

**Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority**

# **Development Plan Scheme 2010/11**

**March 2010**

## Purpose

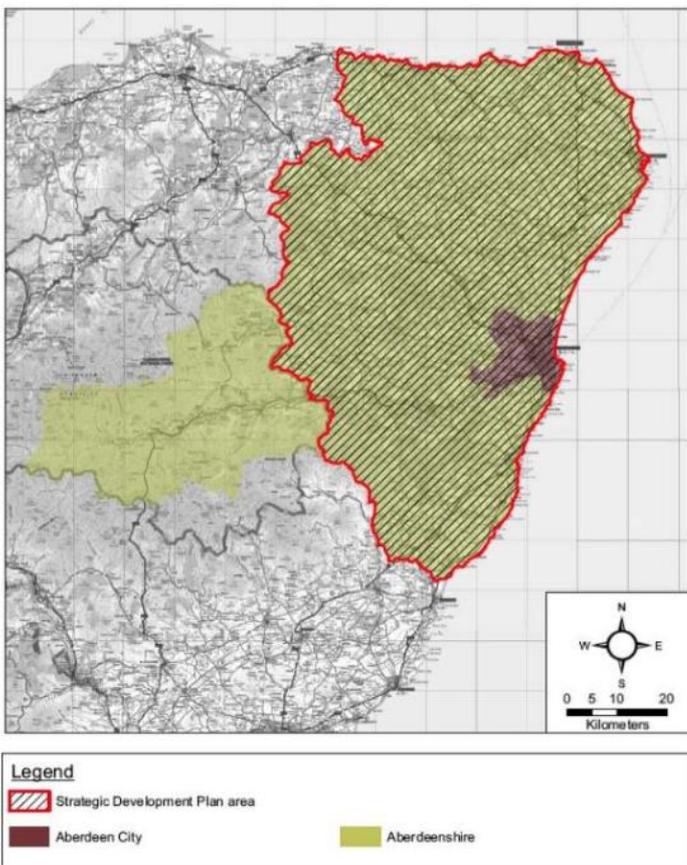
This development plan scheme sets out the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority's programme for preparing and reviewing its strategic development plan. It is designed to promote transparency, accountability and engagement in the preparation of the plan.

## Background

As part of the Scottish Government's reform of the planning system, the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority was designated on 25 June 2008. It is one of four in Scotland covering the largest city-regions. Each strategic development planning authority is responsible for the preparation and review of a strategic development plan in their area.

The strategic development plan area is the area for which we will prepare our plan (see figure 1). This is made up of the administrative areas of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils but excludes that part of Aberdeenshire within the Cairngorms National Park.

**Figure 1: Strategic Development Plan Area**



## The Development Plan System in Scotland

The development plan system in Scotland consists of three core statutory documents:

(i) **The National Planning Framework for Scotland.** This is produced by the Scottish Government and sets out, in broad terms, the Governments' strategy for Scotland's spatial development, including national developments, and the priorities for that development;

(ii) **Strategic Development Plans.** These will be prepared by the new strategic development planning authorities, setting out a long-term (20 years or more) development strategy indicating, in broad terms, where future development will be located and what is needed to deliver it. These plans will be approved by Scottish Ministers;

(iii) **Local Development Plans.** These will be prepared by local authorities, setting out more detailed policies and proposals to guide development. The plans, which are adopted by the local authority, must be consistent with the approved strategic development plan.

Supplementary guidance on a specific planning topic may be prepared and form part of the development plan.

## Current Development Plan

As at 1 April 2010, the development plan for the area is made up of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009, the Aberdeenshire Local Plan (2006) and the Aberdeen City Local Plan (2008).

Work relating to the monitoring and implementation of the structure plan is ongoing, including the preparation of non-statutory supplementary planning guidance on waste.

Both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils are in the process of preparing local development plans which will be consistent with the structure plan.

## What is a Development Plan Scheme?

The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 requires development plan schemes to be prepared by all strategic development planning authorities. The scheme sets out the authority's programme for preparing and reviewing its strategic development plan and what is likely to be involved at each stage. It also includes a participation statement, stating when, how and with whom consultation on the plan will take place, as well as the authority's proposals for public involvement in the plan preparation process. As this is the first time through the new strategic development plan process, it should be noted that some of the timings for the stages in the timetable may require to be revised as the preparation process unfolds. However, as the scheme must be regularly monitored and reviewed (at least annually) any potential timing revisions can be quickly addressed.

This is the second statutory development plan scheme prepared by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority. This development plan scheme only covers the strategic part of the development plan. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils have prepared their own development plan schemes to cover the preparation of local development plans and more information on these can be obtained directly from both councils.

## The Strategic Development Plan

The strategic development plan will be a concise, visionary document which will contain a clear spatial strategy for development over a period of at least 20 years. It will target key spatial issues and be focused on delivery and outcomes, informing decisions about strategic infrastructure investment. We will build upon and learn the lessons from the structure plan which sought to embrace this change.

When approved by Scottish Ministers, the strategic development plan will replace the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 makes strategic environmental assessment a legal requirement for the strategic development plan. Its purpose is to ensure that environmental issues are considered by decision-makers alongside economic and social issues. It will be carried out in a proportionate manner in line with the high level detail that is contained within strategic development plans.

## Project Plan

Scottish Government policy is that the development plan scheme should focus on actions that have to be taken to ensure that an up to date development plan is in place as swiftly as possible.

It is important that work on the strategic development plan is co-ordinated with the work of the two councils on their local development plans and this timetable will allow both councils to move forward with the preparation of local development plans to implement the structure plan. Co-ordination with other regional plans and strategies, such as the regional transport strategy and the economic action programme, will take place during the preparation of the strategic development plan.

Although not a legal requirement, the 2006 Act suggests that, as the structure plan was approved in 2009, a proposed strategic development plan should be submitted to Scottish Ministers by the end of 2013. However, the proposal outlined below would see a strategic development plan submitted to Scottish Ministers by the end of 2012, and approved by them by the end of 2013.

There are a number of key stages in the plan preparation process and documents we need to publish. These are highlighted in figure 2 below, along with an indicative timescale.

**Figure 2: Indicative Project Plan**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>April 2010</b>	<b>Publication of the Development Plan Scheme 2010/11</b>	<b>This will be informed by a detailed project plan for the strategic development plan.</b>
↓	Preparation of 'Main Issues Report' taking into account the Research/ Studies and the Monitoring Statement	<p>This stage will include the preparation of supporting documentation in addition to undertaking research/studies to inform the Main Issues Report. This will include the preparation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a Housing Need and Demand Assessment</li> <li>• a Monitoring Statement</li> <li>• a retail study</li> <li>• a transport assessment</li> <li>• a climate change study</li> <li>• a draft Action Programme</li> <li>• an Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment</li> <li>• a Habitats Regulations Assessment</li> <li>• a Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report and Interim Environmental Report</li> </ul> <p>Engagement will take place with stakeholders (including the Key Agencies) on the form of the plan, the issues that need to be debated and the options available. This engagement will inform the Main Issues Report.</p>
<b>May 2011</b>	<b>Publication of the 'Main Issues Report' and associated documents.</b>	<b>This is followed by a 12-week period for consultation and subsequent analysis of the responses.</b>
↓	Preparation of the 'Proposed Plan'.	This will include updating the various assessments and the preparation of a Proposed Action Programme.
<b>April 2012</b>	<b>Publication of the Proposed Strategic Development Plan.</b>	<b>This includes the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment and Proposed Action Programme.</b>
↓	Formal representation period and analysis of responses.	The representation period is likely to cover a period of 12 weeks.
<b>December 2012</b>	<b>Submission of Proposed Strategic Development Plan to Scottish Ministers</b>	<b>This includes submission of the Proposed Action Programme, Report of Conformity with the Participation Statement, and a note of the issues raised in representations and how they have been taken into account.</b>
↓	Examination of Proposed Strategic Development Plan.	The length of the examination will depend on the scale and nature of objections to the plan.
<b>December 2013</b>	<b>Strategic development plan approved by Scottish Ministers</b>	<b>The action programme will be published within three months of the approval of the plan.</b>

# Participation Statement

Consultation and engagement will take place throughout the preparation of the strategic development plan and will be integral to the process. We are determined to prepare the strategic development plan in an open and inclusive way.

Not all parties will wish or be able to engage with the plan preparation process in the same way.

Participation methods need to be tailored to the needs of each group to enable them to

participate in an appropriate way. The five main identified groups are:

- Councillors;
- Key Agencies (Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Nestrans and NHS Grampian);
- Public and private sector stakeholders;
- Community Councils; and
- General public.

Figure 3, below, sets out an indication of the time periods over which different elements of engagement will take place.

**Figure 3: Indicative Participation Statement**

Period	Aspect of plan	Who?	How?
March 2010 & annually thereafter	Development Plan Scheme		We will publish it on the strategic development planning authority website, send an e-alert to those registered on our database and send copies to the Scottish Ministers, Key Agencies, Community Councils and Councillors. Copies will be made available in all libraries and on request from the address below.
April 2010 - May 2011	Preparation of the 'Main Issues Report'	Councillors, Community Councils, Key Agencies, Stakeholders and the general public.	<p><b>Councillors and Community Councils</b> - We will report to both councils and brief Community Councils during 2010 on the process and opportunities to get involved in the preparation of the strategic development plan</p> <p><b>Key Agencies</b> - We will seek the active participation of the Key Agencies, as well as Transport Scotland and Historic Scotland. Involvement will take the form of joint as well as individual meetings and dialogue, focused on the preparation of the Monitoring Statement, issues identification and options development.</p> <p><b>Stakeholders</b> – We will involve relevant stakeholders (including Key Agencies) in the preparation of the various studies required to inform the Main Issues Report.</p> <p><b>All</b> - We will organise a public awareness campaign through the provision of information leaflets and provide an opportunity to input to the issues identification and options development work. We will send everyone on our contacts database a copy of the Development Plan Scheme 2011/12, alerting them to the start of</p>

			consultation on the Main Issues Report at least one month before it starts. We will keep our website up-to-date.
May 2010 – August 2011	Consultation on the 'Main Issues Report'	All identified groups and individuals	Copies will be sent to identified groups and individuals, while press notices and press releases will be used to engage the wider public. Sessions will be organised throughout Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire to enable people to engage with the consultation. We will facilitate the submission of comments by post, fax, email or online.
August 2011 – April 2012	Preparation of the 'Proposed Plan'	Councillors, Community Councils, Key Agencies and Stakeholders.	We will engage as necessary on particular issues with identified groups to move from the 'Main Issues Report' to the 'Proposed Plan'.
April 2012 – July 2012	Consultation on 'Proposed Plan'	All identified groups and individuals	Copies will be sent to identified groups and individuals while press notices and press releases will be used to engage the wider public. We will facilitate the submission of comments by post, fax, email or online.
December 2012	Submit to Scottish Ministers	All identified groups and individuals	We will advertise in the press, notify those registered on our database and published all information on our website.

## Keeping you informed

We are determined to make our work as accessible as possible and keep all with an interest up-to-date with progress and opportunities to get involved.

We have created a new contacts database which will be kept up-to-date as far as Key Agencies, Councillors and Community Councils are concerned, although it will be the responsibility of everyone else to inform us of any change of address.

We will notify all interested parties and stakeholders at important stages of the process. However, email offers the opportunity to provide more regular updates and these will be sent to all those who register their email address with us. The website allows interested parties to register their contact details.

All press releases will be sent to all local newspapers (as well as certain national media organisations) and placed on our website.

## How we will work

### Transparency and Accountability

We aim to prepare the strategic development plan in a transparent and accountable way. We will make all relevant information available from our website and progress will be monitored by the strategic development planning authority. We will produce a report for submission with the proposed plan which outlines the extent to which we have met the commitments given in the scheme.

### Plain English

We will make continuous efforts to make everything we produce as accessible as possible. Not everything will be able to achieve the 'crystal mark' standard but we will monitor our output to ensure that information is effectively communicated at a level appropriate to the intended audience.

### Equalities and Human Rights

The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 places a duty on us to perform our functions in a manner which encourages equal opportunities. As part of our commitment to this we will carry out an 'Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment' of the 'Main Issues Report' and 'Proposed Plan'. Considerable effort will be

made to ensure that event venues are accessible to all and that documents are available in alternative formats or languages if required. In addition, audio versions of the 'Main Issues Report' and the 'Proposed Plan' will be made available.

### Environmental Responsibility

The 2006 Act also places a duty on us to perform our functions with the objective of contributing to sustainable development. Part of this will include taking account of the environmental, social and economic impact of purchasing decisions. Staff will use public transport where possible and we will seek to minimise the environmental impact of our operations.

## Monitoring and Review

This development plan scheme will be monitored at regular intervals throughout the year by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority and will be updated at least annually. The third development plan scheme will be published by April 2011.

## Getting Involved

If you would like to be involved in the strategic development plan process (or other work of the strategic development planning authority) you can register your details on our website or contact us by:

**Telephone:** 01224 628210

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

### Writing to us at:

Strategic Development Plan Team  
Archibald Simpson House  
27-29 King Street  
Aberdeen City  
AB24 5AA

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