

Directorate for the Built Environment

National Spatial Planning, Aquaculture and North Division

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David Jennings
Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority
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Our ref: B3114821
14 August 2009

Dear Mr Jennings

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
FINALISED ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE STRUCTURE PLAN**

Scottish Ministers have decided to approve the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan as submitted on 27 February 2009. In reaching their decision they have considered all representations and objections made to them in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 1983. In addition to the matters taken into account in the Plan as submitted, the Scottish Ministers have considered such other matters as they thought relevant.

Scottish Ministers are content that the Plan as submitted conforms with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 1983 and has been informed by a Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment. The Plan is a positive response to the Scottish Ministers' desire for succinct development plans and the Plan's aspirations and vision for the future of the area are endorsed.

Scottish Ministers, in approving the Plan, recognise the pressing need to identify land for housing, business and industry in the North East. Approval of the Plan should ensure that a shortage of land does not constrain development opportunities while allowing for additional supply to be brought forward where demand exists. The Plan sets out objectives, targets, delivery mechanisms and monitoring arrangements to ensure the policies, proposals and the delivery actions identified in the Plan are achieved. Scottish Ministers consider that the Plan provides the necessary certainty in the short term and sufficient flexibility to allow adjustments over time in response to changing circumstances. The approval of the Plan will enable quick progress to be made in bringing forward Local Development Plans (LDPs) in both City and Shire

and, where appropriate Supplementary Guidance, which will use the spatial strategy to set detailed policies and identify land for development.

Scottish Ministers have taken account of all representations in support of the Plan as well as those which express reservations or objection. The key issues raised in representation include opposition to the proposal for a third crossing over the River Don and criticisms that the Plan is short on substantiation on housing land allocations, transport infrastructure and waste management.

While some consider that the level of housing land supply within the Plan is inadequate, others believe it is excessive. Aberdeen City and Shire have commenced the preparation of a Housing Needs and Demand Assessment which fits within a wider context of evidence on housing need and demand in the area. This will further inform both Local Housing Strategies and Local Development Plans. The Plan complies with Scottish Ministers' aspirations to increase the supply of new homes in Scotland.

Concerns have been raised relating to transport infrastructure to support the implementation of land allocations, particularly those associated with the longer term phase of the Plan. Scottish Ministers are satisfied that the Plan provides the strategic framework for LDPs to allocate and protect land for the development of transport proposals. Further transport appraisal through the preparation of the LDPs will identify transport interventions required to support the delivery of the Plan.

On waste management, Scottish Ministers are satisfied that the Plan and the Supplementary Guidance on waste management to which the Plan refers, together with the forthcoming LDPs for the City and the Shire and the first SDP, will provide for all forms of waste management infrastructure, covering all forms of controlled waste.

In respect of the provisions in the Plan for a third Don Crossing, the proposal is about re-affirming the principle of such a crossing which is included in both the regional and local transport strategies rather than the siting, design or environmental impact which are the primary focus of concern within the representations received. Scottish Ministers consider that it is appropriate for the Plan to include the proposal as part of the long term settlement strategy and that it is for Aberdeen City Council to give detailed consideration for such a crossing in their LDP in consultation with communities and other interests.

In approving the Plan, Scottish Ministers acknowledge that the Plan establishes the targets required to meet each of the identified objectives and requires the preparation of an Action Programme to focus attention on delivering new housing, employment and commercial uses and providing the necessary infrastructure. The Plan indicates that it is the intention of both authorities to act in a number of ways to meet the Plan's targets including making quick progress in preparing Local Development Plans, informed by the completion of a housing needs and demand assessment, transport appraisals, and supplementary guidance on waste management. Scottish Ministers expect both authorities to attach priority to this work. Scottish Ministers now look to Aberdeen City and Shire Councils, working

closely with the public, private and community sectors, to ensure that the Plan's targets and associated work streams are delivered.

The decision to approve the Plan is final, subject to the right, conferred by Section 238 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, of any person aggrieved by the Scottish Ministers' decision to apply to the Court of Session within 6 weeks from the date of publication of the first notice of the approval of the Plan, whereby the Court may quash the decision if satisfied that it is not within the powers of the Act or that the applicant's interests have been substantially prejudiced by a failure to comply with any requirement of the Act.

Scottish Ministers' approval of the Plan does not convey approval of any matter therein for any other statutory purpose. In particular it does not commit Scottish Ministers, or any other Government department, to the amount or timing of any capital expenditure or to payment of grant on any particular project. Approval does not extend to other documents submitted with the Plan.

The Plan shall become operative on 17 August 2009.

A copy of this letter has been sent to all those who made representations to Scottish Ministers on the submitted Plan. A copy of this letter has also been sent to the Director of Planning and Environmental Services in Aberdeenshire Council and to the Head of Planning and Infrastructure in Aberdeen City. Information about this decision has also been made available on the Scottish Government's website at www.scotland.gov.uk/planning.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. M. Dowell', with a horizontal line underneath.

Steve Dowell
Principal Planner

CC. Dr. Christine Gore, Director of Planning and Environmental Services, Aberdeenshire Council
Dr. Margaret Bochel, Head of Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council