

**ABERDEEN** | *Strategic Development*  
**CITY AND** | *Planning Authority*  
**SHIRE**

Development Plan Scheme 2012/2013



March 2012

## Purpose

This development plan scheme sets out our programme for preparing and reviewing our strategic development plan. We have written it to promote openness and help people get involved as we prepare the plan. It is also written to make sure we meet people's expectations.

## Background

We, the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Planning Authority, were set up on 25 June 2008 as part of the Scottish Government's reform of the planning system. We are one of four strategic development planning authorities in Scotland, responsible for preparing and reviewing 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 does not include the part of Aberdeenshire in the Cairngorms National Park.

## The development plan system in Scotland

The development plan system in Scotland is made up of three main documents.

### The National Planning Framework for Scotland.

This is produced by the Scottish Government and sets out their strategy for the development of different areas of Scotland, including national developments and priorities.

**Strategic development plans.** These are prepared by the strategic development planning authorities and set out a long-term (20 years or more) development strategy showing where future development will be and what is needed to deliver it. Scottish Ministers approve these plans.

**Local development plans.** These are prepared by local authorities and set out more detailed policies and proposals to identify land for development. The plans must be consistent with the approved strategic development plan.

Other guidance on a specific planning topic may be prepared and become part of the development plan; this is called supplementary guidance.

## Current development plan

As at 1 April 2012, 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 Local Development Plan (2012).

Aberdeenshire council are also preparing a local development plan which will be consistent with the structure plan. We expect this will replace their local plan by mid-2012.

The development plan will also include a range of supplementary guidance which the two councils will adopt during 2012.

Figure 1: Strategic development plan area



## What is a development plan scheme?

Under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, all strategic development planning authorities must prepare development plan schemes. The scheme sets out our programme for preparing and reviewing our strategic development plan and what is likely to be involved at each stage. It also includes a participation statement, saying who we will consult on the plan and when and how this will take place.

This development plan scheme only covers the strategic part of the development plan. Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils have written their own development plan schemes to prepare local development plans and you can find more information on these from both councils.

## The strategic development plan

The strategic development plan will be a short document which will contain a clear vision and spatial strategy for development over a period of at least 20 years. It will target important spatial issues and will focus on delivery and results. It will also affect decisions about strategic infrastructure investment.

Once it has been approved by Scottish Ministers, the strategic development plan will replace the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009).

We propose to adopt supplementary guidance alongside the strategic development plan. This will include the delivery of projects through a strategic transport fund, but may cover other topics as well.

## Project plan

Scottish Government policy is that the development plan scheme should focus on what we need to do to make sure that an up-to-date development plan is in place as quickly as possible.

Once the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan is in place (expected in the next two to three months), the area's planning framework will be up-to-date.

The main reason for preparing the strategic development plan is the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006. This suggests that, as the structure plan was approved in 2009, a proposed strategic development plan should be sent to Scottish Ministers by August 2013. The proposal set out below would see a proposed strategic development plan sent to Scottish Ministers by June 2013, and approved by them between late 2013 and June 2014.

We will also make sure other regional plans and strategies, such as the regional transport strategy and the economic action programme, are in line with the strategic development plan.

There are a number of stages in the process of preparing the strategic development plan. Some of these were carried out last year, although this year we will publish a proposed plan. We show the key stages and a timescale we aim to work to, in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Project plan





Period	Description	Comments
April 2011	We will publish the development plan scheme 2011/2012.	This was sent to various groups and made available from all local libraries and our website.
	We will prepare the main issues report which takes into account any research and studies done, as well as the monitoring statement.	We completed supporting documents and published them with the main issues report; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a housing need and demand assessment;</li> <li>• a monitoring statement;</li> <li>• a risk assessment of the structure plan;</li> <li>• a transport assessment;</li> <li>• a climate-change study;</li> <li>• an equalities and human rights impact assessment;</li> <li>• a habitats regulations assessment; and</li> <li>• a strategic environmental assessment and interim environmental report.</li> </ul> We spoke to stakeholders (including the key agencies) about the plan and the issues and options we had. We took these discussions into account when preparing the main issues report.
September 2011	We will publish the main issues report and related documents.	The main issues report was published on 7 October 2011. This was followed by a 13 week consultation period and a review of responses. A consultation report was published which showed the consultation steps taken and comments received.
	We will prepare the proposed plan.	We will update the various assessments and prepare a proposed plan and proposed action programme.
November 2012	We will publish the proposed strategic development plan for representations.	This will include the strategic environmental assessment, habitats regulations assessment, equalities and human rights impact assessment and proposed action programme. This will be followed by a formal 7 week period for representations.
	We will look at responses made during the consultation period.	This will focus on identifying the issues raised during the consultation and responding to them.

Figure 2: Project plan (continued)

Period	Description	Comments
June 2013	We will send our proposed strategic development plan to Scottish Ministers.	This will include our proposed action programme, report of conformity with the participation statement and the issues raised in representations and how we have taken them into account.
	Examination of proposed strategic development plan by Scottish Ministers.	The examination of the plan will be carried out by the Scottish Government Directorate of Planning and Environmental Appeals.
June 2014	Our strategic development plan will be approved by Scottish Ministers.	We will publish the action programme within three months of the plan being approved.

## Participation Statement

We want the strategic development plan to be prepared in an open way which recognises the contribution different people and groups can make. We need to involve people in the plan preparation process in ways tailored to the needs of each group. The five main groups are:

- **councillors;**
- **key agencies (Scottish Natural Heritage, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Nestrans and NHS Grampian);**
- **public-and private-sector stakeholders (groups with a particular interest in our work);**
- **community councils; and**
- **the general public.**

Figure 3, below, sets out the time periods for when you can get involved.

Figure 3: Participation statement

Period	Which part of the plan?	Who is involved?	How?
<b>March 2011 and every year after that</b>	The development plan scheme		We will publish it on the strategic development planning authority website, send an email to everyone registered on our database and send copies to the Scottish Ministers, key agencies, community councils and councillors. You will be able to get a copy from all local libraries and the address below.
<b>From April 2011 to August 2011</b>	We will prepare the main issues report	Councillors, community councils, key agencies, stakeholders and the general public.	<p><b>Councillors and community councils</b> - We spoke to both local councils and community councils in 2011 about what we were doing and how they could get involved in preparing the strategic development plan. We responded to individual requests for information.</p> <p><b>Key agencies</b> - We encouraged the involvement of key agencies, as well as Transport Scotland and Historic Scotland. This included two workshop sessions as well as individual meetings, focusing on preparing the monitoring statement, identifying issues and developing options.</p> <p><b>Stakeholders</b> – We involved relevant stakeholders (including key agencies) when we prepare the various studies needed for the main issues report.</p> <p><b>All</b> - We organised a public-awareness campaign and provided information leaflets to help people get involved. We sent a copy of the development plan scheme for 2011/2012 to all our contacts so they could get involved with the consultation on the main issues report three weeks before it starts. We kept our website up-to-date.</p>
<b>From September 2010 to December 2011</b>	We will speak to you about the main issues report	All of our contacts	We sent copies to all of our contacts and we used press notices, press releases and our website to reach everyone else. We organised sessions in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire so people could get involved.

Figure 3: Participation statement (continued)

Period	Which part of the plan?	Who is involved?	How?
<b>From January 2012 to October 2012</b>	We will prepare the proposed plan	Councillors, community councils, key agencies and stakeholders	We will speak to relevant groups about particular issues when preparing the proposed plan.
<b>From November 2012 to December 2012</b>	We will speak to you about the proposed plan	All of our contacts	We will send copies to all of our contacts and we will use press notices and press releases to reach the wider public. We will ask for comments by post, email or on our website.
<b>From January 2013 to June 2013</b>	We will respond to comments we receive and send the proposed strategic development plan to Scottish Ministers	All of our contacts	We will advertise in the newspapers, tell everyone registered on our database and publish all the information on our website.

## Keeping you informed

We will keep you up-to-date about what we are doing and all opportunities for you to get involved.

We have a database of contacts which we will keep up-to-date for key agencies, councillors and community councils, although other groups and individuals will be responsible for telling us about any changes to their contact details.

We will let all people with an interest in our work know about important stages of the process. The internet allows us to provide regular updates and we will send an email to everyone who registers their email address with us on our website.

We will send all press releases to every local newspaper (as well as some national media organisations) and put them on our website.

## How we will work

### Being open and responsible for what we do

We will prepare the strategic development plan in a clear and open way. We will make all relevant information available on our website and our progress will be monitored. We will produce a conformity report along with the proposed plan which shows how much we have kept to the commitments we made in the development plan scheme.

### Plain English

We will try to make sure all our documents are as easy to understand as possible. Not all the documents we produce will meet the Plain English Campaign's 'Crystal Mark' standard, but we will check what we produce to make sure that our information is at the right level for the audience.

## Equalities and human rights

The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 requires us to encourage equal opportunities. As part of our commitment to this, we will carry out an equalities and human rights impact assessment of the proposed plan. We will make every effort to make sure that event venues are accessible to all and will provide documents in other formats or languages if needed. We will also provide an audio version of the proposed plan.

## Environmental responsibility

Under the Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006, we must contribute to sustainable development. This will mean thinking about the environmental, social and economic effect (both locally and worldwide) of what we do and the strategic development plan we prepare. Our staff will use public transport where possible, and we will try to reduce the environmental effect of our work.

## Monitoring and review

We will check this development plan scheme regularly through the year, and we will update it every year. We will publish the next development plan scheme before April 2013.

## Getting Informed

If you would like to know more about the work of the SDPA you can register your details on our website or contact us in one of the following ways.

**Phone:** 01224 628210

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

**Write to us at:** Strategic Development Plan Team  
Archibald Simpson House  
27-29 King Street  
Aberdeen  
AB24 5AA

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

