

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Statutory Requirements and Guidance
3. Development Plan Scheme
4. Overview of Consultation Process
5. Strategic Environmental Assessment
6. Scale of Publicity, Engagement and Consultation
7. Conclusion

Appendix 1: Legislative Requirements & Guidance

- a) Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 - extract
- b) Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 1983 - extract
- c) Planning Advice Note 37 – Structure Planning

Appendix 2: Engagement Meetings with Communities and Stakeholders

Appendix 3: Press Adverts & Notices

- a) Formal Notice of Intent – 23 February 2007
- b) Plain English Advert – 23 February 2007
- c) Provisional Strategy Consultation Advert – 19 October 2007
- d) Draft Structure Plan Advert – 27 June 2008
- e) Public Meeting Timetable Advert (1) – 1 August 2008
- f) Public Meeting Timetable Advert (2) – 29 August 2008
- g) Formal Notice of Submission – 27 February 2009
- h) SEA Environmental Report Notice – 7 July 2008

Appendix 4: Press Releases

- a) Start of Structure Plan Process – 23 February 2007
- b) Provisional Draft Structure Plan – 2 April 2008
- c) Draft Structure Plan – 26 June 2008
- d) Close of Consultation – 8 September 2008
- e) Submission of Finalised Structure Plan – 26 February 2009

Appendix 5*: Responses to the Issues Report

Appendix 6: Responses to the Provisional Strategy Consultation

Appendix 7*: Responses to the Draft Structure Plan

Appendix 8: SEA Timetable

Appendix 9: Schedule of Changes to the Draft Structure Plan

Appendix 10: Tracked Changes Version of the Finalised Structure Plan

** Note – Appendices 5 and 7 are bound separately due to their length.*

Finalised Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan

Publicity and Consultation Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority submitted the Finalised Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan to Scottish Ministers on 27 February 2008 for their approval.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to evidence compliance with the legislation governing the publicity and consultation elements of structure plan preparation.
- 1.3 This report sets out the procedures followed to publicise the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan. It outlines the main engagement and consultation processes involved, the agencies and groups consulted and summarises the responses and key issues identified.
- 1.4 The preparation of the plan was coordinated by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee (ACSSPC) until June 2008. Since then, this role has been performed by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA).
- 1.5 All the comments received during the consultation exercise were taken into consideration when preparing the finalised plan for submission to Scottish Ministers. The SDPA would like to thank those organisations and individuals who took part and contributed to refining the format and content of the plan over the period since late 2006.
- 1.6 The finalised structure plan comprises a written statement and key diagram. In addition to this 'Publicity and Consultation Statement', the following additional documents support the plan:
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment
 - Appropriate Assessment
 - Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment
 - Background Paper
 - Report of Survey
- 1.7 Following submission to Scottish Ministers, the finalised structure plan will be placed on deposit for eight weeks. During this period, copies of all the above documents may be viewed on the Strategic Development Planning Authority website, at the main Council offices or at public libraries in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Any objections or representations should be made directly to Scottish Ministers on the form provided.

2. Statutory Requirements and Guidance

- 2.1 The Finalised Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 1983.
- 2.2 A statement of publicity and consultation is a legal requirement of planning authorities when submitting a structure plan to Scottish Ministers. The legislative background is contained in both the 1997 Act and the 1983 Regulations – extracts of which are provided in **Appendix 1**. The regulations emphasise that the publicity and consultation statement should be a “brief account” of the steps taken to meet the statutory requirements.
- 2.3 Further guidance on the contents of a publicity and consultation statement is provided in Planning Advice Note 37: Structure Planning (paragraphs 31 and 47 – reproduced in **Appendix 1**). Here it is suggested that the statement should:
- summarise the significant dates in plan preparation;
 - identify the steps taken to secure adequate publicity;
 - indicate the consultation with other authorities and bodies;
 - indicate how representations and responses were considered;
 - clearly indicate those parts of the plan that have been amended as a result of representation; and
 - indicate where users who seek more information can find it.
- 2.4 This publicity and consultation statement has been produced to comply with the above statutory requirements and guidance.
- 2.5 As suggested above, this statement is a “brief account” which attempts to capture the scale and nature of publicity, engagement and consultation which has gone into the preparation of the finalised structure plan. This report does not seek to be comprehensive, although additional information is available on the SDPA website.

3. Development Plan Scheme

- 3.1 Although the plan is being prepared under the 1997 Act and 1983 Regulations, every attempt has been made to embrace the planning modernisation agenda in its preparation, format, content and level of engagement/consultation.
- 3.2 A development plan scheme (DPS) was published to coincide with the start of formal work on the structure plan on 23 February 2007. Although not a statutory requirement until the new development plan regime is implemented in early 2009, it evidences commitment to openness, transparency and the cultural and procedural changes required by planning modernisation.
- 3.3 The DPS was largely prepared before the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 received Royal Assent and before any draft regulations had been published. As a consequence it represented an early attempt to think through the form and content of such documents.
- 3.4 The 28 January 2008 meeting of ACSSPC identified the need to review and republish the DPS due both to the period of one year since it was first published and the amended timetable for plan preparation agreed at the meeting in September 2007. A revised version was prepared and agreed in May 2008.
- 3.5 The DPS provided information on why a new structure plan was being prepared, a timetable for its preparation and a timetable for consulting and engaging with stakeholders and the community (identifying the methods to be used). Four groups were identified which had different requirements and could contribute in different ways:
 - the general public;
 - community groups;
 - people and organisations in the private sector; and
 - people and organisations in the public sector.
- 3.6 The DPS contained a commitment to equal opportunities, to ensure all meeting venues were accessible to disabled people and to provide a translation service for everyone whose first language is not English. It also contained a commitment to produce all documents in plain English.
- 3.7 A number of the key documents during plan preparation received “crystal marks” from the Plain English Campaign including the initial advert announcing the start of the process, the Development Plan Scheme, the Issues Report and the Draft Plan. The Finalised Plan also received a ‘crystal mark’.
- 3.8 The implementation of the DPS has been monitored at quarterly intervals since February 2007 at the meetings of ACSSPC and since June 2008, the meetings of the SDPA.

4. Overview of Consultation Process

- 4.1 Consultation and engagement were integral to the preparation of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan. Figure 1 provides a graphic overview of the preparation process with a particular focus on those points where there was a specific period of engagement or consultation.
- 4.2 Although plan preparation formally started on 23 February 2007, considerable work was done in advance of this date, particularly around engagement with stakeholders and communities.
- 4.3 It can be seen that there were six principal stages where engagement and consultation took place during the preparation of the finalised plan and each of these are identified below, highlighting what the stage involved, what the output of the stage was and how it influenced subsequent stages.
- 4.4 In addition to these stages, a Key Stakeholder Reference Group' (KSRG) met on 9 occasions at key points during plan preparation (**Appendix 2**). The group (of up to 30) met with the purpose of enabling stakeholder views to be taken into account by officers and members at each point during the plan preparation process. The meetings have been useful in terms of communicating expectations, increasing mutual understanding and keeping partners informed and engaged at each step in the process.

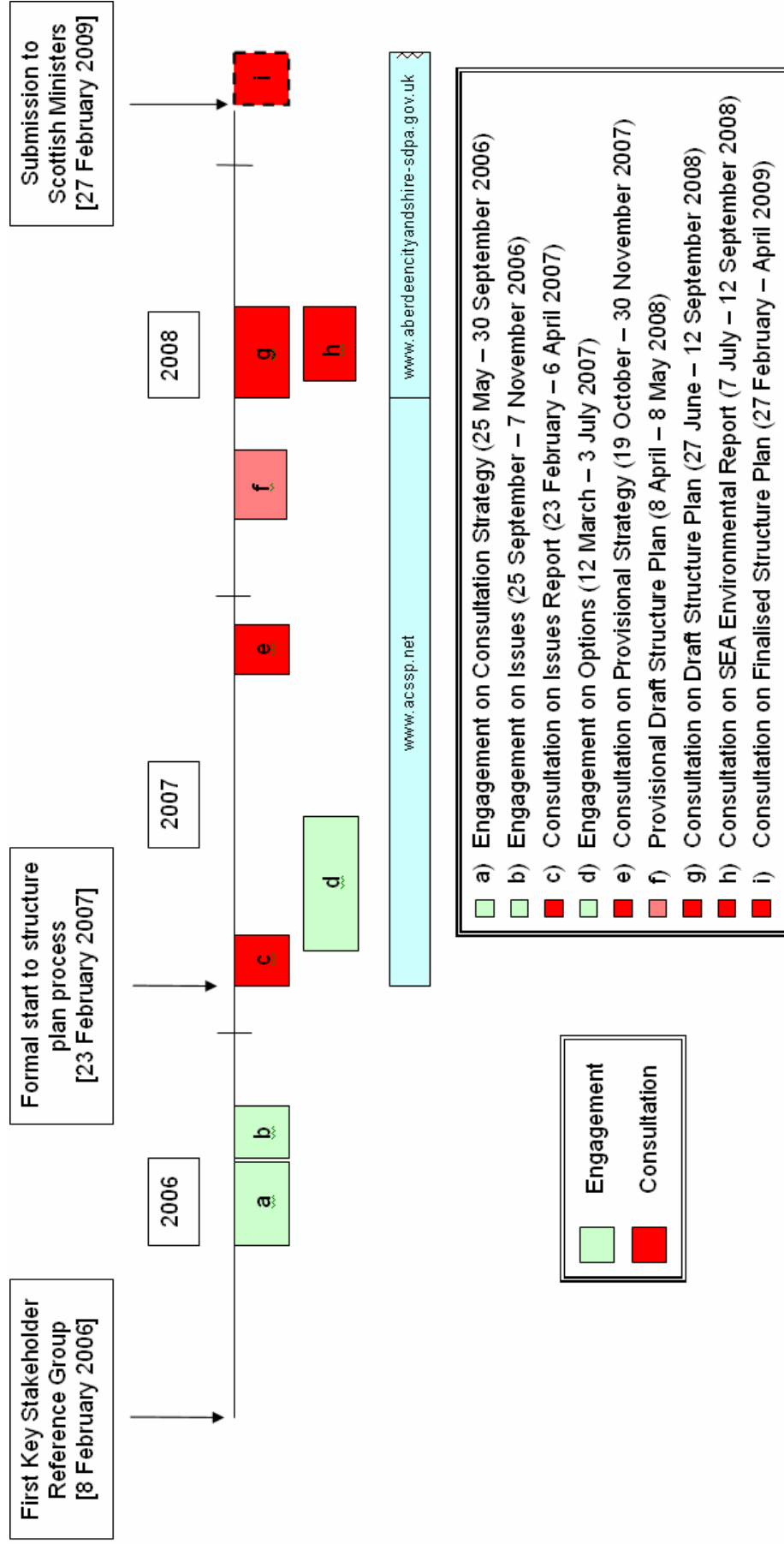
Consultation Strategy (a)

- 4.5 Before the formal start of plan preparation, extensive engagement took place with communities and other stakeholders. Meetings were organised to consider how the engagement process on the structure plan should be structured and the standards that should be applied.
- 4.6 Nine meetings were held in mid-2006 in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and over 80 people attended an event. **Appendix 2** provides a list of the meetings which took place. A meeting of the KSRG also considered this issue.
- 4.7 Meeting notes were prepared and distributed to attendees. This engagement informed the preparation of the consultation strategy and the development plan scheme.

Engagement on Issues (b)

- 4.8 Also before the start of plan preparation informal meetings were organised with Community Councils to gain views on the issues the structure plan should seek to address as well as providing some early indication of initial options for the plan.

Figure 1: Plan Preparation Timeline (Engagement and Consultation)



- 4.9 Each meeting commenced with short presentations on the need for a new structure plan, the implications of the (as then) Planning Bill before the Scottish Parliament and the commitment to prepare a new plan in the spirit and culture of the new system. This was followed by the meeting opening up for discussion and the capturing of potential issues.
- 4.10 A total of 12 meetings were held between late September and early November 2006 in a range of locations throughout Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. More information is provided in **Appendix 2**. A meeting of the KSRG also considered this issue.
- 4.11 A total of 75 people attended the community meetings which generated around 600 separate comments which were captured via a laptop and projector. These comments were grouped together by topic and used to inform the preparation of an “Issues Report”. Meeting notes were prepared and distributed to attendees as well as being placed on the Plan website when plan preparation formally commenced.

Issue Report (c)

- 4.12 The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee, on 12 January 2007, recommended to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils that they commence the preparation of a new structure plan. They further agreed (subject to ratification by the two Councils) to publish a Development Plan Scheme, a Report of Survey, a ‘Getting Involved’ leaflet as well as consult on an Issues Report. Radio Scotland’s local news bulletin reported this decision. These recommendations were accepted by Aberdeenshire Council on 25 January 2007 and by Aberdeen City Council on 13 February 2007.
- 4.13 The notice of intent to prepare a Structure Plan was published on 23 February 2007 and marked the start of a six week public consultation period on an Issues Report. The Issues Report identified 13 issues the community and stakeholders believed should be covered by the plan as well as a draft vision.
- 4.14 In order to secure adequate publicity for the formal start to the structure plan process and consultation on the Issues Report, the following steps were taken:
- A formal ‘notice’ was published in the Press and Journal (on 23 February 2007 and 2 March 2007) and the Edinburgh Gazette (on 23 February 2007) in the form prescribed by regulation (**Appendix 3**).
 - A more informative ‘advert’ was published in a range of local newspapers including the Press and Journal and 11 weekly papers in the area (between 23 February and 2 March 2007 – **Appendix 3**). This advert had a Plain English Campaign ‘Crystal Mark’.
 - A press release was issued on 22 February 2007 and sent to over 40 press organisations as well as being placed on the websites of the two councils (**Appendix 4**).

- A “Getting Involved” leaflet was published which explained what structure plans are, the process of plan preparation and the opportunities to input to the process.
 - The documents were published on a dedicated website (www.acssp.net). In the period 23 February 2007 to 6 April 2007 the website received more than 400 ‘hits’.
 - Copies of the Issues Report, Development Plan Scheme, Report of Survey and ‘Getting Involved’ documents were distributed to (and available for public viewing/ uplift from) a total of 65 locations throughout Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. These were Council HQ planning receptions (2 locations), area planning offices in Aberdeenshire (6 locations), public libraries (54 locations) and information points (3 locations).
 - Letters were sent to 838 individuals and organisations with complementary copies of both the Development Plan Scheme and Issues Report. Organisations included community councils, community centres, focus group members, neighbouring local authorities, statutory consultees and other stakeholders.
 - Letters with a copy of the “Getting Involved” leaflet were sent to an additional 422 individuals or businesses with a known interest in strategic planning (largely taken from the database used for the preparation of the previous structure plan), indicating the start of the structure plan process and how the consultation documents could be obtained.
 - Copies of the documents were sent to anyone on request.
- 4.15 All four published documents were reviewed by the Plain English Campaign and three of them (Development Plan Scheme, ‘Getting Involved’ leaflet and the Issues Report) received a ‘Crystal Mark’.
- 4.16 The Issues Report was structured around three questions relating to the draft vision, issues and spatial strategy for the new plan. In terms of format, the consultation documents highlighted three ways to make a response - by post, by fax and by email.
- 4.17 The closing date of responses to the Issues Report was 6 April 2007.
- 4.18 The press release, newspaper articles, adverts, and the posting out of 1,250 letters attracted 91 responses. Figure 2 below shows how these responses were submitted and classifies them by resposdee. On analysis 1,004 individual comments were identified from these responses.
- 4.19 Each response was acknowledged and received a copy of the proposed response to each comment prior to the meeting of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee on 25 June 2007
- 4.20 A schedule of all comments made and responses to them was published on the Structure Plan Website on 24 July 2007.

Figure 2: Responses to the Issues Report Consultation

	Number	Percentage
Post	60	66%
Fax	2	2%
Email	29	32%
TOTAL	91	100%

	Number	Percentage
General public	17	19%
Property / land interests	38	42%
Elected members	1	1%
Community Councils	6	7%
Interest groups	7	8%
Business	5	5%
Government agencies	9	10%
Other local authorities	0	0%
Council departments	2	2%
Other	6	7%
TOTAL	91	

Engagement on Options (d)

- 4.21 The issues engagement exercise had included a brief consideration of spatial strategy and the Issues Report took this a stage further.
- 4.22 Over the period between November 2006 and March 2007, however, a series of options were developed for the strategy of the structure plan.
- 4.23 This option development process included wide-ranging internal consultation within both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Council to ensure that a wide variety of options were presented for public comment. The options centered on three main topics:
- The scale of development (low, medium or high);
 - The timing of development (front-loaded, level or back-loaded); and
 - The location of development (eight possibilities were highlighted).
- 4.24 Around 850 invitations to one of 37 meetings were sent out, along with a briefing paper which sought to inform attendees of the options in advance. In total, some 360 people attended the events.

Type of meeting	Number of meetings	Number of invitations made	Number of attendees	% of those invited attending
Community	24	602	240	40.0%
Elected member	7	110	58	52.0%
Interest group	7	141	68	48.0%

- 4.25 The meetings considered issues of scale and timing of development through open discussion, while two group exercises were used to capture views on the location of development.
- 4.26 The first exercise sought views on the advantages and disadvantages of a group's favoured and least favoured spatial strategy against a series of criteria. The second exercise used a map and groups were asked to distribute 20 counters to indicate the relative scale of growth in different locations.
- 4.27 Meeting notes were taken and circulated to those in attendance following the meeting and they were placed on the plan website.
- 4.28 This engagement exercise informed the decision on a provisional strategy taken by ACSSPC on 28 September 2007.
- 4.29 In addition to community and stakeholder engagement, the options were subject to technical appraisal and strategic environmental assessment.

Provisional Strategy Consultation (e)

- 4.30 At the 28 September 2007 meeting of ACSSPC, members agreed that the public should be informed of the likely direction of the plan and be invited to comment, and that any comments received in response would be reported to the next meeting of the Joint Committee. This was additional to the participation arrangements set out in the DPS.
- 4.31 A press release was issued following the Committee meeting and advertisements were placed in a wide range of local papers in the week of 15 October 2007 (**Appendix 3**). A six week period was given for comments on the provisional strategy with a closing date set of 30 November 2007.
- 4.32 The consultation contained text in bold identifying the 6 points of the provisional strategy. This in effect was the consultation, although an explanatory paragraph to assist those who wished to respond was added to each point.
- 4.33 A total of 15 responses were received and were put to a meeting of ACSSPC on 28 January 2008 for their information. A list of all those who responded is provided at **Appendix 7**.

Provisional Draft Structure Plan (f)

- 4.34 The responses to the Issues Report, Options engagement and Provisional Strategy consultation were taken forward into the drafting of the structure plan itself. An early draft of the plan, the “Provisional Draft Structure Plan” was prepared in late 2007 and early 2008 as a basis for engagement with Councillors from the two Councils.
- 4.35 A joint seminar of Councillors from both Councils was held on 20 March 2008. The seminar featured a number of presentations followed by an opportunity for an extensive question and answer session. Six workshop groups were formed to look at different aspects of the plan in more detail. The event was well attended and provided useful feedback which has been taken into account in the draft plan.
- 4.36 A press conference was held at the Beach Ballroom in Aberdeen on 2 April 2008 by the joint chairs of the SDPA to coincide with the publication of the ‘Provisional Draft Structure Plan’ for consultation with both Councils. Local newspapers, radio and television news reported the story.
- 4.37 The Provisional Draft Structure Plan was considered by eight committees of the two Councils:
- Marr Area Committee 8 April 2008
 - Banff & Buchan Area Committee 8 April 2008
 - Garioch Area Committee 15 April 2008
 - Buchan Area Committee 15 April 2008
 - Kincardine & Mearns Area Committee 22 April 2008
 - Formartine Area Committee 22 April 2008
 - Aberdeenshire Infrastructure Services Committee 8 May 2008
 - Aberdeen City Policy & Strategy Committee 29 April 2008
- 4.38 A range of observations were made, with many being reflected in the draft plan.

- 4.39 A briefing for MEPs, MPs, and MSP’s was provided in late May 2008 to give them with an overview of the draft plan before the formal consultation process began on the draft plan itself.

Draft Structure Plan (g)

- 4.40 Following amendments to the “provisional” draft, formal consultation on the Draft Structure Plan began on Friday 27 June 2008 and ran for 11 weeks until Friday 12 September 2008.
- 4.41 In addition to the Draft Structure Plan itself, three other supporting documents were published and open for comment over the same period:
- Strategic Environmental Assessment – Environmental Report

- Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment
- Background Paper.

- 4.42 A total of 3,500 copies of the plan were printed. A press release was distributed (**Appendix 4**) and adverts (**Appendix 3**) placed in the Press and Journal and 12 weekly Aberdeenshire newspapers. Copies of the draft structure plan were sent to 970 individuals and organisations as well as two copies to the 24 active community councils in Aberdeen City and 77 community councils and forums in Aberdeenshire. Copies of the draft plan were accompanied by a copy of the press advert and a set of consultation questions.
- 4.43 The members of the Key Stakeholder Reference Group identified in the development plan scheme were also sent copies. Around 25 additional copies of the draft plan were sent to each library (including the mobile van) in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire for members of the public to take away in addition to the main planning offices and 'The Point'. A copy was posted to Members of each Council and all elected Members of the Scottish, Westminster and European Parliaments.
- 4.44 The website (www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk) went live on the day that the public consultation began; 27 June 2008. To date over 100 people have registered to receive email updates of plan progress and the wider work of the SDPA. The website allowed for online submission of comments to the draft structure plan (55 received) in addition to e-mailing a generic team e-mail address. Comments could also be submitted by letter or fax.
- 4.45 A public consultation event timetable was circulated to all who had been sent copies of the draft plan and adverts notifying the public were published in newspapers across the north-east (**Appendix 3**). Following the inclusion of an additional date for the North Formartine area, eleven meetings were held across Aberdeenshire and three in Aberdeen City – 14 in total. The events provided an opportunity for the public, community groups and others to hear presentations on the content of the plan, ask questions in relation to it and participate in workshop sessions examining the detail of the plan. Approximately 300 people attended the public meetings.
- 4.46 Presentations were also given during the consultation period at a number of events. These include meetings of the Aberdeenshire Community Health Partnership, The Aberdeen City Alliance, Aberdeenshire Housing Strategy Group and the Aberdeen Homes Forum. Meetings also took place with a number of stakeholders including BT and Transport Scotland.
- 4.47 A public meeting was attended on the Third Don Crossing on 14 August 2008 which had been organized by Tillydrone Community Council, Old Aberdeen Community Council and Grandholm Village Residents Association. Around 80 people attended this meeting including 3 Councillors, an MSP and an MP.

- 4.48 A number of press releases were issued throughout the consultation period including a release at the start of the consultation period as well as one as a reminder of the close of consultation (Appendix 4).
- 4.49 There were also numerous articles and letters in both the Press and Journal and weekly papers on the Structure Plan and the consultation on the draft plan.
- 4.50 The June 2008 edition of “Energising Aberdeen”, published by Aberdeen City Council and distributed via the Evening Express newspaper (average circulation of over 50,000) featured the draft structure plan on its front cover. The August 2008 issue of the “Scottish Planner” also featured the draft structure plan on its front cover as part of a wider piece on the SDPA.
- 4.51 A reminder letter was sent out one week before the closing date to all individuals and organisations receiving copies of the plan to encourage responses (around 1,000 letters in total).
- 4.52 There were 473 responses received during the consultation period (Figure 5). These were summarised into a database containing almost 2,500 individual comments (Figure 6).

Figure 5: Responses to Consultation on Draft Structure Plan

Topic	Comments
Individuals (inc. Standard Letter)	280
Community Groups (inc Community Councils)	40
Businesses / Business Groups	12
Developers	6
Agents	93
Consultees	17
Politicians	9
Other	15
	472

Figure 6: Summary of Comments on Draft Structure Plan

Topic	Comments
Presentation	33
Introduction	12
Vision	116
Aims	86
Spatial Strategy (General)	255
Spatial Strategy (Strategic Growth Areas)	161
Spatial Strategy (Local Growth & Diversification Areas)	78
Spatial Strategy (Regeneration Priority Areas)	51
Objectives (General)	70
Objectives (Economic growth)	124
Objectives (Sustainable development and climate change)	136
Objectives (Population growth)	148
Objectives (Quality of the environment)	91
Objectives (Sustainable Mixed Communities)	120
Objectives (Accessibility)	122
Putting this plan into practice	364
Monitoring and reviewing this plan	26
Schedule 1	140
Glossary	6
Key Diagram	18
General	256
Strategic Environmental Assessment: Environmental Report	29
Background Paper	1
Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment	4
	2,447

4.53 The individual comments, with draft responses to them were put before the SDPA on 3 December 2008 and 23 January 2009 for information. Each respondee was then sent copies of the proposed responses to their comments on 6 February 2009 prior to decisions being taken by the SDPA on 13 February 2009.

4.54 At the meeting of the SDPA on 13 February 2009, the SDPA agreed:

- responses to the comments received on the draft plan;
- changes to the draft plan (and associated documents) in light of the comments received and the most up-to-date information; and
- to recommend to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils that the draft plan, as amended, be submitted to Scottish Ministers as the Finalised Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan, along with the associated supporting documents.

Finalised Structure Plan (h)

4.55 The Finalised Structure Plan was submitted to Scottish Ministers on 27 February 2009 and was accompanied by:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Appropriate Assessment
- Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment
- Report of Survey
- Background Paper
- Publicity and Consultation Statement

4.56 Notices were placed in the Edinburgh Gazette (27 February 2009) and the Press and Journal (27 February 2009 and 6 March 2009). Notices were also placed in 12 weekly papers covering the area between 27 February 2009 and 6 March 2009 (**Appendix 3**).

4.57 A schedule of changes to the draft plan, with the reasons for the change, is provided at **Appendix 9**, while **Appendix 10** contains a tracked changes version of the Finalised Structure Plan highlighting the changes made to the draft plan.

5. Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 5.1 In accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the preparation of the structure plan has been subject to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process. **Appendix 9** summarises the SEA activities to date in relation to the structure plan.
- 5.2 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report was submitted to the SEA Gateway on 16 April 2007 (following approval by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee on 2 March 2007). The response of the SEA consultation authorities (Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Scotland) was received on 21 May 2007 and considered at a meeting of ACSSPC on 25 June 2007.
- 5.3 A number of relatively minor suggestions were made by the consultation authorities and most of these were actioned in the preparation of the Environmental Report.
- 5.4 On 7 July 2008 the Environmental Report was published and submitted to the SEA Gateway for distribution to the consultation authorities (Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Historic Scotland). A notice was published in the Press and Journal announcing consultation on the Environmental Report on the same date (**Appendix 3**).
- 5.5 On 12 September 2008 the SEA Gateway delivered the responses from the consultation authorities to the Strategic Development Plan Team. An additional 5 responses were received to the Environmental Report. These were reported to the SDPA on 13 February 2009 and amendments made to the Environmental Report.
- 5.6 The amendments to the Environmental Report were published in an Addendum to the Environmental Report on 27 February 2009 alongside the finalised Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan.

6. Scale of Publicity, Engagement and Consultation

6.1 A total of 75 meetings have been organised specifically around the preparation of the structure plan, as set out in Figure 7 below. These are all detailed in Appendix 2. This is in addition to meetings at which it has been an item on a wider agenda, internal meetings within the two Councils or meetings with individual stakeholders.

Figure 7: Summary of Structure Plan Engagement and Consultation Events

Meeting	Number
Community	59
Stakeholder	7
Key Stakeholder Reference Group	9
Total	75

6.2 There have been four periods of consultation where written responses have been sought in addition to the period for objections which commences with the submission of the Finalised Structure Plan to Scottish Ministers. Two of these lasted for six weeks, while consultation on the draft plan was for an eleven week period. Figure 8 summarises the responses to the written consultations. The responses and how they were dealt with are detailed in Appendixes 5-7.

Figure 8: Responses to Written Consultation

Document	Number of Responses
Issues Report	91
Report of Survey	5
SEA – Scoping Report	2
Provisional Strategy	15
Draft Structure Plan	472
SEA – Environmental Report	9
Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment	3
Background Paper	1
Total	598

6.3 Over 70 adverts or notices (of nine types) will have appeared in the Edinburgh Gazette, Press and Journal and weekly papers in the area between 23 February 2007 and 5 March 2009, as set out in Figure 9. These are all reproduced in Appendix 3.

Figure 9: Summary of Adverts and Notices

	Edinburgh Gazette	Press & Journal	Local Weekly Papers
Notice of Intent	1	2	-
Initial Advert	-	1	11
Provisional Strategy Consultation	-	1	12
Draft Plan Consultation	-	2	12
SEA Environmental Report	-	1	-
Draft Plan Public Meetings (1)	-	1	12
Draft Plan Public Meetings (2)	-	-	1
Finalised Plan Notice	1	2	12
TOTAL	2	10	60

- 6.4 It can be seen that the preparation of the Aberdeen City and Shire has involved extensive engagement and consultation, well in excess of statutory requirements. One consequence of this is that more than three times as many responses were received to the draft plan as were received to the consultation draft of the previous structure plan in 2000 (472 responses as opposed to 175 for the previous structure plan).

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This publicity and consultation statement has set out the arrangements put in place to comply with the statutory requirements and guidance for the preparation of structure plans.
- 7.2 The statement has shown that the process far exceeds the requirements of the current development plan regime and marks a significant step towards the aspirations for the new regime under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006.
- 7.3 The Finalised Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan was prepared in a period of transition and this has been reflected in both the plan itself as well as the way it has been prepared.
- 7.4 More detail than has been provided in this statement is contained on the SDPA website which contains copies of meeting notes and all the documents referred to. More information is also available from the Strategic Development Plan Team at the address at the back of this publication.

Appendix 1: Legislative Requirements & Guidance

Section 8 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states:

- (1) *When preparing a structure plan for their district and before finally determining its content for submission to the Secretary of State, the planning authority shall take such steps as will in their opinion secure –*
 - a) *that adequate publicity is given in their district to the report of the survey under section 4 of this Act and to the matters which they propose to include in the plan,*
 - b) *that persons who may be expected to desire an opportunity of making representations to the authority with respect to those matters are made aware that they are entitled to an opportunity of doing so, and*
 - c) *that such persons are given adequate opportunity of making such representations.*
- (2) *The authority shall consider any representations made to them within the prescribed period.*
- (6) *A structure plan submitted by the planning authority to the Secretary of State for his approval shall be accompanied by a statement containing such particulars, if any, as may be prescribed -*
 - a) *of the steps which the authority have taken to comply with subsection¹, and*
 - b) *of the authority's consultations with, and consideration of the views of, other persons with respect to those matters.*

The Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 1983 elaborate on these requirements.

Reg. 3 The prescribed period for the purposes of section 6(1) ... of the [1972] Act [replaced by s8 of the 1997 Act] shall be such period (not less than 4 weeks) as shall be specified by a planning authority when giving publicity under these sections to matters proposed to be included in a structure...plan.

Reg. 4 (2) A planning authority preparing a structure plan...shall
(a) consult the following –
iii) such other authorities or bodies as the planning authority think appropriate
(c) take such views into consideration.

Reg.12 Two certified copies of the structure plan shall be submitted to the Secretary of State together with a statement containing the following particulars:–

- (a) a brief account of the steps the planning authority have taken to secure publicity required by section 6(1)(a) of the Act;
- (b) a brief account of the steps taken by the planning authority to secure awareness of persons referred to in section 6(1)(b) of the Act of entitlement to an opportunity of making representations in that paragraph;
- (c) a brief account of the opportunity afforded to such persons of making such representations;
- (d) a brief account of the consultations had by the planning authority with, and of their consideration of the views of, persons mentioned in regulation 4 (2).

(The Town and Country Planning Act (Scotland) 1972 referred to as “the Act” in the 1983 Regulations has been superseded by the 1997 Act)

Planning Advice Note 37: Structure Planning (1996) provides advice from the Scottish Office on the content of publicity and consultation statements.

Preparing the Finalised Plan

31 . . . Authorities are required to submit a publicity and consultation statement to the Secretary of State and this should clearly indicate those parts of the plan which have been amended as a result of representation. This will enable the parties concerned to see how their interests have been taken into account and help them decide whether to object to the finalised plan. . .

Publicity and Consultation Statement

47. This document should summarise the significant dates in plan preparation, the steps taken to secure adequate publicity with the general public and consultation with other authorities and bodies, and how representations and responses were considered. It should indicate where users who seek more information can find it.

Appendix 2: Engagement meetings with communities and stakeholders

A) Key Stakeholder Reference Group (KSRG) Meetings

Date	Venue	Location
08-Feb-06	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
10-May-06	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
28-Aug-06	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
29-Sep-06	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
05-Dec-06	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
15-Jun-07	AECC	Aberdeen
19-Sep-07	Station Hotel	Aberdeen
25-Mar-08	Town House	Aberdeen
01-Dec-08	St Nicholas House	Aberdeen

B) Consultation Strategy

Date	Meeting	Venue	Location
25-May-06	Kincardine & Mearns CC Forum	Viewmount	Stonehaven
01-Jun-06	Garioch CC Forum	Gordon House	Inverurie
07-Jun-06	Formartine CC Forum	Meldrum Academy	Meldrum
20-Jun-06	Banff & Buchan CC's East	Leisure Centre	Fraserburgh
22-Jun-06	Banff & Buchan SCC's West	Macduff Town Hall	Macduff
27-Jun-06	Marr CC's South	Huntly Arms Hotel	Aboyne
28-Jun-06	Marr CC's North	Forbes Arms Hotel	Alford
29-Jun-06	Buchan CC's	Saplinbrae House Hotel	Old Deer
30-Sep-06	Getting Involved Forum	Town House	Aberdeen

C) Structure Plan Issues

Date	Meeting	Venue	Location
25-Sep-06	Buchan	Saplinbrae House Hotel	Old Deer
28-Sep-06	Banff and Buchan (East)	Station Hotel	Fraserburgh
02-Oct-06	Marr (North)	Gordon Arms Hotel	Huntly
04-Oct-06	Garioch	Kintore Arms Hotel	Inverurie
05-Oct-06	Marr (South)	Burnett Arms Hotel	Banchory
09-Oct-06	Banff and Buchan (West)	Fife Lodge	Banff
11-Oct-06	Kincardine and Mearns	St Leonards Hotel	Stonehaven
12-Oct-06	Formartine	Meldrum Arms Hotel	Oldmeldrum
31-Oct-06	Aberdeen City - North	Summerhill Centre	Aberdeen
01-Nov-06	Aberdeen City - Central	The Town House	Aberdeen
02-Nov-06	Aberdeen City - South	Hilton Treetops Hotel	Aberdeen
07-Nov-06	Special Interest Groups	The Town House	Aberdeen

D) Structure Plan Options – Stakeholder Meetings

Date	Meeting	Venue	Location
12-Mar-07	Development interests	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
12-Mar-07	Business interests	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
15-Mar-07	Environmental interests	Woodhill House	Aberdeen
18-Mar-07	Transport interests	Craighaar Hotel	Aberdeen
19-Mar-07	Housebuilding Interests	Thistle Hotel	Aberdeen
26-Jun-07	SRPBA (landowners)	Macauley Institute	Aberdeen

Structure Plan Options – Community Meetings

Date	Area	Venue
16-Apr-07	Balmedie	The White Horse
17-Apr-07	Ellon	New Inn Hotel
18-Apr-07	Turriff	Fife Arms Hotel
19-Apr-07	Banchory	Burnett Arms Hotel
23-Apr-07	Fraserburgh	Royal Hotel
24-Apr-07	Laurencekirk	Mearns Academy
25-Apr-07	Mintlaw	Saplinbrae House Hotel
26-Apr-07	Blackburn	Community Centre
30-Apr-07	Stonehaven	St Leonards Hotel
01-May-07	Oldmeldrum	Meldrum Academy
02-May-07	Peterhead	Palace Hotel
03-May-07	Insch (1)	Carriages Hotel
08-May-07	Alford	The Vale Hotel
09-May-07	Kintore	Torryburn Hotel
10-May-07	Banff	Fife Lodge
14-May-07	Westhill	Holiday Inn
15-May-07	Huntly	Gordon Arms Hotel
16-May-07	Inverurie	Kintore Arms Hotel
17-May-07	Portlethen	Quoilers
19-May-07	Aberdeen (Central)	Town House
21-May-07	Aboyne	Huntly Arms Hotel
24-May-07	Aberdeen (South)	Kaimhill Community Centre
26-May-07	Aberdeen (North)	Bankhead Academy
03-Jul-07	Insch (2)	Carriages Hotel

E) Draft Structure Plan – Public Meetings

Date	Location	Venue
18-Aug-08	Fraserburgh	Dalrymple Hall
19-Aug-08	Aberdeen (North)	Bankhead Academy
20-Aug-08	Westhill	Holiday Inn
21-Aug-08	Laurencekirk	Mearns Academy
25-Aug-08	Huntly	Gordon Arms Hotel
26-Aug-08	Banchory	Burnett Arms Hotel
27-Aug-08	Ellon	New Inn
27-Aug-08	Aberdeen (Central)	St Machar Academy
28-Aug-08	Stonehaven	St Leonards Hotel
01-Sep-08	Aberdeen (South)	Kaimhill Community Centre
02-Sep-08	Banff	Fife Lodge Hotel
03-Sep-08	Inverurie	Kintore Arms Hotel
04-Sep-08	Mintlaw	Mintlaw Academy
08-Sep-08	Turriff	British Legion

Appendix 3: Press Adverts & Notices



NOTICE OF INTENTION TO START PREPARATION OF STRUCTURE PLAN

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1972
Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997

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

Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council intend to prepare the above named structure plan in respect of land in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.

Further information on the plan can be obtained from the Structure Plan Joint Officer Group at either Strategic Leadership, Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council, St Nicholas House, Broad Street, Aberdeen (tel 01224 523325), or Planning Policy and Environment, Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Aberdeen (tel 01224 664755)

Dr Margaret Bochel
Head of Planning and
Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council

Dr Christine Gore
Director of Planning and
Environmental Services
Aberdeenshire Council

23 February 2007

THE ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN

**“NORTH-EAST PEOPLE HAVE THE CHANCE TO
SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE REGION”**

We (Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council) have started to prepare a new structure plan. The plan will cover the area of both councils, but not the part of Aberdeenshire within the Cairngorms National Park.

The structure plan is a strategy for using land in the future. It covers the next 25 years and focuses on issues such as:

- the amount of new development needed;
- what sort of developments we need; and
- where new developments should be built.

The plan looks at developing areas for things such as housing, offices and shops. It does not contain detailed policies but sets broad aims.

The structure plan is an important document that will guide how the area is developed in the future. Local plans are based on structure plans, and individual planning applications are also influenced by the content of the structure plan.

We have published the following four documents.

- 1 **Development plan scheme** – a document which sets out the timetable for preparing the plan and the opportunities for you to get involved and influence the plan.
- 2 **Getting involved** – a leaflet which explains how you can get involved in developing the structure plan.
- 3 **Issues report** – a consultation document that sets out a draft vision and 13 issues which the structure plan could aim to deal with. We need your responses to the issues report by 6 April 2007.
- 4 **Report of survey** – a document which sets out background information on the economy, environment, transport and housing in the area, as well as wider issues such as the population changing and the size of towns and villages in the area.

You can get more information about the structure plan (including these four documents) from:

- the plan website (www.acssp.net);
- all libraries in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire;
- area offices in Aberdeenshire;
- ‘The Point’ (an information centre on Broad Street, Aberdeen);
- and
- the Structure Plan Joint Officer Group at either of the addresses below.

Aberdeen City Council
Planning and Infrastructure
St Nicholas House
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1BW
Phone: 01224 523325

Aberdeenshire Council
Planning Policy and Environment
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen
AB16 5GB
Phone: 01224 664755

23 February 2007

ABERDEEN CITY AND ABERDEENSHIRE (EXCLUDING THE CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK) STRUCTURE PLAN: PROVISIONAL STRATEGY

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee have adopted a strategy on a provisional basis for further testing and refinement for development into the draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan.

The structure plan is important as it will set a long-term vision for the use of land in the North East. It will identify what type of development is needed, how much is required and where (in general terms) it should take place.

Further information on the provisional strategy is available from the structure plan website (www.acssp.net) or from either Aberdeen City Council (tel 01224 523325) or Aberdeenshire Council (tel 01224 664221).

A formal consultation and opportunity to make representation will take place in the late spring of 2008 following publication of the draft structure plan itself. However, any written comments on the provisional strategy at this stage will be welcomed and reported to the Committee at its January meeting.

Any comments should be sent to the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Officer Group, Strategic Development Plan Suite, 27 – 29 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5AA, or e-mailed to team@acssp.net, to be received by **30 November 2007**.

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



THE DRAFT ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN

“Aberdeen City and Shire in 2030 – have we got it right?”

We (Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council) have published a draft structure plan for comment. The plan covers the area of both councils, but not the part of Aberdeenshire within the Cairngorms National Park.

The draft plan is a short, easy to read document. It contains a vision for the area to 2030 and sets out how the area needs to change and develop to realise that vision – including the scale and general location of new housing and employment land.

We have also published the following three documents.

- 1 SEA – Environmental Report
- 2 Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment
- 3 Background Paper

Responses to all four documents must be with us by 5pm on 12 September 2008.

Responses can be posted, faxed, e-mailed or submitted via the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) website. Contact details can be found below.

You can get more information about the draft structure plan (and the other three documents shown above) from:

- **the SDPA website**
(www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk);
- **all libraries in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire;**
- **area planning offices in Aberdeenshire;**
- **“The Point” (on Broad Street, Aberdeen); and**
- **the Strategic Development Plan Team**

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Team
Archibald Simpson House
27 – 29 King Street
Aberdeen AB24 5AA
Phone: 01224 628210
Fax: 01224 640517
E-mail: team@aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk

27 June 2008

DRAFT STRUCTURE PLAN CONSULTATION EVENTS

Following the publication of a draft structure plan for consultation on 27 June 2008, a timetable for public meetings can be found below. All consultation events will start at 7pm and last approximately two hours. In addition to presentations from the Strategic Development Plan Team there will be workshop and question & answer sessions.

DATE	LOCATION	VENUE
Monday 18 August	Fraserburgh	Dalrymple Hall
Tuesday 19 August	Aberdeen (North)	Bankhead Academy
Wednesday 20 August	Westhill	Holiday Inn
Thursday 21 August	Laurencekirk	Mearns Academy
Monday 25 August	Huntly	Gordon Arms Hotel
Tuesday 26 August	Banchory	Burnett Arms Hotel
Wednesday 27 August	Ellon	New Inn
Wednesday 27 August	Aberdeen (Central)	St Machar Academy
Thursday 28 August	Stonehaven	St Leonards Hotel
Monday 1 September	Aberdeen (South)	Kaimhill Community Centre
Tuesday 2 September	Banff	Fife Lodge Hotel
Wednesday 3 September	Inverurie	Kintore Arms Hotel
Thursday 4 September	Mintlaw	Mintlaw Academy

The public meetings have been arranged to assist the submission of written responses to the draft structure plan which must be received by us no later than **5pm on 12 September 2008**. Comments can be posted, faxed, e-mailed or submitted via the SDPA website.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Team
Archibald Simpson House, 27-29 King Street, Aberdeen AB24 5AA
Tel: 01224 628210 Fax: 01224 640517 Email: team@aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk
Website: www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk 1 August 2008

DRAFT STRUCTURE PLAN CONSULTATION EVENTS

A further date has been added to the public meetings timetable published recently to discuss the Draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan. This will take place on:

DATE	LOCATION	VENUE
Monday 8 September	Royal British Legion	High Street, Turriff

The event scheduled for Banff (Fife Lodge Hotel) on Tuesday 2 September will continue as planned. Both events will start at 7pm and last approximately two hours. In addition to presentations from the Strategic Development Plan Team there will be a workshop and question & answer session.

The public meetings have been arranged to assist the submission of written responses to the draft structure plan which must be received by us no later than **5pm on 12 September 2008**. Comments can be posted, faxed, e-mailed or submitted via the SDPA website.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Team
Archibald Simpson House, 27-29 King Street, Aberdeen AB24 5AA
Tel: 01224 628210 Fax: 01224 640517
Email: team@aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk
Website: www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk 29 August 2008

ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN NOTICE UNDER 16 (2) OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2005

Aberdeenshire Council has, on behalf of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, prepared an Environmental Report (ER) for the draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan under Section 8(1) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The ER identifies, describes and evaluates the likely significant effect on the environment of implementing the draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and its reasonable alternatives.

A copy of the environmental report and the draft structure plan can be obtained from or inspected at public libraries, Area Planning Offices, "The Point" and the Strategic Development Plan Team at the address below.

If you would like to express your opinion on the environmental report and the draft structure plan, please, send your comments to us either by post, fax or email to the address below, or online via the website. The closing date for responses is 5pm on **12 September 2008**.

*Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Team
Archibald Simpson House, 27-29 King Street, Aberdeen AB24 5AA
Tel: 01224 628210 Fax: 01224 640517
Email: team@aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk
Website: www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk*

The Notice to be published on 27 February 2009 will be added here prior to publication.

Appendix 4: Press Releases

Public urged to plan the North-east's future

23/02/07

The people of the North-east are being urged to help shape the way the region grows over the next two decades and beyond.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils are poised to prepare a new Structure Plan for the area, in close consultation with local people and scores of North-east organisations.

The important document will identify the development which is needed in the next 25 years, what form it should take and where it should be focused – and it will stress that growth should be managed with as little harm as possible to the wider environment.

The plan will also aim to ensure the North-east has a large enough population, and sufficient homes and jobs, to sustain the quality of services and facilities which people have a right to expect.

Aberdeen city councillor Ian Yuill, joint chair of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee, said: “The planning system affects all our lives so now is the time to make your voice heard about the future of your community and environment.”

Fellow joint chair Councillor Alison McInnes, of Aberdeenshire Council, said: “Our planners have already worked with community groups and other stakeholders to map out a draft vision for the area and a series of issues which the North-east faces. Individuals and communities now have the chance to speak up on how our new Structure Plan should be shaped.”

Public consultations are being launched tomorrow [Fri, Feb 23] and will run until April 6. Documents are available from all public libraries, on the internet at www.acssp.net , and at area offices in Aberdeenshire and The Point information centre on Broad Street, Aberdeen.

The new plan will cover all of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, excluding the Cairngorms National Park, and will look at issues like housing, office developments, new shops, transport and the environment.

The Structure Plan will not pinpoint precisely where new development should take place, which is the purpose of the City’s and the Shire’s separate Local Plans – but it will spell out broader proposals on how much development should take place and where it should happen.

City and Shire planning officials have set the scene by publishing four preliminary documents:

- a Development Plan Scheme, setting out the timetable for preparing the new Structure Plan and the opportunities for people to influence it;
- a Getting Involved leaflet , which explains how to participate in its preparation;
- an Issues Report, laying out the draft vision and 13 issues which the Structure Plan should tackle;
- a Report of Survey, which presents background information on the North-east economy, environment, transport and housing, and covers wider issues like the changing population and the size of towns and villages.

The draft vision states that by 2030, Aberdeen City and Shire should be an “exciting, modern and environmentally sustainable European city-region” where everyone should have the chance to “enjoy the highest quality of life”.

It also says the North-east should by then be recognised world-wide for its leadership in renewable energy, its technological and intellectual expertise, and its unique natural environment.

Planning officers have drawn up an ambitious programme to deliver a draft plan by January 2008. Public comments on the Issues Report will be fed into the draft. Planners will also write to all respondents to tell them the results of the public feedback and inform them when the follow-up consultations on the draft Structure Plan will start.

The finalised plan should be completed by June 2008 and will then go off to Scottish Ministers for approval within 40 weeks of its submission.

Every stage of the process will involve consultations with local people and organisations.

Responses to the Issues Report can be sent to Aberdeen City Council, Planning and Infrastructure, St Nicholas House, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1BW, tel (0124) 523325, or to Aberdeenshire Council, Planning Policy and Environment, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB, tel (01224) 664221.

Draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan maps out vision of high-quality growth across region

02/04/08

A new draft Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan will go out for public consultation this spring.

City and Shire planners are drawing up the draft document to ensure the region maintains and enhances its attractiveness and continues to develop sustainably over the next 20 years.

The 22-page draft plan – which will be discussed by City and Shire councilors before the launch of the public consultation period – aims to map out a framework for the delivery of the new homes, businesses, transport infrastructure and facilities which will ensure continued prosperity.

The document stresses that the North-east must aim high – and earn a reputation for top-quality design and construction in all new development, of which local people and the whole country can be proud.

The draft plan states: “Aberdeen City and Shire is currently an attractive place to live and work, with a high-quality environment, high average incomes and low unemployment.

“However, there are disparities in wealth and opportunity between some of the region’s communities, and future events – for example, changes in North Sea oil and gas production, the impact of climate change, and global resource depletion – will threaten the prosperity of all if no action is taken.

“By 2030, Aberdeen City and Shire will need to have adapted to a very different world. The challenges ahead need to be faced up to so as to maintain and enhance the attractiveness of the region as a place to live and do business.”

The new draft plan marks a radical departure from previous structure plan documents by focusing hard on development needs over the next 20 years.

It lays out objectives, targets, delivery mechanisms and monitoring arrangements to ensure the policies and proposals contained in the plan are achieved.

And it stresses throughout that development must be driven by the principles of sustainability to make sure that growth enhances the environment and is a credit to the region.

The plan aims to:

- deliver a robust framework for investment decisions to deliver economic growth and diversification;
- address the urgent challenges of sustainable development and climate change;
- ensure the region has enough people, homes and jobs to support the level of services needed to enhance quality of life;
- protect and enhance the area's natural and built environment;
- create sustainable mixed communities in growth corridors, regeneration areas and in existing shire settlements, employing the highest standards of design and construction;
- make the most efficient use of the transport network to ensure travel is minimised, and make walking, cycling and public transport attractive choices.

Spatial strategy

The document emphasises that all parts of the North-east will be involved in delivering the plan's vision but says different areas will play different roles.

The strategy has been developed to promote environmentally sustainable development in the locations which best cater for business needs – and where there is clear potential for public transport growth, and opportunities for significant public and private sector investment in schools, community facilities, roads and railways.

Three Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) have been pinpointed as the prime focus for 75-80% of development by 2030:

- **Aberdeen City** – earmarked for 50% of all new development over the plan period, with preference given to brownfield sites but where more than half will need to be accommodated on greenfield sites;
- **Huntly to Laurencekirk** – in line for significant development along the 66-mile road/rail corridor, where Crossrail proposals should deliver new stations, more frequent trains and increased rail capacity;
- **Aberdeen to Peterhead** – pinpointed as a prime area for economic growth and diversification, where initially modest levels of new home-building could be stepped up in the second half of the plan period as demand increases.

Further growth is proposed in Regeneration Priority Areas (RPAs) to ensure they realise their potential, with economic renewal targeted on: the coastal communities between Peterhead and Fraserburgh and beyond; from the Angus border to Inverbervie; and within Aberdeen City.

RPA priorities include:

- creating public, private and voluntary sector partnerships to drive redevelopment;
- regenerating brownfield sites with high-quality development which improves the environment;
- improving economic performance, infrastructure and transport connections;
- realising tourism potential.

Beyond the three SGAs and the RPAs, the draft structure plan envisages modest growth in existing settlements, with a focus on mixed housing, smaller homes for sale or rent, and high levels of affordable homes – respecting at all times the character of each area.

The finalised structure plan will not pinpoint specific sites for development. Land allocations and localised development policies will be detailed in Local Development Plans, which will be drafted from early 2009.

Economic growth

The draft structure plan says that, while oil and gas will continue to be important to the North-east economy, diversity will be essential to guarantee future prosperity.

New business ideas will be sought from the city's universities, a high-speed fibre-optic or equivalent telecommunications infrastructure will be developed, and retail provision will be enhanced.

A marketable supply of at least 60 hectares of employment land will be available at all times in Aberdeen, along with 60 hectares within the SGAs in Aberdeenshire (and further employment land in Aberdeenshire to meet local needs), with a proportion of sufficient quality to attract company headquarters.

Sustainable development and climate change

The structure plan's objective is to lead the way to a reduction in the consumption of resources, cuts in CO₂ emissions and adaptations to cope with climate change.

New developments will have to use resources more efficiently and reduce the region's global footprint – with the aim of all new buildings achieving zero net carbon dioxide emissions by 2016 and no new development on land at risk from flooding.

Sustainable energy sources must be tapped more effectively and the environmental performance of new buildings will have to demonstrate a step change from older structures.

New water efficient technologies will be employed to protect the River Dee – the region's main source of drinking water – from over-exploitation. And measures will have to be stepped up to reduce landfilling of waste.

Population growth

The draft structure plan maps out mechanisms to boost the North-east population from 443,000 to 480,000 by 2030 – because a falling and ageing population deters investment, impacts on service quality and delivery, and depresses the local economy.

The draft plan states: “A falling population is inconsistent with the achievement of our vision and aims. A stable population is the minimum requirement – but to fully realise the vision, population growth is required to enable the economy of the area to fulfil its potential.

“Increasing the population by almost 40,000 over 24 years will be a significant challenge for the North-east and it will only be achieved if an integrated approach is taken to delivering it.

“This will only be acceptable if the development delivered is of the highest quality, development that the whole community can be proud of.”

Achieving population growth will require an increase in housebuilding from recent 2,200-per-year average levels to 3,000-a-year over the plan period.

The draft structure plan calls for “rapid progress with the preparation of Local Development Plans in both City and Shire” and the “release of land as quickly as possible at the start of the structure plan period, consistent with appropriate levels of consultation and scrutiny”.

Housing allowances for Aberdeen City are proposed to be 11,900 units on brownfield sites up to 2030, 5,000 in regeneration areas and 19,100 on greenfield sites.

In the Shire, three options are presented which give different weightings of development to different areas. In each case, however, land for some 36,000 new homes will be required.

Environmental quality

The draft plan emphasises the vital need to secure development which enhances the environment.

The document states that the natural, built and historic environments of the North-east are among its key assets – and that causing damage or decline would undermine the high quality of life that the region offers its residents and businesses.

The draft plan states: “The natural and historic environment is a valuable and finite resource. It is important that development does not lead to the progressive decline of the North-east’s natural and historic assets. Habitats have become more fragmented and focus should be given to their enhancement and augmentation.”

Sustainable mixed communities

For too long, the plan says, development in the North-east has failed the tests of sustainability, diversity and community focus.

The document states: “This must not be allowed to continue. If we are to achieve our vision, we need to cultivate a reputation for quality and this can only be done by setting the highest standards for urban and rural design, the mix of accommodation provided, the efficiency with which land is used and the reuse of previously developed land.”

Future communities need to offer mixed house types, sizes, tenures and prices – on greenfield, brownfield and regeneration area sites, to begin to close the gap between prosperous and disadvantaged areas. They must also offer a range of services, facilities and shops to be sustainable and reduce the need to travel.

Implementation

An action programme will be developed to ensure the aims and visions are achieved.

This will involve mapping out timescales for major developments, masterplanning exercises, guidance for developers to help them deliver the programme, annual monitoring reports, and two-yearly reviews of progress.

The plan recognises that the capacity of roads, schools and sewers must increase to accommodate the proposed new development, and that investment is needed in community facilities.

The document points out that completing key developments already in the pipeline will be vital to delivering the structure plan vision, including:

- Aberdeen city centre redevelopment and Union Street pedestrianisation;
- the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route;
- rail improvements (increased frequency and new stations), and improvements at the Haudagain roundabout and the Bridge of Dee;
- the 3rd Don Crossing;
- a community stadium;
- continued joint work by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, the University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon’s University to contribute to the knowledge economy.

A provisional draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan is due to go in front of Aberdeenshire Council area committees through April, to Aberdeen City Council’s Policy and Strategy Committee on April 29, and to Aberdeenshire Council’s Infrastructure Services Committee on 8 May.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee (ASCCPC) members will consider the finalised draft on May 16 or 23.

If approved, the six-week period of public consultation will be launched before the end of May. Details of where to view the document and the ways in which people can respond during the consultation period will be published closer to the launch date.

It is expected that a Finalised Structure Plan will be submitted to Scottish Ministers by the end of 2008 for approval.

Views sought on Draft Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan - a vision for high-quality growth across region

26/06/08

Aberdeen City and Shire citizens are being urged to give their views on how the region should grow over the next two decades.

A new draft Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan was published for public consultation on Friday, June 27, to give local folk the chance to influence the finalised version.

The draft plan has been drawn up to ensure the region maintains and enhances its attractiveness and continues to develop sustainably over the next 20 years.

This marks an important step and follows wide consultation and engagement with communities and stakeholders over the past 18 months.

The 28-page draft plan maps out a framework for the delivery of the new homes, businesses, transport infrastructure and facilities, which will ensure continued prosperity.

The document stresses that the region must aim high – and earn a reputation for top-quality design and construction in all new development, of which local people and the whole country can be proud.

The draft plan states: “Aberdeen City and Shire is recognised as an attractive place to live and work, with a high-quality environment, high average incomes and low unemployment.

“However, there are significant differences in wealth and opportunity between some of the region’s communities, and future events – for example, changes in North Sea oil and gas production, the effects of climate change, and the reduction in worldwide resources – will threaten everyone’s wellbeing if we do not take any action.

“By 2030, 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 and do business.”

Aberdeen City Council planning convener Councillor Scott Cassie said: "This plan is very different from previous structure plans in both its form and content and marks a significant step towards achieving our exciting aspirations for the future. Delivering this level of change and the scale of growth required will be a challenge – but it's a challenge we are up for."

Aberdeenshire Council infrastructure services chair Councillor Peter Argyle said: "I welcome the publication of this draft plan and the opportunity it gives for the community and other stakeholders to have their say. I believe it's a balanced plan, which enables us to have a fresh look at how we can grow and diversify the economy in a sustainable way – in both urban and rural areas."

The new draft plan marks a radical departure from previous structure plan documents by focusing hard on development needs over the next 20 years.

It also has a 'Crystal Mark' from the Plain English Campaign – evidence of a determination to make the plan accessible to the public.

It lays out objectives, targets, delivery mechanisms and monitoring arrangements to ensure the policies and proposals contained in the plan are achieved.

And it stresses throughout that development must be driven by the principles of sustainability to make sure that growth enhances the environment and is a credit to the region.

The plan aims to:

- deliver a robust framework for investment decisions to deliver economic growth and diversification;
- address the urgent challenges of sustainable development and climate change;
- ensure the region has enough people, homes and jobs to support the level of services needed to enhance quality of life;
- protect and enhance the area's valued assets and resources, including our natural and built environment;
- create sustainable mixed communities in growth corridors, regeneration areas and in existing shire settlements, employing the highest standards of design and construction;
- make the most efficient use of the transport network to ensure travel is minimised, and make walking, cycling and public transport attractive choices.

Spatial strategy

The document emphasises that all parts of the region will be involved in delivering the plan's vision but says different areas will play different roles.

The strategy has been developed to promote environmentally sustainable development in the places which best cater for business needs – and where there

is clear potential for public transport growth, and opportunities for significant public and private sector investment in schools, community facilities, roads and railways.

Three Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) have been pinpointed as the prime focus for 75-80% of development by 2030:

- Aberdeen City – earmarked for 50% of all new development over the plan period, with preference given to brownfield sites but where more than half will need to be accommodated on greenfield sites;
- Huntly to Laurencekirk – in line for significant development at key points along the 66-mile road/rail corridor, where Crossrail proposals should deliver new stations, more frequent trains and increased rail capacity;
- Aberdeen to Peterhead – pinpointed as a prime area for economic growth and diversification, where initially modest levels of new home-building could be stepped up in the second half of the plan period as demand increases.

Further growth is proposed in Regeneration Priority Areas (RPAs) to ensure they realise their potential, with economic renewal targeted on: the coastal communities between Peterhead and Fraserburgh and beyond; from the Angus border to Inverbervie; and within Aberdeen City.

RPA priorities include:

- creating public, private and voluntary sector partnerships to drive redevelopment;
- regenerating brownfield sites with high-quality development which improves the environment;
- improving economic performance, infrastructure and transport connections;
- realising tourism potential.

Beyond the three SGAs and the RPAs, the draft structure plan envisages modest growth in existing settlements, with a focus on mixed housing, smaller homes for sale or rent, and high levels of affordable homes – respecting at all times the character of each area.

The finalised structure plan will not pinpoint specific sites for development. Land allocations and localised development policies will be detailed in Local Development Plans, which will be drafted from early 2009.

Economic growth

The draft structure plan says that, while oil and gas will continue to be important to the economy, diversity will be essential to guarantee future prosperity. New business ideas will be sought from the city's universities, a high-speed fibre-optic or equivalent telecommunications infrastructure will be developed, and retail provision will be enhanced.

A marketable supply of at least 60 hectares of employment land will be available at all times in Aberdeen, along with 60 hectares within the SGAs in Aberdeenshire

(and further employment land in Aberdeenshire to meet local needs), with a proportion of sufficient quality to attract company headquarters.

Sustainable development and climate change

The structure plan's objective is to lead the way to a reduction in the consumption of resources, cuts in CO2 emissions and adaptations to cope with climate change.

New developments will have to use resources more efficiently and reduce the region's global footprint – with the aim of all new buildings achieving zero net carbon dioxide emissions by 2016 and no new development on land at risk from flooding.

Sustainable energy sources must be tapped more effectively and the environmental performance of new buildings will have to demonstrate a step change from older structures.

New water-efficient technologies will be employed to protect the River Dee – the region's main source of drinking water – from over-exploitation. And measures will have to be stepped up to reduce landfilling of waste.

Population growth

The draft structure plan maps out mechanisms to boost the region's population from 440,000 to 480,000 by 2030 – because a falling and ageing population deters investment, impacts on service quality and delivery, and depresses the local economy.

The draft plan states: "A falling population will not help us achieve our vision and aims. We need at least a stable population but to fully make the vision a reality, we need the population to grow to allow the economy of the area to fulfil its potential.

"Increasing the population by almost 40,000 over 24 years will be a significant challenge and we will only achieve it if we work towards our aims and objectives with our partners.

"This will only be acceptable if the development delivered is of the highest quality."

Achieving population growth will require an increase in housebuilding from recent 2,200-per-year average levels to 3,000-a-year over the plan period.

The draft structure plan calls for "quick progress in preparing local development plans in both City and Shire" and "making land available for housing as quickly as possible at the start of the structure plan period, following appropriate levels of consultation".

Housing allowances for Aberdeen City are proposed to be 10,000 units on brownfield sites up to 2030, 5,000 in regeneration areas and 21,000 on greenfield sites.

In the Shire, three options are presented which give different weightings of development to different areas. In each case, however, land for some 36,000 new homes will be required.

Environmental quality

The draft plan emphasises the vital need to secure development which enhances the environment.

The document states that the region's natural, built and historic environments are among its key assets – and that causing damage or decline would undermine the high quality of life that the region offers its residents and businesses.

The draft plan states: “The built, natural and cultural environment is a valuable resource, but one which needs to be protected.”

Sustainable mixed communities

Too often in the past, the plan says, new development in this region has failed the tests of sustainability, diversity and community focus.

The document states: “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 housing, using land more efficiently and re-using previously developed land.”

Future communities need to offer mixed house types, sizes, tenures and prices – on greenfield, brownfield and regeneration area sites, to begin to close the gap between prosperous and disadvantaged areas. They must also offer a range of services, facilities and shops to be sustainable and reduce the need to travel.

Implementation

An action programme will be developed to ensure the aims and visions are achieved.

This will involve mapping out timescales for major developments, carrying out masterplanning exercises, giving guidance for developers to help them deliver the programme, and producing monitoring reports and two-yearly reviews of progress.

The plan recognises that the capacity of roads, schools and sewers must increase to accommodate the proposed new development, and that investment is needed in community facilities.

The document points out that completing key developments already in the pipeline will be vital to delivering the structure plan vision, including:

- Aberdeen city centre redevelopment and Union Street pedestrianisation;
- the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route;
- rail improvements (increased frequency and new stations), and improvements at the Haudagain roundabout and the Bridge of Dee;
- the 3rd Don Crossing;
- a community stadium;
- continued joint work by Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, the University of Aberdeen and Robert Gordon's University to contribute to the knowledge economy.

Consultation arrangements

The draft plan is being sent out to over 1,000 people and organisations and is available at all public libraries in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. The plan and associated consultation documents are also available on a new website at www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk.

The website has been launched to coincide with the legal designation order for the new Strategic Development Planning Authority which came into force earlier this week.

Around 15 public meetings will take place from 18 August to 5 September throughout the area, with details of locations and dates to be publicised soon.

Responses to the consultation should be made by 12 September 2008 to the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Team, Archibald Simpson House, 27 – 29 King Street, Aberdeen, AB24 5AA or via the website.

Following consultation, it is expected that a Finalised Structure Plan will be submitted to Scottish Ministers by the end of 2008 or early 2009 when there will be a further period for formal objections. The plan will eventually be approved by Scottish Ministers.

Last chance to air your views on draft structure plan

08/09/08

The deadline for submitting a response to the draft structure plan published by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council is Friday [12 September].

More than 300 people have already attended public meetings throughout Aberdeen City and Shire. These events were designed to assist individuals, community groups and other organisations in understanding and responding to the draft plan.

A number of responses have already been received, but individuals, community groups, interest groups, businesses, landowners and developers – everyone with an interest in the future of the area – are encouraged to get involved.

The draft plan has an aspirational vision and a series of six objectives and associated targets covering issues of:

- Economic growth;
- Sustainable development and climate change;
- Population growth;
- Quality of the environment
- Sustainable mixed communities
- Accessibility

It includes a strategy for the development of the North-east until 2030, with 72,000 new homes with associated infrastructure and employment land. The draft plan targets a significant increase in the quality of new development across the area and encourages renewable energy, population growth and environmental enhancement.

The deadline for responses to the draft plan (and associated documents) is Friday 12 September. A large response would be welcomed given the importance of the new plan to the area.

The plan can be viewed at all public libraries in the area and is available online at www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk Copies can also be requested by calling 01224 628210.

The press release to be published on 26 February 2009 will be added here prior to publication.

Appendix 5: Responses to the Issues Report

**Appendix 5 has been
bound separately due to
its length**

Note: This was previously agreed by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee on 25 June 2007 and, at 124 pages, has not been included in the papers for the meeting of the Authority for environmental reasons. However, it is available on the SDPA website under Current Work/Emerging Structure Plan.

Appendix 6: Respondees to the Provisional Strategy

David Dix – Bennachie Community Council	Letter - 1 November 2007
Karen Allan – Stonehaven Allotment Association	E-mail - 5 November 2007
Anonymous (“AG”)	Letter - 7 November 2007
Allen Smith – Benholm and Johnshaven Community Council	E-mails 19 November 2007 and 1 December 2007
S Jenkins – Bellhelvie Community Council	E-mail - 26 November 2007
David Morrish – Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council	E-mail - 28 November 2007
Gillian Lamont – Fraserburgh Futures Partnership	E-mail - 29 November 2007
Bernard Murray – Rathen, Memsie and District Community Council	E-mail - 30 November 2007
Halliday Fraser Munro – Blackburn Consortium	Letter - 30 November 2007
Halliday Fraser Munro – John McIntosh	Letter - 30 November 2007
Halliday Fraser Munro – Heron Properties Ltd.	Letter - 30 November 2007
Halliday Fraser Munro – Chap Group	Letter - 30 November 2007
Halliday Fraser Munro – Muir Group	Letter - 30 November 2007
Stuart Milne Group	Letter - 30 November 2007
PPCA Ltd	Letter - 20 November 2007

Appendix 7: Responses to the Draft Structure Plan

**Appendix 7 has been
bound separately due to
its length**

The content of this Appendix is contained in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report to the Authority and will be included here prior to publication.

Appendix 8: SEA Timetable

	SEA Activity	When	Notes
1	Screening	June 2006	No screening report was submitted to the SEA Gateway as SEA was deemed necessary due to the nature and scale of the plan.
2	Scoping	March 2007	Scoping report submitted to the SEA Gateway for comment by the three consultation authorities on 17 April 2007. Comments were received on 21 May 2007. The consultation authorities approved the methodology proposed with minor changes.
3	Relationship with other plans, programmes & environmental objectives	August 2007	Updated following comments from the consultation authorities on 21 May 2007.
4	Environmental baseline	February 2007	Updated following comments from the consultation authorities on 21 May 2007.
5	Environmental issues		Updated following comments from the consultation authorities on 21 May 2007.
6	Evolution of the likely future environment without the plan	July 2007	
7	Alternative/options	February 2007 – July 2007	Alternatives were known in February, and were assessed against the SEA objectives, as part of the plan's technical appraisal of the eight options.
8	Assessment method established	June 2007	Following the comments received from the consultation authorities on 21 May 2007, the assessment methodology was formally approved by ACSSPC on 25 June 2007
9	Assessment of the vision, scale, phasing, and provisional strategy.	September 2007	Agreed by members of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee (ACSSPC) on 28 September 2007.

10	Selection of plan alternatives	September 2007	Alternatives were formally identified following the agreement of the spatial option by members of ACSSPC on 28 September 2007
11	Likely problems after implementation & mitigation identified	February 2007	Method/framework was agreed by the consultation authorities with minor amendments on 21 May 2007
12	Monitoring method established	February 2007	Agreed by the consultation authorities on 21 May 2007
13	Consultation timescale with consultation authorities	17 April 2007	Comments were received from the consultation authorities on 21 May 2007. Few alterations or amendments were proposed. Members of the ACSSPC approved the changes to the scoping report on 25 June 2007
14	Consultation timescale with the public	16 August 2007	The period of six weeks was agreed by the Scottish Ministers 16 August 2007
15	Development of objectives	January 2008	Were drafted in November 2007 and agreed by ACSSPC
16	Notification & publicity	March - May 2008	
17	Consult on Environmental Report	7 July 2008 – 12 September 2008	The consultation period lasted for almost 10 weeks and eight responses were received.
18	Collate views on the Environmental Report	September – January 2008	Views analysed, changes proposed and Environmental Report updated in light of changes to the Draft Structure Plan.
19	Report comments received on the Environmental Report, recommending appropriate changes	February 2009	Responses were reported to the Strategic Development Planning Authority on 13 February 2009, along with the changes proposed to the Environmental Report (published as an Addendum).
20	Submission to Scottish Ministers	27 February 2009	Finalised Structure Plan placed on deposit for objection, along with the Environmental Report and Addendum.

Appendix 9: Schedule of Changes to Draft Plan

Appendix 10: Tracked Changes Version of Finalised Plan