



Scottish Natural Heritage

All of nature for all of Scotland

Aftab Majeed
Planning & Sustainable Development
Aberdeen City Council
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11 January 2011.

Dear Aftab

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005:
00513 ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL OPEN SPACE STRATEGY
SCOPING REPORT**

I refer to the above scoping report, sent to the Scottish Executive SEA Gateway on 24 December 2010. In accordance with Section 15(2) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, Scottish Natural Heritage has reviewed the report in its role as a Consultation Authority under the above Act.

We consider this to be a good SEA Scoping Report and our few, specific comments are set out in the Annex to this letter. The comments follow the sequence of the Scoping Report. Subject to these comments, we are content with the scope and level of detail proposed for the environmental report; and the proposed 8 week consultation period.

We hope that our comments are useful to you and present the issues clearly. Please contact us if you require any further information or advice from SNH in relation to the preparation of the SEA.

Yours sincerely

Ewen Cameron
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ANNEX

Table 3.1

I believe that your Council's Planning Department has now adopted the FIRS (Future Infrastructure Requirements for Services) approach and it may be worth specifically mentioning this in the context of Action 1.1 and/or Action 1.2

In Action 3.3, we think it would be appropriate to go a step further and actively encourage communities to take a major role in the maintenance of their local green space.

In action 4.1, you may wish to give the example of the Council's involvement in the soon to be launched Simple Pleasures Easily Found Initiative <http://www.snh.gov.uk/enjoying-the-outdoors/simple-pleasures/>

In action 5.1 it would be appropriate to specifically highlight that local green space can positively support the requirements of outdoor learning and the Curriculum for Excellence.

In action 6.3, you may wish to consider whether businesses could "adopt" green spaces within the City and undertake an annual or bi-annual litter pick or other appropriate "enhancement" work.

Page 9, text following table 4.1

In the second bullet point (solid black) you refer to EPS and species listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act and mention golden eagle. Most readers would know that golden eagle does not occur within the city and are very unlikely to ever do so. Consequently, they may consequently dismiss the relevance of the Act. However, another bird included in Schedule 1 (peregrine falcon) does occur within the city and regularly breeds there, so I would suggest mentioning them instead.

4.3 Likely evolution of the environment without the Open Space Strategy

I think there may be some text missing here?

6.1 Proposed Consultation Timescale

A minimum period of 8 weeks is proposed for consultation, yet Table 6.1 mentions 6 weeks. We believe 8 weeks is appropriate for such an important Plan.

Appendix 7.2.4: SEA Topic: Biodiversity

SEA Indicator - Sites of Special Scientific Interests (SSSIs) Corby, Lily and Bishops Lochs comprise one single SSSI.

Sea Indicator - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) The potentially most significant issue for the River Dee SAC is water abstraction, especially with the predicted aspects of climate change leading to lower water levels and flow rates in summer.

SEA Indicator - European Protected Species (EPS) Badgers are not EPS.