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P
Planning and Building Standards
Infrastructure Services
Aberdeenshire Council
Woodhill House
Aberdeen
AB16 5GB

Our ref: **01402 Environmental Report - Aberdeenshire Council - Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan**

31 July 2020

Dear [Redacted]

With reference to the Environmental Report you submitted to the SEA Gateway on 25 May 2020.

In accordance with Section 16 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Consultation Authorities have now considered the Environmental report you submitted. The individual responses from the Consultation Authorities are attached to this letter.

As the Consultation Authorities have now expressed their opinions, you should refer to the 2005 Act to consider your next step, while taking into account the opinions of the Consultation Authorities.

If you have any queries or would like me to clarify any points, please call me on [Redacted].

Kind regards

[Redacted]

Environmental Assessment and Policy Officer

Our ref: [REDACTED]
SG ref: [REDACTED]

If telephoning ask for:
[REDACTED]

31 July 2020

SEA Gateway Team
Scottish Government
[REDACTED]

By email only to: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam

ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020: STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Thank you for your Environmental Report (ER) consultation submitted in respect of the Aberdeenshire Strategic Environmental Assessment for Aberdeenshire Local Development Proposed Plan 2020. This was received by SEPA via the Scottish Government SEA Gateway on 13 April 2020.

We have used our scoping consultation response to consider the adequacy of the ER and this is used as the framework for detailed comments which can be found in Appendix 1. For convenience, these comments have been structured to reflect that of the ER. Please note, this response is in regard only to the adequacy and accuracy of the ER and any comments we may have on the Aberdeenshire Local Development Proposed Plan 2020 itself will be provided separately.

As the Aberdeenshire Local Development Proposed Plan 2020 is finalised, Aberdeenshire as Responsible Authority, will be required to take account of the findings of the Environmental Report and of views expressed upon it during this consultation period. As soon as reasonably practical after the adoption of the plan, the Responsible Authority should publish a statement setting out how this has occurred. We normally expect this to be in the form of an "SEA Statement" similar to that advocated in the [Scottish Government SEA Guidance](#). A copy of the SEA statement should be sent to the Consultation Authorities via the Scottish Government SEA Gateway on publication.

Should you wish to discuss this environmental report consultation, please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] or via our SEA Gateway at [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Senior Planning Officer



Chairman
[REDACTED]
Chief Executive
[REDACTED]



Ecopsy: [REDACTED]

71009 Appendix 1: SEPA Comments on the Environmental Report (ER)

General comments

We previously provided comments on the ER for the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan Main Issue Report (our reference PCS163520, dated 8 April 2020) and are pleased to note that most of our comments and recommendations have been incorporated into the revised ER and consequently the Proposed Plan. We welcome the inclusion of further mitigation measures and see that many of these have been taken forward to the Proposed Plan.

We have provided a separate consultation response to the Aberdeenshire Proposed Local Development Plan 2020 (PCS/170943) where we have commented in more detail on the proposed policies and settlement statements. These detailed comments outline some further mitigation measures we consider necessary to ensure the impacts of development of the sites are minimised as well as possible. The finalised ER should be updated to include these measures and any others identified through the ER consultation process.

In our response to the Proposed Plan we have also requested rewording to the proposed policies to further ensure mitigation of any impacts.

Detailed comments

1. Relationship with other Plans, Policies and Strategies (PPS)

- 1.1 As stated in our previous response, we consider all the PPS relevant to our interests as listed in Appendix 8.3 have been considered in the ER (we highlight that this appendix is incorrectly referenced as 8.2 in some of Table 8.2.2).

2. Baseline information

- 2.1 We previously welcomed the undertaking of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and reiterate we are generally satisfied that this has adequately informed the site assessment process and the mitigation measures put forward. However, we have provided detailed comments on specific site flood risk assessment in our Proposed Plan response and these should be taken forward to the Adopted Plan and the finalised ER. Significant changes we wish in the environmental assessment as a result of our review are discussed in more detail in section 4 below.

3. Environmental Problems

- 3.1 We highlighted previously additional environmental problems we wished to see be included in Table 5.3 and we welcome the inclusion of these here or now addressed in the policies of the Proposed Plan

4. Environmental Assessment

- 4.1 We thank the Council for providing up to date shape files of all the allocated sites within the Proposed Plan. This aided our independent assessment of the sites. We welcome that all

allocated sites, including P, R and BUS sites have now been included in the Assessment of the Proposed Plan Sites. Although we have not made a thorough check of every sites due to focussing on those relevant to our interests, we would highlight Memsie R1 site appears to be missing from the Assessment of the Proposed Sites and Table 8.7.1

4.2 As stated above, we have provided detailed comments on each allocation in the Proposed Plan and what further, if any, mitigation measures we require for each allocation in our response to the Proposed Plan. We will expect the reasoning for these additional mitigation measures to be included in the finalised ER where they are not already included. However, we highlight below a number of site assessments in Table 8.7.1 which we would particularly wish to be revised after our reassessment of these sites.

4.3 Tipperty OP2 (Formartine)

We previously highlighted that this site was at significant risk from flooding and do not agree with the SFRA that this can be dealt with by SUDS and buffer strips alone. Mitigation measures we have suggested are: removal from the Plan or; amendment of the site boundary and proposed site access to exclude areas of the flood extent or; a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is submitted prior to being allocated in the finalised Plan. Unless the latter one/both of the latter two mitigation measures are undertaken, we **request** the score for Climatic Factors be - -

4.4 The following sites are also at significant risk from flooding. We will only support the assessment score for Climatic Factors for each if these sites in Table 8.7.1 if the mitigation measures in the form of the modifications to the allocation texts we have requested are undertaken. If any of the allocation texts are not modified as requested then we **request** the score for Climatic Factors be - -

Auchnagatt OP1 (Buchan)
Peterhead OP6 (Buchan)
Pitmedden OP3 and R1 (Formartine)
Insch OP1 and R4 (Garioch)
Kemnay OP1 (Garioch)

4.5 Memsie OP2 (Banff and Buchan)

We have highlighted in our response to the Proposed Plan that any future development on the north side of Memsie may be limited during the Plan period due to there being no further dilution capacity in the receiving waters to take further private waste water treatment. We **request** that the text in the 'Comments and mitigation measures' column of Table 8.7.1 is revised to reflect our detailed comments to this allocation in our Proposed Plan response.

4.6 We are pleased to note only a handful of proposed allocations appear to be underlain by peat. We have requested that an additional developer requirement comprising a Peat Survey is added to the allocation text for the following sites that appear to be underlain by peat and we **request** that this requirement is added as a mitigation measure to the 'Comments and mitigation measures' column of Table 8.7.1 for each of these sites:

Oldmeldrum OP5 and R1, Durris Forest R1, Marywell BUS2, Portlethen OP4

We also **request**, due to possibly 50% of the site underlain by peat that the Soil score for Portlethen OP4 is changed to -/?

4.7 We welcomed the new opportunity to assess the cemetery allocations within the Proposed Plan after receipt of the shape files. And whilst we welcome the inclusion now of these sites in the environmental assessment, there are unfortunately a number of them where further

site investigations may indicate that some of the sites are not suitable for a cemetery use due to an unavoidable impact on groundwater and/or nearby watercourses. If these sites are included in the finalised Plan before any groundwater assessment is undertaken, we **request** the following amendments to Table 8.7.1 Water column and Comments and mitigation measures:

Banchory R2	-/?	Due to close proximity and likely hydraulic connectivity of the cemetery site to the River Dee, without a detailed groundwater assessment, the environmental impact on water factors are unknown.
Old Deer R1	-/?	Likely to have an adverse effect on soil and landscape but the effects unlikely to be significant. Due to the underlying geology and the presence of a private water supply, without a detailed groundwater assessment, the environmental impact on water factors are unknown.
Rathen R1	-/?	Due to close proximity and likely hydraulic connectivity of the cemetery site to the nearby watercourses, without a detailed groundwater assessment, the environmental impact on water factors are unknown.
Torphins R2	-/?	Due to close proximity and likely hydraulic connectivity of the cemetery site to the Beltie, without a detailed groundwater assessment, the environmental impact on water factors are unknown.

We confirm we are supportive of the assessment for Banff R1 in this regard.

- 4.7 We welcome the assessment for Cairnbulg and Inverallochy OP1 site in relation to soil factors. We highlight there are two other sites allocated in the Plan, Longside Airfield OP1 and Fordoun BUS2 which were former military airfields and which also require specialist assessments to inform appropriate mitigation. We therefore **request** the following amendments to Table 8.7.1 Soil column and additional text to the Comments and mitigation measures:

Longside Airfield OP1	0/?	Mitigations include specialist investigation for contamination due to former airfield use
Fordoun BUS2	0/?	Mitigations include specialist investigation for contamination due to former airfield use

5 Mitigation Measures

- 5.5 We note and welcome that most of our previous comments regarding mitigation measures have been incorporated into the ER and carried through to the Proposed Plan text. We have highlighted above, and in our more detailed response to the Proposed Plan, some additional site specific mitigation measures we wish to see in the finalised ER and Plan.

6 Monitoring Framework

- 6.1 We have no further comment to make on the monitoring framework.

7 Next Steps

- 7.1 We have no further comments to make in this respect.