

**Appendix 4: Revised Provisional Draft Structure Plan**

**Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee**

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

**Structure plan**

**2007 – 2030**

**Revised provisional draft structure plan – May 2008**

# Introduction

Aberdeen City and Shire is currently an attractive place to live and work, with a high-quality environment, above-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 prosperity 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.

The purpose of this structure plan is to set a clear direction for the future development of the North East which the public and private sectors can work towards to deliver our vision.

This plan is significantly different to previous structure plans in both its form and content. It aims to be more focused and concerned with taking action. Its content is influenced by the need for change, and it more clearly explains how we will deliver those changes.

This structure plan has been prepared under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 and the Town and Country Planning (Structure and Local Plans) (Scotland) Regulations 1983.

## Layout and content of the plan

This plan focuses on what we want to change. It does not aim to cover all planning issues but only those which can best be dealt with by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils working together.

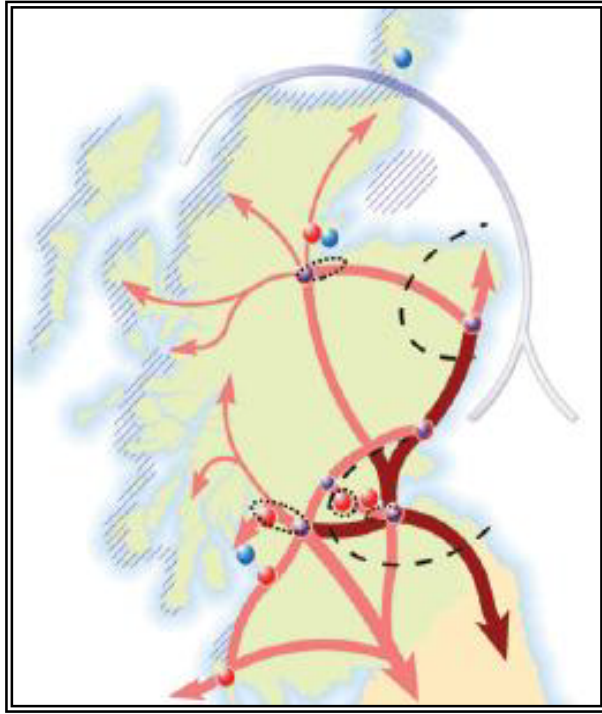
A central part of this plan is our vision, aims and spatial strategy. These are supported by a series of objectives which each have their own targets, required actions and monitoring arrangements. These are important to how we put the plan into practice. We have tried to use as few technical terms as possible.

It is vital to recognise the links between the different parts of the plan. We have highlighted this not by dividing the plan into topic-based chapters but by recognising that individual topics (such as housing) relate to a number (if not all) of the objectives. This influences how the plan should be used. Both Councils will use it in appropriate cases to help decide whether a planning application would guide the area in the right direction. **Local development plans** consistent with this plan will be the main way in which decisions are made on planning applications.

## Influences on the plan

We have written this plan with a wide range of international, national, regional and local influences in mind.

The National Planning Framework (NPF) was published in 2004 and provides a framework to guide the development of Scotland to 2025. The Draft National Planning Framework 2 (DNPF2) was published in December 2007 and looks forward to 2030 with the main parts of the development strategy being shown in figure 1 below. Except for **'grid reinforcement** to support renewable energy development', no national developments have been identified in the area.



Along with the challenges associated with the changing nature of the offshore oil and gas industry (recognised in both NPF and DNPF2), the potential of the North East to build on its strengths is also recognised. As in the existing NPF, the east-coast corridor from Aberdeen to Newcastle is identified as offering opportunities to develop links with the energy and offshore industries and the universities along the route. Opportunities to develop coastal shipping connections are also identified (particularly relevant to Peterhead and Aberdeen), along with the potential investment in transport infrastructure to reduce journey times for road users and rail passengers. This is being considered as part of the Scottish Government's Strategic Transport Projects Review.

The strategic development plans for Aberdeen, Dundee and Edinburgh city regions are seen as important to strengthen the corridor. The plans in the Aberdeen and Edinburgh city regions are considered to be particular priorities.

The regional strategies and plans which have an important influence on this plan include 'Priorities for the North East' (agreed by both councils – prepared by the North East Scotland Joint Public Sector Group), the North East Scotland Transport Partnership's (Nestrans) Regional Transport Strategy and the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum's (ACSEF) Economic Manifesto.

The plan is going through a range of assessments including the Strategic Environmental Assessment, Appropriate Assessment and Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment. All of these have affected the content of the plan.

### **Preparing the plan**

This plan has been prepared jointly by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils through the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee. It represents a shared vision for the future of the area and was developed in a way which aims to include everyone in the process, including communities, public-sector organisations and businesses.

## The vision for the plan

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. A vision for a successful and **sustainable** future is set out below.

**“By 2030, Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more exciting, modern and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, visit and do business.**

**We will be recognised for:**

- **our enterprise and inventiveness, particularly in the **knowledge economy** and in **high-value markets**;**
- **the unique qualities of our environment; and**
- **our high quality of life.**

**We will have acted confidently and taken the courageous decisions necessary to further develop a robust and resilient economy and to lead the way towards development being sustainable, including dealing with climate change and our society being more inclusive.”**

To make this vision a reality, we have developed a series of aims. These provide a useful guide which both interprets the vision and focuses clearly on the role this plan will play in delivering it. This recognises that many different people and organisations will be involved in delivering this vision.

The primary aims of the plan are to:

- provide a strong framework for investment decisions which help to grow and diversify the regional economy, supported by promoting the need to use resources more efficiently and effectively;
- confront the urgent challenges of sustainable development and climate change.

In support of these primary aims, the plan will:

- make sure the area has enough people, homes and jobs to support the level of services and facilities needed to maintain and improve the quality of life;
- protect and improve our valued assets and resources, including the built and natural environment and our cultural heritage;
- help create mixed communities, and the associated **infrastructure**, which meet the highest standards of urban and rural design and cater for the needs of the whole population; and
- make the most efficient use of the transport network, reducing the need for people to travel and making sure that walking, cycling and public transport are attractive choices.

We are committed to all the aims as a whole. This is the only way we will be able to achieve our vision.

We will assess development proposals against these aims and will balance the weight given to each of them in coming to a decision. We will do this in a confident and courageous manner.

# The spatial strategy

All parts of the North East are important for the future of the area. However, different areas will take different roles as a result of their current characteristics and future opportunities. This plan will identify necessary rules and ways of working, but will give local development plans the opportunity to respond to local circumstances. However, this plan must set out a strategy for how these issues can be considered.

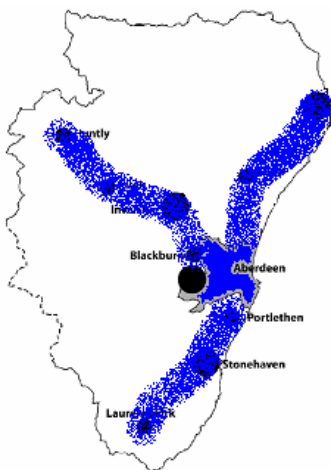
Identifying where development will take place is a vital part of delivering the changes needed in the Aberdeen City and Shire area. Being clear about where we want new homes, businesses and other developments to be located provides long-term certainty and confidence for communities, businesses and organisations that provide services. It allows us to make best use of the investment that we will need to maintain the quality of life in the area over the coming decades.

We have developed a spatial strategy which promotes development in places that meet the needs of business and, at the same time, protects the environment over the longer term. The strategy also recognises the need to maintain and improve the area's communities and the services they depend on.

This strategy focuses development in places where there are clear opportunities to encourage people to use public transport, which itself can be provided in an efficient way. The strategy plans for growth in a limited number of places, where there can be significant public and private investment in schools, community facilities and transport networks without affecting people's quality of life. It also provides the flexibility to meet the needs of local communities. These areas are as follows.

## 1 Strategic growth areas

This structure plan identifies three strategic growth areas (SGAs) which will be the main focus for development in the area up to 2030.



Although these areas will carry out different roles, together they can be expected to account for around 75% to 80% of the growth over the next 20 years or more.

Development in these areas will bring about a significant need for improvements to the infrastructure, including new primary and secondary schools, improvements to roads and railways, and new water and waste-water systems. This investment is essential if we are to create successful sustainable mixed communities. The cost is likely to be several hundred million pounds and landowners will need to fund much of this (through the increase in land values as a result of the new development).

The three strategic growth areas are as follows.

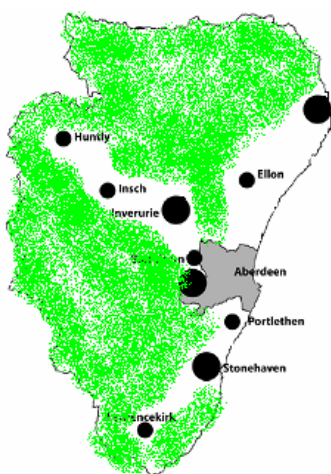
- **Aberdeen City** – around half of all new development in the city region will be within Aberdeen City. While we prefer development to take place on **brownfield sites** (some of these will be in the 'community regeneration areas'), the scale of growth we expect will mean that more than half of the development will need to take place on **greenfield sites**. This will mean reviewing the whole green belt to make sure that it meets the aims of this plan and Scottish Planning Policy 21: Green Belts (SPP21). Reducing travel distances and making walking, cycling and public transport more attractive to people is vital. We will need to make sure that one or two secondary schools, associated primary schools and improvements to transport infrastructure are provided to serve new development in the City.

- **Huntly to Laurencekirk** – significant development will take place in the road and rail corridor stretching 66 miles from Huntly to Laurencekirk. Much of this corridor is served by a dual carriageway and the railway lines from Edinburgh and Glasgow to Aberdeen and Aberdeen to Inverness. The Crossrail proposals aim to provide more regular journeys and extra stations to serve commuters, shoppers, students and visitors; this will be facilitated by development in this corridor. Bus services on this corridor are already good, although we will need to make further improvements to make these services an even more attractive choice. We will need to provide two secondary schools and associated primary schools in this area.
- **Aberdeen to Peterhead** – this area has important strategic assets (such as the ports) and will focus on diversifying and developing the economy as well as the provision of infrastructure in the first half of the plan period. There will be less new housing in this area than the other two SGAs, although the amount of housing could increase in the second half of the plan period (as a result of later reviews of this plan) if the economy grows and becomes more diverse. This reflects the aspirations of local communities and ACSEF as expressed through the 'Energetica' initiative.

All three SGAs should focus on creating sustainable mixed communities with the services, facilities and infrastructure necessary for the 21st century.

## 2 Local growth and diversification areas

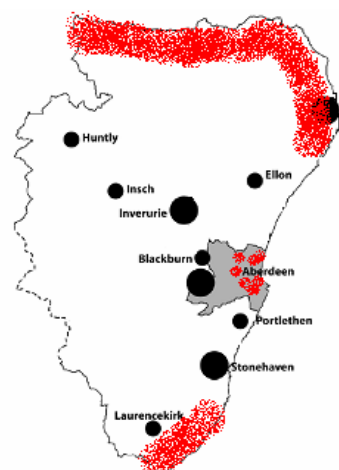
Levels of growth in individual settlements should relate to local needs, although the scale of this growth will vary from place to place. While we should aim to provide a



mix of housing opportunities for all, we need to focus on providing smaller homes to buy or rent, and a significant amount of affordable housing. We need to give priority to developments which respect the character of the landscape and local identity. In this way, not only will new development be in, or an extension to, existing settlements but it will also help create and maintain successful places.

In this area, there will continue to be pressure for housing in the countryside which is not connected to existing settlements. Local development plans, in line with **Scottish Planning Policy**, should approach this by focusing new housing in, or as an extension to, existing settlements, particularly those which are well served by public transport.

There is a need for diversification and growth in the economy in this area to meet local needs, with tourist-related developments having a role to play.



## 3 Regeneration priority areas

Regeneration is also a vital part of the strategy of this plan. Inequality exists in some parts of the area, so we need to take a range of actions to help these areas meet their full potential. These actions will involve forming partnerships across the public, private and voluntary sectors, and will focus on achieving clear results.

These areas include some of the coastal communities and the largest towns in Aberdeenshire (Fraserburgh and



Peterhead), as well as parts of Aberdeen (including the community regeneration areas). This offers opportunities for redeveloping brownfield sites in a way that respects local identity, improves the quality of the environment and uses high-quality design. Improving the economy and the competitiveness of business should play a particular role in these areas, along with improving transport infrastructure – especially to Aberdeen and further south. The quality of the environment varies from area to area, however, it should be possible to further develop tourism in some coastal locations.

Developing on brownfield sites is a particular priority because developing on greenfield sites is likely to take resources out of the town and make it more difficult to meet wider aims for regeneration.

In some cases developments which aim to meet the needs of the Aberdeen City region may need to be located on a specific site. Where this is not in an identified strategic growth area, appropriate justification against the aims, objectives and targets of the plan will be required.

### **Targets**

- For at least 75% of all homes built and employment land developed to be in the SGAs by 2030.
- For at least 50% of all homes built to be in Aberdeen City by 2030.
- For all strategic developments meeting the needs of the city region to be based in SGAs.

### **How to meet the targets**

- Local development plans (and, where appropriate, **supplementary guidance**) will use the spatial strategy to set policies and identify land for development.
- Planning applications should be assessed against the spatial strategy.

### **Monitoring**

- Assess patterns in house-building (carried out each year using the housing land audit).
- Assess patterns in land used for new employment uses (carried out each year using the employment land audit).

# Economic Growth

## Objective

To provide opportunities which encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate for and attractive to the needs of different industries, while at the same time enhancing the essential **strategic infrastructure** necessary to allow the economy to grow over the long term.

## Issues

The economy of Aberdeen City and Shire is currently dominated by the oil and gas industries. While these are predicted to continue to be important to the area for the future, it is also important that we promote a diverse local economy throughout the life of this plan. A central part of this will involve putting into practice new ideas from our universities and research organisations, and developing a high-speed telecommunications network. Service industries will have a role to play.

It is critical that retail provision throughout the region is promoted to ensure the vitality and viability in our town centres, particularly in Aberdeen City Centre, whilst creating opportunities for growth in the economy. Existing retail centres will be supported in order to improve regional provision and, in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy 8, identification of sites for new retail development will be subject to a **sequential approach**.

Making sure that there is enough land for business use, of the right type and in the right place, will give Aberdeen City and Shire a competitive advantage. It is anticipated that the 'Energetica' initiative may help to deliver this in the Aberdeen to Peterhead strategic growth area.

Future development should not be allowed to limit the growth of the economy by making the region less attractive to business, particularly in relation to congestion and access to roads, ports, airports and rail facilities.

## Targets

- To make sure there is at least 60 hectares of land available to businesses at all times in a range of places within Aberdeen City.
- To make sure there is at least 60 hectares of land available to businesses at all times in a range of places within SGAs in Aberdeenshire.
- For at least 20 hectares of this land to be of a standard which will attract high-quality businesses or be suitable for company headquarters.
- For Aberdeen to be one of the top-25 retail areas in the UK by 2030.
- For all new development in SGAs to use modern, up-to-date high-speed telecommunications networks (such as fibre optic).



## How to meet the targets

- Local development plans should make land available for business use in the following areas and identify strategic reserve land.

	Minimum land available at all times (hectares)	New allocations 2007-2023 (hectares)	Strategic reserve 2024-2030 (hectares)
Aberdeen City	60	105	70
Aberdeenshire			
Huntly to Laurencekirk	40	105	70
Blackdog to Peterhead	20	45	43
<b>Total</b>	120	255	183

- Identifying an appropriate amount of business land in the local development plan for 'local growth and diversification' areas in Aberdeenshire.
- Making it a priority to complete the city-centre masterplan for Aberdeen and put it into practice.
- Working in partnership with Robert Gordon University and the University of Aberdeen (and other appropriate research organisations) to help them maximise their positive contribution to the area.
- Using action programmes to identify what is needed to make allocated land available to business in line with the spatial strategy.

## Monitoring

- Measuring the supply of business land (carried out each year using the employment land audit).
- Using the UK retail rankings.

# Sustainable development and climate change

## Objective

To become a city region which reduces the amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) it releases into the air, adapts to the effects of climate change and limits the amount of non-renewable resources it uses.

## Issues

The challenges of sustainable development and climate change are some of the most serious we will face over the period covered by this plan. Reducing the causes of climate change is critical, however, due to current and past actions it is vital to put in place a number of measures to limit the consequences of climate change.

In order to combat climate change, all new development must be designed and built to use resources more efficiently and be located so as to reduce environmental impact.

We also need to tackle both the supply of and demand for energy during the plan period. This will involve increasing the supply from **renewable sources**,

The increased risk of flooding comes about through changing and more unpredictable weather patterns and rising sea levels. We will need to take account of the scale of these changes when we consider what new developments should be built and where they should be located.

The River Dee is the region's main source of drinking water and is classed as a Special Area of Conservation. This resource is under pressure and as a result, managing the use of water is important.

The area produces 136,000 tonnes of **biodegradable municipal waste** (BMW) every year; the majority of this is disposed of in landfill sites. We need to make changes during the first half of the plan period in order to manage this resource in an environmentally friendly way.

## Targets

- For all new buildings to be **carbon neutral** by 2016.
- For the city region's electricity needs to be met from renewable sources by 2020.
- For all new developments to use water-saving technology.
- To avoid having to increase the amount of water we are licensed to take from the River Dee, as a result of the new developments proposed in the plan.
- To avoid developments on land which is at risk from coastal or river flooding (as identified by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency), except in exceptional circumstances.
- By 2020, no more than 54,000 tonnes per year of BMW will be sent to landfill.

## How to meet the targets

- Local development plans (and supplementary guidance) will promote a staged move towards buildings which are carbon neutral.
- Local development plans (and supplementary guidance) will identify areas and / or technology which can contribute to the supply of renewable energy.

- Local development plans (and supplementary guidance) should make it a requirement for water-saving technology to be used in all new developments.
- Progress the joint procurement of residual waste treatment solutions.
- Prepare supplementary planning guidance to provide a context for making decisions on future, regionally significant, planning applications for waste-management facilities.

### **Monitoring**

- Water taken from the River Dee by Scottish Water as a percentage of their licensed level (information published annually by Scottish Water).
- Measuring the installed capacity of renewable energy technologies in the area.
- Monitoring development built on land which is at a high risk of flooding.
- Measuring the amount of carbon dioxide that is released from new developments (carried out each year by Building Standards).
- Measuring the percentage of waste which is recycled or composted (carried out by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency using information from the Landfill Allowance Scheme).
- Measuring the amount of BMW sent to landfill (carried out every three months by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency using information from the Landfill Allowance Scheme).

# Population growth

## Objective

To increase the population of the city region and achieve a balanced age range to help maintain and improve people's quality of life.

## Issues

The population of the city region was 440,000 in 2006. Since 1995, the population has fallen slowly each year until the last few years. A falling population has a negative effect on investors' confidence, the ability of the public and private sectors to provide services and facilities, and residents' quality of life. However, as well as the total size of the population, the age range of the population also presents challenges in the years ahead. If, as predicted, the number of people who are of working age (16 to 65) falls, this will have a significant effect on the economy of the area and the way in which services are provided for an increasingly elderly population.

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 40,000 over 24 years will be a significant challenge for the North East and we will only achieve it if we work towards our aims and objectives with our partners. The latest forecasts suggest that this is a reasonable target. A longer-term ambition would be to see the population rise to 500,000.

If the population grows to the levels we are aiming for, we will need to increase the number of homes which are built each year (currently 2,200).

## Targets

- To increase the population of the city region by 9% to 480,000 by 2030.
- To increase the population of people who are of working age (16-65) by 15% by 2030.
- To build at least 2,500 new homes each year by 2014 through the development plan.
- To build at least 3,000 new homes each year by 2020.

## How to meet the targets

Both planning authorities will need to act in a number of ways for us to achieve this objective and meet the above targets.

- Making quick progress in preparing local development plans in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire.
- Making land available for homes through local development plans, in line with the spatial strategy and schedule 2 of this plan.
- Making land available for housing as quickly as possible at the start of the structure plan period, following appropriate levels of consultation.
- Using **action programmes**, **planning gain** and possibly **compulsory purchase powers** to focus attention on the delivery of new housing and the necessary infrastructure.

As well as these, there are also other actions we need to take to meet this objective. These actions are covered under other objectives which focus on the quality of development and will help to make the North East an even more attractive place to live, visit and do business. In this way, providing land for housing (and increasing the population) is one part of a strategy to increase the quality of life in the area. Providing new housing which doesn't meet the requirements of the spatial strategy or meet the standards set out under other objectives will not be supported by this plan.

Meeting these targets will also depend on factors which are not related to the development plan or under the control of the planning authorities. These factors include the health of the global and local economy, the price of oil, Bank of England base rates, the response of the house-building industry and how the area is marketed to potential residents from the rest of Scotland or further afield.

### **Monitoring**

- Assessing patterns in the total population of the North East (carried out each year by the General Register Office for Scotland).
- Measuring change in the population in the North East compared to the other city regions in Scotland, as well as other places in the rest of the UK and further afield.
- Assessing patterns in house-building in the North East (carried out each year using the housing land audit).
- Measuring how many new homes are built in the North East compared to the other city regions in Scotland and other places in the rest of the UK and further afield.
- Assessing what land is available for new homes (carried out each year using the housing land audit).
- Assessing progress with local development plans in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire (carried out each year using development plan schemes).
- Measuring what percentage of the population is of working age (carried out each year by the General Register Office for Scotland).

# Quality of the environment

## Objective

To make sure new development maintains and improves the region's important built, natural and cultural assets.

## Issues

The built, natural and cultural environment is a valuable resource, but one which needs to be protected. Site selection and high quality design will ensure that development does not lead to the decline of the North East's built, natural and cultural assets.

Biodiversity, wildlife habitats and landscape can be vulnerable to new development. We therefore need to focus on their maintenance and improvement; especially where land is allocated for development.

The quality of **water courses** in the area does not currently meet the standards set by the Water Framework Directive. River Basin Management Plans are being prepared in partnership to deal with these issues.

The green belt around Aberdeen will continue to play a vital role in protecting the character and landscape setting of the City. However, it will need to change to meet the growth aspirations of the plan. It must guide development to appropriate places while protecting the most important areas.

Sites and areas valued for their contribution to the built and historic environment are just as sensitive and should be protected from the negative effects of development.

## Targets

- To ensure that development improves and does not lead to the loss of, or damage to, built, natural or cultural heritage assets.
- For all water courses in the structure plan area to achieve 'good ecological status' under the Water Framework Directive by 2015.
- To undertake a green-belt boundary and policy review by 2010.

## How to meet the targets

- Local development plans (and supplementary guidance) will make sure the North East's natural environment and historic sites and buildings continue to be protected and improved.
- Both Councils will participate in the River Basin Management Planning process, particularly as it relates to new development.
- Both Councils will take account of biodiversity, landscape and other sensitive areas in the identification of land allocations, the preparation of masterplans and the assessment of development proposals.
- The green belt review should be undertaken jointly by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils as part of their local development plan processes.

## Monitoring

- Measuring the percentage of water courses that achieve 'good ecological status' (carried out by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency).
- Assessing how development has directly or indirectly led to the loss of the built, natural and cultural assets (by reviewing through local development plans).



- Assessing how much development has been granted planning permission against green-belt policies (using appeal decisions and Scottish Minister notifications).
- Assessing if the findings from the green-belt review have been put into practice (carried out each year).

# Sustainable mixed communities

## Objective

To make sure that new development meets the needs of the whole community, both now and in the future, and makes the area a more attractive place for residents and businesses to move to.

## Issues

Too often in the past, new development has not been sustainable, varied or focussed on meeting the needs of the community, 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, the efficient use of land and re-use of previously developed land.

Our future communities must be mixed in terms of the type and size of homes, as well as their **tenure** and cost. We also need to make sure that new houses are designed to a high standard and that they respect and improve the existing qualities of the area. If we want to allow people to have a choice of where they want to live, developments must provide a wide range of options, from starter homes to large detached houses. Having a variety of homes and residential environments will help to improve urban design in both the city and rural areas. New housing which does not meet the targets set out below will not comply with the plan.

It is important that new development meets the needs of the whole community. With an ageing population and smaller households, new development will be required to meet the changing needs of society over its whole life.

Land brought forward for development must be used efficiently and brownfield sites and regeneration areas should be given priority. Through this process we should create opportunities for new development that will close the gap between the wealthy and most disadvantaged areas of the region.

New development needs to focus on communities. In the strategic growth areas, services and facilities for the community must be a part of the development. This plan will not support house-building that fails to provide these services and facilities which help make successful and sustainable communities.

In the same way, a focus on communities means that new housing and employment / commercial uses should be integrated to improve quality of life and opportunity. This should be a particular focus in masterplans prepared for larger development areas.

In order to achieve sustainable mixed communities, retail provision must be central to the preparation of masterplans / development briefs for new development. New retail development will be subject to a sequential approach. The sequential approach establishes a sequence of site selection ranging through the following sequence: the development site; town centres, edge of centre; other commercial centres identified in the development plan; and out of centre sites which can be, or are, accessible via a variety of modes of transport. However, existing retail uses will also be supported to ensure that the needs of the community are met now as well as in the future.

This plan has a clear objective for population growth in the North East and increasing the level of house-building. However, this will only be acceptable if the development is of the highest quality.

## Targets

- To increase the range and quality of housing and the residential environment in the 'community regeneration areas'.
- For 40% of all new housing in Aberdeen City to be on brownfield sites.
- For all housing development of over one hectare in SGAs to be in line with approved supplementary guidance and generally have no less than 30 properties in each hectare.
- For the quality and design of new developments in the city region to be nationally recognised (including developments recognised under the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative – Framework Document to be published by the Scottish Government in summer 2008).
- For new housing to meet the needs of the whole community by providing at least 25% of affordable housing (see the note below) and an appropriate mix of types and sizes of houses in line with local development plans and approved supplementary guidance.

## How to meet the targets

- Local development plans will take account of these targets when deciding how and where to set aside land for development.
- Everyone involved in the process needs to show a commitment to quality and set the highest standards throughout the development process.
- Using supplementary guidance to provide more detail on the appropriate mix of properties, urban-design principles and community facilities.
- Start a design review process for masterplans and the most significant planning applications.
- Working with partners to bring forward appropriate proposals for development (in line with this plan) through the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative.

## Monitoring

- Measuring how many properties there are in each hectare for sites of over one hectare which have been granted planning permission in strategic growth areas (carried out each year using the housing land audit).
- Measuring the percentage of new housing on brownfield sites in Aberdeen (carried out each year using the housing land audit).
- Recording and monitoring progress in redeveloping the 'community regeneration areas'.
- Building up a detailed picture of new housing development, including the sizes, types and tenure of properties (carried out each year using the housing land audit).

**Note:** The two councils, and their partners, will shortly begin preparing a 'housing need and demand assessment'. We will take account of the findings from this assessment before we publish the final structure plan, and these may affect this section and other sections of the plan (particularly 'Population growth').

# Accessibility

## Objective

To make sure that all new developments contribute towards reducing the need to travel and encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport by making these attractive choices.

## Issues

It is widely accepted that there are negative environmental, economic and social effects associated with road transport, including air and noise pollution and congestion,

This plan will help to promote the integration of land use with transport to make sure that all new development is conveniently located to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport. Improving bus and train services will make sure that people will be encouraged to use more environmentally friendly forms of transport.

Walking and cycling – the most environmentally friendly forms of transport - should also be encouraged as this will help to achieve important health, social and environmental benefits.

Improving access to the North East is also essential to developing a strong economy and providing better links. The spatial strategy will help to promote accessibility by making sure that future development also allows for improvements in the rail and road networks. This will help to improve and encourage the use of bus and train services.

## Targets

- For all developments to meet the accessibility standards set out in the local transport strategies by 2013.
- For major employment and service developments in strategic growth areas to show that they are easy to access by walking, cycling or using public transport. The travel plans produced for these developments should reduce the need for people to use cars.
- To reduce the percentage of journeys which are made by car.

## How to meet the targets

- Local development plans will identify and protect land from development to make sure that transport proposals identified in the local and regional transport strategies can be developed. Transport proposals required due to development promoted in the plan will be identified in supplementary guidance.
- The spatial strategy will direct development to areas that can be accessed by a greater choice of more environmentally friendly forms of transport.
- The action programme will, at an early stage, identify the necessary requirements to make sure that developments can be accessed by walking, cycling and public transport.

- Approved supplementary guidance will include layouts and design for new developments which can be accessed easily by walking, cycling and public transport.

### **Monitoring**

- Using transport assessments and information about planning applications will enable the accessibility of developments to be monitored.
- Measuring the reduction in the percentage of journeys which are made by car.

## Putting this plan into practice

This structure plan provides a vision that aims to develop the economy, maintain and enhance the quality of our environment and provide a high quality of life up to 2030. The scale of the changes needed and the challenges set by the vision, especially in relation to sustainable development and climate change, should not be underestimated.

This plan sets the framework for other plans and strategies, and promotes targets to achieve our aims. This plan will be put into practice through local development plans and supplementary guidance. These will be prepared separately by Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council and must to be consistent with this plan.

However, local development plans will not have the long-term vision of the structure plan. There may be action that needs to be taken now to allow proposals to be included in future local development plans. We will develop an **action programme** to support this plan. This will identify a number of steps needed to put the plan into practice, including:

- identifying timescales for major investments;
- the preparation of masterplans; and
- preparing supplementary guidance to help development to take place.

The programme will identify who is to take action, when this will need to happen and how it will be funded. This will give those concerned the confidence to make decisions on investment. The action programme will be monitored regularly and reviewed at least every two years.

## Providing infrastructure

To make changes on the scale proposed in this plan, we will need to invest in the infrastructure of the structure plan area, particularly if we want to maintain people's quality of life. The existing roads, sewers and schools will not be able to cope with the demands extra development will bring. We will also need to invest in facilities and services for communities. These two needs have to be carefully considered very early in the land-development process, even before land is identified in local development plans.

Developers will have to accept the need for contributions towards necessary infrastructure, services and facilities within their own site. However, in cases where development has a wider impact, additional necessary contributions will have to be secured. We also expect that the increase in land value, as a result of granting planning permission, will fund a large percentage of the new infrastructure needed, although an important contribution will be required from the public sector. We will need to secure a higher percentage of the increase in land values than we have in the past, to be able to create sustainable mixed communities.

## Proposals

A range of projects have been proposed that will help us achieve our vision for the North-East. While some are well advanced, others are at an early stage. These include:

- initiatives by Robert Gordon University and University of Aberdeen to strengthen our knowledge economy;



- major proposals to regenerate some of the city region's most disadvantaged areas;
- a new community stadium;
- the 'Energetica' initiative being promoted by Scottish Enterprise (and ACSEF) for the Aberdeen to Peterhead SGA;
- the city centre masterplan which includes proposals to make Union Street an area for pedestrians only;
- implementation of the Aberdeen airport masterplan;
- road and rail improvements (such as Crossrail) to make environmentally friendly methods of transport more attractive;
- the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route to provide better access and connections to other places and to allow environmentally friendly methods of transport to be provided;
- a third crossing of the River Don (and other associated measures) to deal with congestion and allow growth in and to the north of the city; and
- a new prison (in the Peterhead area).

### **Monitoring and reviewing this plan**

We recognise that things will change over time, both in response to the direction the plan promotes and events we were not able to predict. Monitoring must take place to assess our progress in meeting the plan's aims and objectives.

We currently use housing land and employment land audits to collect information on the rate of development, where the development is taking place, and whether we are meeting our land supply targets. We also monitor new retail proposals in this way. Each objective of this plan identifies ways of monitoring progress towards achieving our aims and we will produce a monitoring report each year to assess our progress in meeting the targets.

Significant changes in society, the economy, environment and population will only become clear over the longer term, but will also require monitoring to make sure the plan's objectives are appropriate. Monitoring these will, in practice, be a continuous process, however, we will only report on them as part of the monitoring statement that we produce for the five-yearly review of the plan.

The first review of this plan will involve replacing it with a **strategic development plan**. The Scottish Government want to see strategic development plans in place as early as possible and we can expect to replace this plan by 2013.

**Schedule 1: Housing Allowances**

*Alternatives*  
(1) (2)

	<b>Effective Land Supply 2007</b>	<b>Constrained</b>	<b>2007 – 2016</b>	<b>2017 – 2023</b>	<b>2024 – 2030</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
Aberdeen City – B/F*	1,882		4,000	3,000	3,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Regeneration Areas*	0	0	2,000	2,000	1,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Aberdeen City – G/F*	1,161		12,000	5,000	4,000	21,000	21,000	21,000
<b>Aberdeen City</b>	<b>3,043</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>18,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>
Huntly – Pitcaple	365	340	300	500	200	1,000	800	1,000
Inverurie – Blackburn*	1,891	0	1,000	1,500	4,000	6,500	1,000	10,000
Portlethen – Stonehaven*	982	0	2,600	2,400	1,000	6,000	13,500	8,000
S of Drumlithie - Marykirk	235	180	500	400	100	1,000	1,200	1,200
Peterhead – Hatton	623	407	600	800	600	2,000	2,000	2,000
Ellon – Blackdog*	174	25	0	1,400	600	2,000	0	500
Local Growth (AHMA)*	2,652	331	2,100	1,500	1,500	5,100	5,100	1,100
Local Growth (RHMA)	2,210	1737	4,400	4,000	4,000	12,400	12,400	12,200
Small Sites (AHMA)	265							
Small Sites (RHMA)	685							
<b>Aberdeenshire</b>	<b>10,082</b>	<b>3,020</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>12,500</b>	<b>12,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>36,000</b>
<b>AHMA (*)</b>	<b>9,007</b>	<b>859</b>	<b>23,700</b>	<b>16,800</b>	<b>15,100</b>	<b>55,600</b>	<b>55,600</b>	<b>55,600</b>
<b>RHMA</b>	<b>4,118</b>	<b>2,664</b>	<b>5,800</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>4,900</b>	<b>16,400</b>	<b>16,400</b>	<b>16,400</b>
<b>Aberdeen City and Shire</b>	<b>13,125</b>	<b>3,523</b>	<b>29,500</b>	<b>22,500</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>72,000</b>	<b>72,000</b>	<b>72,000</b>