

**ABERDEEN  
CITY AND  
SHIRE**

*Strategic Development  
Planning Authority*

# Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement

March 2019



**Aberdeenshire**  
COUNCIL



## Purpose

This Development Plan Scheme sets out our programme for preparing and reviewing the Strategic Development Plan for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. We have written it to promote openness and help people get involved as we prepare the next Plan. It is also written to make sure we meet people's expectations.

## Background

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority is one of four strategic development planning authorities in Scotland.

The Strategic Development Planning Authority was established in June 2008 following the reform of the planning system in Scotland through the Planning etc. Scotland Act, 2006. The Strategic Development Planning Authority is a partnership of two member authorities; Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council.

The Strategic Development Planning Authority works collaboratively with Key Agencies and Stakeholders to produce a deliverable and effective Strategic Development Plan for the Aberdeen City Region. The area covered by the Strategic Development Planning Authority is shown in Figure 1. The Strategic Development Planning Authority is governed by a Joint Committee which comprises of twelve Councillors, six from each member authority. The Joint Committee meets at least four times a year. Its main purpose is the preparation, monitoring and review of the Strategic Development Plan.

The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced the statutory basis for current regime of development planning in Scotland. It inserted a new Part 2 into the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 ("the Act") requiring the replacement of structure plans with strategic development plans. Strategic development planning authorities are required by section 4(1) of the Act to prepare and review strategic development plans, and to submit these to Scottish Ministers within four years of the approval of the existing plan (section 10(8)). The current Strategic Development Plan was approved in March 2014. Based on this required timing the Plan should have been submitted to Scottish Ministers before March 2018. In response to advice sought from Scottish Ministers the Strategic Development Planning Authority has been advised to continue preparing the Strategic Development Plan.



Figure 1



## The Strategic Development Plan

A Strategic Development Plan is a short document containing a clear vision and spatial strategy for development of the area over a period of at least 20 years. It seeks to focus on important spatial issues and focuses on delivery and results. It will also affect decisions about strategic infrastructure investment.

Once approved by Scottish Ministers, the new Strategic Development Plan would replace the extant Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014).

## Recent Progress

Since the March 2018 Development Plan Scheme was published, we have completed the Main Issues Report consultation stage, which underwent a ten-week consultation from 12 March to 21 May 2018<sup>2</sup>. The Strategic Development Planning Authority considered the responses received to the Main Issues Report consultation at the Authority's meeting in June 2018<sup>3</sup>. Following consideration of responses received and further extensive engagement with key stakeholders, a Proposed Strategic Development Plan ("Proposed Plan") for the City Region was agreed in August 2018.

The final version of the Proposed Plan and supporting documents was agreed by the Strategic Development Planning Authority at their August 2018 meeting, and this decision was ratified by Aberdeen City Council (on 10 September 2018) and Aberdeenshire Council (on 27 September 2018).

The Proposed Plan is supported by a Proposed Action Programme, a Habitats Regulation Appraisal, a Strategic Environment Assessment Environmental Report, a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, a Cumulative Transport Appraisal, a Housing Methodology Paper and an Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment. The Proposed Plan, along with the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Proposed Action Programme, were subject to a ten-week consultation period from 8 October to 17 December 2018. This ten-week period provided four additional weeks to the minimum period of six weeks required by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006.

## Project Plan

There are a number of key stages that require to be followed in the process of preparing a Strategic Development Plan. These stages are set out in Scottish Government Circular 06/2010 "Development Planning". This Circular asks for indicative timings to be given for each stage, specifying the months when the Authority proposes to publish its Main Issues Report, Proposed Plan and also when it will submit the Plan to Scottish Ministers for Examination in Public.

Table 1 does include information on all earlier stages, namely the Main Issues Report and the Proposed Plan stages, along with when they are completed. Where we are now is indicated by a red arrow, along with a programme of work for 2019.

Following the close of the period for representations on the Proposed Plan, the Strategic Development Planning Authority may decide to modify the Proposed Plan to take account of matters arising from representations, or any drafting or technical matters. However, where significant changes to the Proposed Plan are proposed that would change the underlying aims or strategy in the Plan, this plan would be considered to be a 'new' proposed strategic development plan that would require to be published and consulted on before making a submission to Scottish Ministers.

The stages and timings for progressing the Strategic Development Plan set out in Table 1 identify the significant activity that has occurred since March 2018 to progress the Plan to its position in early 2019. Key areas of work for early 2019 relate to consideration of responses to the Proposed Plan, along with the preparation of Schedule 4 forms for submission along with the Proposed Plan to Scottish Ministers in March 2019. Schedule 4 forms are defined through The Town and Country Planning (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008; Regulation 20(2)(b). Preparation work for Examination will follow submission.

Approval of the plan by Scottish Ministers is anticipated in early 2020, based on the 6 months expected for the Examination and 2 months for the Minister to consider as set out in Circular 06/2013.

The Strategic Development Plan Authority has already discussed the anticipated timescale for submission to Scottish Ministers with the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals in Autumn 2018. It is hoped that this early engagement will allow early programming and allocation to a reporter and allow the Examination to proceed at the earliest opportunity. However, the exact timing of the final Examination Report will depend on the availability of Reporters and the complexity of the issues raised for discussion.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/CurrentWork/ClosedConsultations.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk/AboutUs/SDPAMeetings.aspx>

Table 1: Strategic Development Plan Preparation Programme

\*Typical timings from Circular 6/2013

Key Stages	SDP and associated SEA/ HRA process	Consultation?	*Typical Timings; Where we are now →
Evidence Gathering	Engage with key agencies Gather evidence base / Prepare Monitoring Statement; Prepare Main Issues Report; Prepare Scoping Report & submit to SEA Gateway and refine methodology. Prepare Main Issues Report (MIR). Screen to identify implications for European Sites (HRA). Report approved by Strategic Development Planning Authority Board.	Key agencies, partners and constituent councils.	*8 Months
Main Issues Report & Supporting documents	<b>Publish Main Issues Report</b> and Monitoring Statement. <b>Publish Environmental Report</b> and submit via SEA Gateway. Continue to consider implications for European sites regarding preferred options.	Public Consultation (12 March to 21 May 2018).	
Proposed Plan & Supporting documents	Consider representations to MIR Prepare Proposed Plan and Action Programme and Publish. Publish revised Environmental Report if necessary; submit via SEA Gateway. Prepare HRA Record to include screening and where necessary, Appropriate Assessment. Approved by Strategic Development Planning Authority Board. Ratified by 'Constituent' Councils.	Public engagement Consultation: 8 October to 17 December 2018 (actual 4 ½ months).	*6 Months
Submission to Ministers →	Consider representations received, and where no modifications proposed, prepare: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note of representations;</li> <li>• Summary of unresolved issues;</li> <li>• Report of Conformity with Participation Statement</li> </ul>	Strategic Development Planning Authority approval, and submission to Scottish Ministers. 3 month target adopted.	*5 Months  (3 month target adopted - March 2019)
Examination	Examination of Proposed Plan to consider unresolved issues / promote modifications as necessary.	Allocation to Reporter anticipated Spring 2019	*6 Months
Approval, Modification or Rejection of the Plan	Ministers consider Examination Report. Scottish Government appraises any modifications; Ministers approve, modify or reject the plan, & publish revised Environmental Report.	No engagement.  Anticipated Early 2020	*2 Months
Publish Plan and Action Programme	The Strategic Development Planning Authority publish the finalised Plan along with supporting documents, updated as required. Publish Post-Adoption SEA Statement and submit to Gateway.	No engagement. Anticipated Late Spring 2020	*3 Months

## Participation Statement

We want the next Strategic Development Plan to be prepared in an open way which recognises the contribution different people and groups can make. We need to involve people in the plan preparation process in ways tailored to the needs of each group. The five main groups are:

- Councillors;
- Key Agencies (Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Nestrans and NHS Grampian as well as Transport Scotland, Historic Scotland, Marine Scotland and the Forestry Commission);
- public and private sector stakeholders (groups with a particular interest in our work);
- community councils; and
- the general public.

The commitment to engagement by the Strategic Development Planning Authority as previously set out the March 2018 Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement will continue to apply to the remaining stages of strategic development plan preparation. However, given that the Examination process exists to consider the merits of the issues earlier raised through consultation and which remain as unresolved representations, there is no further formal opportunity for parties to submit further representations to Scottish Ministers.

However, we will continue with the following:

### Keeping You Informed

We will keep you up-to-date about what we are doing and all opportunities for you to get involved. We have a database of contacts which we will keep up-to-date for key agencies, councillors and community councils, although other groups and individuals will be responsible for telling us about any changes to their contact details. Regarding the use of data on 'individuals', how we will use and manage your data is outlined in the Privacy Notice on the Strategic Development Planning Authority website.

Once the Strategic Development Planning Authority has been notified by Scottish Ministers regarding the appointment of the person to examine the plan, this appointment will be advertised in a local newspaper, and those who have made unresolved representations will be notified of this appointment by the Scottish Ministers. The Strategic Development Planning Authority will advertise the appointment in local libraries, including information on where documentation connected to the Examination, including the summary of unresolved issues, can be viewed. Our website will be updated regarding progress.

### Plain English

We will try to make sure all our documents are as easy to understand as possible. Not all the documents we produce will meet the Plain English Campaign's 'Crystal Mark' standard, but we will check what we produce to make sure that our information is at the right level for the audience.

### Equalities and Human Rights

The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 requires us to encourage equal opportunities. As part of our commitment to this, we have carried out an Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment on the Proposed Plan.

### Environmental Responsibility

Under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, we must contribute to sustainable development. This will mean thinking about the environmental, social and economic effect (both locally and worldwide) of what we do and the Strategic Development Plan we prepare. Our staff will use public transport where possible, and we will try to reduce the environmental effect of our work.

### Monitoring and Review

We will check this Development Plan Scheme regularly through the year, and we will update it every year.

## How We Have Engaged and Future Opportunities

When	How	Who
March - May 2018	We asked you what you think of the main issues report.	Mainly you
June - July 2018	We have taken into account all main issues report responses received in preparing the proposed plan.	Mainly us
September - November 2018	We asked you what you think of the proposed plan. This was the last point in the process that you can provide input to the plan unless further information is requested as part of the examination.	Mainly you
December 2018 - March 2019	We have responded to all the issues raised in representations to the plan and prepared a summary of representations and proposed responses for the Strategic Development Planning Authority.	Mainly us
April 2019 - March 2020	All unresolved representations made to the plan, and our responses to them, will be examined by a Scottish Government reporter who will publish a report recommending how the plan might be changed. Further information may be sought by the reporter if necessary.	Scottish Government - DPEA
April 2019 - February 2020	Scottish Ministers will consider the recommendations contained in the report of the examination and decide whether to approve the plan with or without modifications.	Scottish Ministers
March 2020 onwards	We will publicise the approval of the plan and make a copy of the approved plan available on our website as soon as possible. Within three months of the plan's approval we will publish the action programme and various other documents, including the post-adoption statement.	Mainly us

## Getting Informed

If you would like to know more about the work of the Strategic Development Planning Authority you can contact us as follows:

Phone: 01467 539734

Email: [team@aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk](mailto:team@aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk)

Write to us at: Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, AB16 5GB

Website: [www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk)



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