

# Main Issues Report – Consultation Questions

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Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2012

## Major influences on the strategic development plan

**Q1** Do you agree that supporting development in challenging economic times and responding to the challenges and opportunities of climate change should be the main factors which influence the content of this main issues report? Are there others?

**A1** Development must be sustainable in the sense of what we do today should not be to the detriment of future generations. Hence developments that encourage car use which will increase global warming and environmental degradation, such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing should be excluded from the plan.

The other main threat to Aberdeen's welfare, but neglected in this plan, is the limits to growth posed by reduced availability of resources and increased demand by the BRIC nations. The main one being 'peak oil'. There will be increased price for energy which will lead to an increase in families excluded from facilities such as private car travel. The plan must take account of Aberdeen and Shire's over reliance on motor vehicle transport and encourage modal shift to minimise this risk. Developments such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing encourage the growth in motor transport which is a threat to Aberdeen's social and financial welfare.

I consider the plan to overall show a disconnection between the ideals and visions of tackling the challenges of climate change and financial instability, and the actions proposed. The proposals at heart follow the same unsustainable development agenda but are decorated with largely ineffectual environmental trimmings

## Format

**Q2** Are there any other changes to the format or presentation of the current structure plan which would make it easier to read or use?

**A2** Links or citations of investigations that justify or support of inclusion of developments in the plan. For example the justification for the inclusion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing is flawed and contradicts the overlying aims of the plan.

## Vision and spatial strategy

**Q3** Do you agree that the vision and spatial strategy of the current structure plan are still appropriate to use in the strategic development plan?

**A3** I agree with the vision which "aims to balance economic growth with the need to create a more sustainable and inclusive society. There is however a disconnect between this vision and proposed actions such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing which exacerbates our weakness of being car dependent and out failings of being the most exclusive region in Scotland.

The spatial strategy presented by the diagram appears to demonstrate an inability to decouple from the unsustainable car transportation mode by showing ribbon development along the main road arteries perpetuating current failing development trends.

## **Sustainable economic growth**

**Q4** Do you agree that the current structure plan supports sustainable economic growth in Aberdeen City and Shire and is ambitious in its vision?

**A4** The structure plan fails to support sustainable economic growth as defined by the Scottish Government i.e. “building a dynamic and growing economy that will provide prosperity and opportunities for all while ensuring that future generations can enjoy a better quality of life too”. The proposals such as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing will increase the marginalisation of the poorer and more vulnerable members of the community, detrimentally affecting their health and well being. It will irreversibly damage for current and future generations, natural environments and habitats and valuable heritage sites.

By continuing unsustainable development it sadly demonstrates a lack of ambition in its vision.

**Q5** Do you agree that we should update the housing requirement to reflect the findings of the housing need and demand assessment and that the current allowances are enough to meet the need for new housing in the period until 2035?

**A5.** Yes and this must be an iterative process and housing provision in proportion to urgency of need. i.e. emphasis on affordable housing.

**Q6** Do you agree that the strategic development plan should put more emphasis on the transport network in encouraging economic growth and the role of Aberdeen Airport in particular as an important gateway?

**A6** What is economic must be determined by more measures than GDP. It must be sustainable and air transport is not sustainable so must come secondary to sustainable modes.

**Q7** Do you agree that the strategic development plan should support the roll-out of high-speed broadband throughout the area, possibly including it as a proposal as well as a policy theme?

**A7** The United Nations has proposed internet access as a ‘human right’ and many countries e.g. France have implemented this. Inclusive access to the internet should be the priority and access to computers is the greatest aspect of the ‘digital divide’ and ‘Low-income populations are the technological “have-nots”’.

Broadband is always a relative term, understood according to its context. The wider (or broader) the bandwidth of a channel, the greater the information-carrying capacity, given the same channel quality. This relativity is determined by technology and hence should not be included in long term strategies due to the risk of inappropriate investment. Access to all must come before wider bandwidth.

**Q8** What role should new development play in encouraging the take-up of high-speed broadband?

**A8.** None, as there is a risk in not providing the returns for investment. Investment should be towards “access for all”.

**Q9** Are there any other changes needed to the current structure plan which would further support sustainable economic growth in the area?

**A9.** There is no emphasis on 'people'. Sustainable economic growth will arise if individuals are provided the environment in which to flourish. I. e improved services and facilities for all, i.e. education, art, sport, technology and entertainment. The role of the planners should be to provide a healthy and stimulating environment for innovation to flourish. This plan will continue the trend of stifling opportunities for the young. For example the 3rd Don Crossing will create severance, pollute and damage the amenities of a regenerating community, and encourage further traffic into the most polluted city centre in the country.

## Supporting development

**Q10** Are there other measures that the strategic development plan should be exploring to encourage development?

**A10** Community centred development should be explored. E.g. Community Trusts, Social Bonds, Social Enterprise Schemes, community energy efficiency and land management schemes.

**Q11** Do you agree that using supplementary guidance to deliver identified transport projects by development charging is the best approach?

**A11** No, The most efficient and fairest way (as recommended by Milton Friedman) is by road charging. Congestion charging can fund efficient high speed, efficient public transport, dedicated HGV routes and rail freight interchanges to enable the modal shift essential for a future sustainable inclusive society. There would be a savings gained through the lack of need for further road expansion.

**Q12** Are there other ways the strategic development plan could encourage the development of more affordable housing?

**A12** Greater pressure should be put on the Government to allow for local authority capital borrowing, and social housing quotas for developers should be increased to 40%. Community self build schemes should be encouraged with Local Authorities transferring housing land ownerships to community trusts.

**Q13** Should we consider rolling out a wider infrastructure fund along the lines of that suggested in the Scottish Government research which goes beyond transport infrastructure? What advantages would this bring?

**A13** Absolutely. It would provide ownership if control is given to Communities.

## Managing resources efficiently

Note The Graph titled "Advances in the fuel efficiency of cars". is meaningless. Please explain its significance. (e-mail response to frankjpaterson@googlemail.com)

**Q14** Do you agree that we should plan for regional self-sufficiency in managing our waste rather than being a net importer or exporter of waste?

**A14** Yes

**Q15** Do you agree that, apart from extending time limits, there is no need for extra landfill space in the area?

**A15** With appropriate management there should be no need for any extra landfill.

**Q16** Do you agree that the policy framework should be tailored to stress the importance of meeting most of the need for new waste management facilities in or close to Aberdeen to both reduce the transport effects of development and make best use of the byproducts of waste-management processes?

**A16** Yes

**Q17** Do you agree that it is appropriate to leave it to the local development plans to decide whether a site-specific approach is needed or wanted in particular cases?

**A17** No

**Q18** Will this policy framework encourage the move towards more sustainable waste management in Aberdeen City and Shire on a timescale to meet Scottish Government targets?

**A18** No

**Q19** Is there anything more the strategic development plan could do to support the move towards the more sustainable management of waste?

**A19** Yes, Introduce waste charging.

## Proposals

**Q20** Do you agree that the new proposals listed above are of national or regional importance and should be identified in the strategic development plan as helping to deliver the vision and aims of the plan?

**A20** The proposals are not listed above. I presume you refer to the proposals on page 26 of the Strategic Plan 2009.

If this is the case, I do not agree that the Third Don Crossing is of National Importance. A view also taken by the Scottish Government and given as the reason for not calling in the plan after its approval without an inquiry despite over 600 objections and its rejection by the Government Reporter in an inquiry for its previous submission.

I disagree that it is of regional importance as there is no requirement for the development as it will not ease congestion but exacerbate it. It also contradicts the purpose of the Western Peripheral by encouraging traffic into the city centre and likewise undermines the effectiveness of the Bridge of Don and Ellon Park and Ride schemes and calls into question the proposed park and ride schemes.

**Q21** Are there any other proposals which meet these conditions which should be reflected in the strategic development plan?

**A21** The other proposal is the Union Terrace Garden development which I consider to be unsustainable as it will destroy a city centre carbon sink. I would however make the following proposals.

Congestion charges.

Car parking charges in City Centre and in streets around industrial areas

Funding from above to develop a comprehensive cross Aberdeen and Shire bus network.

Rapid bus only lanes. With unloading prohibited on bus lanes.

Efficient public transport ticketing system.

Extensive pedestrianisation of the city centre.

Enforced work place travel plans.

## **Appendix 2: Carbon neutrality in new development**

**Q22** Should there be flexibility around the target in the current structure plan for developments to be carbon neutral by 2016 given the challenging financial climate?

**A22** No

**Q23** Is there an advantage in setting one standard for both council areas or should the current approach (with responsibility given to the two local development plans) be kept?

**A23** The most rigorous standard should applied.

**Q24** Do you agree that option 4 provides an appropriate and consistent method to use to deliver improved levels of energy efficiency in new developments?

**A24** No, all aspects should be included.

**Q25** Is 2018 (a two-year delay from the current structure plan target) a realistic target for carbon neutrality? If not, what would a realistic and challenging target be?

**A25** No, 2016

## **Appendix 3: Water efficiency**

**Q26** Do you agree that using sustainability labelling within building standards is an appropriate way to deliver improved levels of water efficiency in new homes?

**A26** Yes.

**Q27** Is there an advantage in setting one standard for both council areas or should the current approach (with responsibility given to the two local development plans) be kept?

**A 27** Gold standard should be applied throughout.

**Q28** Do you agree that the gold level should be the standard that new homes are designed to achieve or would there be value in phasing this in gradually? What would be the advantages of doing it more gradually?

**A28** Apply gold standard.

**Q29** Do you agree that non-domestic buildings should have to include water-saving technology? How could this be achieved?

**A29** Yes. Apply metering.

**Q30** Are there any other measures that we should take to improve water efficiency either through the strategic development plan or in our other actions?

**A30** Metering is the all encompassing solution.

## **Appendix 6: Proposal Summaries – Carbon capture and storage**

**Q31** Do you agree that the strategic development plan should support the capturing and storing of CO<sub>2</sub> from existing fossil-fuel power stations as a way of tackling the effects of climate change and helping with the move towards low-carbon energy?

A 31 Sorry I am sceptical of the CCS technology in combating global warming. The Potsdam Institute, Germany estimate that, to keep the chances of exceeding a 2C increase in temperature to 20% or less between 2000 and 2050 the world can afford to release no more than 886 bn tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. We have already emitted 321bn tonnes between 2000 and 2010 which leaves us only 565bn for the next 40 years. The government claims this problem can be resolved through CCS, but much of the fuel intended to be extracted will be burned in cars, planes or domestic boilers, from which the CO<sub>2</sub> cannot be captured. CCS in power stations relies on technologies which have not yet been proven in combination, at scale. It looks to me that the primary purpose of CCS is to permit the construction of a new generation of coal plants. The UK Government proposes an emissions performance for electricity plants set at 450 grams CO<sub>2</sub> per kW hour, which is only slightly higher than the average for current coal plants built in the 1970s and 1980s. Even at this level new coal plants will be hard to build to this standard as coal produces more CO<sub>2</sub> per kW hour than other fossil fuels, but if the new coal burner is a CCS demonstration plant it is exempted from the emissions standard. A demonstration plant only needs to capture part of its output of CO<sub>2</sub> say just from 300 megawatts of a 4,000 megawatt station. In 2007 WWF listed Longannet as the most climate polluting plant in the UK relative to power output.

**Q32** Do you agree that proposals at Longannet (as it affects Aberdeen City and Shire) and Peterhead should be identified as proposals in the plan?

**A32** No for the above reasons.

## **Appendix 6: Proposal Summaries – Electricity transmission infrastructure**

**Q33** Do you agree that the strategic development plan should support the role of Peterhead in transmitting renewable energy and developing the links to Norway and north-east England in particular?

**A33** I support the proposal for a DC pan European power network. Construction of pumped storage hydro electric systems, or compressed air storage systems are feasible in Scotland. This would provide the security of energy self reliance and provide employment opportunities through capital funded infrastructure works more sustainable than road building.

**Q34** Do you agree that an electricity transmission masterplan is an appropriate way of co-ordinating the various projects in this area?

**A34** Yes