

**ABERDEEN  
CITY AND  
SHIRE**

*a brighter  
outlook*



Structure Plan:  
**Issues report**



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

Area covered by the  
Aberdeen City and Shire  
Structure Plan

Cairngorms National Park  
within Aberdeenshire



The following structure plan documents have been published to date:

- IA Development plan scheme
- IB Getting involved leaflet
- IC [Issues report](#)
- ID Report of survey



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# Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan Issues report

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## **A structure plan for Aberdeen City and Shire**

We (Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council) are preparing a new structure plan for the area. The structure plan will set a long-term vision for how we use land in the future. The plan will cover the whole of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire except the area within the Cairngorms National Park. The plan will replace our existing structure plan, North East Scotland Together (NEST). It will influence where and how development (for example, new housing, shops and offices) takes place over the next 25 years.

We have published this issues report along with the following documents to start developing the structure plan and encourage people to discuss the issues the plan could cover.

**Notice of intent and press advert** - the first formal step in preparing the new plan.

**Development plan scheme** – this sets out the programme for preparing the new structure plan. It also shows how and when we will consult people about the plan.

**Getting involved in the new structure plan for Aberdeen City and Shire** – an easy-to-read leaflet which explains what the planning system does, what structure plans are and how to get involved.

**Report of survey** – facts about Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire which will influence the plan.

You can find all of these documents, including this issues report, on the structure plan website ([www.acssp.net](http://www.acssp.net)) or get them from either of the two councils (our contact details are at the end of this report).



## **What is an issues report?**

An issues report is designed to help identify the issues a plan should cover and how the plan should deal with them. We have set out a draft vision, 13 issues and a section on where development should take place. The issues report is part of the early consultation on the next structure plan and we would welcome your comments.

You can find more information on structure plans in the leaflet on getting involved. The leaflet shows how this consultation fits into the wider process of preparing a new structure plan.

Although we are interested to hear from you on any topic raised in this issues report, we are particularly interested in your responses to the questions at the start of each section. There are limits to what the structure plan can do, so we will only be able to take relevant responses into account.

# Question 1

Do you support our draft vision? Does it strike the right balance between change and protection and between economic growth, the environment and having a society that includes everybody? Can you suggest any improvements?

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## What should the plan's vision be?

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, not everybody has these environmental and economic advantages. Also, these advantages may be under threat in the years to come (for example, because of long-term falling production from oil and gas fields in the North Sea, and wider environmental issues throughout the world).

The challenges ahead mean that we cannot continue to work in the same way and we need a clear new vision to guide us into the future. This vision will allow us to be a more economically competitive society that includes everybody and reduces the effect we have on the environment as much as possible.



## Here is our draft vision.

“By 2030, Aberdeen City and Shire will be an exciting, modern and environmentally sustainable European city region. Our communities will include everybody and enjoy the highest quality of life. We will be recognised across the world for our leadership in renewable energy, our technological and intellectual excellence, and the unique qualities of our environment.

To help achieve the vision, this plan will encourage new development to use land in a way that has less and less of an effect on the wider environment. It will help all the industries that support the vision to be successful. It will allow the area to have enough people, homes and jobs to support the level of services and facilities the community wants, and will provide a range of opportunities in lifestyle.

In achieving our vision, we will:

- manage our natural, built and community resources responsibly;
- consider the needs of all our different communities fairly, now and in the future; and
- be confident and courageous when making the hard choices needed to allow change to happen.”

# Question 2

ISSUES 4  
REPORT 5

Are any of the 13 issues (a to m) particularly important? Are any unimportant? Have any key issues been missed? Do you have any views as to how we should tackle these issues, either on our own or with other organisations?

## What issues should the plan address?

Working with communities and others with an interest in the plan, we have identified 13 issues that the structure plan may be able to tackle. We are keen to hear your views on these and any other important issues to do with land use that you think should be included. We have not given priority to any of the issues.

### a Population

Maintain a population large enough to improve services, promote the wider interests of the community and improve quality of life.

Services and facilities such as schools, shops, health care, sports and cultural facilities rely on people within a particular area to use them. The plan could aim to keep the population the same size and in the same areas, or try to encourage more people to live in particular areas (or the area as a whole) to help services improve.



### b Changes in the population

Changes in the population include more elderly people, fewer children and fewer adults of working age (between 16 and 65 years old) in the area. There are also workers from other countries (particularly Eastern Europe) moving to the area.

We need to take action in response to these challenges.

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## c Regeneration

Give priority to improving the areas we live in and reducing inequality.

Although we live in a wealthy area, not everyone's experience is the same. There are some parts of the area which are very disadvantaged and these affect individual people, communities and the whole region. If we are to continue to be successful, all parts of the community need to benefit from (and make a positive contribution to) that success.

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## d Balancing needs

Balance development in the city with developments in towns and villages.

Although the structure plan will focus on the big issues, we need to recognise local needs and hopes. In the same way, the plan is likely to need to balance the needs of Aberdeen with the needs in towns and villages.

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## e Green belt

Make sure the green belt meets our needs.

Although the green belt is important (for example, to protect the landscape surrounding the city), we also need to make sure it doesn't stop appropriate development taking place. As a result, we may need to reassess the role of the green belt, and the areas it covers, to make sure we allow developments in the most appropriate places.

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## f Housing

Make sure the number and type of homes built meets the needs and hopes of the population.

The number, type, size and affordability of new homes has major effects on existing and new communities. We need to promote a range of new housing in communities which include everybody.



## g Design

Improve the layout and design of all new developments to create high-quality environments which make a positive contribution to the area and have the smallest possible negative effects on the environment.

Recent developments are often criticised as being bland and having a negative effect on the quality of the area. However, new developments could make a positive contribution to the quality of the area, maintain local character and benefit the environment.

## h Shopping

Maintain the existing role of shopping areas and strengthen their position, particularly the national importance of Aberdeen city centre.

The quality of shopping has an effect on people's quality of life and influences people's attitudes towards living in an area. Maintaining the role and strengthening existing shopping areas will help maintain and improve the attractiveness of shopping in the centre of Aberdeen as well as towns and villages across Aberdeenshire.



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## **i Economic potential**

**Help the area be as economically successful as possible and deal with economic uncertainty.**

Although we expect employment relating to oil to fall during the period covered by the next structure plan, the economic development agencies are working hard to make sure there is a range of other jobs available. It will be important to allow new industries to develop. This may mean we set aside more land for business development and put in place a system to make sure the land is not used for anything else.

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## **j Transport**

**Reduce the need to travel and encourage people to walk, cycle, use buses and trains.**

Transport has a major effect on the economy, the environment and society (for example, delays caused by congestion, pollution caused by vehicle emissions and accidents). The planning system could make it easier for people to make choices which reduce these costs to society and have positive benefits.

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## **k Infrastructure**

**Make sure existing networks of services and facilities can support new development or provide new services to meet demand.**

Communities need to be well-served by transport, water and sewerage networks, community facilities, open space and so on. Overloading these (for example, roads, sewers or schools) has consequences (for example, busy traffic, pollution or social problems). The structure plan can make sure developments are built in areas where there are enough services available or make sure new or better facilities are provided.

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## I Climate change

Tackle the causes and effects of climate change, including carbon use, rising sea levels and more flooding.

Transport and buildings (building, using and demolishing them) make a major contribution to climate change. The structure plan could help reduce this contribution by reducing the need to travel, protecting resources and using renewable energy (such as wind and solar power). We are likely to notice climate change during the time this plan covers. The plan may have a role in protecting areas which may be vulnerable to the effects of climate change (for example, future flooding).



## m Heritage

Protect and manage the area's built, cultural and natural heritage.

The area's built, cultural and natural heritage has a major effect on people's quality of life. Managing these resources in the long-term, including making them available to more people, is important to the area's future.



# Question 3

Do you have any general views on where new developments should take place, or where it should not take place, and why?

## Where should new developments take place?

The most important part of the next structure plan is likely to be identifying the most appropriate locations for all types of new development (the spatial strategy). The spatial strategy will set out the type and amount of development needed in different parts of the area. In the spatial strategy, we will tackle many of the issues identified above and allow communities and property developers to be more certain about where development is likely to take place.

The spatial strategy will aim to answer questions such as the role the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route should have in the way we develop the area in future and how developments may affect our ports and airport. It will also provide the framework within which we can consider large or high-profile planning applications, such as where to build waste-management facilities (for example, recycling centres, landfill sites and creating energy from burning waste) or major sports venues.

We need to discuss a wide range of things relating to the spatial strategy, including how much development should take place, where it should go and when it should be done. Over the next few months, we will consult a wide range of community and business groups to get their views on what strategy we should base the draft structure plan on.



## How can I respond to this consultation or get more information?

Please give your comments on this issues report by 6 April 2007. You can send them to either of the following addresses. We will use these responses when preparing the draft structure plan, which we hope to publish in early 2008. We will write to you to tell you the results of this consultation and let you know when we start consulting people on the draft plan.



If you would like more information on how we will prepare the new structure plan, you can get this from the following addresses, the structure plan website and all public libraries.

Structure plan website: [www.acssp.net](http://www.acssp.net)

E-mail: [team@acssp.net](mailto:team@acssp.net)



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If you need help reading this document (for example if you need it in a different format or in another language), please phone us on 01224 523542.

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如果需要語言/傳譯及其他形式的傳訊支援服務，  
請聯絡:01224 523 542。

Если требуется помощь при выборе  
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