

## **General - 6b Publications and Consultations**

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### **o Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform members of recent publications and consultation papers of interest and to agree a response where appropriate.

### **o Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2015**

Aberdeenshire Council has published a Proposed Plan as a refresh of their Local Development Plan. A copy is available at:

[http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans\\_policies/ProposedPlan2016.asp](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans_policies/ProposedPlan2016.asp)

The Proposed Plan represents the settled view of the Council, as agreed by the Council on 12 March 2015. This follows a process of engagement detailed in the [Development Plan Scheme](#) and included consultation on a Main Issues Report in 2013, which was considered at the Nestrans Board at its meeting on 16 December 2013. Formal representations were sought, but a consultation period only extended for six weeks, until Friday 8 May 2015 at 5pm. An officers' response has therefore been submitted and is attached as Appendix A to this report for members' information, comment or endorsement.

Aberdeenshire Council intend that unresolved issues arising from the representations will be presented to Scottish Ministers for public examination, probably in December of this year.

### **o TayPlan Proposed Plan**

The strategic plan for the Tayplan area was published on 11 May 2015 for an eight week period for representations. This is the settled view of Tayplan and the constituent councils of what the final contents of the Plan should be. Interested parties can make concise representations in support or seeking changes. The representations will be considered and the Joint Committee will then decide whether or not to modify the Proposed Plan. Modifications would require a new period for representations. Otherwise the Proposed Plan and all representations would be submitted to Scottish Ministers. - more information is available at:

[http://www.tayplan-sdpa.gov.uk/strategic\\_development\\_plan#sthash.iR0SRT3H.dpuf](http://www.tayplan-sdpa.gov.uk/strategic_development_plan#sthash.iR0SRT3H.dpuf)

Representations can be made until 3 July 2015.

### **o Nigg Bay Development Framework**

Members will be aware that Aberdeen Harbour Board are proposing a major new harbour at Nigg Bay. This has now been accepted as a national project and included within the national Planning Framework (NPF3). In support of the proposal, Barton Wilmore have been appointed to produce a Development Framework for Nigg Bay, Altens and East Tullos on behalf of Aberdeen Harbour Board, Scottish Enterprise and Aberdeen City Council. This

framework will consider the long term development and regeneration opportunities arising as a result of the proposed new harbour at Nigg Bay.

Following a series of public and stakeholder engagement events to date, the consultants have now produced the Draft Nigg Bay Development Framework. Copies of the material on display at the engagement events is available at:

<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=64864&SID=2991>

Responses are required by 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

**o Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board:

- a) note the content of this report and homologate the response to the Aberdeenshire Local Development Proposed Plan.

RD/5 June 2015

## Appendix A

Our Ref  
Your Ref

RD/N14/5  
2015/0009547

8 May 2015

Planning Policy Team  
Infrastructure Services  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB16 5GB

Dear Piers

### **Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2016 – Proposed Plan**

Thank you for your letter received on 25 March, enclosing a copy of the Proposed Plan and offering an opportunity to make representations.

As the Regional Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, we have focussed our comments on those issues that are relevant to strategic transport. We generally support the policies and the objectives of the Local Development Plan and welcome the commitment to promoting sustainable transport and improved access, as articulated as one of the six key themes contained in the “Vision for the Plan” section.

Nestrans welcomes recognition of the Regional Transport Strategy as one of the Influences on the Plan and the role of Nestrans in helping to achieve the objectives. We support **Policy PR2** in protecting sites for future transport developments, including protecting disused railway lines and core paths. However, the Plan should also make reference to Car Parking standards as maximums in line with national guidance and the agreed Regional Car Parking Strategy developed jointly by Nestrans and both local authorities.

**Policy RD2** makes reference to the need for developer contributions as part of mitigating the cumulative impact of developments on the strategic transport networks by means of a Strategic Transport Fund. However, the Plan lacks detailed guidance and needs to further develop this policy by specific reference to the detail of the STF perhaps also by including a link to the SDPA’s Supplementary Guidance or including a summary of the obligations on developers.

The Map on page 58 contains some omissions in terms of land required to be safeguarded for Transport schemes. To the north of Aberdeen, a section of the proposed Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route is indicated in black and labelled A90 rather than red as AWPR; and the proposed Balmedie-Tipperty dualling on the A90 is not shown. It is unclear why some Transport proposals are safeguarded (e.g. Banff Western By-Pass and Stuartfield Link Road), but others are not such as Newmachar Distributor Road and Inverurie Northern Link Road.

In respect of Settlement Statements, we would wish to raise a number of points on major settlements across the area.

**Banff:** The aspiration for a potential western by-pass for Banff is mentioned and a Proposal R1 identified, but not included on the settlement proposals maps.

**Laurencekirk:** The introduction should refer to the ongoing study into access to Laurencekirk as a “Nestrans/Transport Scotland study...” and specific reference should be made to the need for developers to deliver the outcomes of the study by contributing towards safe accesses on to the A90. Although the Plan contains a high level reference in the general text under local transportation infrastructure to the need for contributions to grade-separated access, this must be included as a specific requirement in the descriptions of the Allocated sites OP1, OP2 and OP3.

**Kintore:** Nestrans welcomes the identification of a site for a new railway station to the north of Kintore (R2) and is currently working with Aberdeenshire Council, Network Rail and other partners to develop a business case and funding package to deliver the station by 2019. This will be partly funded through the Strategic Transport Fund, so references to the role of contributions to STF would be beneficial.

**Inverurie and Port Elphinstone:** The reference to the Scottish Government’s proposals to dual the A96 should be amended to read “A96 Aberdeen to Inverness...” to emphasise that the proposal will also include upgrading the existing route between Inverurie and the AWPR. The dualling proposals will impact upon traffic demand at the Thanestone and Port Elphinstone junctions which could impact upon the need for provision of a grade-separated junction to replace the existing roundabouts. It would seem prudent to limit the scale of development until there is a greater degree of certainty regarding the dualling proposals.

Nestrans and Aberdeenshire Council are currently progressing plans to develop a Transport Interchange at Inverurie Town Centre, to include an increase in car parking for Inverurie Station. This should be the focus of the text within proposal OP2 rather than the Inner Relief Road, which is not now expected to be brought forward.

**Stonehaven:** One of the key issues in Stonehaven is the restricted availability of car parking close to the station, which acts as a deterrent to rail use and has limited the growth potential of the station and rail services to/from the town. The Settlement Statement should recognise this constraint in the text and site CC1 should be considered as having potential for station car parking (possibly in association with retail development) with direct access from the site to the north-bound platform.

**Westhill:** As the Plan states, Westhill is not included within a Strategic Growth Area. It also states that significant traffic congestion is an issue. The allocation of site R1 for future expansion of sub-sea industries is therefore incongruous, particularly on the south side of the B9119, which is unsuitable for additional traffic. The traffic implications of such development would need to be addressed and the Plan should commit to including a requirement for developer contributions to the Strategic Transport Fund if this site were to be developed. Although the STF does not normally seek contributions from outwith the Strategic Growth Areas, as the Plan states, this site is not in conformity with the Strategic Development Plan and therefore an exceptional circumstance.

Westhill does not fall within one of the Strategic Development Plan’s identified Strategic Growth Corridors and as such, significant development in this corridor may well fall outwith the Strategic Development Plan criteria, through which mechanisms are in place to ensure that developer obligations are met for addressing the cumulative impact of development on

the transport network. If further land allocations are to be made in this area, significant improvements to the transport infrastructure (both local and strategic mitigation) and substantial efforts to encourage travel by sustainable modes would need to be an essential requirement for any development.

**Insch:** The Plan identifies that the provision of disabled access to the railway station is an important objective for Insch, but there are no proposals to enable this to be implemented. Consideration should be given to whether the site immediately south of the station could be suitable for expansion of car parking facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan and I hope that these comments are helpful in taking the plan to adoption. If you would like to discuss any of the points raised in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rab Dickson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Rab Dickson  
Transport Strategy Manager