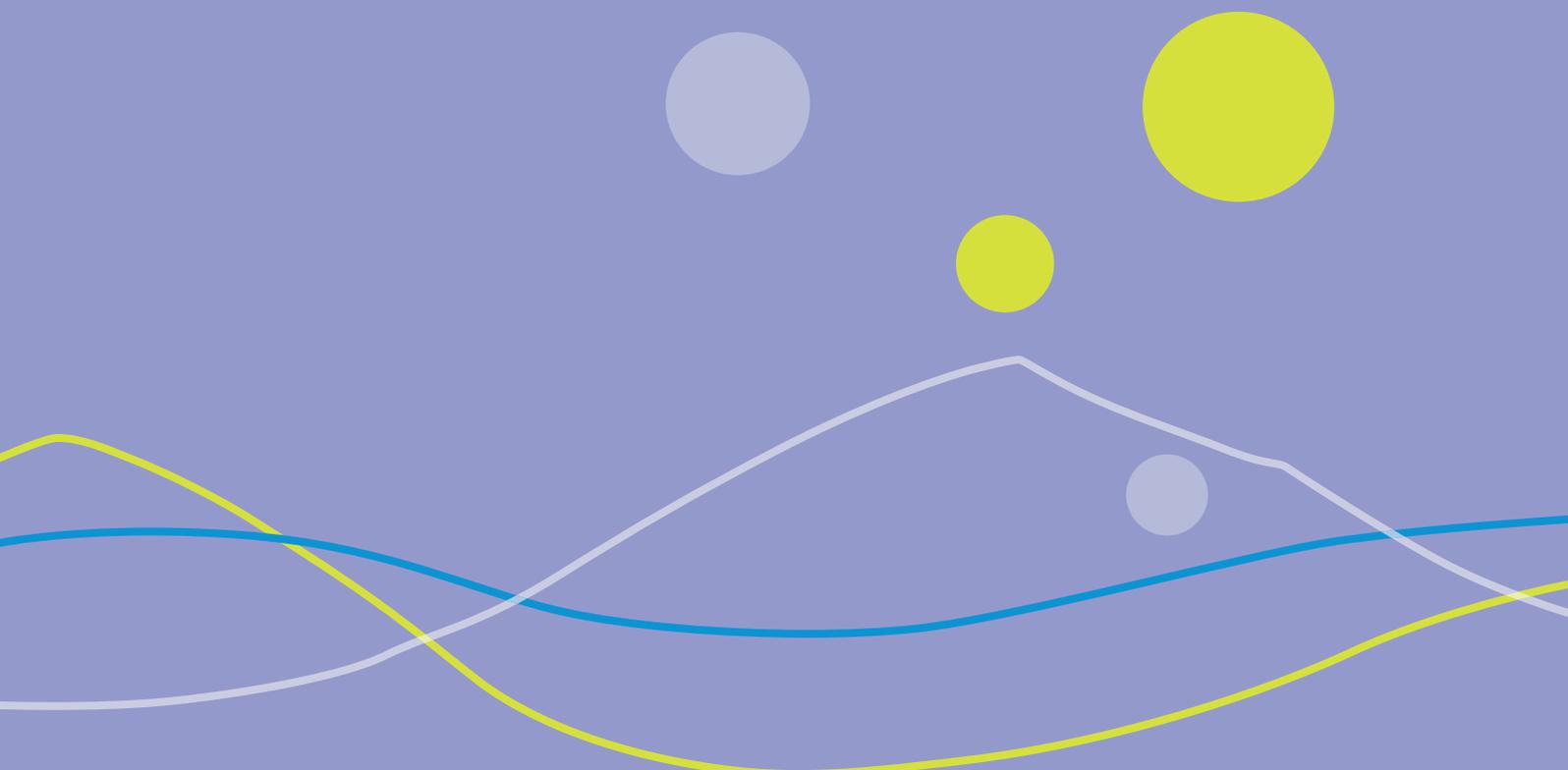


**ABERDEEN
CITY AND
SHIRE**

| *a brighter
outlook*

Structure Plan:
Draft Structure Plan

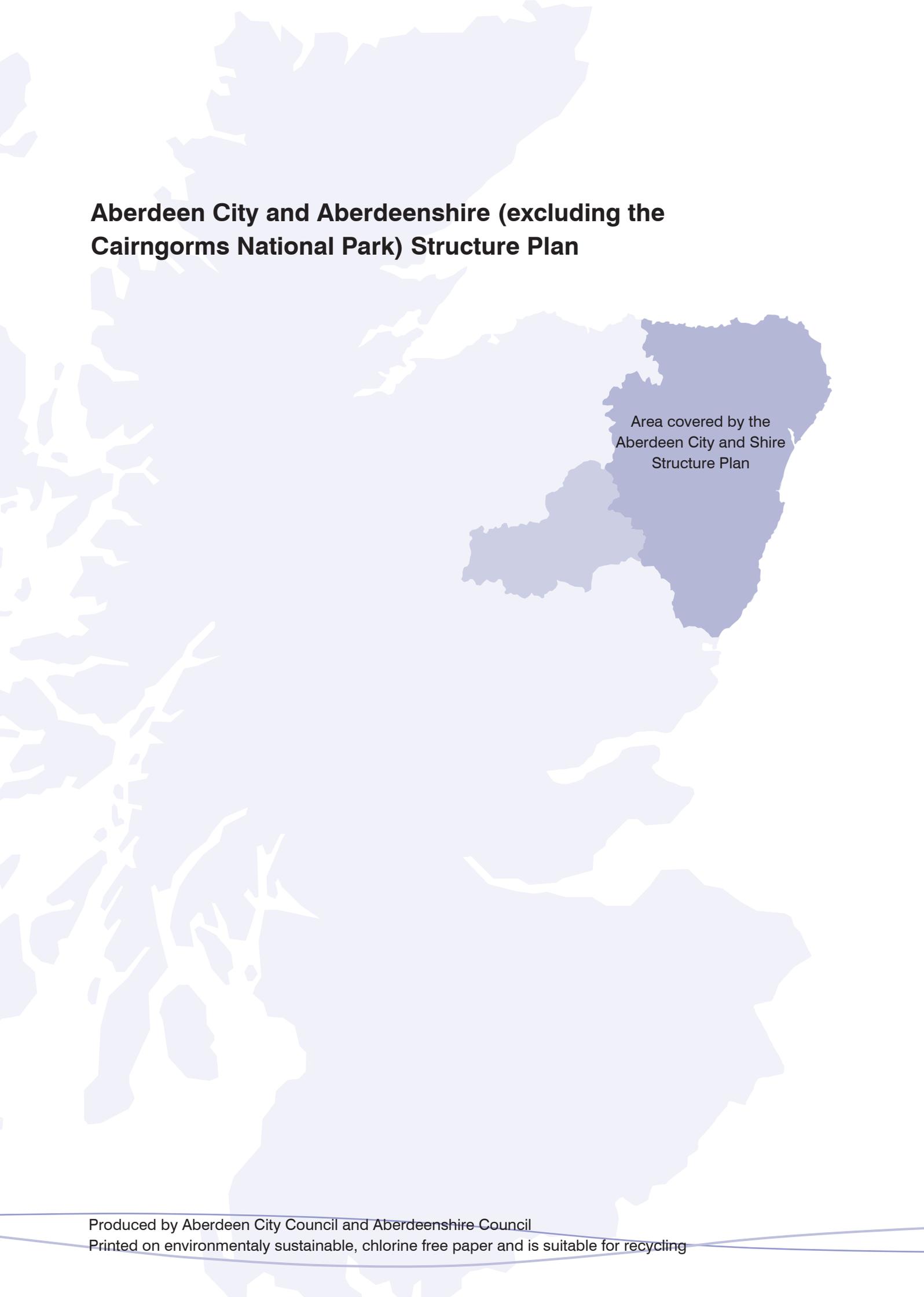


Background Paper



June 2008

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (excluding the Cairngorms National Park) Structure Plan

A map of the Aberdeen region in Scotland, showing the coastline and major islands. A specific area in the northeast, covering Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, is highlighted in a darker shade of blue. The rest of the region is shown in a lighter shade of blue. The highlighted area is roughly rectangular, extending from the city center southwards and eastwards towards the coast.

Area covered by the
Aberdeen City and Shire
Structure Plan

Draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan

Background Paper

Background

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils formally started the preparation of a new structure plan for the area in February 2007. At the same time a 'Report of Survey' was published containing up-to-date information on the area in terms of its population and households, environment, economy, transport and housing.

Purpose

A draft structure plan was published for consultation in June 2008. However, the period February 2007 – June 2008 (the period between the publication of the Report of Survey and the draft structure plan, a number of pieces of more up-to-date information have become available. It is necessary to provide an update on three issues by way of background to the draft structure plan. These relate to:

- 1) the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR);
- 2) new Population and Household Forecasts & Projections; and
- 3) a draft Brownfield Urban Capacity (Aberdeen)

These three topics are dealt with in summary in this background paper. However, more information in relation to the AWPR and population and household forecasts and projections is available online via links contained in Appendix 1. The draft brownfield urban capacity study is available as Appendix 2.

1 Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route

- 1.1 The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) is a new road being developed to improve travel in and around Aberdeen and the North-east of Scotland.
- 1.2 Backed by the Scottish Government, the road is being developed by Transport Scotland - the national transport agency - in partnership with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils.
- 1.3 The AWPR is one of a number of transport projects planned to help improve road safety and accessibility, reduce congestion and grow the local economy - ensuring the North East remains a competitive business location. The Regional Transport Strategy submitted to Scottish Ministers in April 2008 has the AWPR as a key building block for future transport initiatives in the area - facilitating the delivery of complementary transport measures as part of an integrated package.
- 1.4 The AWPR was recognised as important in the current approved structure plan ('North East Scotland Together' - 2001) and included on its 'key diagram'. Since 2001, however, the Scottish Government have accepted in principle the need for the road (in January 2003) and have committed to fund 81% of its cost (and 100% of the cost of the 'fastlink' to Stonehaven).
- 1.5 As a consequence of the objections to the draft road and compulsory purchase orders, a public local inquiry is to be held to consider them and make recommendations to Scottish Ministers. With the announcement of the inquiry, it was noted that, with Ministers having accepted the need in principle for the road, the inquiry will focus on the technical and environmental aspects around the choice of route.
- 1.6 A pre-inquiry meeting took place on 13 May 2008, with the public inquiry itself is due to start on 9 September 2008. The inquiry is expected to last for 8 – 10 weeks. It will be held in the Cedar Suite, Hilton Aberdeen Treetops Hotel, 161 Springfield Road, Aberdeen.
- 1.7 The AWPR project has therefore clearly moved forward significantly since the Report of Survey was prepared in late 2006, with the inquiry due to focus on the detail of the route rather than the principle of a new road.
- 1.8 The AWPR has an estimated delivery date of 2012.

2 Population and Household Forecasts & Projections

2.1 At the time of publication of the Report of Survey in February 2007, the mid-2005 population estimates were the most up-to-date available, along with the 2004-based population projections from the General Register Office for Scotland – GRO(S). The forecasts prepared by the Councils were also 2004-based.

Population estimates

2.2 Since February 2007, mid-2006 population estimates have been published by the GRO(S) along with revised estimates for the period 2003 – 2006 for six Council areas including Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

2.3 These revisions increased the estimated population of Aberdeen City and decreased the estimated population of Aberdeenshire. The net change was an increase of over 1,500 in mid-2005. More details are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Original and revised 2005 population estimates

	Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Difference
Aberdeen City	202,370	205,910	+3,540
Aberdeenshire	235,440	233,430	-2,010
Total	437,810	439,340	+1,530

Source: Revised mid-year population estimates 2003 – 2006, GRO(S)

2.4 The revisions highlighted above resulted from a review on the part of the GRO(S) of the way in which international migrants were accounted for.

2.5 These changes, however, impact on both the level of population rise in Aberdeenshire and population fall in Aberdeen City. Instead of the second largest fall in population in Scotland between 1995 and 2005 at 8%, the population of Aberdeen fell by 6.4% which was the fourth largest fall. In the case of Aberdeenshire, instead of a 4% increase (the fifth largest in Scotland), the population grew by 3.3% (the seventh largest in Scotland).

2.6 The revised 2006 estimates put the population of Aberdeen City at 206,880 and Aberdeenshire at 236,260, totaling 443,140 for the combined area of the two Councils and approximately 440,000 for the area covered by the draft plan. The population growth in the area in the year to mid-2006 was 3,800 people.

2.7 Instead of the continuation of a downward trend in population identified in the estimates before they were revised, the population of the area has been growing since 2003 and the population of Aberdeen City has been growing since 2005.

Population projections and forecasts

2.8 2006-based population projections have also been published by the GRO(S) since the Report of Survey, along with 2006-based strategic forecasts by the two Councils.

2.9 These publications provide an important foundation for the draft structure plan and present a different picture of the future than their predecessors.

- 2.10 For the first time, in addition to a 'principal' projection, the GRO(S) have published a 'high migration' projection. The difference between these projections is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Principal and High-Migration Population Projections

	2006	Principal Projection (2030)	High Migration Projection (2030)
Aberdeen City	206,880	187,721	208,432
Aberdeenshire	236,260	280,532	292,462
Total	443,140	468,253	500,896

Source: 2006-based Population Projections, GRO(S)

- 2.11 It can be seen that both projections anticipate an increase in the population of the area, with the high migration projection pointing towards a population of half a million.
- 2.12 Prior to the GRO(S) published population projections, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils published a revised set of strategic forecasts. These contained low, probable and high population forecasts from a 2006-base and are summarised in table 3.

Table 3: Low, Probable and High Population Forecasts

	2006	Low Forecast (2030)	Probable Forecast (2030)	High Forecast (2030)
Aberdeen City	206,880	198,273	210,400	219,800
Aberdeenshire	236,260	236,795	247,600	261,600
Total	443,140	435,068	458,000	481,400

Source: 2006-based Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Forecasts

- 2.13 Both the projections prepared by the GRO(S) and the forecasts prepared by the two Councils point to significant population growth in the area over the period to 2030. This contrasts quite significantly with the data available at the time the Report of Survey was published.
- 2.14 The population target of 480,000 by 2030 set out in the draft structure plan is higher than both the 'Principal Projection' of the GRO(S) and the Probable-case forecast prepared by the two councils. However, the target is within the range established by both publications.

Household projections and forecasts

- 2.15 The GRO(S) published 2006-based household projections in May 2008 consistent with their population projections. These are summarised in table 4 below.

Table 4: Principal and High-Migration Household Projections

	2006	Principal Projection (2031)	High Migration Projection (2031)
Aberdeen City	100,740	105,780	116,170
Aberdeenshire	98,770	131,590	135,430
Total	199,510	237,370	251,600

Source: 2006-based Household Projections, GRO(S)

- 2.16 More than half of the forecast growth is seen as taking place in the period to 2016. This equates to 219,820 households under the principal projection and 224,680 under the high migration projection
- 2.17 Projected average household size over the period 2006 – 2031 is projected to fall from 1.98 to 1.71 (the lowest in Scotland) in Aberdeen City and from 2.37 to 2.10 in Aberdeenshire. This will take average household size below 2 persons per household around 2021. This explains why a 25,000 increase in population (under the government’s principal projection) can give rise to an increase of almost 38,000 households.
- 2.18 In 2007, the GRO(S) estimate that 4% (8,697) of dwellings in Aberdeen City and Shire were either vacant or second homes.
- 2.19 The strategic forecasts prepared by the two councils include household forecasts which are summarized below (table 5).

Table 5: Low, Probable and High Household Forecasts

	2006	Low Forecast (2031)	Probable Forecast (2031)	High Forecast (2031)
Aberdeen City	100,740	+11,950	+16,470	+21,900
Aberdeenshire	98,770	+12,800	+21,680	+27,670
Total	199,510	+24,740	+38,150	+49,570

Source: 2006-based Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Forecasts

- 2.20 When account is taken of a range of factors including vacant and second homes and demolitions, the ‘housing requirement’ published in the forecasts range from 33,000 to 59,000 over the period.

Future publication dates

- 2.21 Mid-2007 population estimates are due to be published in July 2008, during the consultation period on the draft structure plan. Updated population and household projections are not anticipated from the GRO(S) until early 2010.

3 Brownfield Urban Capacity (Aberdeen)

3.1 A draft Brownfield Urban Capacity Study has been prepared for Aberdeen City which is attached at Appendix 2. This assessment has been carried out in light of the identification of brownfield sites as meeting an element of the new housing required by the draft structure plan in Aberdeen.

Historic Performance

3.2 Over the past 25 years, housing development on brownfield sites has averaged 631 dwellings per year, with a generally upward trend since the late 1980's, The average over the last five years has been 730 dwellings per year. The number has not fallen below 500 since 1991.

3.3 Evidence from the mid-1990's suggests that high levels of brownfield development can co-exist with high levels of greenfield development.

3.4 Since 2002, the percentage of new homes on brownfield sites has averaged over 80%, peaking at 94% in 2004.

Urban Capacity Study Findings

3.5 The draft brownfield urban capacity study has identified sites for between 4,779 and 8,173 dwellings depending on assumptions about density. These are conservative figures because they do not include categories of site which have been included in other similar studies elsewhere.

Draft Structure Plan Allocations

3.6 The draft structure plan makes housing allocations in Aberdeen to brownfield sites in each of the three phases of the plan, as shown in table 6 below.

Table 6: Average Brownfield Housing Allocations in Draft Structure Plan

Time Period	2007 - 2016	2017 - 2023	2024 - 2030	2007 - 2030
Years	10	7	7	24
Brownfield Allocation	4,000	3,000	3,000	10,000
Average	400pa	429pa	429pa	417pa

Source: Draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (June 2006)

3.7 These figures, ranging from 400pa in the first phase to 429pa in the later phases, are similar to those identified in the current structure plan of 4,500 over 11 years (409pa).

3.8 The results of the urban capacity study are more than enough to suggest that an assumption of 400pa is reasonable over the next 5 – 10 years. Beyond that, it can only be regarded as indicative, subject to annual monitoring and the preparation of an updated study to coincide with the preparation of the first strategic development plan.

3.9 Although this is a plan for the next 24 years, it will be reviewed at least every five years. Adjustments to the plan at that point can be made if necessary – taking a view on the prospects for future housing on brownfield sites at that time. Monitoring will be carried out annually to assess the assumptions upon which the plan is based via the housing land audit.

3.10 Although the draft structure plan recognises the importance of new housing on brownfield sites, it also recognises that greenfield housing is important. The draft plan therefore strikes an appropriate balance between them.

Appendix 1: Web Links

Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route

AWPR website

<http://www.awpr.co.uk>

AWPR Public Local Inquiry Website

<http://www.awpr-pli.org/index.asp>

Population and Household Forecasts and Projections

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Forecasts (2006 – 2031)

http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/statistics/economic/strategic_forecasts_2007.pdf

GRO(S) Population Estimates (general)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/population-estimates/index.html>

GRO(S) Mid-2006 Population Estimates

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files1/stats/mid-2006-population-estimates-scotland/mid-2006-population-estimates-scotland.pdf>

GRO(S) Population Projections (general)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/popproj/index.html>

GRO(S) Population Projections Scotland (2006-based)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files1/stats/population-projections-scotland-2006-based-population-projections-by-sex-age-and-administrative-area/population-projections-scotland-2006-based-population-projections-by-sex-age-and-administrative-area.pdf>

GRO(S) Estimates of Household and Dwellings in Scotland (2007)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files1/stats/gros-estimates-of-households-and-dwellings-in-scotland-2007/gros-estimates-of-households-and-dwellings-in-scotland-2007.pdf>

GRO(S) Household Projections for Scotland (2006-based)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/publications-and-data/household-projections-statistics/household-projections-for-scotland-2006-based/index.html>

Appendix 2: Draft Brownfield Urban Capacity Study

Contents

- 1 Introduction
 - 2 Trends in Brownfield and Greenfield Development
 - 3 Sources of Urban Potential
 - 4 Calculating Urban Potential
 - 5 Conclusions
 - 6 References
- Annex 1 – Vacant and Derelict Land
- Annex 2 – Non Effective Housing Land
- Annex 3 – Industrial and Business Areas
- Annex 4 – Institutions
- Annex 5 – Redevelopment of Other Uses
- Annex 6 – Potential Brownfield Housing Sites

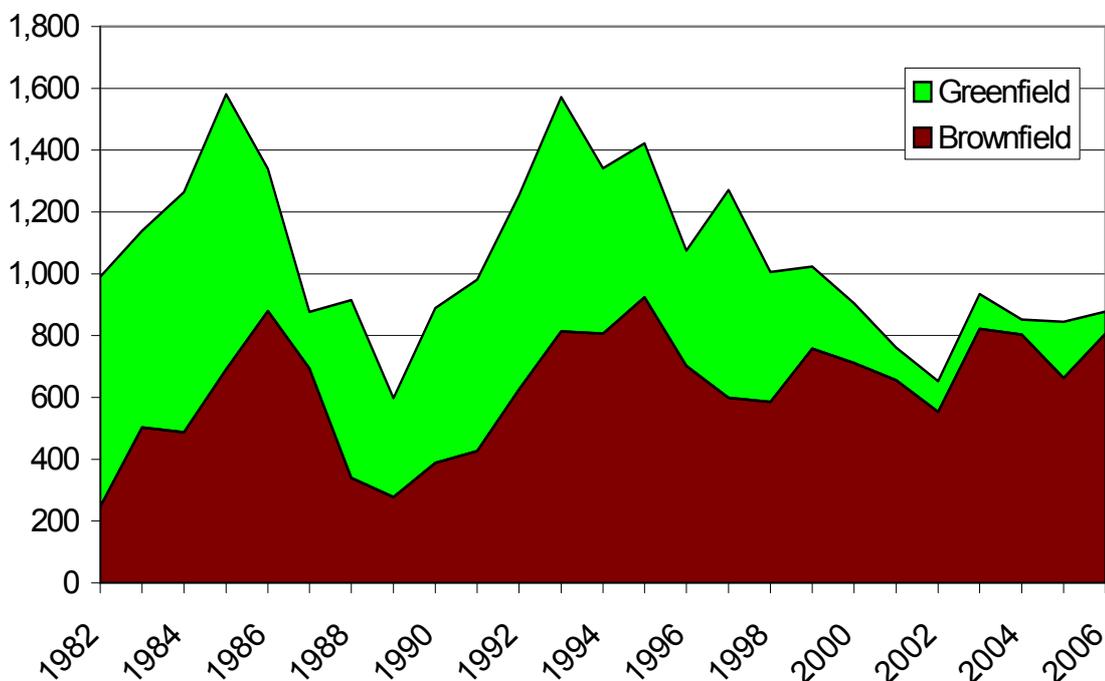
1 Introduction

- 1.1 An important part of the preparation of the new structure plan is an assessment of the potential of the main urban area of Aberdeen to absorb further housing development. This in turn will support the identification of the best strategic development option for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. The focus of this study is on previously developed land and the conversion of buildings within the settlement boundaries in Aberdeen. Trends have been examined to see if there have been any changes in the provision of greenfield and brownfield housing. Although this in itself cannot be used to predict future development rates, it does give an indication of Aberdeen's development over the last 25 years.
- 1.2 Sources of potential housing sites or capacity have been taken from the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Urban Capacity Study, which was carried out as part of their structure plan review and "Tapping the Potential" – the main English guidance produced by the DETR in 2000. We do not intend to use all of these sources (which are listed in Table 1) but to pick those that are appropriate to Aberdeen. These are then examined in more detail in the annexes.
- 1.3 Once sites have been identified from the main sources, two methods of calculating their potential housing yield are used. The first is based on past brownfield development densities in Aberdeen, the other based (in the absence of Scottish advice) on the Consultation Paper on PPS3 Housing (Dec 2005 to Feb 2006) – the English equivalent of SPP3 Planning for Housing. These methods provide a range of potential housing yields.

2 Trends in Brownfield and Greenfield Development

2.1 Brownfield and greenfield housing development rates have been examined over the 25 year period from 1982 to 2006. The figures (1 and 2) are completion rates taken from the Housing Development Schedules (DABS). In doing this work a number of assumptions have been made. Developments on playing fields have been counted as greenfield as well as large developments on previously undeveloped land (e.g. the Macaulay developments in Mannofield and Lord Hays Grove by Bridge of Don). Some of these sites are shown as brownfield in DABS. Small infill developments have been counted as brownfield, even if they were in a garden for instance. They are nearly always shown as brownfield in DABS. DABS does not indicate whether small sites (under 5 units) are brownfield or greenfield. It is therefore assumed that small sites in the Former City and Dyce are brownfield and those in Oldmachar, Newhills, Peterculter and Nigg are greenfield.

Figure 1: Brownfield and Greenfield Housing Completions 1982-2006

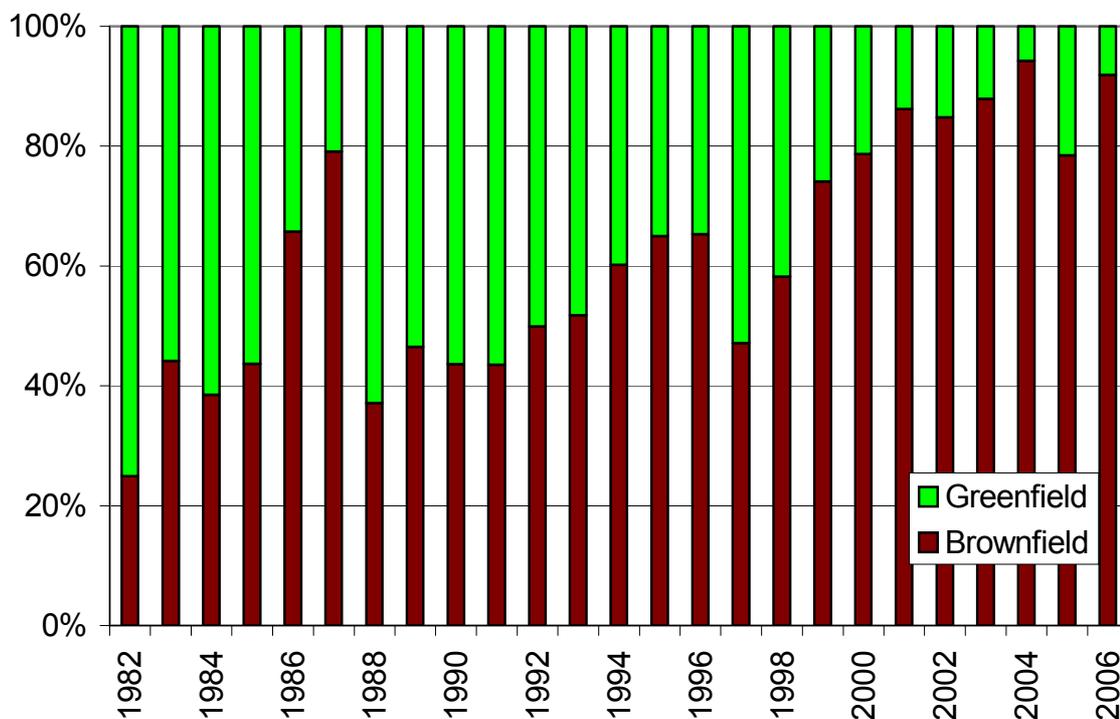


- 2.2 Apart from dips in 1982 and around 1989 the level of brownfield development has been consistently high. The average over the 25 year period is 631 brownfield dwellings per annum with the overall trend being upwards. The majority of brownfield housing developments have taken place in the Former City area.
- 2.3 In respect of greenfield completions there was a dip between 1987 and 1989, prior to the publication of the 1991 Aberdeen City District Wide Local Plan which allowed the release of greenfield allocations in the 1990's. The most noticeable feature however is the consistent drop in greenfield completions since 1997. This is probably as a result of the 1991 local plan greenfield allocations being developed out. Major house building stopped in Cove in 1998/99, in Bridge of Don in 2000 and at Kingswells in 2003. The small rise in 2005 is due to the release of Charleston Cove. Overall trends

are downwards with an average greenfield completion rate of 424 per annum.

- 2.4 Average housebuilding rates are 1,055 per annum over the 25 year period, although this has fallen over the last 10 years as greenfield sites have run out. 60% of these are brownfield and 40% greenfield over the period. However, the proportion of brownfield completions has risen over time, reaching a peak of over 90% in 2004 – see figure 2.

Figure 2: Proportion of Brownfield and Greenfield Development



3 Sources of Urban Housing Potential

- 3.1 There is an absence of national guidance on urban potential or capacity studies in Scotland, although both PAN38 on Housing Land and draft SPP3 Planning for Housing encourages councils to carry them out. Two main sources of information were therefore used to inform this study - the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Urban Capacity Study, which was carried out as part of their structure plan review and “Tapping the Potential” – the main English guidance produced by the DETR in 2000. The following table shows the main sources of potential urban housing land. Not all of these sources are considered appropriate in an Aberdeen context, and so their suitability or otherwise is briefly discussed here. Those sources that are considered suitable are examined in more detail in the annexes.

Table 1 - Sources of Urban Housing Potential

Source	Glasgow & Clyde Valley	Tapping the Potential	Aberdeen	Notes
Vacant and Derelict Land	Yes	Yes	Yes	Sites identified through the 2007 Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDL). It is obviously good planning practice to recycle vacant and derelict land and buildings and it is considered that this annual survey is a useful means of identifying potential sites.
Non-effective Housing Supply	Yes	No	Yes	These can be taken from the Housing Land Audit 2007 and comprise the non-effective sites from the Established Housing Land Supply. Housing on these sites is generally acceptable in principle and should therefore be examined in more detail.
Industrial and Business Areas	Yes	Yes	Yes	Due to land supply and low vacancy reasons the peripheral estates at Dyce, Bridge of Don and Altens/Tullos should be discounted. The smaller urban estates and harbour area could be examined in more detail for possible long term housing potential.
Public Sector Demolitions	Yes	No	No	There is currently no such programme in Aberdeen City Council. However, reference should be made to the next category deals with this issue in the Regeneration Areas.
Redevelopment of Existing Areas	No	Yes	No	This could lead to a net loss of units but would lead to a qualitative improvement. The 6 Regeneration Areas in Aberdeen would normally be factored into any study. However in this instance the structure plan housing allowances take these into account so there is no need to study them in any more detail here.
Institutions	Yes	No	Yes	This would include surplus school sites identified in the 3R's Project together with other public sector surplus buildings and sites such as Woolmanhill Hospital.

Car Parks	Yes	Yes	No	There is no review of car parking underway at the time of writing so no way of telling whether any car parks are underused or in the wrong place. This category should therefore be discounted as a potential housing source at this stage.
Green Spaces	Yes	Yes	No	There are no disposal programmes and an open space audit has not yet been carried out. Planning policies in Aberdeen are generally supportive of retaining open space in order to protect amenity and prevent town cramming. This category should therefore be discounted as a potential housing source.
Redevelopment of Other Uses.	Yes	Yes	Yes	These include miscellaneous sites identified in the local plan, through local plan developer bids or by planning and asset management officers. A number of these sites are still in use. Such sites have been included where there has been an interest expressed in their redevelopment and/or relocation.
Subdividing Homes	No	Yes	No	Tapping the Potential suggests using past trends to estimate future potential and discounting over time as fewer larger dwellings remain. Net increases of 122 in 2005 and 61 in 2006 suggest that this is not an insignificant source. However, Aberdeen's data on subdivisions prior to 2005 is unreliable and no longer term picture can be made. Although this study cannot therefore examine this source in detail, it should be recognised that it is likely to continue to provide a significant source of housing over and above that identified in this study.

Flats over Shops	No	Yes	No	A crude rule of thumb suggested in Tapping the Potential is that a third of floorspace is available for conversion and that a third of this is suitable for conversion. Assuming one flat per retail unit, using this calculation produces an unconstrained yield of 230 units in Aberdeen. This is further discounted (by another third) to produce a constrained yield of 76 units. The crudity of this method and the low yield makes its inclusion in this study questionable. It was not used in the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Urban Capacity Study.
Empty Homes	No	Yes	No	There is little the planning system can do to bring into use private sector empty properties. Most of those in the public sector are being dealt with in the regeneration areas. This category should therefore be discounted as a potential housing source.
Intensification e.g. backland and garden development	No	Yes	No	Further development is likely to continue to come forward from this source as unidentified windfalls. However, identifying individual sites could be very time consuming. It could lead to pressure for development which could have an adverse effect on the character of some areas. This category should therefore be discounted as a potential housing source.
Review Existing Allocations	No	Yes	No	Increasing the density of the current local plan allocations is impractical at this stage of the local plan's progress.

- 3.2 This Urban Potential Study will examine the following sources in more detail;
- Vacant and Derelict Land (Annex 1)
 - Non effective Housing Land (Annex 2)
 - Industrial and Business Areas (Annex 3)
 - Institutions (Annex 4)
 - Redevelopment of Other Uses (Annex 5)
- 3.3 The following sources will not be examined in any further detail for the reasons outlined in the table above;
- Public Sector Demolitions
 - Redevelopment of Existing Areas (Regeneration Areas)
 - Car Parks
 - Green Spaces
 - Subdividing Homes
 - Flats over Shops
 - Empty Homes
 - Intensification
 - Review of Existing Allocations

4 Calculating Urban Potential

- 4.1 Once sites have been identified as being suitable for housing, an estimation of their potential yield has to be made. Two methods of calculating the potential yield are used – one based on the density of planning consents in Aberdeen, the other based (in the absence of Scottish advice) on the Consultation Paper on PPS3 Housing (Dec 2005 to Feb 2006) – the English equivalent of SPP3 Planning for Housing.
- 4.2 In order to indicate the potential yield of future brownfield sites, planning permissions granted between 1997 and 2006 for brownfield housing proposals were examined from DABS to obtain information on densities. These figures do not include very small sites of under 5 units.

Figure 3: Number & Density of Brownfield Planning Consents in Aberdeen

	Sites	No Units	Hectares	Units per ha.
1997	16	341	6.15	55.5
1998	26	861	15.42	55.8
1999	16	562	6.83	82.3
2000	17	787	9.44	83.3
2001	10	578	6.31	91.6
2002	12	439	7.83	56.1
2003	25	1,098	18.03	60.9
2004	14	881	18.09	48.7
2005	12	372	8.15	45.6
2006	15	864	23.23	37.2
TOTAL	163	6,783	119.48	56.77

- 4.3 There does not appear to be any discernible trends over the ten year period. Average densities for the year can be influenced by one or two individual sites with either very low or very high densities. One noticeable issue is that larger sites (those over 2ha) tend to be developed at a much lower density than smaller sites. This may provide a more sensitive means of calculating urban potential than simply applying an overall average density to all brownfield sites.

Figure 4: Density of Large and Small Brownfield Sites in Aberdeen 1997- 06

	Sites	No Units	Hectares	Units per ha.
Large Sites	14	2,170	70.1	30.95
Small Sites	149	4,613	49.38	93.42
TOTAL	163	6,783	119.48	56.77

- 4.4 Proposals on larger sites over 2ha tend to be built at a lower density (around 30 per ha) than those for smaller sites (at around 95 per ha). If we apply these densities to the identified sites, then their potential can be estimated.

4.5 A further means of calculating the potential yield of sites is using the Indicative Density Ranges (IDR) in the Consultation Paper on PPS3 Housing. Annex C of the Consultation Paper suggests the following indicative density ranges (dwellings per hectare) for specific types of location:

- City Centre Above 70
- Urban 40-75
- Suburban 35-55
- Rural 30-40

4.6 Although these ranges were not included in the final version of PPS3, they do provide an alternative means of calculating yield for comparative purposes. They can be applied to Aberdeen in the following way:

- City Centre – the area identified as the City Centre in the 2004 Finalised Local Plan proposals maps.
- Urban – the urban part of the 'Former City' parish area.
- Suburban – remaining settlements and urban areas within the former parishes of Old Machar, Dyce, Newhills, Peterculter and Nigg.
- Rural – green belt areas - no sites have been identified here.

4.7 The identified sites can be divided thus and the notional PPS3 densities applied. A maximum figure of 95 dwellings per hectare is applied to city centre sites to give a range of potential for all areas.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Over the last 25 years Aberdeen has accommodated high levels of brownfield housing development – between 300 and 900 per annum, and averaging over 600 per annum. Brownfield development rates have generally risen over this period. Perhaps surprisingly there is little evidence of increased densities of individual sites over the last 10 years. Figures fluctuate according to the nature of sites coming forward. Nevertheless more housing units are being accommodated within the urban area as uses change and vacant land is brought back into use.
- 5.2 By applying various density scenarios to known potential housing sites, there would appear to be the potential to accommodate between 4,800 and 8,200 brownfield homes in Aberdeen on currently identifiable sites.

Figure 5: Urban Potential in Aberdeen

Potential Source	Small & Large Site Potential	IDR* Low Potential	IDR* High Potential
Vacant and Derelict Land	2,171	2,164	3,682
Non Effective Housing Land	224	273	511
Industrial and Business Areas	202	270	506
Institutions	565	502	813
Redevelopment of Other Uses	1,704	1,570	2,661
TOTAL	4,866	4,779	8,173

*IDR = Indicative Density Range

- 5.3 These figures are in addition to those identified as effective in the Housing Land Audit. They do not include those sources of potential discounted in section 3. The subdivision of homes and the conversion of smaller commercial buildings in particular are likely to continue to make significant contributions in the form of windfalls. The figures could therefore be regarded as a conservative estimate.
- 5.4 Spread over 10 years there is the potential to identify sites able to accommodate between 480 and 820 brownfield dwellings per annum. NEST's brownfield requirement for 2000-10 averages out at 409 per annum by way of comparison. These figures also stand comparison with the average annual brownfield completion rate of 631 over the last 25 years. This figure however, should be regarded as indicative for the period beyond 10 years. This in turn would require Aberdeen's urban potential to be reviewed to monitor whether the City can continue to provide this level of brownfield development.
- 5.5 All this would suggest that it should be possible for Aberdeen to continue to accommodate significant levels of brownfield housing development. There is no doubt that bringing back into use previously vacant land and buildings is beneficial and sustainable. However, it also needs to be recognised that Aberdeen does not have a legacy of long term industrial decline that many other cities have experienced. As a consequence it does not have large tracts of vacant and derelict land available for development compared to many other local authorities. It therefore needs to be considered whether it is desirable to continue with historical levels of brownfield housing development, in particular the rates of development of the last 10 years. Many of the brownfield housing developments over the last 25 years have been on sites which had a non housing use. Of the 45 potential sites

identified in this study, only around 3 were last in residential use. This has sustainability implications in respect of the mix (or lack of mix) of uses within the urban area.

6 References

- Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey 2007
- Strategic Forecasts for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire 2003-2021
- Housing Land Audit 2007
- Housing Development Schedules (DABS) 1985 to 2007
- Aberdeen Industrial Areas Guide 2006-07
- Employment Land Audit 2007
- PAN38 Housing Land (Revised 2003)
- Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan NEST 2002
- Finalised Aberdeen Local Plan 2004
- Tapping the Potential – Assessing Urban Housing Capacity; Towards Better Practice, ODPM, 2000
- Glasgow and the Clyde Valley 2006 Structure Plan Alteration Technical Report TR 5/06 – Urban Capacity Study 2004
- SPP3 Planning for Housing
- Consultation Paper on a new PPS3 Housing (Dec 2005 to Feb 2006)

Annex 1 - Vacant and Derelict Land

This is a significant category and a number of sites are identified in the Scottish Vacant and Derelict Land Survey (SVDLS). The 2007 SVDLS was used as a base. There are 31 sites on the 2007 Survey. Of these 17 were considered unsuitable for residential development and two sites are now under construction. This leaves 14 sites covering a total of 57.54ha.

Small & Large Site Potential

	Sites	Hectares	Urban Potential
Large Sites @ 30 per ha	6	50.70	1,521
Small Sites @ 95 per ha	8	6.84	650
TOTAL	14	57.54	2,171

Indicative Density Range Potential

Location (and notional density)	Sites	Hectares	Low Potential	High Potential
City Centre (70 to 95)	2	0.64	49	61
Urban (40 to 75)	9	24.59	984	1,844
Suburban (35 to 55)	3	32.31	1,131	1,777
TOTAL	14	57.54	2,164	3,682

Annex 2 - Non Effective Housing Land

These sites are taken from the Housing Land Audit 2007 and comprise the non-effective sites from the Established Housing Land Supply. There are 8 such sites on the 2007 Audit of which 2 have been discounted as they have already been covered by the SVDL Survey sites above. One further site at Hopecroft has also been discounted as it is part of the local plan greenfield housing allocations for the period 2000-05. This leaves 5 sites covering a total of 6.79ha.

Small & Large Site Potential

	Sites	Hectares	Urban Potential
Large Sites @ 30 per ha	2	6.49	195
Small Sites @ 95 per ha	3	0.30	29
TOTAL	5	6.79	224

Indicative Density Range Potential

Location (and notional density)	Sites	Hectares	Low Potential	High Potential
City Centre (70 to 95)	1	0.06	4	6
Urban (40 to 75)	4	6.73	269	505
Suburban (35 to 55)				
TOTAL	5	6.79	273	511

Annex 3 - Industrial and Business Areas

The 2007 Employment Land Audit shows that Aberdeen has a marketable employment land supply of 53ha – up 32.5% as a result of constraints being removed from Moss Side. However the immediately available supply is down 20.6% to 27ha as a result of new developments taking place. Due to low land supply and low vacancy reasons the major peripheral estates at Dyce, Bridge of Don and Altens/Tullos should be discounted as potential housing areas. The smaller urban estates and harbour area could be examined in more detail for their possible long term potential.

- St Machar – this small estate is doing well and there is only one vacant plot. It should therefore be discounted as a potential housing site.
- Kittybrewster – Scottish Water, who own the northern part of this site, indicated in a local plan objection that they wish to see their site developed. Although there are no plans for the Council depot to the south, the site could have some future housing potential.
- Northfield – A large plot in the middle of the site is vacant. However, because a number of other business uses surround this site, it should be discounted for potential housing at this stage.
- Mugiemoos and Donside Paper Mills – These have been considered in the SVDL Survey section.
- Mastrick – Although the occasional unit is vacant, there are no vacant plots and it is acting successfully as Aberdeen's main car sales destination. It should therefore be discounted as a potential housing site.
- Rubislaw/Marathon – This area is operating very successfully with oil related offices and should be discounted for housing
- Harbour – There are a number of small plots vacant. However, the industrial nature of surrounding uses and the harbour's significance as a transport gateway into Aberdeen means it should be discounted for potential housing.
- Wellington Street/Links Place – A relatively new development with only one vacant plot which should be discounted for potential housing.
- Industrial Land between Commerce Street and Footdee – This area appears to be well used. Part is within the Harbour's operational area and there are several gas/chemical storage tanks in the area.

The demand for office and employment land in Aberdeen is currently very high and there are very few vacant plots, even in the smaller, older and more central employment areas. Although the 2004 Employment Forecasts predict a decline post 2011, this decline is very gradual. This would suggest that there is unlikely to be a significant amount of business and industrial land becoming redundant in the foreseeable future. Although there may be further moves towards housing in the harbour area, the current strength of the economy and the Harbours commercial operations means that there is unlikely to be large scale redevelopment in the shorter term. Other than the two paper mills (dealt with elsewhere) it is considered that the only employment area that may be suitable for future housing potential at this stage is at Kittybrewster.

Small & Large Site Potential

	Sites	Hectares	Urban Potential
Large Sites @ 30 per ha	1	6.75	202
Small Sites @ 95 per ha			
TOTAL	1	6.75	202

Indicative Density Range Potential

Location (and notional density)	Sites	Hectares	Low Potential	High Potential
City Centre (70 to 95)				
Urban (40 to 75)	1	6.75	270	506
Suburban (35 to 55)				
TOTAL	1	6.75	270	506

Annex 4 - Institutions

This section includes surplus school sites identified in the 3R's Project together with other public sector surplus buildings and sites such as Woolmanhill Hospital. It excludes school sites which will be replaced on site such as Cults Academy and Airyhall Primary. Sites that have already been considered elsewhere (such as Cornhill Hospital in the SVDL Survey) have also been discounted.

Small & Large Site Potential

	Sites	Hectares	Urban Potential
Large Sites @ 30 per ha	3	7.5	225
Small Sites @ 95 per ha	4	3.58	340
TOTAL	7	11.08	565

Indicative Density Range Potential

Location (and notional density)	Sites	Hectares	Low Potential	High Potential
City Centre (70 to 95)	1	2.53	177	240
Urban (40 to 75)	4	5.14	206	385
Suburban (35 to 55)	2	3.41	119	188
TOTAL	7	11.08	502	813

Annex 5 - Redevelopment of Other Uses

These include miscellaneous sites identified in the local plan, through local plan developer bids or by planning and asset management officers. A number of these sites are still in use e.g. Bucksburn House. Such sites have been included where there has been an interest expressed in redevelopment and/or relocation.

Small & Large Site Potential

	Sites	Hectares	Urban Potential
Large Sites @ 30 per ha	6	33.63	1,009
Small Sites @ 95 per ha	12	7.32	695
TOTAL	18	40.95	1,704

Indicative Density Range Potential

Location (and notional density)	Sites	Hectares	Low Potential	High Potential
City Centre (70 to 95)	5	1.35	95	128
Urban (40 to 75)	7	17.74	710	1,331
Suburban (35 to 55)	6	21.86	765	1,202
TOTAL	18	40.95	1,570	2,661

Annex 6 – Potential Brownfield Housing Sites

Site	Source	Location	Reason/Source	Large
Kittybrewster Depots	In Use	Urban	Business and Industrial Land	✓
Smithfield School	In Use	Urban	Institutions	✓
Balgownie Primary	In Use	Suburban	Institutions	
Marchburn Infant School	In Use	Urban	Institutions	
Mile End Primary	In Use	Urban	Institutions	
Braeside Infant School	In Use	Urban	Institutions	
Denburn and Woolmanhill	In Use	C Centre	Institutions	✓
Bankhead Academy		Suburban	Institutions	✓
Oakbank School	In Use	Urban	Non Effective Housing Land	✓
Woodside Church	Other	Urban	Non Effective Housing Land	
Water Lane Grannary	Other	C Centre	Non Effective Housing Land	
1-7 Crombie Road, Torry		Urban	Non Effective Housing Land	
Froghall Terrace	In Use	Urban	Non Effective Housing Land	✓
Nazareth House		Urban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
Frederick / East North Street		C Centre	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
VSA Gallowgate		C Centre	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
OP30 East Woodcroft	Other	Suburban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	✓
Stoneywood Terrace	Other	Suburban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
Cummings Park Crescent	Other	Urban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
North Castlegate Car Park	Other	C Centre	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
Citadel	Other	C Centre	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
Urquhart Road Works	In Use	Urban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
The Bush Peterculter	In Use	Suburban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
Victoria House	Other	C Centre	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
140 Causewayend	Other	Urban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
St Peter's Nursery, Spital	Other	Urban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	
OP31 Farburn Terrace Dyce		Suburban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	✓
Land at Bucksburn House	Other	Suburban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	✓
BP Dyce (Part)	Other	Suburban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	✓
Broadford Works	In Use	Urban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	✓
Hillhead Halls		Urban	Redevelopment of Other Uses	✓
Balgownie Centre	SVDL	Suburban	SVDL	✓
Tillydrone Primary School	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	✓
Cornhill Hospital	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	✓
Woodend Hospital Annex	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	✓
Mugiemoss Mill	SVDL	Suburban	SVDL	✓
Donside Paper Mill	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	✓
35 Froghall Road		Urban	SVDL	
Dunbar Halls	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	
Cattofield Reservoir	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	
Ex Satosphere	SVDL	C Centre	SVDL	
Triple Kirks	SVDL	C Centre	SVDL	
Torry Research Lab	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	
Abbey Road Torry	SVDL	Urban	SVDL	
Kennerty Mill	SVDL	Suburban	SVDL	

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