |
| 5 | Gas | 674 | 691 | 708 | 3 |
| 6 | Electricity | 2,420 | 2,481 | 2,543 | 3 |
| 7 | Cleaning Service | 542 | 542 | 542 | 3 |
| 8 | Security Service | 372 | 376 | 379 | 2 |
| 9 | Window Cleaning | 19 | 19 | 19 | |
| 10 | Refuse Collection | 325 | 328 | 332 | 2 |
| 11 | Cleaning - Payments to Contractor | 453 | 458 | 463 | 2 |
| 12 | Premises Insurance | 57 | 58 | 60 | 3 |
| 13 | Other Property Costs - Council Tax | 122 | 122 | 122 | |
| | | 30,212 | 30,858 | 31,522 | |
| Administration Costs | | | | | |
| 14 | Down sizing Grants/Direct Debit Incentives | 52 | 52 | 52 | |
| 15 | Legal Expenses | 201 | 201 | 201 | |
| 16 | Office Tel / Rent | 88 | 90 | 92 | 3 |
| 17 | Former Tenants Arrears | 1,379 | 1,379 | 1,379 | |
| 18 | Charges - Services Admin & Management | 8,582 | 8,668 | 8,747 | |
| 19 | General Consultancy | 55 | 55 | 55 | 2 |
| 20 | Training for Front Line Staff | 100 | 100 | 100 | |
| 21 | Benefits Staff | 95 | 96 | 97 | 2 |
| 22 | Charges - Tenants Participation | 206 | 208 | 210 | 2 |
| 23 | Charges for Environmental Health | 227 | 229 | 232 | 2 |
| | | 10,985 | 11,078 | 11,165 | |
| Supplies & Services | | | | | |
| 24 | Provision of Meals | 168 | 169 | 171 | |
| 25 | Equipment Purchase | 55 | 55 | 55 | |
| 26 | Television Licence | 5 | 5 | 5 | |
| 27 | Integrated Housing System | 314 | 314 | 314 | |
| | | 542 | 543 | 545 | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

| | Housing Revenue Account | Budget | Budget | Budget | |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | |
| | | £000 | £000 | £000 | Notes |
| | Agencies | | | | |
| 28 | Mediation Service | 98 | 99 | 99 | 2 |
| 29 | Energy Advice | 81 | 82 | 83 | 2 |
| 30 | Citizens Advice Bureau | 14 | 14 | 14 | |
| 31 | Disabled Persons Housing Service | 38 | 38 | 39 | 2 |
| | | 231 | 233 | 235 | |
| | Transfer Payments | | | | |
| 32 | Aberdeen Families Project | 414 | 418 | 422 | 2 |
| 33 | Loss of Rent - Council Houses | 722 | 747 | 773 | 4 |
| 34 | Loss of Rent - Garages, Parking etc | 211 | 218 | 226 | 4 |
| 35 | Loss of Rent - Modernisation Works | 50 | 53 | 54 | 4 |
| 36 | Supporting People Contribution | 406 | 406 | 406 | |
| 37 | CFCR | 22,116 | 22,783 | 23,570 | |
| | | 23,919 | 24,625 | 25,451 | |
| | Capital Financing Costs | | | | |
| 38 | Loans Fund Instalment | 3,903 | 4,794 | 5,715 | |
| 39 | Loans Fund Interest | 9,559 | 10,263 | 10,829 | |
| 40 | Heating Leasing Payment | 131 | 131 | 131 | |
| | | 13,593 | 15,188 | 16,675 | |
| | Expense Total | 79,482 | 82,525 | 85,593 | |
| | | | | | |
| | Income | | | | |
| 41 | Government Grant – General | (234) | (234) | (234) | |
| 42 | Ground Rentals | (27) | (27) | (27) | |
| 43 | Dwelling Houses Rent Income | (76,589) | (79,632) | (82,700) | 4 |
| 44 | Housing - Heat with Rent Income | (1,459) | (1,459) | (1,459) | |
| 45 | Housing - Garages Rent Income | (1,087) | (1,087) | (1,087) | |
| 46 | Housing - Parking Spaces Rent | (187) | (187) | (187) | |
| 47 | Housing - Insurance Income | (2) | (2) | (2) | |
| 48 | Housing - Other Service Charge | (489) | (489) | (489) | |
| 49 | Legal Expenses | (260) | (260) | (260) | |
| 50 | Revenue Balance Interest | (148) | (148) | (148) | |
| | Income Total | (80,482) | (83,525) | (86,593) | |
| | | | | | |
| | Net Expenditure | (1,000) | (1,000) | (1,000) | |
| | | | | | |
| | Current Minimum Working Balances | 3,974 | 4,126 | 4,280 | |
| | Actual Working Balance | 5,200 | 6,200 | 7,200 | |

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT THREE YEAR BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

1. Repairs and Maintenance

The analysis of the three year budget is included within this booklet (page 27). The budget has been uplifted by 2.5% in 2014/15 and 2015/16. The fee element has been uplifted by 1% to reflect the salary uplift.

2. Maintenance of Grounds, Security Service, Refuse Collection, Cleaning – Payments to Contractors, General Consultancy, Benefits staff, Charges – Tenants Participation, Charges for Environmental Health, Mediation Service, Energy Advice, Disabled Persons Housing Service, Aberdeen Families Project

As these budgets are principally for staffing within the Council an uplift of 1% has been applied to reflect the anticipated public sector pay awards.

3. Rent, Gas, Electricity, Cleaning Service, Premises Insurance, Office Telephone

These budgets have been uplifted by the inflationary increase in the HRA Business Plan.

4. Dwelling Houses Rent Income and Transfer Payments

The budgeted income from dwelling house rent is calculated by using the anticipated income from the new rent structure uplifted by the potential rent increase of 4.1% for 2013/14 and then uplifting each year by 3.5% (RPIX of 2.5% used in the business plan plus 1%) less a projected reduction in stock of 50 each year.

| HOUSING REPAIRS DRAFT BUDGET | | Base Budget 2013/14 £000 | Base Budget 2014/15 £000 | Base Budget 2015/16 £000 |
|---|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| PLANNED AND CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE | | | | |
| 1 | External Joiner work Repairs including external paintwork etc. | 1,500 | 1,538 | 1,576 |
| 2 | Boiler Maintenance - Extra Care Housing | 300 | 308 | 315 |
| 3 | Controlled Entry Systems – Maintenance | 370 | 379 | 389 |
| 4 | Fire Precautions - Servicing & Renewal of Equipment inc. Smoke Detectors & Dry Risers | 220 | 226 | 231 |
| 5 | Flat Roofs/Dormers – Renewal & Insulation | 50 | 51 | 53 |
| 6 | Common Rooms - Replacement of Furniture | 40 | 41 | 42 |
| 7 | Gas Servicing, Maintenance and Repair | 2,885 | 2,957 | 3,031 |
| 8 | Laundry Equipment Replacement & Maintenance | 60 | 62 | 63 |
| 9 | Legionella Testing incl. Repair/Renewal of Tanks | 60 | 62 | 63 |
| 10 | Lift Maintenance | 350 | 359 | 368 |
| 11 | Mutual Repairs outwith Housing Action Areas | 25 | 26 | 26 |
| 12 | Pumps & Fans - Maintenance & Renewal | 120 | 123 | 126 |
| 13 | Extra Care Housing - Replacement of Carpets, furnishings etc | 40 | 41 | 42 |
| 14 | Standby Generators – Maintenance | 120 | 123 | 126 |
| 15 | Warden call systems- Maintenance and Repair | 90 | 92 | 95 |
| 16 | Provision of Community Alarm | 230 | 236 | 242 |
| 17 | Environmental Improvements | 1,200 | 1,230 | 1,261 |
| 18 | Relets | 3,550 | 3,636 | 3,729 |
| 19 | Asbestos | 200 | 205 | 210 |
| Planned/Cyclical Maintenance Sub Total | | 11,410 | 11,695 | 11,988 |
| DAY TO DAY RESPONSE MAINTENANCE | | | | |
| 20 | Blacksmith General incl. Renewing & Repairing Rotary Driers/Handrails | 160 | 164 | 168 |
| 21 | Car Park Repairs | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| 22 | Chimney heads - Repointing and Rebuilding | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 23 | Condensation - Treatment of Walls | 100 | 103 | 105 |
| 24 | Electrical Work - General Repairs | 1,100 | 1,128 | 1,156 |
| 25 | Emergency Work - Out of Hours Service | 620 | 636 | 651 |
| 26 | External/Internal Response Paintwork | 250 | 256 | 263 |
| 27 | Fire Damage Repairs | 300 | 308 | 315 |
| 28 | Garage Repairs | 50 | 51 | 53 |
| 29 | Glazier work | 150 | 154 | 158 |
| 30 | Joiner work – General Repairs | 2,400 | 2,457 | 2,519 |
| 31 | Mason work and Water Penetration Repairs | 350 | 359 | 368 |
| 32 | Minor Environmental Services | 560 | 574 | 588 |
| 33 | Plasterwork – General | 270 | 277 | 284 |
| 34 | Plumber work – General | 1,150 | 1,179 | 1,208 |
| 35 | Slater work | 800 | 820 | 841 |
| 36 | Snow Clearance | 52 | 53 | 55 |
| 37 | TV Aerial | 150 | 154 | 158 |
| 38 | Rubbish Removal | 140 | 144 | 147 |
| 39 | Vandalism | 100 | 103 | 105 |
| 40 | Water Services Charges | 10 | 10 | 11 |
| Day to Day Response Maintenance Total | | 8,732 | 8,950 | 9,174 |
| Chargeable Repairs | | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| HOUSING REPAIRS TOTAL | | 20,142 | 20,645 | 21,162 |
| | Fees | 1,900 | 1,919 | 1,938 |
| TOTAL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE BUDGET | | 22,042 | 22,564 | 23,100 |

| | Management & Admin | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | | Budget | Budget | Budget |
| | | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
| | | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| | Staff Costs | | | |
| 1 | Salaries | 6,003 | 6,063 | 6,124 |
| 2 | Overtime | 70 | 71 | 71 |
| 3 | Superannuation | 1,063 | 1,074 | 1,084 |
| 4 | N.I | 481 | 486 | 491 |
| 5 | Other Staff Costs | 245 | 247 | 250 |
| | | 7,862 | 7,941 | 8,020 |
| | | | | |
| | Premises Costs | | | |
| 6 | Rates | 104 | 107 | 109 |
| 7 | Rent | 30 | 31 | 31 |
| 8 | Insurance | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 9 | Electricity/Gas | 63 | 65 | 66 |
| 10 | Void Properties | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 11 | Rubbish Removal | 21 | 22 | 22 |
| 12 | Cleaning | 114 | 116 | 119 |
| 13 | Repairs and Maintenance | 34 | 35 | 36 |
| 14 | Security | 51 | 52 | 53 |
| | | 429 | 440 | 448 |
| | | | | |
| | Administration Costs | | | |
| 15 | Printing | 89 | 91 | 93 |
| 16 | Photocopying | 19 | 19 | 20 |
| 17 | Stationery | 31 | 32 | 32 |
| 18 | Subscriptions | 22 | 23 | 23 |
| 19 | Postages | 101 | 103 | 106 |
| 20 | Telephones | 50 | 51 | 52 |
| 21 | Bank Charges | 77 | 79 | 81 |
| 22 | Advertising | 44 | 45 | 46 |
| 23 | Course Expenses | 100 | 103 | 105 |
| 24 | Legal Expenses | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 25 | Former Tenants Arrears | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 26 | Tenants Participation Costs | 20 | 21 | 21 |
| | | 555 | 569 | 581 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

| | | Budget | Budget | Budget |
|----|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
| | | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| | Transport Costs | | | |
| 27 | Travel Costs | 99 | 101 | 104 |
| | | 99 | 101 | 104 |
| | Supplies & Services | | | |
| 28 | Equipment Purchases | 69 | 71 | 72 |
| 29 | Computer Software Support | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| 30 | Sundry Outlays | 153 | 156 | 160 |
| | | 237 | 242 | 247 |
| | Corporate/Directorate Recharge | | | |
| 33 | Corporate/Directorate Recharge | 2,366 | 2,390 | 2,414 |
| | | 2,366 | 2,390 | 2,414 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | Expense Total | 11,548 | 11,683 | 11,814 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | Income | | | |
| | Recharges:- | | | |
| 34 | Management & Admin – HRA | (8,582) | (8,669) | (8,751) |
| 35 | Tenants Participation – HRA | (206) | (208) | (210) |
| 36 | Recharges to Other Housing | (330) | (334) | (336) |
| 37 | Recharges to Homeless | (149) | (150) | (152) |
| 38 | Housing Capital | (1,044) | (1,054) | (1,065) |
| | | (10,311) | (10,415) | (10,514) |
| | | | | |
| 39 | Hostel – Rents | (1,237) | (1,268) | (1,300) |
| | | | | |
| | Income Total | (11,548) | (11,683) | (11,814) |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | Net Expenditure | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Draft Housing Capital Budget 2013/14 to 2015/16

| Project | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS | | | |
| 1 Compliant with the tolerable standard | | | |
| 1.1 Major Repairs- | 1,250 | 1,000 | 1,030 |
| Roofs Renewal/Gutters/RWP/Roughcast | | | |
| Undertaking large scale repairs to Roofs/Gutters/RWP/Roughcast | | | |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 1,250 | 1,000 | 1,030 |
| 2 Free from Serious Disrepair | | | |
| 2.1 Primary Building Elements | | | |
| Structural Repairs Multi Storey | 6,175 | 2,875 | 2,725 |
| Multi Storey blocks are surveyed on a 5-7 year cycle to identify any works required to the structure of the buildings in order to keep the buildings safe and prolong their life. | | | |
| Structural Repairs General Housing | 1,170 | 1,450 | 950 |
| Structural works carried out in order to keep the building stable and structurally sound. | | | |
| Secondary Building Elements | | | |
| 2.2 Upgrading Of Flat Roofs General | 350 | 350 | 350 |
| Replacement of existing roof covering and upgrading of insulation to meet current building regulations. | | | |
| 2.3 Upgrade Flat Roofs Multi Storey | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Full replacement of the flat roofs and also checking the replacement of roof ventilation as required | | | |
| 2.5 Mono Pitched Types | 530 | 500 | 500 |
| Replacement of the external render of the building, replacement of gutters and downpipes, environmental works | | | |
| 2.6 Window Replace General | 600 | 500 | 500 |
| A rolling programme of double glazing where previously single glazing, or replacing existing double glazing to meet current standards. This is based on a cyclical programme. | | | |
| 2.7 Window Replace Multi Storey | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| A rolling programme to replace existing double glazing to meet current standards. This is based on a cyclical programme. | | | |
| 2.8 Balcony Storm Doors | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| Replacement of existing doors with more secure, solid doors | | | |
| 2.9 Balcony Glass Renewal - Multi Storey | 1,165 | 90 | 90 |
| Replacement of existing balcony glazing on a cyclical basis | | | |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 11,050 | 6,825 | 6,175 |

| | 2013/14 £000 | 2014/15 £000 | 2015/16 £000 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 3 Energy Efficient | | | |
| <u>Effective insulation</u> | | | |
| 3.1 Energy Efficiency – General Houses | 220 | 0 | 220 |
| 3.2 General Houses Loft Insulation | | | |
| Installation of loft insulation where there is none previously or the topping up of existing insulation to comply with current building regulations. | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| <u>Efficient Heating</u> | | | |
| 3.3 Heating Systems Replacement | 4,950 | 4,100 | 3,500 |
| Replacement of boiler/whole system as deemed necessary. | | | |
| 3.4 Medical Need Heating | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Installation of gas/electric heating depending on the medical assessment. This can be installing a completely new system, modifying or extending an existing system. | | | |
| 3.5 Energy Efficiency Multi Blocks | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| Contribution to Aberdeen Heat & Power for the creation of Combined Heat & Power Plants | | | |
| 3.6 Energy Efficiency Sheltered | 250 | 350 | 250 |
| Introduction of energy efficiency measures in extra care housing such as new or upgraded heating systems. | | | |
| <u>Additional Energy Efficiency measures</u> | | | |
| 3.7 S.C.A.R.F | 35 | 35 | 35 |
| Payment to SCARF for work carried out by them under the Energy Efficiency programme to individual council properties. The work carried out includes the installation of loft insulation, draught proofing and compact fluorescent bulbs. Also providing tenants with energy efficiency advice and information. | | | |
| 3.8 Solid Wall Insulation | 250 | 150 | 150 |
| 3.9 Vestibule Doors | 0 | 0 | 15 |
| | <u>7,305</u> | <u>6,235</u> | <u>5,770</u> |
| 4 Modern Facilities & Services | | | |
| <u>Bathroom and Kitchen Condition</u> | | | |
| 4.1 Modernisation Programme | 13,894 | 13,111 | 12,979 |
| Replacement of bathrooms and kitchens. | | | |
| | <u>13,894</u> | <u>13,111</u> | <u>12,979</u> |
| 5 Healthy, Safe & Secure | | | |
| <u>Healthy</u> | | | |
| 5.1 Condensation Measures | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Installation of heating systems and ventilation measures to combat condensation. | | | |
| <u>Safe</u> | | | |
| 5.3 Rewiring | 1,100 | 1,100 | 1,100 |
| Replacement of cabling, fittings and distribution boards as necessary. This work is carried out in every property on a cyclical basis | | | |
| 5.4 Lift Replacement Multi Storey/Major Blocks | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Replacement of lifts where they are beyond economical repair. This can be full replacement or replacement of specific parts of the lift. | | | |
| 5.5 Smoke Detectors – Common Areas Major Blocks | 150 | 50 | 50 |

| | 2013/14 £000 | 2014/15 £000 | 2015/16 £000 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Healthy, Safe & Secure (continued) | | | |
| 5.6 Services | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Cyclical maintenance/replacement of the following services | | | |
| Ventilation Systems, water tanks/pipe work, refuse chutes/chamber, Dry risers systems, Standby Generators | | | |
| 5.7 Entrance Halls/Concierge | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Provision of security service | | | |
| 5.8 Laundry Facilities | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Replacement of laundry equipment | | | |
| 5.9 Upgrading of Lighting | 36 | 10 | 10 |
| Installation of lighting controlled by photo cell i.e. switches on and off automatically depending on the level of natural light & installation of lighting in areas where there was none before | | | |
| <u>Secure</u> | | | |
| 5.11 Door Entry Systems | 40 | 40 | 40 |
| Installation of door entry and replacement of existing doors where required | | | |
| 5.12 Replace Door Entry Systems - Major Blocks | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| Installation of door entry and replacement of existing doors where required | | | |
| 5.13 Other Initiatives | 750 | 750 | 750 |
| Upgrading of stairs and installation of security doors and door entry systems | | | |
| | 3,476 | 3,350 | 3,350 |

NON SCOTTISH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

| | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 6 Community Plan & Single Outcome Agreement | | | |
| 6.1 Housing For Varying Needs | 300 | 300 | 300 |
| New build including extra care housing. | | | |
| 6.2 Community Initiatives | 300 | 400 | 400 |
| Refurbishment of properties or environmental improvements in designated areas. | | | |
| 6.5 Regeneration/Acquisition of Land or Houses | 300 | 500 | 1000 |
| Early Action projects linked to Regeneration and Master planning Briefs for Regeneration & provision of consultation events. Acquisition of Land/Houses for the new build programme. | | | |
| 6.6 CCTV – Concierge | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| Provision of CCTV for the new Concierge service | | | |
| 6.7 Adaptations Disabled | 1,250 | 1,250 | 1,250 |
| Installation of level access showers, ramps, stair lifts and kitchen adaptations | | | |
| 6.8 Special Initiatives/Barrier Free Housing | 650 | 250 | 150 |
| Provision of specialist facilities or housing for tenants with particular needs i.e. extensions | | | |
| 6.9 Housing For Varying Needs- Amenity/Adaptations | 200 | 150 | 100 |
| Conversion of properties to Amenity Level standard | | | |
| 6.10 Housing For Varying Needs- Extra Care/Adaptations | 150 | 100 | 100 |
| Adaptations required to ensure existing sheltered housing stock meets current standards | | | |
| 6.11 Roads | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Upgrade of Roads to an adoptable standard | | | |
| 6.12 Paths | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Formation or upgrading of paths | | | |
| 6.13 Garages | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Upgrade of Garages | | | |
| 6.14 New Affordable Housing | 600 | 400 | 0 |
| | 4,100 | 3,700 | 3,650 |

| | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| 7 Service Development | | | |
| 7.1 Conditions Surveys | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| Surveying of Council houses to identify failures against Scottish Housing Quality Standard | | | |
| 7.2 Property Database | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Various items of IT equipment including hardware and software | | | |
| 7.3 Integrated Housing System | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Various purchase of PC's and software packages | | | |
| | <u>250</u> | <u>250</u> | <u>250</u> |
| 9 Service Expenditure | | | |
| Corporate Fees | 5,605 | 4,859 | 4,745 |
| | <u>5,605</u> | <u>4,859</u> | <u>4,745</u> |
| Gross Programme | <u>46,930</u> | <u>39,330</u> | <u>37,949</u> |
| Less Slippage | (5,397) | (4,525) | (4,366) |
| Net Programme | 41,533 | 34,805 | 33,583 |
| Financed by :- | | | |
| Borrowing | 17,917 | 12,022 | 10,013 |
| Scottish Government Grant Funding – New Build | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SEE Grant Funding | 1,500 | 0 | 0 |
| CFCR (Capital Financed From Current Revenue) | 22,116 | 22,783 | 23,570 |
| Total Funding | <u><u>41,533</u></u> | <u><u>34,805</u></u> | <u><u>33,583</u></u> |

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| COMMITTEE | Council |
| DATE | 19 December 2012 |
| LEAD OFFICER | Chief Executive |
| TITLE OF REPORT | Strategic Police Priorities |
| REPORT NUMBER | OCE/12/032 |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report brings before the Council the draft strategic police priorities prepared by the Scottish Ministers for the Scottish Police Authority. The Council is invited to comment on the draft, with any response to be submitted to the Scottish Government by Thursday 10 January 2013.

The report provides a suggested response from the City Council

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Council considers the suggested response and, subject to any alteration agreed at the meeting, approves its submission to the Scottish Government.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications for the Council to this report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The discharging of the Council's responsibilities in relation to the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 is of direct relevance to the delivery of the Council's responsibilities in relation to Community Planning, the Single Outcome Agreement and the Business Plan.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 (the Act) establishes the Scottish Police Authority and the Police Service of Scotland. The Authority maintains the Service and holds the Chief Constable to account for the policing of Scotland.

Under the terms of the Act (paragraph 33), the Scottish Ministers may determine strategic priorities for the Authority which may relate to the policing of Scotland or the carrying out of the Authority's functions.

Before determining strategic police priorities, the Scottish Ministers must consult (among others) such persons as appear to them to be representative of local authorities.

The strategic police priorities will inform the strategic police plan to be prepared by the Scottish Police Authority and will feed into the development of the Chief Constable's annual plan and local plans.

At its meeting on 29 November the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee agreed in principle the format and content of the draft local police plan for Aberdeen City. The final local police plan will be brought back to that Committee for approval in early 2013.

Attached as Appendix 1 is a copy of the draft strategic police priorities along with a diagram outlining the relationship between priorities, planning and reporting.

In seeking feedback on the draft priorities, the Cabinet Secretary for Justice states that "taken together, the strategic police priorities and plans will form the basis against which progress on achieving positive outcomes for Scotland's communities is monitored. National and local priorities are not mutually exclusive – so a focus on preventing violent crime as a national priority may translate into a focus on preventing knife crime or alcohol crime locally. National priorities often emerge from issues identified locally."

The comments of the Council are invited on the strategic police priorities and in particular views are sought on the following questions:

- Do the strategic police priorities adequately reflect the Scottish Government's purpose and outcomes and the new policing principles?
- Do the strategic police priorities cover the important issues as a stakeholder you would expect to see?
- The purpose of the strategic police priorities is to provide strategic direction over the medium to long term. Are these priorities pitched at the right level? In terms of the three year strategic plan produced by the Scottish Police Authority, what should the plan contain? Are there more specific deliverables flowing from the strategic priorities which you would expect to be delivered by the Scottish Police Authority and the Police Service of Scotland?

It is suggested that the Council responds as follows:-

Aberdeen City Council welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft strategic police priorities set by the Scottish Ministers for the Scottish Police Authority.

In particular, the City Council supports the emphasis placed on the requirement for a partnership approach to the policing of Scotland and the empowerment of local police commanders to work closely with partners at a local level.

In Aberdeen, we have established a strong working relationship with the local police commander for the Aberdeen City Division of the Police Service of Scotland and expect to agree with him the local police plan for Aberdeen for 2013/2014 in early 2013. Clearly that plan will be influenced by the strategic police priorities and the policing principles set out in the Act, but in addressing locally the Scottish Government's purpose and outcomes the focus for the City Council, the local police commander and other community planning partners will be on together delivering the Single Outcome Agreement for the benefit of people living and working in Aberdeen.

Given that the recently circulated guidance relating to the new Single Outcome Agreements has as one of its policy priorities *safer and stronger communities, and reducing offending*, and given the stress placed in that guidance on a clear understanding of place, prevention and community engagement the City Council looks forward to working closely with the local police commander and his colleagues in devising, delivering and monitoring local solutions to local challenges and in jointly meeting the needs of the people we serve. It is gratifying that the draft strategic police priorities envisage the local commander being able to play a full and active role in such local partnership initiatives.

It is understood that as national organisations, the Scottish Police Authority and the Police Service of Scotland will require to monitor and report on a number of national deliverables, but again the focus for Aberdeen City Council will be on the local outcomes that are embedded both within the local police plan and the Single Outcome Agreement having emerged through assessments of need conducted by community planning partners across the City.

The City Council looks forward to receiving for comment the Scottish Police Authority's draft strategic police plan. It is hoped that the plan will reinforce both the centrality of a partnership approach to the work of the Police Service of Scotland and the empowerment of local police commanders to engage proactively with the local authority and others to address the issues that matter in local communities.

It is recommended that the Council considers the suggested response above and, subject to any alteration agreed at the meeting, approves its submission to the Scottish Government by 10 January 2013.

6. IMPACT

As noted above, the subject matter of this report is relevant to the Council's work in relation to Community Planning, the Single Outcome Agreement and the delivery of the Business Plan.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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DRAFT STRATEGIC POLICE PRIORITIES

The Scottish Police Authority (SPA) and the Police Service of Scotland will deliver the policing principles and realise the statutory principles of policing as set out in the Police & Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012. The SPA is the national body responsible for the governance of policing in Scotland. It will allocate resources to the Chief Constable and hold him to account for the policing of Scotland and the delivery of statutory functions.

The priorities as drafted are intended to clearly incorporate the contribution which policing can make to achieving the Scottish Government's national outcomes and the priorities within the Strategy for Justice. Consistent with our wider ambitions for public service reform, these are strongly underpinned by an ethos of prevention, rooted within a partnership approach.

They are intended to set clear national priorities but also to empower local commanders to work with partners in the public, private and third sectors, and local communities within the community planning framework to deliver greater integration of services at a local level driven by better partnership, collaboration and effective local delivery.

We expect that further specific and measurable deliverables relating to Scottish Government's national outcomes will be included in the Strategic Plan which the SPA will draft on the basis of the strategic priorities.

The draft strategic priorities are:

1. Make communities safer and reduce crime by demonstrating pioneering approaches to partnership and collaboration at a national and local level.

Actively support a decisive shift towards prevention by promoting evidence based preventative practice and effective partnerships which make the most of collective resource, knowledge and expertise, especially around reducing violence, substance misuse, promoting better outcomes for young people who offend and protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Supports:

- National outcome 5: Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed**
- National outcome 8: We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk**
- National outcome 9: We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger**

2. Strengthen Scotland's reputation as a successful and safe country by demonstrating excellence in effectively planning for and responding to major national events and threats.

Work across national, international and organisational boundaries to ensure a safe and secure Commonwealth Games; contribute effectively to multi agency arrangements to deal with emergencies; and minimise threats to our communities more generally.

Supports:

National outcome 9: We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger
National outcome 11: We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others

3. Provide an efficient, effective service and deliver the benefits of reform.

Deliver the three benefits of reform and work with others to ensure that the criminal justice system is fair and accessible, cost effective and efficient.*

Supports:

National outcome 16: Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to people's needs

(*note – the three benefits of reform are i) protect and improve local services despite financial cuts, by stopping duplication of support services eight times over and not cutting frontline services; ii) create more equal access to specialist support and national capacity where and when they are needed; iii) strengthen the connection between services and communities, by creating a new formal relationship with each of the 32 local authorities, involving many more local councillors and better integrating with community planning partnerships.)

4. Make communities stronger by increasing public confidence and reducing fear of crime, making the new Police Service of Scotland an exemplar of visible and responsive policing.

Ensure that victims, witnesses and communities experience positive engagement with the police by providing inspirational leadership and embedding a culture, identity and values which provide a highly skilled and motivated workforce to deliver improved local services with the consent and involvement of communities.

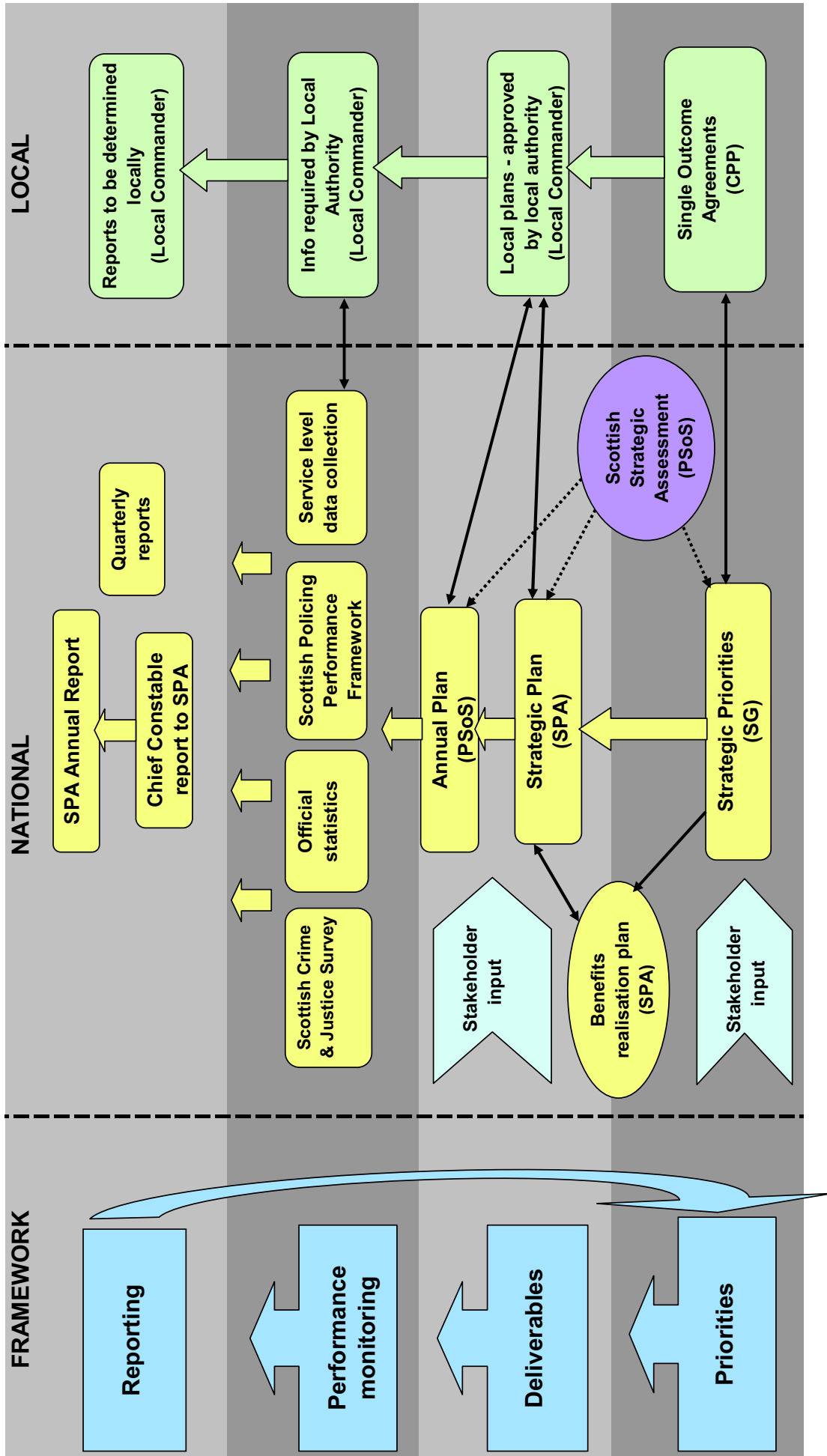
Supports:

National outcome 7: We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.
National outcome 9: We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger
National outcome 11: We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others

- National outcome 13: We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity**
- National outcome 16: Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs**

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POLICE: PLANNING, PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY



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