

**SEA ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT – COVER NOTE
PART 1**

To:

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or

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PART 2

An Environmental Report is attached for

ABERDEENSHIRE CORE PATHS PLAN

The Responsible Authority is:

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

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Date

10 August 2011

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)



ABERDEENSHIRE CORE PATHS PLAN ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

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NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Environmental Report

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to provide information on the Aberdeenshire Core paths Plan (CPP). Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives on the environment. This Environmental Report will also provide an early and effective opportunity for the Consultation Authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this Report.

1.2 Key Stages of the SEA Process

The key stages in the Strategic Environmental Assessment process are:

- Screening – determining whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required.
- Scoping – deciding on the scope and level of detail of the Environmental Report.
- Environmental Report – publishing an Environmental Report on the PPS and its environmental effects and consulting on that report.
- Adoption – Adopting the PPS following any modifications required to address the comments received during consultation.
- Post Adoption Statement – provides information on how environmental considerations have been integrated into the PPS; how the environmental report has been taken into account; how opinions expressed during various consultations have been taken into account; the reasons for choosing the PPS as adopted in the light of other reasonable alternatives; and
- Monitoring – the measures taken to monitor significant environmental effects which will enable the identification of any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and the implementation of appropriate mitigation.

1.3 The Context of the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan and Relationship with other Plans and Strategies

Under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, it is the duty of Aberdeenshire Council as Access Authority to draw up a plan for a system of paths known as 'Core Paths'. This system should be sufficient to give the public reasonable access throughout their area. In drawing up the Plan, the Access Authority should take account of the likelihood of the public using a path; the desirability of encouraging the use of it and the need to balance the rights of those taking access with the interests of the owners of the land.

Within Aberdeenshire, the Core Paths Plan as a whole will aim to deliver the following objectives:

- Improve people's health and wellbeing by providing better opportunities for access
- Assist in the integration of access with land management and the natural environment

- Have a wider functional benefit than recreation e.g. provide safer routes to schools and improve community links
- Encourage people to consider alternatives to car use
- Provide opportunities for multi-use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders, water borne users and the less able although not all paths are required to cater for all users.
- Contribute to encouraging tourism to the area
- Provide routes which are welcoming and well signposted.

This Environmental Report includes an outline of the CPP relationships with other relevant PPS including international, European and national level PPS and how the environmental objectives of those various PPS have been taken into account.

1.4 **Baseline Data and Environmental Issues**

This section of the Environmental Report describes:

- The current state of the environment in the CPP area
- How this might change in the future in the absence of the CPP
- The environmental characteristics of the area likely to be significantly affected by the CPP
- The existing environmental issues which are relevant to the CPP including those relating to areas of particular environmental importance.

The baseline data is presented under the broad topics of:

- Biodiversity Flora and Fauna
- Population and Human Health
- Soils
- Water
- Air
- Climatic Factors
- Material Assets
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape

Following scoping, Aberdeenshire Council scoped out the environmental topics which the CPP would have little or no potential effect on leaving the following with the potential environmental trends and issues:

- Biodiversity Flora and Fauna – potential disturbance and damage to designated sites from increased access
- Population and Human Health – insufficient paths would lead to a reduction in the opportunity to take exercise
- Material Assets – improvement in the value of material assets through the creation of more access opportunities
- Cultural Heritage – potential for damage to historical features through carelessness and footfall if effective public awareness is not provided

1.5 **Assessment of Effects**

The assessment of the Plan was carried out as a two stage process. The first stage was an assessment of the Plan objectives against the compatibility of the SEA objectives. None of the objectives was found to be incompatible and no changes were therefore considered necessary.

The second part of the process involved assessing all the paths selected for inclusion in the Plan against the SEA objectives. This exercise predicted the likely environmental effect that each path may have. A summary of the overall findings is contained in the Environmental Report in Table 8. No paths were found to have an overall negative impact on the environment, most paths were found to have either a neutral or positive impact.

The majority of routes designated as Core Paths in Aberdeenshire already exist. The principal effect of the CPP will be to promote routes for use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and canoeists where access to inland water has been designated. As a consequence, the impacts associated with the CPP will arise primarily through the potential for increased use of existing routes and the creation of a small number of new routes.

There is a risk that increased use in particularly sensitive areas could result in impact caused by improper use, however, this will be mitigated by improved signage and so is unlikely to cause any significant adverse environmental effects.

Some existing routes will require upgrading to make them fit for purpose and a small number of new routes will need to be created. There is the potential for minor short term negative impact during this process but this will be mitigated for and the resulting improved paths will reduce any potential long term negative impact. Overall, the health and environmental benefits that the CPP can deliver, in terms of improving the provision of dedicated routes for non-motorised forms of transport, encouragement for recreational use of paths and the protection that the paths will be afforded as a result of their designation, will outweigh any minor effect on the environment that arises through increased patronage and improvement works.

1.6 **Mitigation**

As the environmental impacts of the Core Paths Plan have been assessed as largely neutral, or in some cases positive, specific positive mitigation measures are not felt to be necessary. However, if the development of a Core Path is likely to have an impact on a Natura 2000 site then this should be subject to appropriate assessment. Where the promotion of Core Paths may have an impact on particularly sensitive areas, signage and interpretation will be used to raise awareness and encourage responsible behaviour.

1.7 **Monitoring**

The monitoring of the effects of implementing the CPP will be undertaken by Council staff on a routine basis. This will include recording the condition of Core Paths and the identification of any environmental impacts e.g. erosion, damage to vegetation cover etc. Reported incidents of disturbance to wildlife will also be recorded.

1.8 **Comment on the SEA Process**

Some of the difficulties, weaknesses and limitations encountered in the SEA process are listed below:

- The development of the CPP and the SEA process took a considerable length of time and some environmental and planning legislation changed during that period requiring the Report to be updated before publication
- The key stage of Scoping was originally omitted from the process and the preparation of the Report was delayed to address this.
- Because the Report has had to focus on broad objectives and high level strategic actions, full effects will not be completely understood until low level plans for implementation have been developed.

1.9 **Consultation**

The Environmental Report is published for consultation with the draft CPP. The public consultation period is scheduled to last for eight weeks following the publication of this Environmental Report. Following consultation on the Environmental Report, the CPP will be revised and updated taking account of stakeholder and public comments.

An SEA Statement will be prepared and made available to the Consultation Authorities (and made public) setting out how the findings of the public and stakeholder consultation exercise and the environmental assessment have been incorporated into the development of the CPP before the CPP is finalised for adoption.

Any queries regarding the SEA of the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan should be addressed to:

**Outdoor Access
Planning and Environmental Services
Gordon House
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AB51 3WA
cpp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk**

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of this Environmental Report

2.1.1 As part of the preparation of the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan, Aberdeenshire Council has carried out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 which requires that plans such as the Core Paths Plan (CPP) are subject to a process that identifies and evaluates the likely environmental effects of the Plan.

2.1.2 The SEA process is a systematic method for considering the likely environmental effects of certain Plans, Programmes and Strategies (PPS) including the CPP. SEA aims to:

- Integrate environmental factors into PPS preparation and decision making;
- Improve PPS and enhance environmental protection;
- Increase public participation in decision making; and
- Facilitate openness and transparency in decision making.

2.1.3 The key stages of the SEA process are:

Screening	Determining whether the PPS is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required.
Scoping	Deciding on the scope and level of detail of the Environmental Report.
Environmental Report	Publishing an Environmental Report on the PPS and its environmental effects and consulting on that report
Adoption	Adopting the PPS following any modification which takes into account comments received during the consultation
Monitoring	Monitoring significant environmental effects in a manner that enables the Responsible Authority (RA) to identify any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and undertake appropriate mitigation.

2.1.4 The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

- provide information on the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan; identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan and its reasonable alternatives;
- provide an early and effective opportunity for the Consultation authorities and the public to offer views on any aspect of this Environmental Report.

2.2 Key Facts

2.2.1 The key facts relating to the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan are set out below:

Table 1 – Key Facts

Responsible Authority	Aberdeenshire Council
Title of Plan	Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan
What prompted the Plan	Section 17 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003
Plan Subject	Core Paths
Period covered by the Plan	Starts 2011 but has no end dates for the use of such a designation
Frequency of update	Probably every 5 years following adoption
Area covered by the Plan	The Aberdeenshire Council Area excluding area covered by the Cairngorms National Park (4680 km ²)
Plan purpose	To identify a basic framework of core paths sufficient to provide reasonable non motorised access throughout the area. This basic framework of paths will be both in and around local communities and will also link into and support wider networks of other paths. Access to inland water will also be included
Contact point	Alastair Fullwood Environment Planner Viewmount Arduthie Road Stonehaven AB Alastair.fullwood@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

2.3 SEA and CPP Activities to Date

2.3.1 The main SEA and CPP activities undertaken to date in relation to the preparation of the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan are summarised in Table 2 below:

SEA Action/Activity	When Undertaken	Notes
Preparation of Draft Core Paths Plan commenced	April – June 2006	First phase of public consultation undertaken to identify local access needs
Screening Report submitted to SEA Gateway	2 November 2006	
Responses to Screening Report received from Consultation Authorities	November/December 2006	Aberdeenshire Council determined an SEA was required
Criteria for candidate core path selection developed and agreed with ALOAF	December/January 2006/2007	Candidate paths selected through first stage process
Refined criteria and identified CPP objectives with ALOAF	March 2007	Paths assessed against criteria/objectives
Further consultation with community councils and landowners to identify additional routes to meet sufficiency criteria	April – November 2007	Additional routes assessed against criteria/objectives
Candidate routes ground proofed by Ranger Service	November 2007- March 2008	Condition and suitability of routes checked on the ground
Candidate routes mapped, ongoing landowner consultations, first draft CPP prepared for informal consultation	June – September 2008	
Responses analysed and CPP reviewed and modified, ongoing landowner consultations	October 2008 – March 2009	
Final Draft Core Paths Plan prepared for Formal Consultation	June – September 2009	Formal consultation to run for 12 weeks
SEA Scoping Report published for consultation	September - October 2009	Comments received from Consultation Authorities taken into account in the preparation of the Environmental Report(see Appendix 5)
SEA Draft Environmental Report published for consultation	August 2011	Consultation period of 8 weeks

3 CONTEXT

3.1 Outline and Plan Objectives

- 3.1.1 Schedule 3 of the Environmental assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental report includes “*outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme*”. The purpose of this section is to explain the nature, contents, objectives and timescale of the Core Paths Plan.
- 3.1.2 Under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (LRSA) it is the duty of each Access Authority to draw up a plan for a system of paths known as “Core Paths”. This system should be sufficient to give the public reasonable access throughout their area. In drawing up the Plan, the Access Authority should take account of the likelihood of the public using a path: the desirability of encouraging the use of it and the need to balance the rights of those taking access with the interests of the owners of land.
- 3.1.3 Within Aberdeenshire, the Core Paths Plan as a whole will aim to deliver the following objectives:
- Improve people’s health and well being by providing better opportunities for access.
 - Assist in the integration of access with land management and the natural environment.
 - Have a wider functional benefit than recreation, e.g. provide safer routes to schools and improve community links.
 - Encourage people to consider alternatives to car use.
 - Provide opportunities for multi use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders, water borne users and the less able although not all paths are required to cater for all users.
 - Contribute to encouraging tourism to the area.
 - Provide routes which are welcoming and sign posted.

3.2 Relationship with other Plans and Strategies

- 3.2.1 Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes an outline of the CPP relationships with other relevant PPS and how the environmental protection objectives have been taken into account in the PPS preparation. This section covers these issues and describes the policy context within which the PPS operates and the constraints and targets that this context imposed on the Plan.
- 3.2.2 The key legislation, plans, programmes, policies and strategies at an international, European and national level are contained in full in Appendix 2. Table 3 below provides a summary of those that are relevant to the Core Paths Plan

Table 3 – Relationship with other Plans and Policies

Name of Plan, Programme, Strategy or Environmental Protection Measure	
International Level	
1.	Council Directive 92/43/EEC <i>on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (known as the Habitats Directive)</i>
2.	Council Directive 79/409/EEC <i>on the conservation of wild birds (known as the Birds Directive)</i>
3.	Council Directive 2000/60/EC <i>on establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy (known as the Water Framework Directive) – integrated river basin management for Europe</i>
4.	European Diversity Framework (COM 1998/42)
5.	Kyoto Protocol (1992)
6.	European Framework on Sustainable Development (2001)
7.	European Landscape Convention (2000)
8.	EU Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection (2005)
9.	Council Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks <i>(known as the Floods Directive)</i>
National Level	
10.	Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009
11.	DTI (2003) Energy White Paper – Our Energy Future – Creating a low carbon economy
12.	The UK's Shared Framework for Sustainable Development (2005)
13.	UK Biodiversity Action Plan 1994
14.	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
15.	The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004
16.	The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c) Amendment (No. 2) (Scotland) Regulations 2008
17.	Planning to halt the loss of biodiversity – Biodiversity conservation standards for planning in the United Kingdom – Code of Practice, 2006
18.	Office of Public Sector Information, 2006 <i>The Planning (Scotland) Act 2006</i>
19.	The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2002) " <i>Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment</i> " 2nd Edition
20.	The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003
21.	Historic Scotland Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (withdrawn)
22.	Historic Scotland (2008) Scottish Historic Environment Policy
23.	Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy 2005
24.	Changing Our Ways: Scotland's Climate Change Programme (2006)
25.	National Physical Activity Strategy (2003) - <i>Let's Make Scotland More Active</i>
26.	Disability Discrimination Act 1995 & 2005
27.	Equality Act 2010
28.	Scottish Planning Policy (2010)
29.	PAN 51: Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (Revised 2006)
30.	PAN 58: Environmental Impact Assessment (Revised 2006)
31.	PAN 59: Improving Town Centres (1999)
32.	PAN 60: Planning for Natural Heritage (August 2000)
33.	PAN 65: Planning and Open Space (2003)
34.	PAN 77: Designing Safer Spaces (March 2006)
35.	PAN 78: Inclusive Design (March 2006)
36.	Protection of Badgers Act 1992
37.	Healthy Eating, Active Living: Action Plan to improve diet, increase physical activity and tackling obesity. (June 2008)
38.	Health Impact Assessment of Greenspace - A Guide (Greenspace Scotland)
39.	Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)
40.	Scottish Planning Policy 23 (SPP23): Revoked by SPP item 27

Regional Level	
41.	Finalised Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan (2009)
42.	North East Scotland Biodiversity (2001) <i>North East Scotland's Biodiversity Action Plan</i>
43.	Aberdeenshire Council (2005) Forest and Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City
44.	Aberdeenshire Council (2008) River Dee Catchment Management Plan
Local Level	
45.	Aberdeenshire Community Plan
46.	Aberdeenshire Local Plan
47.	Aberdeenshire Parks and Open Space Strategy 2006
48.	Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (April 2007)
49.	Aberdeenshire Countryside Access Strategy (1998)
50.	Aberdeenshire Council Economic Development Priorities
51.	Aberdeenshire Council Sustainability Charter (2004)
52.	Aberdeenshire Council Carbon Management Programme (2007)
53.	Aberdeenshire Council Pitches Strategy Draft (2008)
54.	Aberdeenshire Council Sports and Active Lifestyle Strategy (2005 -2008)
55.	Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen, South and Central Aberdeenshire, Banff and Buchan and the Cairngorms

From the analysis of the relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives, the key points arising from this analysis are that the core paths plan should:

- avoid adverse impacts on statutory and non-statutory protected sites for natural heritage interests e.g.
 - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - National Scenic Areas (NSA)
 - Sites of Interest to Natural Science (SINS), Areas of Landscape Value (ALV)
 - Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- ensure compliance with statutory provisions for statutory protected species and with regional biodiversity plans;
- promote biodiversity and protect of all wild, rare and vulnerable birds, their nests, eggs and habitats;
- maintain and restore natural habitats to ensure biodiversity;
- maintain and support landscape character and local distinctiveness;
- promote the provision of access links to existing footpaths;
- encourage the promotion of sustainable communities that focus on the sustainable use of natural resources;
- support strategies that help to limit or reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases;
- encourage increased use of renewable energy resources and more efficient use energy and water;
- protect wildlife from disturbance, injury intentional destruction;
- promote, safe environment, clean environment and good quality services;
- promote sustainable alternatives to car and reduce congestion traffic pollution through the promotion and provision of well-designed paths;
- promote economic growth, social Inclusion, environmental improvement, health and safety;
- promote strategies that do not degrade the coastal environment;
- promote the economy, support the community and the public service;
- set the framework for development consents for major housing developments.

- help to promote protect and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment;
- seek to promote watercourses as valuable landscape features and wildlife habitats;
- ensure that the water quality and good ecological status objectives of the Water Framework Directive are maintained.

3.3 Current State of the Environment

- 3.3.1 Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of “the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme” and “the environmental context within which the Core Paths Plan operates and the constraints and targets that this context imposes on the Plan”.
- 3.3.2 It is a requirement of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that sufficient information on the current state of the environment, an Environmental Baseline, be gathered for the purposes of the Environmental Report. The list of the environmental baseline information gathered is outlined in Appendix 3. A brief overview of the current state of the environment in Aberdeenshire is given below.
- 3.3.3 A range of sites in Aberdeenshire have been recognised for their wildlife and geological interest. These include:
- 18 Special Areas of Conservation
 - 10 Special Protection Areas
 - 4 Ramsar Sites
 - 82 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
 - 2 Local Nature Reserves
 - 50 Geological Conservation Review Sites (also includes Aberdeen City and the Cairngorms National Park)
 - Sites of Interest to Natural Science (SINS) are currently subject of a review in Aberdeenshire.
 - Aberdeenshire also has a wealthy historic building environment of national regional and local importance Including:
 - 553 Scheduled Ancient Monuments
 - 3711 Listed Buildings
 - 36 Conservation areas
 - 32 Gardens and Designed Landscapes

Note: A single monument can appear in more than one category and there is an element of double counting.
 - Aberdeenshire has over 17900 archaeological sites recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)
 - Full details of designated sites are contained in Appendix 3.

3.4 Evolution of the Environment without the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan

3.4.1 Without this PPS it is envisaged that the likely future changes to the environmental baseline are inevitable due to natural processes but also due to human interventions that are unconnected with the core paths plan. A number of the PPS listed in Table 3 under “Regional” and “Local” including The Aberdeenshire Local Plan, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan (2002), the Local Transport Strategy and the Local Housing Strategy Plan will involve physical development which will have environmental consequences; both positive and adverse. It should be noted that the existing environmental problems described in the previous section would persist in the absence of the plan being introduced. Potential changes to the environmental baseline without the strategy discussed under the environmental issues are listed in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Potential Environmental Changes without the Core Paths Plan

SEA Topic	Possible changes without the PPS
Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora	The effects on biodiversity predicted due to the strategy would not occur and adverse effects on biodiversity caused by other activities would remain. This includes the loss and fragmentation of habitats caused by development promoted by the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan and Local Plan Development Plan among others
Population and Human health	<p>Without an Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan it is considered that the likely changes to the area will be that public access will continue at the present or possibly increased level but in a largely unmanaged and disjointed manner</p> <p>There is also likely to be an increase in the potential for conflict between different user groups and between access users and land managers.</p> <p>The effects of obesity on human health from inactivity could remain in the absence of adequate core paths provision. The development of an open space and pitch strategy, for example, could promote active walking and recreation, and therefore, without a strategy some physical activity could increase. Besides physical activity is a lifestyle issue and related to personal circumstances rather than mere development of core paths</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>This will lead to an increased risk of damage or disturbance to cultural heritage resources.</p> <p>The effects on the historic environment resulting from the plan may not occur if the implementation of the strategy avoids historic sites. However, the effects associated with other strategies and plans, such as the Local Housing Strategy, Local Transport Strategy, Local Development Plan and the Structure Plan, would remain.</p>
Material Asset	Although recreation and access assets may not be created, other PPS being implemented in the Shire, such as Local Housing Strategy, Economic Development Priorities or Local Development Plan are likely to enhance asset and wealth creation

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3.5 Environmental Issues

- 3.5.1 Schedule 3 paragraph 4 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that the Environmental Report includes a description of existing environmental problems, in particular those relating to any areas of particular environmental importance. The purpose of this section is to explain how existing environmental problems will affect or be affected by Core Paths Plan and whether the Plan is likely to aggravate, reduce or otherwise affect existing environmental problems.
- 3.5.2 Environmental problems were identified through discussions with Aberdeenshire Council Natural and Built Heritage Team and analysis of the baseline data. Relevant environmental problems are summarised in Table 5 below:

Table 5 - Environmental Trends/Issues

SEA Topic	Key Trends/Issues	Relationship to CPP
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	<p>Potential disturbance and damage to designated sites from increased access to sites</p> <p>Potential disturbance to vulnerable sensitive sites by unauthorised/illegal access and motorised transport</p>	<p>The designation of a CPP will influence the nature and location of outdoor access activities</p> <p>Opportunities may exist to prevent degradation of locally important sites through managed access</p> <p>May be opportunities through Core Path Planning to improve knowledge and understanding of biodiversity</p> <p>May be opportunities to discourage or prevent unauthorized/illegal access</p>
Population and Human Health	<p>Insufficient paths could result in a reduction in opportunity to take exercise and create an overall reduction in the level of human health</p>	<p>Core Paths will increase the opportunities to take part in physical activities and reduce dependence on motorised transport</p> <p>The promotion of Core Paths will increase the awareness of the opportunities for physical activity</p> <p>Provision of Core Paths could increase opportunities for functional access and contribute to greater social inclusion</p>
Material assets	<p>Improvement in the value of material assets through the creation of more open space and access opportunities</p>	<p>The designation of a Core Paths Plan will result in an increase in the level of managed outdoor access opportunities</p>
Cultural Heritage	<p>Public use of paths can damage historical features through carelessness and foot fall if effective public awareness is not provided</p>	<p>The designation of a Core Paths Plan will result in an increase in the level of managed outdoor access opportunities</p>

	Potential for path improvement works to have negative effects on historical remains	May be opportunities through Core Path Planning to improve knowledge and understanding of cultural heritage
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3.6 Scope, Content and Objectives of SEA

- 3.6.1 Due to the nature and subject of the strategy, there are a number of SEA topics that, in the opinion of the Responsible Authority, do not require to be assessed in detail in the SEA. The scoping process was therefore used to focus the assessment on the most relevant aspects of the environment upon which the potential for significant effects exists.
- 3.6.2 The scope and content of the SEA was guided by the information requirements in Schedule 3 of the Act as identified in Table 5 below. The table also presents a justification for the view of the Responsible Authority as to which topic areas should be scoped out of this assessment.
- 3.6.3 Table 6 summarises the view of the Council as to which SEA issues should be scoped in or and the justification for that view.

Table 6 - Scoping of SEA Issues

SEA issues	Scoped in	Scoped out	Justification
Biodiversity, flora, fauna	√		There is the potential for proposed Core Paths to cause damage to habitats and disturbance to protected species. There is however the potential for a positive impact through the management of access and the diversion of paths away from sensitive areas
Population and human health	√		The potential exists for significant positive impacts related to social inclusion and access to recreational opportunities, and reducing levels of isolation through increased access to Core Paths. The potential exists for significant positive impacts relating to human health through increased opportunity for, and access to, recreation and physical activity.
Soil		√	Most proposed Core Paths exist already. Any upgrading of existing paths or construction of a small number of new paths will not damage the soil structure unless in exceptional circumstances and then mitigating work would

			be carried out. This should be monitored. At the screening stage, SEPA was of the view that the CPP is <i>"unlikely to have significant strategic environmental effects"</i> in relation to soils.
Water		√	The Core Paths Plan provides for non motorised access to inland waters. It is unlikely that any potential increase in use of these waters will have an effect on water quality. At the screening stage, SEPA was of the view that the CPP is <i>"unlikely to have significant strategic environmental effects"</i> in relation to water.
Air		√	The provision of the CPP may result in a small shift from motorised transport to walking and cycling but it is considered that the impact on air quality will be insignificant. The impact of dust, odour or industrial emissions will also be insignificant. At the screening stage, SEPA was of the view that the CPP is <i>"unlikely to have significant strategic environmental effects"</i> in relation to air.
Climatic factors		√	The provision of a Core Paths network will have no quantifiable effect on climatic factors. At the screening stage, SEPA was of the view that the CPP is <i>"unlikely to have significant strategic environmental effects"</i> in relation to climatic factors.
Material assets	√		A Core Paths network has the potential to better integrate public access with other land use activities leading to a significant positive impact.
Cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	√		A Core Paths network has the potential for both positive and negative impacts on cultural heritage. Access to and a better understanding of cultural heritage could have a positive impact. Negative impacts could result from increasing numbers resulting in damage to heritage sites and structures.
Landscape		√	The designation of core paths in Aberdeenshire will not introduce any significant new features into the landscape that do not currently exist. Nor will it impact significantly on important or sensitive landscapes. However, given the potential evolution of the CPP over a number of years, it is

			acknowledged that visual effects may arise from, for example, the introduction of signage and from path erosion from increased future use. However, this is proposed to be addressed within the mitigation measures presented in the ER.
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3.6.4 Based on the environmental topics defined for this SEA and recognising the level and scope of the Plan and the likelihood of significant environmental effects it is concluded that the SEA should be structured around four key environmental topics:

- Biodiversity, flora and fauna
- Population and human health
- Material assets
- Cultural heritage

3.6.5 SEA objectives have been drawn up for those SEA issues scoped into the assessment (see above). These objectives take account of the key environmental trends and issues outlined in Section 3.4.2 and their relevance to the specific scope and influence of the Plan. The environmental effects of the Plan have been assessed against these objectives.

3.6.6 Table 6 below shows the SEA objectives and sample criteria that have been used to assess the impact (both positive and negative) of the Plan on these:

Table 7 - SEA Objectives

SEA Topic	Objective
Biodiversity (Flora and fauna)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species. 2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses 3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage
Population and Human Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Promote healthy living 5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime 6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations
Material assets	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Make best use of existing infrastructure 8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces
Cultural Heritage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage 10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings. 11. To promote responsible access to and greater understanding of cultural heritage

4 ASSESSMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION

4.1 Assessment of Alternatives

4.1.1 The SEA Directive and the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 require the Environmental Report to consider the impacts of the alternatives to the proposed plan.

4.1.2 As the preparation of a Core Paths Plan is a statutory requirement of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2005 there are no alternatives available and "do nothing" is not an option. However, a wide number of possible routes were identified during the consultation process undertaken as part of the Plan development. This consultation process aimed to identify where people take access, where issues currently exist and to help identify local demand for core paths. This last aim was important because the Core Paths Plan must be sufficient to provide reasonable non-motorised access throughout the area.

4.1.3 In addition to those routes identified through the consultation process other routes were identified from the following sources:

- Routes which Aberdeenshire Council have a record of being claimed, asserted or vindicated rights of way
- Path networks or other routes which are managed or promoted by the Council
- Routes which are known to Aberdeenshire Council as being managed or promoted by others

4.1.4 A number of new or aspirational routes were identified during the process which have not been included in the Plan as it is expected that routes designated as candidate core paths should be "fit for purpose" within two years of adoption of the Plan. Aspirational routes either do not currently exist or require considerable capital cost to make "fit for purpose" so these routes will be considered for inclusion in subsequent reviews of the Plan following adoption and have not been considered as part of the assessment process.

4.1.5 It was considered to be impractical and unnecessary to assess the environmental effect of all of the routes initially identified. Accordingly, the routes were assessed against criteria that were developed in consultation with the Local Access Forum. The routes were initially assessed to determine the level of demand and the potential function. Those routes which were retained after this stage were subjected to a further assessment, taking into account land management issues, path condition/cost and environmental considerations. The overall sufficiency of the Core Paths network was considered, alongside these criteria, before the final selection of Paths was made.

4.1.6 The environmental assessment therefore focused on the candidate Core Paths that remained in the network following the selection process. Had this assessment identified Paths that posed a significant environmental risk, alternative options would have been investigated prior to considering mitigation measures.

4.2 Assessment of the Draft Core Paths Plan

4.2.1 The assessment of the candidate Core Paths was carried out as a two stage process. The first stage of the process was an assessment of the compatibility of the Core Paths Plan objectives with the SEA objectives. Thereafter, all of the Paths selected for inclusion in the draft Core Paths Plan were assessed against the SEA objectives.

4.2.2 The Core Path Plan objectives are repeated below in the numerical order in which they appear in the matrix used to assess their compatibility with the SEA objectives:

1. Improve peoples' health and well-being by providing better opportunities for access
2. Assist in the integration of access with land management and the natural environment
3. Have a wider functional benefit than recreation, e.g. provide safer routes to schools and improve community links
4. Encourage people to consider alternatives to car use
5. Provide opportunities for multi-use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders, water borne users and the less able although not all paths are required to cater for all users
6. Contribute to encouraging tourism to the area.
7. Provide routes which are welcoming and signposted.

4.2.3 The results of the assessment of CPP objectives against SEA objectives are shown in the matrix below. It will be seen that CPP objectives were found to be compatible with SEA objectives.

Table 8 - Core Paths Plan Objectives Matrix

CPP Objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SEA Objectives							
1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife site and protected species	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	√	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	√	√	√
4. Promote healthy living	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	√	√	√	<input type="checkbox"/>	√
5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

7. Make best use of existing infra-structure	□	√	√	√	√	√	√
8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	□	√	□	□	□	□	√
10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	□	√	□	□	□	□	√
11. To promote responsible access to and greater understanding of cultural heritage	√	√	□	√	□	√	√

Key:

- √ = **Compatible**
- x = **Not compatible**
- = **Not linked**

- 4.2.4 All candidate Core Paths selected for inclusion in the draft Core Paths Plan were assessed against the SEA objectives in order to predict the environmental impacts and evaluate their significance. The assessment took into account the period over which any potential impacts might occur, whether they are direct or indirect, permanent or temporary. The outcome of this assessment was recorded on an assessment matrix contained in Appendix 4.
- 4.2.5 Table 8 below shows the percentage of paths that were assessed as having a very positive, positive, positive/negative neutral, uncertain, negative or very negative environmental effect when assessed against the SEA objectives.

Table 9 - Summary of Results of Core Paths Assessments

SEA Objectives	Very Positive	Positive	Positive/Negative	Neutral	Uncertain	Negative	Very Negative
1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	0%	1.2%	0%	90.01%	0.1%	8.69%	0%
2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	0%	3.53%	58.04%	84.9%	3.53%	0%	0%
3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	0%	0.64%	99.36%	0%	0%	0%	0%
4. Promote healthy living	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
7. Make best use of existing infrastructure	0%	98.08%	0%	1.92%	0%	0%	0%
8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	0%	10%	99.68%	0.32%	0%	0%	0%
9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	0%	18.33%	2.60%	77.18%	2.89%	0%	0%
10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	0%	5.79%	0%	92.28%	1.93%	0%	0%
11. To promote responsible access to and greater understanding of cultural heritage	0%	33.44%	0%	65.60%	0.96%	0%	0%

4.2.6 A summary of the overall findings of the Core Paths Plan assessment is shown in Table 10 below:

Table 10 - Summary of Findings of Core Paths Assessment

SEA Objective	Predicted Likely Impact	Comment
Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	Neutral/Negative	A number of candidate paths run close to or through designated sites particularly in coastal areas. These paths are however, in most instances, existing routes encouraging use on well-defined paths that is minimising damage/ disturbance in sensitive areas. Signage and interpretation is often provided to promote responsible behavior. No works are proposed that would adversely impact on these sites or species.
Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	Neutral/Positive/Negative	The majority of the candidate core paths are existing routes. Once approved, the additional management and monitoring of the core paths network will ensure that potential damage/disturbance will be minimised. Relevant surveys will be carried out prior to construction of new routes in order to identify and protect important habitats and species and where possible help create green corridors. In the very small number of cases where the potential impact is unknown or uncertain, the paths will be monitored and appropriate mitigation action taken.
Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	Positive/Negative	The development and promotion of the Core Paths network is likely to encourage more opportunity to visit the countryside. Appropriate signage and interpretation on these routes will aid awareness and understanding of the natural heritage and mitigate the negative affects of increased footfall and disturbance
Promote healthy living	Very Positive	It is hoped that easier access to well signed path networks from centres of population (over 100) will enable greater awareness of the opportunities for access and encourage the public to become more active and therefore improve health and well-being.
Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	Positive	Providing Core Paths for all to access the outdoors will provide young people with opportunities to walk, cycle and horse ride. Also encouraging more use of path networks will provide a deterrent to those who are intent on misusing routes for illegal activities. Better used

		and managed paths will also discourage vandalism
Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	Positive	The Core Paths network not only provides access to the countryside but also to shops, schools and services particularly for those who have limited access to motorised transport. This plus the encouragement of a more active population due to greater facilities on the doorstep will increase the feel good factor for today communities and protect routes for use by future generations.
Make best use of existing infrastructure	Positive	The majority of candidate Core Paths are existing routes, made up of a range of rural and semi urban paths, tracks and pavements. The proposed new routes help to link these existing routes and provide key links between settlements, open spaces and the wider countryside.
Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	Positive/Negative	By focusing on providing Core Paths in and around settlements, many of these paths link to the wider path networks around the settlements and where possible to key green spaces in and around the settlement therefore protecting and enhancing these opportunities. Potential for impact from increased footfall and disturbance but mitigated by promoting responsible behaviour
To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	Neutral/Positive	The majority of candidate Core Paths do not have an impact on the historic environment or cultural heritage. Many paths already in existence have been provided to direct users around sensitive sites. In a few cases the development of new paths will add further protection.
To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	Neutral/Positive	A number of candidate paths run close to or through designated sites particularly in urban/semi urban area. These paths are however, in most instances, existing routes encouraging use on well-defined paths that is minimizing damage/ disturbance to these sensitive areas. Signage and interpretation is often provided to promote responsible behavior. No works are proposed that would adversely impact on these sites or buildings.
To promote responsible access to and greater understanding of cultural heritage	Neutral/Positive	The development and promotion of the Core Paths network is likely to encourage more opportunity for communities to get out and about in their area. Appropriate signage and interpretation on these routes will aid awareness and understanding of the built and cultural heritage.

4.3 Cumulative and Synergistic Impacts

4.3.1 The individual assessment of all candidate Core Paths has determined that the majority of paths will not have any significant environmental impact. Most of the paths are existing and new routes will be sited to avoid any significant environmental effects and should not impact adversely on SEA objectives. However, the cumulative and synergistic effects of the Core Paths Plan in its entirety must also be assessed.

4.3.2 Overall, it is considered that as the candidate Core Paths have a largely neutral effect, the development of the Core Paths Plan is not likely to cause cumulative or synergistic impacts. With regard to human health and material assets, it is predicted that the Core Paths Plan will actually have an overall positive impact. The establishment of a network of designated and signposted paths throughout Aberdeenshire will largely meet the criteria drawn up to assess the impact on those SEA objectives; namely provide opportunities for access to physical activity, reduce dependency on motorised forms of transport, promote greater social inclusion, provide access to leisure and recreation opportunities, provide access to other services, prevent loss/damage of path networks and green spaces and improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces. In addition, the implementation of the Plan will give the Council the opportunity to promote the Scottish Outdoor Access Code to spread as widely as possible an understanding of the principles of responsible and reasonable access.

4.4 Mitigation Measures

4.4.1 Schedule 3 paragraph 7 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires an explanation of “the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme”. Table 10 below sets out any environmental problems that are likely to remain on implementation of the Core Paths Plan and summarises proposed measures for the prevention, reduction and offset of significant adverse effects.

Table 11 sets out environmental problems that are likely to remain on implementation of the Core Paths Plan and summarises proposed measures for the prevention, reduction and offset of significant adverse effects.

Table 11 - Proposed Mitigation Measures

SEA Issue	Existing Problem	Impact of Core Paths	Proposed measures for the Reduction/Prevention and Offset of Significant Adverse Effects	Person (persons) responsible for taking action
Biodiversity Flora and Fauna	Overall decline in biodiversity, sensitivity of international, national and locally important nature sites	Potential impacts from the construction of new paths. Potential impacts due to greater use of the access	There is a requirement to consider biodiversity effects of construction, use and management of the path network through the Core Path	Aberdeenshire Council Environment Officers in consultation with SNH

		network resulting in disturbance and damage to habitats.	Planning process and at individual project level. SNH and Aberdeenshire Council Environment Team should be consulted as appropriate.	
Cultural Heritage	Past loss or decline of nationally and locally important historic sites	Potential impacts from the construction of new paths. Potential impacts due to greater use of the access network resulting in damage to historic sites and areas	There is a requirement to consider cultural heritage effects of construction, use and management of the path network through the Core Path Planning process and at individual project level. Historic Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council Archaeology Service should be consulted as appropriate	Aberdeenshire Council Environment Officers in consultation with Historic Scotland

4.5 Designated Sites

4.5.1 Appropriate Assessment

Core Paths Plan is seeking to encourage the use of existing and some new paths, some of which lie adjacent to the Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special areas of Conservation (SAC) (see Section 3.3.3 and Appendix 3). It is therefore necessary to consider the effects of the proposals in accordance with the requirements of the *Habitats Regulations 1994* as amended. Guidance produced by SNH in 'Natura Casework Guidance: Consideration of Proposals Affecting SPAs and SACs' describes a staged process for considering the effects of proposals that affect SPA/SACs as follows:

1. Define the proposals.
2. Establish whether the proposals are necessary to the management of the site for nature conservation purposes. If they are then no further assessment is required.
3. Determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant effect on the site. This acts as a coarse sieve to remove from the process projects that are neutral, trivial or very short term in their impacts on a site's qualifying interests (the significance test)
4. If it cannot be demonstrated that the effect is trivial or inconsequential, then the implications of the development for the site's conservation objectives should be assessed so as to answer the question "*can it be demonstrated that the proposal will not adversely affect the integrity of the site?*" This is referred to as the Appropriate Assessment.

5. If the Appropriate Assessment (undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council as the Competent Authority) indicates that no adverse effect will occur, consent may be granted. If not, further steps are required to demonstrate that specific reasons why the development should be permitted before consent may be granted. These may include consideration of alternatives, or Imperative Reasons of Over-riding Public Interest (IROPI). The proposals are defined above and it is evident that they are not necessary to management for conservation reasons (steps 1 and 2).

The process of determining whether a likely significant effect will occur has involved a review of the following:

- Details of the nature conservation interests of the SPAs and SACs and the qualifying features for which they are designated;
- The paths that are in close proximity or are within each site (see Appendix 4);
- The anticipated change in the level and pattern of usage of the core paths.

This included consideration of:

- How the proposed core paths could affect the qualifying interests of the SPA/SAC;
- How sensitive the areas of the SPA/SAC most likely to be affected are;
- The probability of a significant effect occurring;
- The likely consequences for the conservation objectives if the effect occurred;
- The magnitude, duration and reversibility of the effect

There will be a small number of new paths and linkages to existing paths created as a result of the CPP. These will involve little or no new major infrastructure and will not involve the removal of habitat to develop new paths. Works would not proceed if it was determined that this would create a significant effect on the environment or exacerbate existing flood risk. The Council would neutralize the impact of path upgrading, development of new paths and associated infrastructure, repair and maintenance activities by observing best practice and following appropriate guidelines.

However, the potential impact of any change in the level or pattern of use of proposed core paths which are adjacent to or within SPAs or SACs should also be considered within the context of an assessment of likely significant effects.

Likely significant effects could arise from:

- The presence of humans and especially with dogs which is considered to be a potential source of disturbance to some bird species;
- Disturbance caused by any minor maintenance work
- Increasing footfall causing erosion that could potentially cause damage to SAC habitats.

The Core Paths which lie within or adjacent to Natura sites (see table 11) are well established and reasonably popular areas for walking, cycling and paddling. Any increase in use due being designated as Core Paths is considered likely to be modest and the additional impact on the integrity of the SPAs or SACs is expected to be minimal.

To mitigate any risk of disturbance from increased path use, good practice or codes of conduct (including the existing codes such as the Scottish Outdoor Access Code) will be promoted and assisted through signage to highlight the value and sensitivity of natural sites and encourage responsible behaviour. These measures should ensure

that the majority of users of the paths should do so without causing unnecessary disturbance.

With regard to the above, it is considered that the paths listed in Table 13 are not likely to have significant effects on the Natura 2000 sites listed in Table 12 and a more detailed Appropriate Assessment by Aberdeenshire Council is not required.

Table 12 – Natura Sites potentially affected by Core Paths

Site Code	Site Name	SAC SPA	Qualifying Interest	Paths Adjacent or within site
8473 8214	Buchan Ness to Collieston	SPA SAC	Aggregations of breeding birds, vegetated sea cliffs	7LD.01, 204.01, 204.02, 207.01, 207.02
8508 8266	Glen Tanar	SPA SAC	Aggregations of non-breeding birds, blanket bog, Caledonian forest, dry heath, wet heath, otters	7CB.09
8505	Fowlsheugh	SPA	Aggregations of breeding birds	7LD.01
8536	Loch of Skene	SPA	Aggregations of non-breeding birds	411.03
8537	Loch of Strathbeg	SPA	Aggregations of breeding and non-breeding birds	7LD.01, 203.02
8587	Troup, Pennan, Lions Head	SPA	Aggregations of breeding birds	7LD.01, 107.02
8592	Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie, Meikle Loch	SPA	Aggregations of breeding and non-breeding birds	7LD.01, 302.02, 302.03, 306.01
8671	Garron Point	SAC	Invertebrates	7LD.01
8373	Sands of Forvie	SAC	Humid dune slacks, lime deficient dune heath, shifting dunes, shifting dunes with marram	7LD.01, 302.02, 302.03
8357	River Dee	SAC	Atlantic salmon, freshwater pearl mussel, otter	7LD.02, 601.01, 609.01, 616.02, 616.03, 604.01, 614.01, 504.02, WA.01, WA.02, WA.03, WA.04, WA.05, WA.11

Table 13 – Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

Sites		Paths		New path?	Some minor development	Cause or increase flooding?	Cause disturbance from dogs, footfalls, etc	Develop associated infrastructure ?	Screen in or out?
Buchan Ness to Collieston	SPA	7LD.01, 204.01,	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
	SAC	204.02, 207.01, 207.02							
Glen Tanar	SPA	7CB.09	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
Fowlsheugh	SAC	7LD.01	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
	SPA								
Loch of Skene	SPA	411.03	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
Loch of Strathbeg	SPA	7LD.01, 203.02	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
Troup, Pennan, Lions Head	SPA	7LD.01, 107.02	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
Ythan Estuary, Sands of Forvie, Meikle Loch	SPA	7LD.01, 302.02, 302.03, 306.01	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
Garron Point	SAC	7LD.01	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
Sands of Forvie	SAC	7LD.01, 302.02, 302.03	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	
River Dee	SAC	7LD.02, 601.01, 609.01, 616.02, 616.03, 604.01, 614.01, 504.02, WA.01, WA.02, WA.03, WA.04, WA.05, WA.11	No	All minor	No	Possible, but can be managed by mitigation	Minor	Out	

5 MONITORING

- 5.1 Section 19 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 requires the Responsible Authority to monitor significant effects of the implementation of the Core Paths Plan. This must be done in such a way as to also identify unforeseen effects and to take appropriate remedial action.
- 5.2 Section 19 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act gives access authorities the power to maintain Core Paths although there is no legal duty on either the Council or landowners to do so. Any existing maintenance arrangements will not be affected and it is envisaged that future maintenance will be undertaken by a range of bodies including the Council.
- 5.3 Monitoring work on the Core Paths Plan and its impact on paths and surrounding areas will be undertaken by various sections of Aberdeenshire Council including Landscape Services, Countryside Ranger Service and members of the core Access Group.
Maintenance will include litter control, repairs to path surfaces and infrastructure such as signposts and gates. The condition of surrounding areas will also be considered and any adverse impacts noted and acted upon as appropriate. Aberdeenshire Council will install counters on key routes and the information provided will assist in determining changes in levels of use. It is envisaged that the path network will also be monitored by others including Forestry Commission Scotland, Sustrans, land owners and managers and the public. Statutory bodies will also monitor scheduled and designated sites for any impact.
- 5.4 The SEA has identified few likely significant environmental impacts of the Core Paths Plan. However a small number of elements of the SEA objectives will require to be monitored to ensure implementation of the CPP is not detrimental.

Table 14 – SEA Objective Monitoring Framework

SEA Topic Area	Monitoring Requirement	When monitoring and carried out and how frequent	Undertaken by
Biodiversity	Monitor condition of designated natural heritage sites. Monitor use of CPP routes adjacent to or within designated natural heritage sites	Monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis by condition survey and by footfall counters. Incidences of disturbance to habitat and species will be recorded if reported	Coordinated by Aberdeenshire Council Environment Team and in consultation with SNH
Cultural Heritage	Monitor condition of designated cultural heritage sites Monitor use of CPP routes adjacent to or within designated cultural heritage sites	Monitoring will be undertaken on an annual basis by condition survey and by footfall counters. Erosion and damage by increased footfall will be recorded	Coordinated by Aberdeenshire Council Environment Team and in consultation with Historic Scotland

5.5 General Difficulties, Weaknesses and Limitations

The planning and SEA processes have taken a very long time and over this period some environmental and planning legislation has changed resulting in a need to update the Environmental report before publication for consultation.

A key stage in the SEA process was omitted, that of Scoping, which resulted in another delay in preparing the Environmental Report to address this.

The Environmental Report has demonstrated through assessment that the CPP will have mostly positive effects rather than potential significant negative environmental effects and therefore the focus should be enhancing the positive effects rather than mitigation measures.

Because the Report has had to focus on broad objectives and high level strategic actions full impacts will not be completely understood until low level action plans have been developed to implement the CPP particularly for Cultural Heritage and Material Assets.

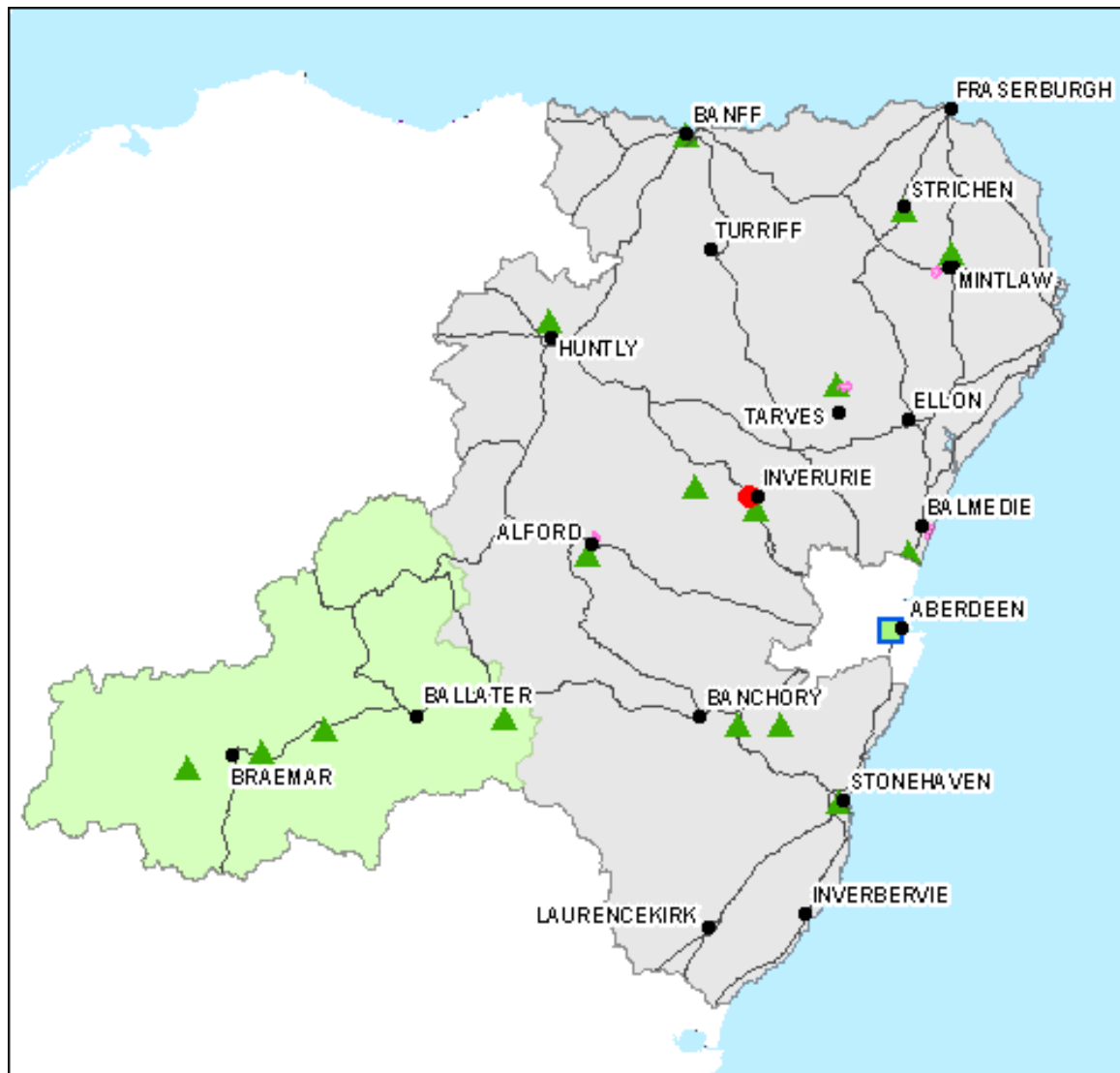
6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 The consultation on the Environmental Report will coincide with that of the draft Core Paths Plan and will run for 8 weeks. Table 15 below sets out the future milestones in the development of the Core Paths Plan and its SEA and the dates when these are expected to be completed where known.

Table 15 - Anticipated CPP and SEA Milestones

Expected Date	Milestone CPP	Milestone SEA
June 2009	Core Paths Plan published	
September 2009	CPP consultation period ends	SEA Scoping Report published for consultation
September 2009 onwards	Negotiations on any objections to CPP	
October 2009		Consultation period ends
July 2011		Environmental Report published for 8 week consultation
September 2011		Consultation on Environmental Report finishes
September 2011	CPP amended if required following SEA consultation and sent to Reporters Office for Public Inquiry	
TBC	Possible revision of CPP following Public Inquiry	Amend Environmental Report to take into account any revisions to CPP
TBC	Adopt Core Paths Plan	Publish post-adoption SEA Statement

Appendix 1: Area Covered by the Aberdeenshire Core Paths Plan



Appendix 2: Full List of Relationships with Other Plans and Policies

	Name of PPS / Environmental protection objective	Requirements of the PPS	How it affects, or is affected by • CPP in terms of SEA issues* at Schedule 3 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005
	INTERNATIONAL		
1.	Council Directive 92/43/EEC <i>on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (known as the Habitats Directive)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora • Maintain or restore natural habitats • Take into account economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics 	Biodiversity, Fauna and flora Core Path Plan should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species. • Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses • Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage
2.	Council Directive 79/409/EEC <i>on the conservation of wild birds (known as the Birds Directive)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for the protection, management and control of all species of naturally occurring wild birds • Seeks to preserve habitats for naturally occurring rare and migratory birds 	Biodiversity, Fauna and flora Core Paths Plan should not hinder protection, management and control of species of naturally occurring wild birds
3.	Council Directive 2000/60/EC <i>on establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy (known as the Water Framework Directive) – integrated river basin management for Europe</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard the sustainable use of surface water; transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater • Supports the status of aquatic ecosystems and environments; • Addresses groundwater pollution; flooding and droughts; river basin management planning; 	Water Core Paths Plan should consider sustainable use of water and measures that mitigate the effects of floods and droughts
4.	European Biodiversity Framework (COM 1998/42)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity • Emphasises education, training and awareness, research, identification, monitoring and exchange of information 	Biodiversity, Fauna and flora Core Paths Plan should support conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity
5.	Kyoto Protocol (1992)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases 	Air & Climatic factors Core Paths Plan should limit or reduce the

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK seeks to reduce emissions of six key greenhouse gases by 12.5% relative 1990 level over the period 2008 to 2012. 	emissions of greenhouse gases Follow interpretations and targets interpreted into national, regional and local guidance
6.	European Framework on Sustainable Development (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote quality of life, coherent and cost effective policy-making; technological innovation; stronger involvement of civil society; and business in policy formulation Strategies for sustainable economic growth should support social progress and respect the local environment 	All Issues Core Paths Plan supports social progress and respects local environment –
7.	European Landscape Convention (2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes across Europe. Highlights the need for public involvement, and promotes European cooperation on landscape issues. Sets out a range of different solutions that states can apply. 	Landscape Core Paths Plan should look to examples of good practise from other countries, and ensure protection and management of valued landscapes.
8.	EU Thematic Strategy on Soil Protection (COM 2006/231)	<p>The overall objective is protection and sustainable use of soil, based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventing further soil degradation and preserving its functions when soil is used and its functions are exploited, action has to be taken on soil use and management patterns, and when soil acts as a sink/receptor of the effects of human activities or environmental phenomena, action has to be taken at source. Restoring degraded soils to a level of functionality consistent at least with current and intended use, thus also considering the cost implications of the restoration of soil. 	Soil Core Paths Plan should protect soil resources
9.	Council Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks (<i>known as the Floods Directive</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Bill will transpose the Floods Directive in Scotland and identify SEPA as the competent authority for the Floods Directive 	Water The CPP should reflect the Flood Risk Management Plans when produced and avoid development of paths on land at risk

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Flood Risk Management Plans prepared by SEPA in response to the Floods Directive will require to be considered during the preparation of the CPP. 	from flooding
	NATIONAL		
10.	Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes local authorities central to more sustainable development and land use, energy efficiency, in housing provision, transport Promotes well-being in communities through energy saving measures/low carbon technologies Best Value Performance Indicator 180 requires local authorities to benchmark energy use in their operational property 	All Issues CPP should promote sustainable alternatives to car and reduce congestion traffic pollution
11.	DTI (2003) Energy White Paper – Our Energy Future – Creating a low carbon economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages cuts in UK’s carbon dioxide emissions Commits to Increase the proportion of electricity provided by renewable sources to 10% by 2010, & double the proportion of electricity supplied by renewable by 2020 subject to consumer acceptance Ensure that every home is adequately and affordably heated 	Air & climatic factors CPP should promote sustainable alternatives to car use.
12.	The UK’s Shared Framework for Sustainable Development (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance and using sound science responsibly. Prioritises sustainable production and consumption; climate change and energy; natural resource protection and environmental enhancement; and sustainable communities. 	All Issues CPP should promote healthy society, with equal access to open space among different groups.
13.	UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks to conserve and enhance biological diversity within the UK and to contribute to the conservation of global biodiversity through all appropriate mechanisms. 	Biodiversity, flora & fauna CPP should promote biodiversity
14.	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives protection to listed species from disturbance, injury intentional destruction or sale. 	Biodiversity, fauna and flora CPP should protect wildlife from disturbance, injury intentional destruction
15.	Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets out a series of measures, which are designed 	Biodiversity, flora & fauna

		<p>to conserve biodiversity and to protect and enhance the biological and geological natural heritage of Scotland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Places a general duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity. 	CPP should promote biodiversity
16.	The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c) Amendment No 2 (Scotland) Regulations 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These implement the Habitats and Birds Directives 	Biodiversity, fauna and flora CPP should reflect the protection of habitats and species
17.	Planning to halt the loss of biodiversity – Biodiversity conservation standards for planning in the UK – Code of Practice , 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies the role of the planning system in halting the loss of biodiversity. Provides recommendations for the integration of biodiversity conservation into land use and spatial planning Specifies procedure for a competent authority to implement biodiversity statute, policy and good practice 	Biodiversity, fauna and flora CPP should reflect the protection of habitats and species
18.	The Planning (Scotland) Act 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces reforms of the Scottish Planning system and is the primary legislation governing land use planning in Scotland replacing the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 	All issues CPP should support the development of sustainable communities and protect and enhance urban and rural environmental quality
19.	The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2002) “Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment” 2 nd Edition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good practice in carrying out landscape and visual impact assessment of development 	Landscape CPP should seek to minimise adverse visual impact on landscape
20.	The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduces a right of responsible access to land and inland water in Scotland Guidelines for responsible access are contained within the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC). The Core Paths Plan is an important component of the Act The relevant objectives of the Core Paths Plan should ensure access is promoted in accordance with SOAC . The relevant objectives of the CPP will be rechecked against the responses to the consultation on this Environmental Report 	Biodiversity, Landscape, Human Health CPP should ensure the protection of sites and species designated under EU legislation by promoting the sustainable management of and avoiding damage to designated and protected sites. CPP should promote healthy living and improve the quality of life for present and future generations. CPP should take account of designated sites and buildings
21.	Historic Scotland’s Memorandum of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Memorandum of Guidance will be replaced by 	Cultural Heritage

	Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (withdrawn)	new guidance notes during 2009. These documents will provide operational guidance on the role of planning authorities	CPP should be consistent with designations
22.	Historic Scotland (2008) Scottish Historic Environment Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out the policy for the identification and designation of nationally important ancient monuments. • Sets the context to conserve the evidence of Scotland's past based on their cultural significance 	Cultural Heritage CPP should ensure the conservation of historic areas of cultural significance
23.	Choosing Our Future: Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has actions to continue to promote walking and cycling for sustainable transport and health benefits 	Human health CPP should promote walking and cycling
24.	Changing Our Ways: Scotland's Climate Change Programme (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements 'Climate Change: The UK Programme' in Scotland which reaffirms local government responsibilities set out in Energy white paper and implements the Kyoto Protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 	All Issues CPP should promote sustainable alternatives to car and reduce congestion traffic pollution
25.	National Physical Activity Strategy (2003)- <i>Let's Make Scotland More Active</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to increase and maintain the proportion of physically active people in Scotland • Sets targets to achieve 50 percent of adults aged over 16 and 80 percent of all children aged 16 and under who meet the minimum recommended levels of physical activity by 2022 through building healthy public policy, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skills and directing health services at the people who need them most. 	Population and Human health CPP should promote physical activities
26.	Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 & 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that discrimination law covers all the activities of the public sector; and requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people • Aims to end the discrimination that many disabled people face and gives disabled people rights in the areas of employment, education, access to goods, facilities and services and buying or renting land or property 	Population and Human health CPP should build the needs of the disabled persons into its strategic actions

27	Equality Act 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a new legislative framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equal opportunities for all 	<p>Population and Human Health</p> <p>CPP should build the needs of all into its strategic actions</p>
28.	Scottish Planning Policy (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement of the Scottish Government's policy on nationally important land use planning matters and revokes several SPPs and NPPGs 	<p>All Issues</p> <p>CPP should support and enhance Scottish Planning Policies</p>
29.	PAN 51: Planning, Environmental Protection and Regulation (Revised 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges the complex nature of the environmental protection issues and seeks to ensure that arrangements are in place that minimises the risk to public health and the environment 	<p>All Issues</p> <p>CPP should seek to protect biodiversity, air, water and soil quality, the historic and cultural environment and safeguard the landscape</p>
30.	PAN 58: Environmental Impact Assessment (Revised 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks the provision of information and guidance on the legislative background to EIA, the process of environmental impact assessment, and the evaluation of environmental information by the planning authority and implementation through the planning decision 	<p>All Issues</p> <p>CPP should contribute to environment protection</p>
31.	PAN 59: Improving Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure town centres are flexible and adaptable if they are to remain active and attractive; and are accessible by a variety of efficient and effective modes of transport, have an amenity which is attractive, clean and safe, and are planned, managed and promoted in a positive way Promotes lively, vibrant and viable town centres that provide a quality urban environment where people can live feel safe, businesses can prosper and opportunities exist for new stimulating activities 	<p>All issues</p> <p>CPP should contribute to sustainable economic development</p>
32.	PAN 60: Planning for Natural Heritage (August 2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides advice on how development and the planning system can contribute to the conservation, enhancement, enjoyment and understanding of Scotland's natural environment Encourages developers and planning authorities to be positive and creative in addressing natural 	<p>Biodiversity</p> <p>CPP should support the conservation, protection and enhancement of biodiversity</p>

		heritage issues	
33.	PAN 65: Planning and Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise the profile of open space as a planning issue • Provides advice on the role of the planning system in protecting and enhancing existing open spaces and providing high quality new spaces • Sets out how local authorities can prepare open space strategies and gives examples of good practice in providing, managing and maintaining open spaces 	Landscape, human health CPP should support the enhancement of existing open spaces and the development of new ones
34.	PAN 77: Designing Safer Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights the positive role that planning can play in helping to create attractive, well-managed environments which help to discourage antisocial and criminal behaviour • Aims to ensure that new development can be located and designed in a way that deters such behaviour as poorly designed surroundings can create feelings of hostility, anonymity and alienation and can have significant social, economic and environmental costs 	Cultural heritage, Population & human health CPP should contribute to feelings of safety and social inclusion
35.	PAN 78: Inclusive Design (March 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks to deliver high standards of design and redevelopment projects and widens the user group that an environment is designed for. Makes it a legal requirement to consider the needs of disabled people under the terms of Disability Discrimination legislation 	Cultural heritage, Population and human health CPP should support the principles of good design and social inclusion
36.	Protection of Badgers Act 1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aimed at protection of badgers, and applicable to wide range of land users, and hence uses. Prohibits any damage to setts, and encouraging access to setts by dogs. 	Biodiversity CPP should discourage any potential disturbance to badgers
37.	Healthy Eating, Active Living: Action Plan to improve Diet, Increase Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines scale and nature of issues in our communities, and recognizes role of physical 	Population & human health CPP to highlight links between healthy

	Activity and Tackling Obesity (June 2008)	environment in our physical and mental health.	communities and use of open space.
38	Health Impact Assessment of Greenspace – A Guide (Greenspace Scotland)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide to advise how to assess health and equity impacts of greenspace, and promote greater recognition in role of greenspace in improving health. 	Population & human health CPP benefits should be assessed against HIA
39.	Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides overarching framework for historic environment policy in Scotland • Aims to promote effective conservation and to enhance the enjoyment of the historic environment • Recognises the importance of the historic environment as an economic resource 	Cultural Heritage CPP should support the protection and enhancement of archaeological sites and other culturally important features.
40.	Scottish Planning Policy 23 (SPP23): Planning and the Historic Environment (Superseded)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out the national planning policy for the historic environment with a view to its protection, conservation and enhancement 	Cultural Heritage CPP should support objectives to protect, conserve and promote the historic environment
	REGIONAL		
41.	Finalised Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a long-term sustainable framework of settlements in a hierarchy, which focuses major development on the main settlements in the North East. • Sets the strategic context for Aberdeenshire Local Plan which in turn set the framework for land use housing development 	All Issues CPP should contribute to sustainable development
42.	North East of Scotland Biodiversity (2001) <i>North East Scotland Local Biodiversity Action Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures the protection and enhancement of the biodiversity in the north east through the development of effective, local, working partnerships; • Ensure that national targets for species and habitats, as specified in the UK Action Plan, are translated into effective local action; 	Biodiversity, fauna & flora CPP should promote biodiversity
43	Aberdeenshire Council (2005): Forest and Woodland Strategy for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to ensure sustainable management of woodlands and forests 	Biodiversity, Population and Human Health

	Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides opportunities for recreation and tourism • Ensures contribution to local economy • Aims to protect and enhance woodland biodiversity 	CPP should support delivery of the aims of the Strategy
44.	Aberdeenshire Council (2008): River Dee Catchment Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records the current state of the Dee catchment including water quality, variety of species and habitats in the catchment 	Biodiversity CPP should avoid impact on water quality and biodiversity
	LOCAL		
45.	Aberdeenshire Community Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stresses access to services of a high quality that meet their needs; seeks to make Aberdeenshire an attractive, clean, healthy and safe place to live; • Promotes Aberdeenshire as forward-looking 	All Issues CPP should support accessibility, health, Safety, and the environment
46.	Aberdeenshire Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets the context and targets for land use, and the direction as well as the capacity of housing development in Aberdeenshire 	All Issues CPP should be consistent with the local Open Space Strategy
47.	Aberdeenshire Parks and Open Space Strategy 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets the framework of the audit of open spaces, and proper development, management and improvement parks and open space 	Population and Human Health The CPP should ensure proper management and improvement of facilities
48.	Aberdeenshire Local Transport Strategy (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes the local transport strategy to take full account of the environment, social and economic implications of transport; • Promotes the maximisation of accessibility for all to services and jobs; efficient resource use, as well as safety in delivering transportation 	Material Asset, Air, Climatic factors CPP should support social exclusion, sustainability, environment protection, accessibility and safety
49.	Aberdeenshire Countryside Access Strategy (1998)		
50.	Aberdeenshire Council Economic Development Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks to promote economic development in Aberdeenshire area based on renewable energy, integration of agricultural and fisheries sectors as well as having an input into employment land provisions 	Material Asset The CPP should be consistent with economic development priorities
51.	Aberdeenshire Council Sustainability Charter 2004	The Charter aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce key resource usage (i.e. energy, water, travel, and waste); • raise awareness; • adopt a sustainable purchasing policy; 	All CPP should promote minimisation of resource use

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce global footprint and • encourage consultation 	
52.	Aberdeenshire Council Carbon Management Programme 2007	<p>The programme seeks to achieve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall reduction in CO2 emissions of 20% by 2012 • An aspirational target to reduce CO2 emissions by 30% by 2012 	<p>All</p> <p>CPP should promote reduction in CO2 emissions</p>
53.	Aberdeenshire Council Pitches Strategy Draft 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets out the context for effective and efficient development, management and rationalisation of Aberdeenshire pitches 	<p>Biodiversity, Population and Human health</p> <p>The CPP should promote efficiency and effectiveness</p>
54	Aberdeenshire Council Sports and Active Lifestyle Strategy 2005-2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate in sport and physical recreation. • Develop the infrastructure, which will allow athletes and participants in sport and active recreation to flourish. • Build the capacity of communities to sustain sporting and recreational activities and new opportunities. • Raise the profile of sport and recreation and promote the contribution it makes to the quality of life in Aberdeenshire. 	<p>Human Health and Population</p> <p>The implementation of the CPP should ensure broad participation, flourishing of participants, and sustainability of facilities</p>
55.	Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen, South and Central Aberdeenshire, Banff and Buchan and the Cairngorms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses the forces for change that affect the landscape • Provides guidance on how these forces for change may best be accommodated in the landscape • Identifies the distinctive landscapes character of an area through detailed assessments • Provides guidelines for conservation and enhancement of landscape character that builds on the local distinctiveness of the area 	<p>Landscape</p> <p>CPP should ensure that important and distinctive landscape features are retained</p>

APPENDIX 3 Environmental Baseline

SEA Topic: Biodiversity

SEA Indicator	Quantified information	Comparators and targets	Trends	Issues/constraints	Data source(s)
North East Biodiversity Action Plan (NE BAP) targets	<p>Transformed habitats resulting from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • farm intensification & inappropriate habitat “creation” • No of action plans for habitats identified in the NE BAP - 20 out of 26. • Action plans being developed – for upland species-rich grassland, coastal cliffs and heSSS, marine habitats, broadleaf woodland, heathland, lochs and ponds, and wetlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of UK BAP priority species in Scotland in 2005: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable: 56 (27%) • Increase: 11 (5%) • Extinct: 5 (3%) • Declining (accelerating): 11 (5%) • Declining (slowing): 18 (9%) • Fluctuating: 3 (1%) • Unknown: 90 (44%) • Status of UK BAP priority habitats in Scotland in 2005: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable: 8 (27%) • Increase: 5 (13%) • Declining (accelerating): 0 • Declining (slowing): 12 (30%) • Fluctuating: 0 • Unknown: 11 (28%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NE BAP is meeting the targets for preparing action plans, as set out in the UK BAP. • UK BAP 2005 trends show that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 habitats (22%) and 42 species (11%) are increasing. • 17 habitats (39%) are thought to be declining, although this decline is slowing for 11 (25%) habitats. • 102 species (27%) are thought to be declining, but the decline is slowing for 36 (10%) species. • UK trend was unknown for 11 habitats (24%) and 47 species (13%). • Changes in farm practices have increased habitat and species numbers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat of Alien Species effecting water quality and ecological status of the rivers. • Native species and habitats are increasing, and the NE BAP is meeting the UK BAP targets, but UK priority species and habitats are still declining and require rigorous protection and enhancement. • Implementation of the NE BAPs is the key issue to enhancing biodiversity. • Equally, a constraint would be the loss of funding/support to complete that work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Executive (2006) <i>Key Scottish Environment Statistics</i>: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/921/0036584.pdf • UK BAP targets for Local Biodiversity Action Plans http://www.ukbap.org.uk/library/brig/trgtargets/ScotlandLBAPTTargets.xls • NE Biodiversity Action Plan: <i>Action Plans</i>: www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/habactionplan.htm • See survey work being done by the Council, using the Integrated Habitat Survey (IHS).
Designated areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 28 Natura sites in Aberdeenshire, which have implications for development. • SINS are currently under review but have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scotstown Moor SSSI in Aberdeen is subject to indirect development pressure due to changes in the water table adjacent development, which is affecting flush 	Housing pressure on designations are increasing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council (2006) <i>Natural Heritage Topic Paper</i> • http://www.snh.org.uk/publications/on-

	been considered as a precautionary approach where other designated may be impacted	and bog habitats. • Dee SAC is the only in affecting the City			line/corporate/factsandfigures/0405/index.htm
Sites of Special Scientific Interests (SSSIs)	In Aberdeenshire there are 82 SSSIs occupying 39805 hectares and taking about 6.3% land.	There are 3 SSSIs in Aberdeen City occupying 47 hectares and taking about 0.2% of the City's land area. 12.92% of Scotland's land areas accommodate 1,455 SSSIs occupying about 1,036, 553 hectares of land	No trend	Development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) <i>SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004</i> . Battleby: SNH
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	5.6% of Aberdeenshire land area accommodates 18 SACs which occupy 35, 334 hectares of land	There is only 1 SAC (Dee SAC) in Aberdeen City it also affects Aberdeenshire There are 238 SACs in Scotland occupying 962, 667 hectares representing 9.9% Scotland's land take.	No trend	Development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) <i>SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004</i> . Battleby: SNH
Special Protection Areas (SPA)	There are 10 SPAs in Aberdeenshire occupying 29,926 hectares representing 4.7% Aberdeenshire's land take.	There are 142 SPAs in Scotland occupying 630305 hectares representing 8% Scotland's land take.	No trend	Development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) <i>SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004</i> . Battleby: SNH
Country Parks (CP)	Aberdeenshire has 4 CPs on 276 hectares of land and this represents 0.04% of the total land area.	0.08 % of Scotland's land area accommodates 36 CPs which occupy 6, 481 hectares of land	No trend	Development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) <i>SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004</i> . Battleby: SNH
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	0.004 % of Aberdeenshire land area accommodates 2 LNRs which occupy 28 hectares of land	Aberdeen City has 4 LNRs on 126 hectares of land and this represents 0.6% of the total land area.	No trend	Development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) <i>SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004</i> . Battleby: SNH

		Scotland has 36 LNRs on 9410 hectares of land and this represents 0.12% of the total land area.			
National Nature Reserves (NNR)	2.2% of Aberdeenshire land area accommodates 6 NNRs which occupy 14225 hectares of land	1.5 % of Scotland's land area accommodates 63 NNRs which occupy 111913 hectares of land	No trend	Development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) <i>SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004</i> . <i>Battleby</i> : SNH
Ramsar sites	There are 4 Ramsar sites in Aberdeenshire occupying 1239 hectares representing 0.2% Aberdeenshire's land take.	There are 51 Ramsar sites in Scotland occupying 313181 hectares representing 4.2% Scotland's land take.	No trend	Development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) <i>SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004</i> . <i>Battleby</i> : SNH
Number of access issues logged	<p>Banff & Buchan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 0 • Mar 07 - 0 • Sept 07 - 1 <p>Buchan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 2 • Mar 07 - 1 • Sept 07 - 5 <p>Kincardine & Mearns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 14 • Mar 07 - 2 • Sept 07 - 12 <p>Marr</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 5 • Mar 07 - 7 • Sept 07 - 5 <p>Garioch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 2 	No comparators	Improving		To be dealt with under the Land Reform or Countryside (Scotland) Act

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mar 07 - 2• Sept 07 - 9 Formartine <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sept 06 - 1• Mar 07 - 1• Sept 07 - 1 Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sept 06 - 24• Mar 07 - 13• Sept 07 - 33				
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SEA Topic: Human Health

SEA Indicator	Quantified information	Comparators and targets	Trends	Issues/ constraints	Data source(s)
Quality and availability of public open space in urban and rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for larger areas of open spaces, including civic or town parks. • There is pressure to reduce the size of open spaces in residential developments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City has development pressure as well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pressure from private developers to develop on open space will continue. • There is growing demand for safer and more accessible areas of open space, which has promoted the creation of PAN65. 	There is a lack of government funding to allow local authorities to continuously manage areas of open space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council (2002) <i>State of the Environment Report</i> http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ACCI/nmsrun/time/saveasdialog.asp?IID=2424&SID=883 • Scottish Executive (2003) <i>Planning Advice Note 65: Planning and Open Space</i> • .Scottish Executive (2006) Consultative draft <i>Scottish Planning Policy 11: Physical Activity and Open Space</i>

<p>Improvements to quality of life in currently deprived areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire ranks high 31st out of 32 councils in terms of multiple deprivation*. • The most deprived areas • are Banff and Buchan and Buchan, aserburgh Peterhead and Huntly • Strathbogie, Echt, Upper Ythan, Inch, Donside and Cromar, Fyvie-Methlick, Aboyne, Upper Deeside, Tarves, and Udy-Slains comprise the worst 5% wards due to poor access to services. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen ranked 23rd* in terms of multiple deprivation. • In Aberdeen City, the highest levels of deprivation are located in Woodside, Tillydrone, Middlefield, Northfield, Cummings Park, Torry and Seaton neighbourhoods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trend is improving 	<p>Poor access to services in rural areas; centralisation of service provision, & low job opportunities and income could be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council (2004) <i>Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (Oxford Report) – Aberdeenshire: Key findings</i> http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/statistics/economic/SIMD%20Abs hire%20Key%20Findings%202004.pdf • Aberdeen City: Community Planning Regeneration Masterplans (2006/7) http://www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/Web/Site/Internet/RegenerationMasterplans.asp
<p>Sport and recreation facilities in areas of identified need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Aberdeenshire, there is still an outstanding need for: • 16.66m x 8.5m pool at Mintlaw; • 6 Badminton Court Hall at Peterhead and Fraserburgh • 56m x 26m ice rink at Peterhead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Aberdeen, there is still an outstanding need for: • sports facilities in Cove; • junior golf course; • a new Stadium and Soccer Academy; • one water based pitches and 2 sand based pitches; and • 50m swimming pool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive steps have been made to ensure everyone has access to sport, leisure and recreation facilities, however limited progress has been made to provide • : • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sportscotland strategy sets out 11 targets to be achieved by 2007, which focus on: • ensuring that most of the population is taking part in sport at least once a week; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council (2002) <i>Active Aberdeen 2002-2007: A sport, recreation and physical activity strategy for Aberdeen City</i> • Aberdeenshire Council (2005) <i>Sports Facility Study Updated Report</i> • sportscotland (2003)

				•	<i>Sport 21: 2003 – 2007: The National Strategy for Sport – Shaping Scotland’s Future</i>
Cause of mental health (especially of poorer communities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire – 12,536 (6%) • Private rented sector and Council stock are higher than in RSL stock or owner-occupied housing • Quality of life/health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire – Good: 73% • Fairly good: 20% • Not good: 7% • *Most common house type: Aberdeenshire - semi-detached (30%); • *Most common house type granted planning consent (units over 20): • Aberdeenshire - detached (74%); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen – 5,054 (13%) • Private rented sector and Council stock are higher than in RSL stock or owner-occupied housing • Quality of life/health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good: 70% • Fairly good: 21% • Not good: 9% • *Most common house type: Aberdeen – flats (49%) • *Most common house type granted planning consent (units over 20): • Aberdeen – flats (76%) • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences in housing stock between the City and Shire will become more extreme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is envisaged that future structure plan will make more provision for housing 	<p>NHS Grampian (2004) <i>Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs Assessment</i>, Public Health Unit</p> <p>Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils (2006) <i>Topic Paper: Characteristics of the Housing Stock</i></p> <p>Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council <i>Housing Needs Assessment 2004: Housing Market Area Report</i></p> <p>Shelter: http://scotland.shelter.org.uk/advice/advice-4035.cfm Register for General Scotland (2006) <i>Mid-2005 Population Estimates</i></p>

<p>% of residents feeling safe after dark</p>	<p>October 2006 - 62% January 2008 - 87%</p>	<p>No Comparators</p>	<p>Improving</p>	<p>In the Citizens Panel consultation results published in January 2008 the top 3 issues for agencies to tackle were: Antisocial driving; Teenagers/ children causing a nuisance; Graffiti/vandalism.</p>	<p>(based on Residents Survey)</p>
<p>Number of casualties on the road</p>	<p>% change in killed and seriously injured based on 1994-1998 average 219</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 22.4% • March 06 – 24.2% • Sept 07 – 37.4% <p>% change in all child casualties based on 1994-1998 average 115</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 – 50.4% • March 06 – 44.3% • Sept 07 – 58.3% 	<p>National Target 40% by 2010</p>	<p>Worsening</p>	<p>National Targets relate to 1994-1998 averages. Figures shown based on accidents in previous 12 mths.</p>	<p>In the Citizens Panel consultation results published in January 2008, 79% of those consulted saw Road Safety as a priority for the Community Safety Partnership.</p>

SEA Topic: Population

SEA Indicator	Quantified information	Comparators and targets	Trends	Issues/constraints	Data source(s)
Changing trends in household size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire household figures: • 2003 – 93,800 • 2021 – 104,300 • Aberdeenshire household size figures: • 2003 – 2.41 • 2021 – 2.24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen household figures: • 2003 – 98,380 • 2021 – 107,610 • Aberdeen household size figures: • 2003 – 2.04 • 2021 – 1.83 • Average household size in Scotland is 2.27. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Household numbers predicted to increase. • 16,040 more houses are required in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area • 6,880 more houses are required in the Rural Housing Market Area • Household size predicted to decrease. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing number of households is creating more demand for housing (and land). • Possibility that the need for more development land could put pressure on or near sensitive natural heritage areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council's (2004) <i>Strategic Forecasts 2003-2021</i>: http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ACCI/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=1720&SID=332 • General Register Office for Scotland: News Release – Household estimates for 2005 http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/press/news2005/drop-in-number-of-vacant-dwellings-and-second-homes-in-scotland.html

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in Aberdeenshire age structure of head of household between 2003 and 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30-44yrs: -6,660 60+: 16,700 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in Aberdeen age structure of head of household between 2003 and 2021: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30-44yrs: -2,870 60+: +5,730 Average age in 2005 in Scotland is 38 (m) and 41 (f). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the North East, the number of households headed by people aged 60+ is predicted to increase by 50%. The number of households headed by people aged 30-44 is predicted to fall by 6,660, a decrease of 25% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The growing age of the head of the household may result in more homes needed for their needs (e.g. bungalows or special needs dwellings). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council's (2004) <i>Strategic Forecasts 2003-2021</i>: http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ACCI/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=1720&slD=332
Years of healthy life expectancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life expectancy in Aberdeenshire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male 75.5 years Females 80.2 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life expectancy in Aberdeen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male 73.6 years Females 78.9 years Life expectancy in Scotland: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male 73.8 years Females 79.1 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life expectancy at birth for Scots continues to improve, and recent trends show a slight narrowing of the gap between males and females to around 5.3 years in 2002-2004. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aging population will create demand for certain types of houses (e.g. bungalows and services (increasing the need for more land) and care homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Executive Statistics (2006) <i>Life expectancy</i> http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/TrendLifeExpectancy
Size of population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire population figures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2003 - 229,330 2021 - 229,353 Average age in 2005: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire – 39 (m), 41 (f) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen population figures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2003 - 206,600 2021 - 202,636 Average age in 2005: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen – 38 (m), 41 (f). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 2% decrease within the City, and 0.01% decrease within Aberdeenshire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council's (2004) <i>Strategic Forecasts 2003-2021</i>: http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ACCI/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=1720&slD=332

Migration change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration loss 2002-05: Aberdeenshire is losing its population to Scotland. • Migration gain 2002-05: Aberdeenshire is gaining its population from Aberdeen and outside Scotland. • The relative age of those migrating to Aberdeen is 15-19 yrs; and Aberdeenshire are 0-14yrs and 30yrs plus. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration loss 2002-05: Aberdeen is losing its population to Aberdeenshire and outside Scotland. • Migration gain 2002-05: Aberdeen is gaining its population from Scotland. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The migration trend in the Aberdeenshire is slow growth to 2016 and then a slow decline thereafter. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-migration will create greater demand for houses and services in Aberdeenshire . • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils (2006) <i>Topic Paper: Population and household change</i> • Register for General Scotland (2006) <i>Mid-2005 Population Estimates Scotland Population estimates by sex, age and administrative area</i>, A National Statistics publication http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files/05mype-cahb-booklet.pdf
Listening and Involvement	<p>Level of perception that the Council listens genuinely to local communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree (2004) – 25% • Agree (2006) – 18% <p>Level of is involvement in the communities it serves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree (2006) – 28% • Don't know (2006) – 25% • Neither/Nor (2006) – 27% • Could do more – 70% 	No Comparators	Perception is worsening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Residents' Survey published in October 2006

<p>Care assessment and provision</p>	<p>% Home care clients aged 65yrs receiving personal care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005/2006 - 91.1% • 2006/2007 – 93.8% <p>% Home care clients aged 65yrs receiving personal care as % of clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-73.7% • Mar 07-97.8% • Sept 07-75% <p>Number of home care clients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-38 • Mar 07-46 • Sept 07-44 <p>% of over 65 yr olds receiving care in the evenings/overnight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005/2006 – 29.5% • 2006/2007 –32.2% <p>% of over 65 yr olds receiving care at weekends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005/2006 – 56.0% • 2006/2007 –58.2% 	<p>No comparators</p>	<p>Improving</p>	<p>The agreed timescale from initial contact is 14 days. The Social Work service is developing a performance management framework in which all indicators will be reviewed. Targets and tolerances will also be considered as part of this review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
<p>Support for young and vulnerable</p>	<p>The percentage of children/families offered/provided with a service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-93.2% • Mar 07-93.8% • Sept 07-98.4% <p>No of Children/Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-44 • Mar 07-48 • Sept 07-61 	<p>No comparators</p>	<p>Improving</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can include assessment within 28 days of referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

School placements	<p>% of children with fewer than 3 placements during the current period looked after</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-76.5% • Mar 07-72.5% • Sept 07-75.4% <p>Number of children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-200 • Mar 07-193 • Sept 07-191 	No comparators	<p>Improving</p> <p>Over the past 18 months, the Council has consistently maintained 75% of all children/young people accommodated away from home in stable placements with only a quarter of children experiencing more than 3 changes in placement during the period of care.</p>	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
Fuel Poverty Assistance	<p>In 2006/7 Aberdeenshire Council Energy Efficiency Advice Project had 305 new cases and dealt with 8,164 enquiries of which a high proportion was fuel poor households.</p> <p>SCARF Cosy Homes project targeting fuel poor had 51% of its referrals from Aberdeenshire and installed 121 energy efficiency measures. SCARF Fuel Cost Campaign for winter 2006/7 across 6 Local Authority areas including Aberdeenshire, resulted in a 49% increase in enquiries on the cost of fuel and other campaign issues.</p>	<p>The information on Scottish fuel poverty statistics is from a survey of 2004/5, which shows that between 2002 and 2004/5 the number of Scottish households in fuel poverty had increased 293,000 (13% of households) to 419,000 (18.2% of households).</p>		•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

<p>Care and support for homeless</p>	<p>Time taken between presentation and completion of duty by the Council for those cases assessed as homeless or potentially homeless 2005/2006 -15.3 weeks 2007/2008 - 17.6 weeks The percentage of households in temporary accommodation in temporary bed & breakfast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-38.9% • Mar 07-35.4% • Sept 07-36.7% <p>Number of households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06-226 • Mar 07-246 • Sept 07-248 	<p>Scottish average of 21 weeks.</p>	<p>No significant improvement</p>	<p>Housing availability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
<p>Recreational and leisure facilities</p>	<p>2005/06 percentage in use (number of berths/number in use)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer - 103% (228/234) • Winter - 60% (187/112) <p>2006/07 percentage in use (number of berths/number in use)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer -90% (326/293) • Winter – No data 	<p>No comparators</p>	<p>The percentage of berths in use was lower in 2006/07 than in the previous summer season although the actual number of berths in use is up from 234 to 293. There were fewer berths available in summer 2006 with Banff Marina closed for improvements. In summer 2007 silt movement reduced the available berths in Johnshaven harbour and the repositioning or mooring chains reduced the number of berths at Rosehearty.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

Number of visitors to country parks	2006/07 March - 56000 September – 71000 2007/08 March – No data September - 70,000	The target for visitors to country parks in 2007/08 is to achieve a 1% increase on the previous year, the monthly average for 2006/07 was 66,000.	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
Secondary School - role and capacity	Aberdeenshire Total Role • 2006 –15,948 • 2007 –15,848 • 2008 –15,635 Total Capacity • 2006 – 16,210 • 2007 – 16,210 • 2008 – 16,210	To comparators	No significant trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
Primary School - role and capacity	Aberdeenshire Total Role • 2006 –19573 • 2007 –19267 • 2008 –19045 Total Capacity • 2006 – 24965 • 2007 – 24943 • 2008 – 24943	To comparators	No significant trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

Achievement and attainment	<p>Aberdeenshire 2006 –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • top 3 local authorities in Scotland • 5 out of the 21 recognised measures of attainment for S4, S5 and S6; • top 6 in 19 of the 21 measures; and, • top 10 in all 21 of the measures. • one of the top 6 local authorities in all but one of these measures. 	When benchmarked against the family of comparator authorities, Aberdeenshire was first on ten of the measures, and second on the other six.	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
	<p>Aberdeenshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96% of adult participants thought they had gained a new skill; • 73% of adult participants were likely to continue learning; • 57% of young participants felt they were more confident as a result of having joined a group; • 81% of adult participants said that their learning had helped them to be more active in their community. 	No comparators	No trend	•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report by the Scrutiny & Audit Committee on Community Learning and Development in Aberdeenshire (SAC Report No. 12)
The number of media issues to the public (new indicator introduced April 2007)	<p>Aberdeenshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 07 -104,877 (Monthly average over six months = 104,211) 	No Comparators	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

The number of hits on the online reference database (new indicator introduced April 2007)	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept 07 - 1,547 (Monthly average over six months = 1,423) 	No Comparators	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
The number of hits on the ALIS online catalogue (new indicator introduced April 2007)	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept 07 - 112,272 (Monthly average over six months = 100,810) 	No Comparators	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
Number of visits to Aberdeenshire Arts website	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept 07 - 11,200 (Monthly average over six months = 10,566) 	No Comparators	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
The number of attendances at council swimming pools	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mar 07 - 384,951 Sept 07 - 376,608 	No Comparators	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
The number of attendances at council indoor sport and recreation facilities	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mar 07 - 104,869 Sept 07 - 115,963 	No Comparators	No trend	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

: SEA Topic: Cultural Heritage

SEA Indicator	Quantified information	Comparators and targets	Trends	Issues/constraints	Data source(s)
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Aberdeenshire • 476	Aberdeen City- • 37	Development is putting pressure on this feature	The location of new developments will be constrained by this factor	http://www.historic-scotland.gov.uk/scheduled-monuments.pdf
Listed Buildings	Aberdeenshire • Category A - 198 • Category B - 1608 • Category C(s) - 1906	Aberdeen City • Category A - 69 • Category B - 680 • Category C(s) - 462	No trend	New housing should take this into account	Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils (2006) <i>Topic Paper: Built Heritage</i> Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland (Scottish Civic Trust) http://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/browsea.asp Scottish Executive (1999) <i>NPPG18: Planning and the Historic Environment</i>
Conservation Areas	Aberdeenshire • 36	Aberdeen City • 11	No trend	The location and design of developments will be constrained by this factor	http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/acc/web/site/Planning/SL/pla_ConservArea.asp http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/devservices/index.asp
Archaeological sites	Aberdeenshire • 17935	Aberdeen City • 699	Development is putting pressure on this feature	The location of new developments will be constrained by this factor	Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils (2006) <i>Topic Paper: Built Heritage</i> Scottish Executive (1998) <i>NPPG5: Archaeology and Planning</i>

<p>Numbers of listed buildings sites at risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of buildings at risk • Aberdeenshire: 117 (6 under restoration) • 3% of listed buildings on the Buildings at Risk register for Aberdeenshire: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of buildings at risk • Aberdeen: 10 (1 under restoration) • 0.62% of listed buildings on the Buildings at Risk register Aberdeen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No trend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only a small number of buildings at risk are undergoing restoration. • The majority of the buildings at risk are in rural areas, with few undergoing restoration. 	<p>Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils (2006) <i>Topic Paper: Built Heritage</i></p> <p>Buildings at Risk Register for Scotland (Scottish Civic Trust) http://www.buildingsatrisk.org.uk/browse.asp Scottish Executive (1999) <i>NPPG18: Planning and the Historic Environment</i></p>
<p>Number of attendances at North East Arts Touring</p>	<p>Aberdeenshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2007 - 11,900 Number of visitors to Aberdeenshire Council's museums were • March 2007 - 1,106, and September 2007 - 7,200 • Directly managed Council museums achieving registration/accreditation - (11) • Indirectly managed Council museums achieving registration/accreditation Two-thirds (6) • 	<p>No Comparators</p>	<p>No trend</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Accreditation and Registration by 'Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. panel members were very positive about cultural events in Aberdeenshire, with comments such as "it is easy for me to travel to and from events", "it is easy to find out about activities/events", "the range of activities/events is as good as elsewhere in Scotland", and "the quality of venues is as good as elsewhere in Scotland". The top three potential venues were village halls (80%), community centres (74%) and local schools or colleges (73%). The cultural and historical environment is protected: The Council runs 11 museums and 3 heritage centres, in addition there are 3,718 listed buildings</p>

					in Aberdeenshire.
No. of sites in Aberdeenshire	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 -17,313 • Mar 07 - 17,511 • Sept 07 - 17,737 	No Comparators	Improving	•	
No. of planning applications, etc., the Archaeology Service commented on	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 -41 • Mar 07 - 49 • Sept 07 - 55 	No Comparators	Improving	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
No. of excavations, evaluations, etc., the Archaeology Service instigated to mitigate against the loss of sites	Aberdeenshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 27 • Mar 07 – 24 • Sept 07 - 31 	No Comparators	Improving	•	Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
				•	
Gardens and Designed Landscapes (GDL)	0.9 % of Aberdeenshire land area accommodates 32 GDLs which occupy 5745 hectares of land	Aberdeen City – 1 GDL 0.83% of Scotland's area accommodates 386 HGDLs which occupy 66765 hectares of land	No trend	Housing development will put pressure on the resource	SNH (2004) SNH Facts & Figures 2003/2004. Battleby: SNH

SEA Topic: Material Assets

SEA Indicator	Quantified information	Comparators and targets	Trends	Issues/constraints	Data source(s)
Number of vacant dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of vacant dwellings and second homes in 2005: Aberdeenshire: 4,8681 (decrease of 15% since 2001) and 4.6% of the total housing stock. In Aberdeenshire there are 749 (5%) vacant commercial properties. Between 2004 and 2005 the number of vacant (and second homes) in Aberdeenshire fell by 250 (-5.1%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of vacant dwellings and second homes in 2005: Aberdeen: 5,574 (5.1% increase since 2001) and 5.2% of the total housing stock. Between 2004 and 2005 the number of vacant (and second homes) in Aberdeen increase by 315 (6%). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of vacant dwellings in Aberdeen is increasing, while in Aberdeenshire the figure is falling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population increases into Aberdeenshire is causing the difference between the City and the shire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Register for Scotland: Vacant dwellings and second homes (2001-2005) http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/files/he-05-table3.pdf
Number of degraded buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of dwellings in disrepair in 2002: Aberdeenshire: 63,000 (70%) against 27,000 that are not in disrepair. Number of dwellings where their disrepair is classified as "urgent" in 2002: Aberdeenshire: 28% Number of dwellings (by tenure) failing to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard in 2002 in: Aberdeenshire: rented (LA/HA) - 50% owner-occupied/ private rented – 55% (HA=Housing Association) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of dwellings in disrepair in 2002: Aberdeen: 76,000 (81%) against 18,000 (19%) that are not in disrepair. Number of dwellings where their disrepair is classified as "urgent" in 2002: Aberdeen: 43% Number of dwellings (by tenure) failing to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard in 2002 in: Aberdeen: rented (LA/HA) - 60% owner-occupied/ private rented – 64% (HA=Housing Association) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire have lower rates of stock failure than the Scottish average, although levels are still quite high. Failure rates are slightly higher in the private sector than in the social rented sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils (2006) <i>Topic Paper: Characteristics of the Housing Stock</i> Communities Scotland (2004) <i>Scottish House Condition Survey 2002</i>, http://www.shcs.gov.uk/pdfs/SHQ_Sreport.pdf#search=%22Scottish%20House%20condition%20survey%20SHQS%2

					2
Derelict and vacant land (and buildings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Aberdeenshire: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 sites totalling 9ha is derelict; and 25 sites totalling 27ha is vacant. In Aberdeenshire the total area of derelict and urban vacant land has declined significantly from 190ha in 1996 to 36ha in 2005. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Aberdeen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 sites measuring 72ha is derelict; 32 sites measuring 116ha is vacant; & combined represents 2% of the total vacant and derelict land recorded in Scotland. Since 1996, the total area of derelict and urban vacant land in Aberdeen has remained steady (2005 figures stand at 180ha). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area of derelict and urban vacant land in Aberdeenshire has decreased significantly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Executive (2006) <i>Statistical Bulletin: Scottish Vacant Derelict and Derelict Land Survey 2005</i> http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/91002/0021846.pdf
Existing flood defences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Aberdeenshire, flood studies have been carried out in Huntly, Inverurie, Rosehearty, Auchnagatt, Fyvie, Maryculter (Mill Inn), Alford and Aboyne. Emergency works had to be carried out on Stonehaven's seawall foundations as coastal erosion caused part of it to collapse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood defence schemes will progressively be affected by soil/sand erosion from increasing rainfall and storm events, which will affect their stability and effectiveness. As a result, there will be a need to increase the maintenance these defences, and possibly relocate them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The predicted rise in storm events and winter precipitation is likely to increase soil/sand erosion from the wind and rain/water, which may prevent flood defence schemes functioning properly and result in their failure (e.g. collapse). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire Council (2005) <i>Flooding in Aberdeenshire: Fifth Biennial Report</i> http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/flooding/report/5biennial.pdf Halcrow (2006) <i>Aberdeen Bay Coastal Defence Scheme, Aberdeen city Council Project Appraisal Report</i>, Aberdeen City Council

Existing pumping stations and sewage works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire has significant constraints throughout most of the area, with the exception of a handful of settlements, including Westhill and Insch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2003, it was identified that the cost of overcoming development constraints in Scotland is £435.1m, of which 89% was identified for the removal of waste water constraints, and 11% for water supply constraints. The North East accounts for 5% of the Scottish total (£18.1m), which is mostly required in Aberdeenshire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data used for this assessment can only be considered as a draft, and will be subject to change in relation to Scottish Water's and SEPA's understanding of asset performance and development potential identified by planning authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a significant wastewater constraint issue in most of Aberdeenshire, which may have adverse effects on water quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils (2006) <i>Topic Paper: Development Constraints (Water and Waste)</i> Scottish Water (2006) <i>Strategic Asset Capacity and Development Plan</i> http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/portal/page?_pageid=627,4099564&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL
Water treatment works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the exception of areas in and around Peterhead, Banchory, Ellon, and Torphins, Aberdeenshire require significant works upgrades. Turriff and Banff and Macduff have been identified with severe water supply constraints. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a significant water supply constraint throughout most of the North East, with the exception of a handful of settlements. 	
Supply of affordable housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire: Net requirement of 915 affordable housing units (this represents two-thirds of the estimated new build 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The demand for affordable housing per annum in Aberdeen is a net requirement of 897 affordable housing units; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The supply affordable homes in the North East are not meeting the demand, even with additional Scottish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a need to review the proportion of affordable housing in new build in both Aberdeen City and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Aberdeen Council and Communities Scotland (2005) <i>2004 Housing</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the area). 		<p>Executive grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main shortfall is for one bedroom and larger (4 plus) bedroom dwellings. 	Aberdeenshire.	<p><i>Needs Assessment,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council and Communities Scotland (2005) <i>2004 Housing Needs Assessment, Executive Summary,</i> Fordham Research http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/councilhousing/reports/aberdeenshire_hna_final_summary.pdf
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Supply of holiday homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of second/holiday homes: • Aberdeenshire (excluding the coast) • 1 to 5%: southern Aberdeenshire (e.g. Mid Deeside and the Mearns area), and coastal areas excluding Peterhead • 5 to 10%: Donside Valley • 10-20%: Portsoy coast (Banff) and Aberdeen • 20%+: Upper Deeside (Cairngorms) • In Aberdeenshire second/holiday homes account for 2% of the housing stock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of second/holiday homes: • 0 to 1%: Aberdeen, central and northern • In Scottish rural areas, the proportion of housing stock accounted for by second/holiday homes is over seven times greater than in urban areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Aberdeenshire, only a small fraction of the total housing stock accounted by second/holiday homes. • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of second homes rented out by oil companies could be sold off as the oil sector declines. • A shortage of holiday homes will adversely affect the tourist trade in Aberdeenshire's most popular areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank of Scotland House Price Database; ONS http://www.hbospic.com/economy/includes/30-07-05FTBsPricedOutofScottishCountryside.doc • PRECiS (2005) No.70 <i>The impact of second and holiday homes on rural communities in Scotland,</i>
Access to good quality affordable housing	<p>Percentage of vacant housing properties offered to new tenants within less than 10 working days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 -87.9 % • Mar 07 -97.7 % • Sept 07 -93 % 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Comparators 	Improving	Funding	<p>The Residents' Survey published in October 2006 reported that 54% of those responding were satisfied with Housing services, this compares with 47% in 2004.</p>
Proportion of building materials from sustainable sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Aberdeenshire, work on increasing the energy efficiency and use of materials from sustainable sources in new dwellings are being researched in a project entitled Index 21. The outcome of this work will be incorporated into 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of • SPP1 - sustainable development; PAN 67 - layout, design and materials to be used, and to a lesser extent in SPP2 and SPP3 will improve the situation. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Executive (2003) <i>SPP1: The Planning System</i> • Scottish Executive (2003) <i>PAN 67: Housing Quality</i>

	<p>the next local development plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although Aberdeenshire councils encourage and support the use of buildings constructed of sustainable materials, there are only a few examples of this actually happening. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Executive (2003) <i>SPP2: Economic Development</i> Scottish Executive (2003) <i>SPP3: Planning for housing</i> Aberdeen Sustainability Research Trust: <i>Index 21</i> (www.index21.org.uk)
Number of new businesses	<p>VAT registered businesses 2005 - 9,980 2008 - 10,110. Rate of businesses formation- 48 VAT registrations per 10,000 working age people in Aberdeenshire</p>	<p>Rate of businesses formation in Scotland- 36 VAT registrations per 10,000 working age people</p>	<p>There were increases in the manufacturing, construction, hotels/restaurants, transport/ communications, finance, real estate/renting/ business activities, and education/ health sectors</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
Business survival rate	<p>% of business formed in 2001 still trading 3 years later</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire –75% 	<p>% of business formed in 2001 still trading 3 years later</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeen City – 75% Scotland – 71% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
Supporting facilities for enterprises	<p>Fully occupied council-owned serviced industrial sites - 41 Fully occupied council-owned business centres – 12 No. of contracts being won by rural partnerships, for the delivery of local services, from Aberdeenshire Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept 06 -8 Mar 07-11 	<p>No comparators</p>	<p>Improving</p>	<p>The Council work with Rural Partnerships to help them win contracts to carry out work for different services of the Council to support the development of viable and sustainable local rural partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sept 07-14 				
Employment land supply	<p>The level of Established Employment Land Supply 2006 - 395 hectares 2007 - 393 hectares</p> <p>Potential industrial land</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 ha land at Portlethen added to the Moss-side Audit. There is additional land at Formartine added in line with the Aberdeenshire Local Plan at Balmedie (Eigie Farm South); 2 further 150 ha sites pending production of development briefs to be used at the former RAF base at Edzell Woods 5.1 ha land at Rosehall in Formartine 	No Comparators	<p>The future trend will see improvements</p> <p>The Council actively provides further industrial land at MacDuff, Fraserburgh, Ellon and Balmedie.</p>	<p>A reduction of 2 hectares (-0.5%). This is predominantly because of land being developed across Aberdeenshire but in particular at Inverurie and Kintore.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
Perception of Council contribution to the economy	<p>Proportion of people believing that the Council has a positive impact on the economy of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2004-35% 2006 - 44% 	No comparators	Improving		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Residents' Survey published in October 2006
Perception of transport service and road	<p>Frequency of public transport (2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor / Very Poor - 23% Good /Very Good –77% <p>Cost and convenience of public transport (2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor / Very Poor -24% Good /Very Good – 76% <p>Dissatisfaction with winter</p>	<p>The percentage of roads identified by national condition survey, which should be considered for maintenance treatment, is an annual figure. The current percentage stand at 39%, which is slightly higher than the previous year's figure of 33.2%. In 2006/07, the Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' Survey published in October 2006 Residents' Research published in November 2007

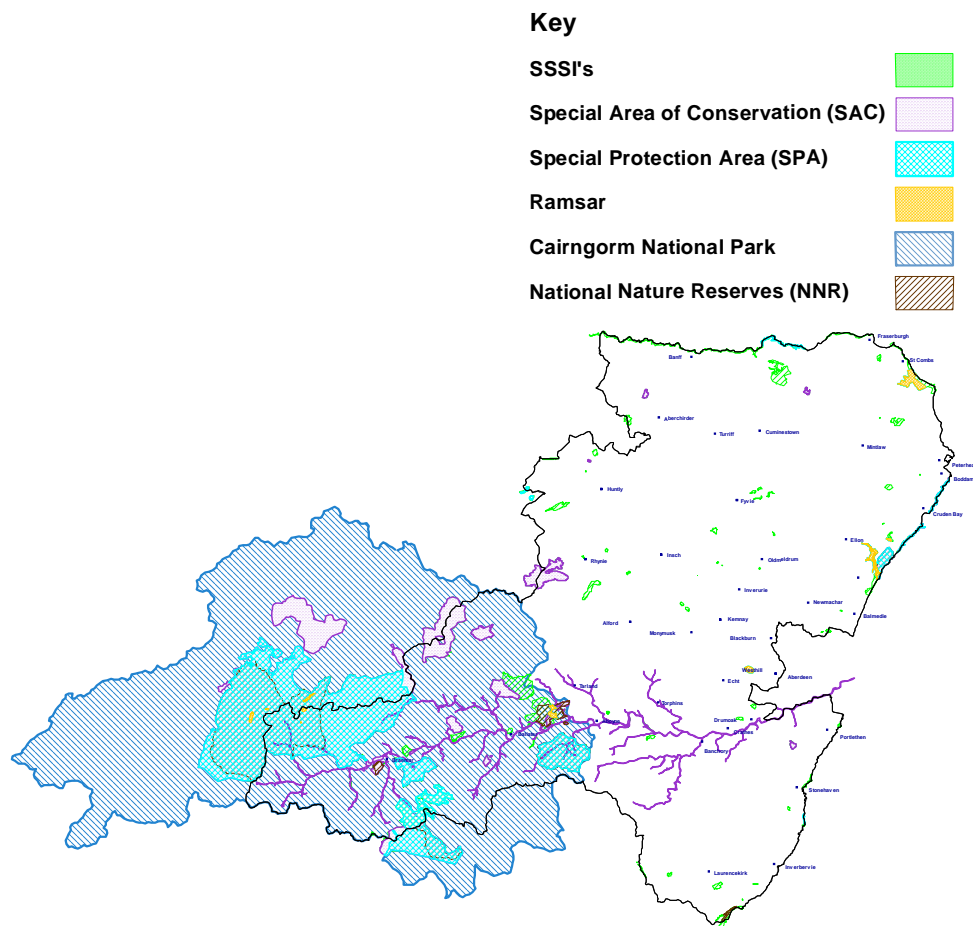
	<p>gritting/snow clearing and road maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer residents <p>Fundamental road surfaces in good condition' (2007)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good/Very Good – 62% <p>Top three aspects of road maintenance -</p> <p>Repair undertaken in good time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Good/Good – 67% • Very Poor /Poor - 27% <p>Winter maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Good/Good – 63% • Very Poor /Poor - 34% <p>Repairs of good quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Good/Good – 67% • Very Poor /Poor - 28% 	<p>completed 6% more road resurfacing and surface dressing than planned. The roads in Aberdeenshire are currently rated as 3rd best in Scotland.</p>			
Quality of life	<p>In 2006 Aberdeenshire – 3rd best quality of life in Scotland's 32 local authorities.</p> <p>In 2007 Aberdeenshire - best quality of life in Scotland's 32 local authorities.</p>	No comparators	No trend	<p>The factors taken into account included employment, the housing market, environment, education, and health. Aberdeenshire was found to have 81% employment, one of the highest life expectancies and low crime rates. A Bank of Scotland spokesperson noted "A strong economy, along with good schools and a low crime rate have helped Aberdeenshire to become the area with the best quality of life in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2007 Quality of Life Study commissioned by the Bank of Scotland.

				Scotland in 2007".	
Efficient provision of Council services	<p>Administration of housing and council tax benefits</p> <p>Processing time (days)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 – 31 • Mar 07- 34 • Sept 07 – 36 <p>Percent accurate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 – 97.6% • Mar 07- 96.8% • Sept 07 – 98.4% <p>Percentage of consumer complaints dealt with within 14 days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2005/06- 60.8% • 2006/07 - 75.3% 	No comparators	No trend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
	<p>Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA) of Operational Buildings in satisfactory condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006/07-34% <p>Percentage of operational buildings suitable for their current use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006/07. 40.3% 	No comparators	No trend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
High standard of financial management	<p>Cost of Council Tax collection (per household)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006/07-£11.68 • 2005/06-£11.24 <p>Percentage of Council Tax collected in year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006/07-95.9% • 2005/06-95.8% <p>Cost of business rates collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006/07-£32 • 2005/06-£30.89 	No comparators	No trend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008

	<p>Percentage of business rates collected</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006/07-97.5% • 2005/06-96.9% <p>Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2006/07-88.3% • 2005/06-87% 				
<p>Planning permission determined in accordance with agreed standards.</p>	<p>% of householder applications determined within 2 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 73% (139) • Mar 07 - 70% (176) • Sept 07- 46% (193) <p>% of non-householder applications determined within 2 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06 - 34% (222) • Mar 07 - 32% (229) • Sept 07-46%193 	No comparators	No trend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeenshire Council Monitoring Plan 2008
<p>Planning Gains</p>	<p>Incoming funds (Planning Gains)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sept 06- £1,479,620 • Mar 07 -£972,281 • Sept 07-£1,294,485 	No comparators	No trend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from the Planning Gain Service shows a total of incoming funds of £3.7m for the 18 month period covered by the baseline report

Issues/Areas	SEA Issues
Buchan Ness to Collieston (SAC & SPA) – Peterhead & Ellon	Biodiversity
River Dee (SAC) – Water Abstraction for all areas	Biodiversity
Garron Point (SAC) - Stonehaven	Biodiversity
Muir of Dinnet (SAC & Ramsar) - Aboyne	Biodiversity
Dinnet of Oakwood (SAC & SPA - Aboyne	Biodiversity
Mortlach Moss (SAC)– Huntly	Biodiversity
Red Moss of Netherley (SAC) – Portlethen & Newtonhill	Biodiversity
Glen Tanar (SPA) Aboyne & Banchory	Biodiversity
Loch of Skene (SPA & Ramsar) - Close to the City/Recreational Impact	Biodiversity
Loch of Strathbeg (SPA & Ramsar) – Fraserburgh, Mintlaw & Peterhead	Biodiversity
Troup, Pennan and Lion’s Head (SPA) Banff, Macduff, Fraserburgh	Biodiversity
Ythan Estuary (SPA & Ramsar) - Ellon	Biodiversity
Sands of Forvie and Meikle Loch (SPA & Ramsar) - Ellon	Biodiversity

International and national natural heritage designations



Landscape designations: Areas of Landscape Significance, Cairngorms National Park, and National Scenic Areas

Key

Areas of Landscape Significance



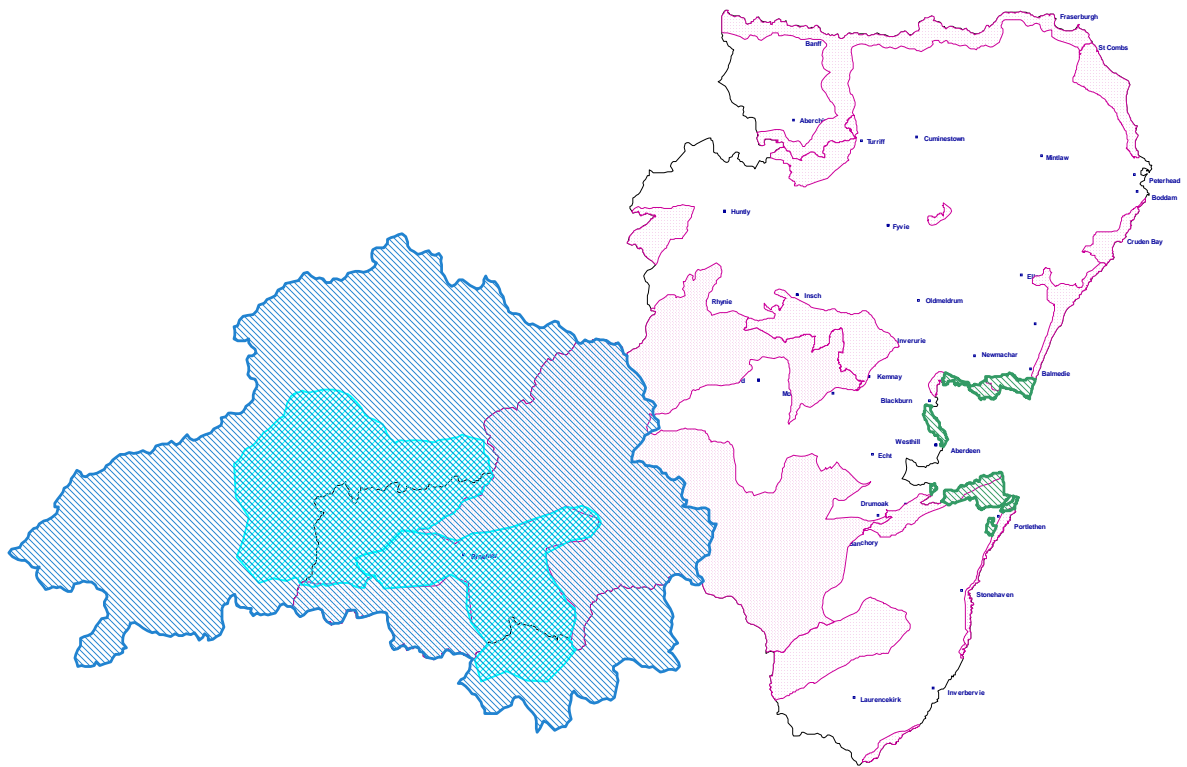
Green Belt



National Scenic Areas (NSA)









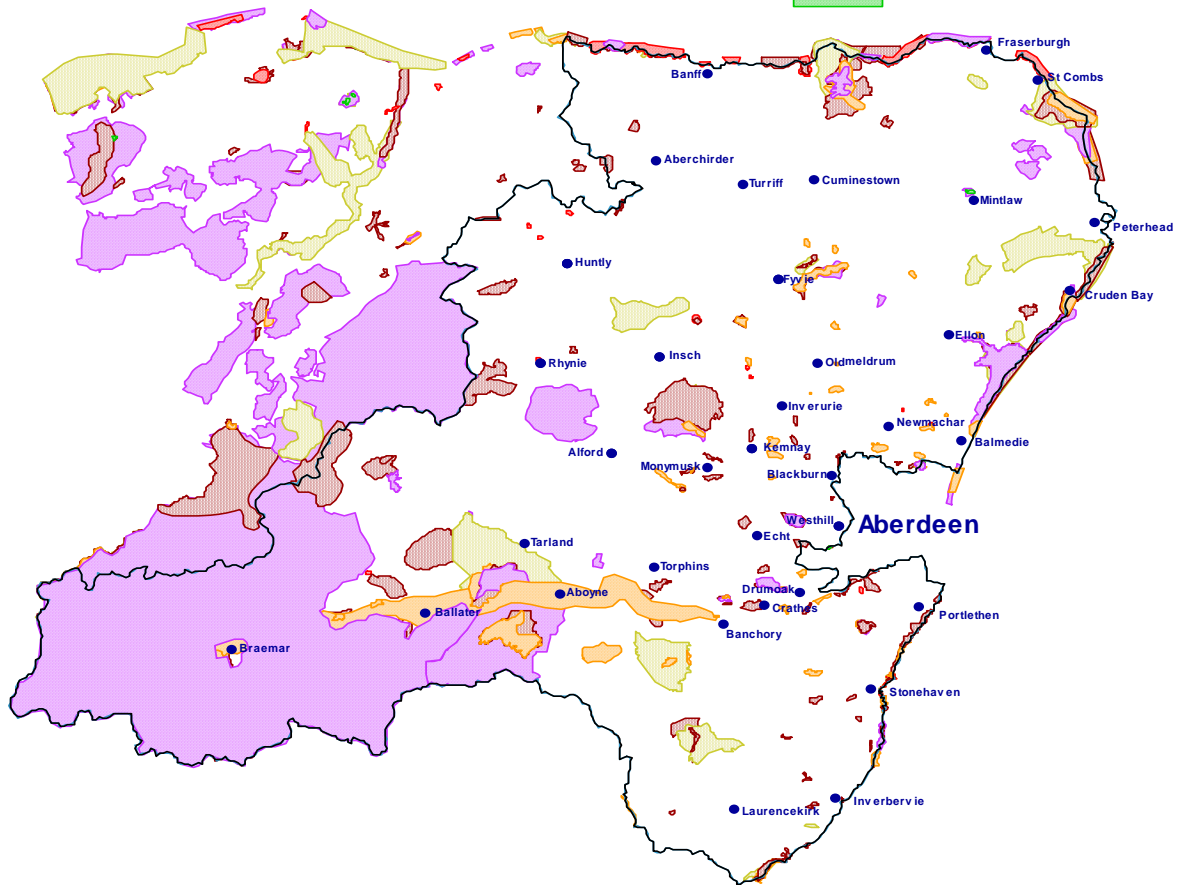
Cairngorms National Park



Local natural heritage designations: Sites of Environmentally Sensitive Areas / Sites of Interest to Natural Science

Key

Geology	
Geomorphology	
Entomology	
Botany	
Ornithology	
Fresh Water Biology	



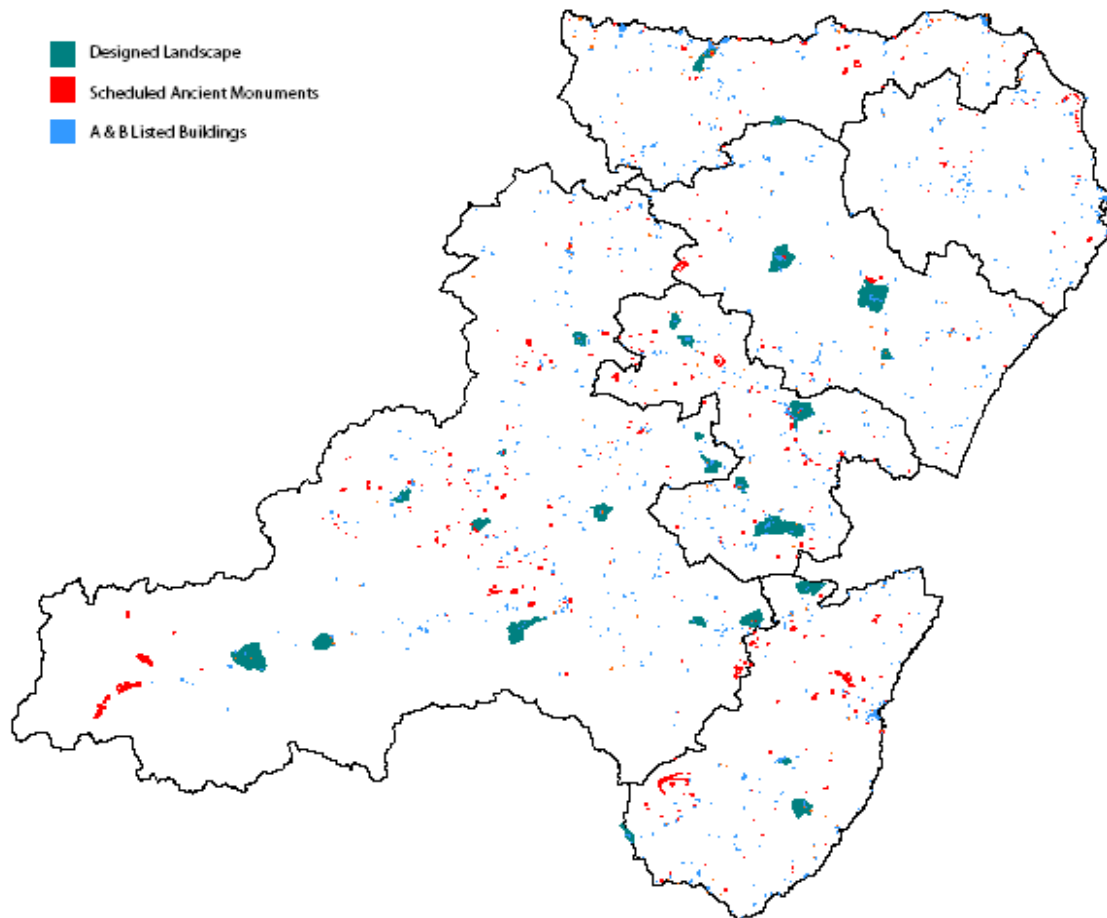
The main settlements likely to be affected by fluvial and coastal flooding (up to the 2080s)

SEA Topic	Quantified information		
Climatic Factors	Settlement	Flood risk	
		Fluvial flooding constraints (1 in 200 year flood event)	Tidal/coastal flooding constraints
	Significantly constrained		
	Fraserburgh	To the west and southeast , including part of the settlement and Fraserburgh Golf Course.	Harbour area (jetties only, not the buildings).
	Turriff	To the south , southwest and northwest from the river Deveron, Burn of Knockiemill, Burn of Dulerstone, and Burn of turriff.	N/A
	Longside	To the north , east , and southeast from the South Ugie Water and Burn of Cairngall.	N/A
	Huntly	To the north , from the River Deveron, which already affects part of the settlement, and to the east and southeast from the river Bogie and Thains Burn.	N/A
	Kintore	To the north , northeast and southeast from the Loch Burn, Bridgealehouse Burn, River Don, and Tuach Burn	N/A
	Banchory	To the south from the River Dee affecting part of the settlement immediately adjacent to the river, to the northeast and east from Burn of Bennie.	N/A
	Newtonhill	To the north and northwest from the Burn of Elrick and to the south from Pheppie Burn.	None.
	Moderately constrained		
	Peterhead	To the north and northwest from the River Ugie and Collie Burn, and to the south from a drainage ditch, which affects the Dales Industrial Estate and a works factory on South Road.	Harbour area, affecting buildings in South Bay Harbour, Bridge street, and the main piers.
	Inverurie	To the north and west from the River Urie, which includes part of the Inverurie Paper Mill, and to the south , from the river Don, which affects part of Port Elphinstone.	N/A
	Stonehaven	To the north and northeast from the Cowie Water (including Mineralwell Park) and to the south from Carron Water.	To the northeast encompassing all of Cowie, the caravan park, and the leisure area along Beach Road, and to the southeast including part of the harbour and the settlement (e.g. High Street)

	Bielside	To the south from the River Dee.	N/A
	Milltimber	To the south from the River Dee.	N/A
	Peterculter	To the south from the River Dee.	N/A
	Slightly constrained		
	Banff	To the south from the River Deveron, affecting Collenard Park and Dew Haugh.	To the southeast , affecting Duff Royal Golf Course, and part of the settlement to the east (including part of Bridge Street, Maple View, the football grounds and Princes Royal Park).
	Macduff	To the south , from Gelly Burn.	None.
	Mintlaw	To the west and south from South Ugie Water and the northwest (Pitfour Lake).	N/A
	Ellon	To the south from the River Ythan, and to the east , from a drainage ditch.	N/A
	Alford	To the north from the River Don and a drainage ditch in Baldyvin Wood.	N/A
	Laurencekirk	To the west and northwest from Luther Water and Ducat Water.	N/A
	Balmedie	To the northeast from Eigie Burn.	None.
	Potterton	To the south from Blackdog Burn.	N/A

Source: SEPA Draft Second generation Indicative flood risk maps (January 2006)

Gardens and Designed Landscapes, Scheduled Ancient Monuments & Listed Buildings



Designated Landscapes, Archaeological & Listed Buildings

Aberdeenshire Key

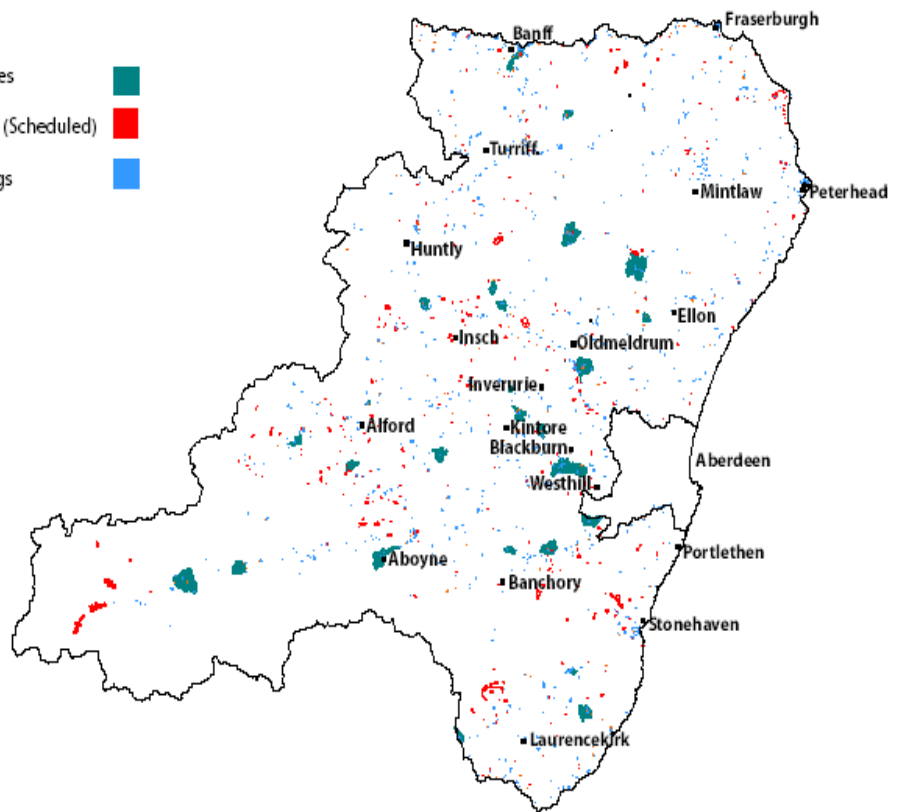
Designed Landscapes



Archaeological sites (Scheduled)



A & B Listed Buildings



APPENDIX 4: ASSESSMENT OF PATHS AGAINST SEA OBJECTIVES

AREA	PATH NUMBER	SEA OBJECTIVES										
		1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	4. Promote healthy living	5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	7. make best use of existing infrastructure	8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	11. To promote responsible access and greater understanding of cultural heritage
Banff and Buchan												
	101.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	101.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	102.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	102.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	104.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	105.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	106.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	106.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	106.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	106.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	106.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	107.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	107.02*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0

	108.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	108.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	109.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	110.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	111.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	111.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	113.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	114.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	114.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	115.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	117.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	118.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
Comments on Assessment		From the assessment of all the paths in B & B, there are no long-term, reversible or irreversible, significant effects on any receptor. These are existing paths and require little or no improvement; besides, where new paths will be developed, they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at a lower-tier level. But the proposed mitigation measures will prevent paths that are likely to have potential significant effects to be developed.										
AREA	PATH NUMBER	SEA OBJECTIVES										
		1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	4. Promote healthy living	5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	7. make best use of existing infrastructure	8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	11. To promote responsible access and greater understanding of cultural heritage
Buchan												

	201.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	201.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	202.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	202.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	202.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	203.02*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	204.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	204.02*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	204.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	204.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	204.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	205.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	205.02	+	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	205.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	205.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	205.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	0	+/-	0	0	0
	206.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	207.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	207.02*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	208.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	208.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	0	+/-	0	0	0
	209.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	210.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	210.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	210.03	0	0	+/-	+	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	210.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	210.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	210.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	210.07	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	210.08	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	210.09	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	211.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	211.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	212.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	0	0	0	0	0

	212.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	213.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	213.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	213.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	214.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	214.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	214.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	0	+/-	0	0	0
	215.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.07	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.08	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.09	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.10	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.11	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.12	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	215.13	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	216.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	217.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	217.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	218.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	218.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	218.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	218.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	218.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	218.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	218.07	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	?	+
	219.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	219.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	219.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	0	+/-	0	0	0
	219.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	0	+/-	0	0	0

	219.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
Comments on Assessment	From the assessment of all the paths in Buchan, there are no long-term, reversible or irreversible, significant effects on any receptor. These are existing paths and require little or no improvement; besides, where new paths will be developed, they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at a lower-tier level. But the proposed mitigation measures will prevent paths that are likely to have potential significant effects to be developed											
AREA	PATH NUMBER	SEA OBJECTIVES										
		1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	4. Promote healthy living	5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	7. make best use of existing infrastructure	8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	11. To promote responsible access and greater understanding of cultural heritage
Formartine												
	301.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	0
	301.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	0
	301.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	301.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	301.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	?	0
	302.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	302.02*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	302.03*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	303.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	?	?
	304.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	+	0
	304.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	+	+
	305.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0

	305.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	305.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	305.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	305.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	306.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	307.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	307.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	307.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	307.04	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	308.01	0	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	0	?
	308.02	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	309.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	309.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	309.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	309.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	309.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	309.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	0
	310.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	310.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	310.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	311.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	311.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	312.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	312.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	312.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	314.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	314.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	?	?
	314.03	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	314.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	314.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	315.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	315.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	316.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0

Commentary on Assessment

From the assessment of all the paths in Formartine, there are no long-term, reversible or irreversible, significant effects on any receptor. These are existing paths and require little or no improvement; besides, where new paths will be developed, they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at a lower-tier level. But the proposed mitigation measures will prevent paths that are likely to have potential significant effects to be developed

AREA	PATH NUMBER	SEA OBJECTIVES										
		1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	4. Promote healthy living	5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	7. make best use of existing infrastructure	8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	11. To promote responsible access and greater understanding of cultural heritage
Garioch												
	401.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	401.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	402.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	402.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	402.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	402.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	403.01	0	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	404.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	404.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	405.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	405.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	406.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0

	406.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	407.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	407.02	+	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	407.03	+	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	+	0
	407.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	407.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	408.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	408.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	408.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	408.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	408.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	408.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	408.07	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	408.08	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	408.09	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	408.10	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	408.11	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	408.12	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	409.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	409.02	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	409.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	409.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	410.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	410.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	410.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	410.04	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	410.05	0	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	411.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	411.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	411.03*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	412.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	414.01	0	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	414.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	414.03	0	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0

	415.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	415.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	416.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	416.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	416.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	418.01	+	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	+	0
	418.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	418.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	418.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
Commentary on Assessment	From the assessment of all the paths in Garioch, there are no long-term, reversible or irreversible, significant effects on any receptor. These are existing paths and require little or no improvement; besides, where new paths will be developed, they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at a lower-tier level. But the proposed mitigation measures will prevent paths that are likely to have potential significant effects to be developed											
AREA	PATH NUMBER	SEA OBJECTIVES										
		1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	4. Promote healthy living	5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	7. make best use of existing infrastructure	8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	11. To promote responsible access and greater understanding of cultural
Kincardine & Mearns												
	501.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	501.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	501.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	503.01	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0

	503.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	504.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	504.02*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	506.01	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	506.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	506.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	507.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	508.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	508.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	509.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	510.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	510.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	510.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	511.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	511.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	511.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	511.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	511.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	512.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	512.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	513.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	513.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	516.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	516.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	516.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	517.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	517.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	517.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	517.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	517.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	517.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	519.01	?	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	519.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	520.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	?	+

	520.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	520.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	520.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+

Commentary on Assessment: From the assessment of all the paths in K&M, there are no long-term, reversible or irreversible, significant effects on any receptor. These are existing paths and require little or no improvement; besides, where new paths will be developed, they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at a lower-tier level. But the proposed mitigation measures will prevent paths that are likely to have potential significant effects to be developed

AREA	PATH NUMBER	SEA OBJECTIVES										
		1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	4. Promote healthy living	5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	7. Make best use of existing infrastructure	8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	11. To promote responsible access and greater understanding of cultural heritage
Marr												
	601.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	601.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	601.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	601.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	605.05	?	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	?	+
	602.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	602.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	603.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	0	+

	604.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.05	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.07	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.08	?	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	604.09	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	606.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	606.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	0	+
	607.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	607.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	607.03	0	+	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	607.04	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	608.08	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	609.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	609.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	609.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	610.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	610.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	?	+
	611.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	611.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	612.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	613.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	613.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	613.03	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	+
	614.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	614.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	0	+
	615.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	615.02	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	616.01	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	616.02*	-	+/-	+	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	616.03*	-	+/-	+	++	+	+	+	+/-	?	0	0

Commentary on Assessment	From the assessment of all the paths in Marr there are no long-term, reversible or irreversible, significant effects on any receptor. These are existing paths and require little or no improvement; besides, where new paths will be developed, they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at a lower-tier level. But the proposed mitigation measures will prevent paths that are likely to have potential significant effects to be developed											
	Number	SEA OBJECTIVES										
Long Distance Routes, Cross Border Routes and Water Access Points		1. Ensure the sustainable management of and avoid damage to designated wildlife sites and protected species	2. Maintain biodiversity avoiding irreversible losses	3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and promote understanding of the natural heritage	4. Promote healthy living	5. Reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	6. Improve the quality of life for present and future generations	7. make best use of existing infrastructure	8. Improve opportunities to access path networks and green spaces	9. To protect and where appropriate enhance the historic environment and cultural heritage	10. To protect and where appropriate enhance designated sites and buildings	11. To promote responsible access and greater understanding of cultural heritage

	7CB.11	0	?	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	+	0
	7CB.12	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	+	+	+
	8WA.01*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.02*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.03*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.04*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.05*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.06	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.07	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.08	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.09	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.10	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.11*	-	+/-	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.12	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.13	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.14	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.15	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
	8WA.16	0	0	+/-	++	+	+	+	+/-	0	0	0
Commentary on Assessment	From the assessment of all the long distance paths and water access points there are no long-term, reversible or irreversible, significant effects on any receptor. These are existing paths and water access points and require little or no improvement; besides, where new paths will be developed, they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis at a lower-tier level. But the proposed mitigation measures will prevent paths that are likely to have potential significant effects to be developed											

* Denotes a path which potentially could impact on a Natura site

Appendix 5: Summary of Scoping Consultation Responses

Respondent	Comment	Response
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) by letter 23 September 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEPA is satisfied with the proposal to scope out the main environmental receptors in which we have an interest. As a result of this we have no comments to make on the proposed level of detail of the assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) by letter 7 October 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNH commented on the Aberdeenshire final consultative Draft Core Paths Plan by letter on 27 August 2009. SNH considers the advice contained in this letter should be taken into account while preparing the SEA Environmental Report. SNH is content with the scope and level of detail subject to the specific and detailed comments set out in their response SNH requests an 8 week consultation period on the Environmental Report Chapter 4 provides a good summary of the relevant plans programmes or strategies. However, SNH recommends the addition of the following: <i>Council Directive on the Assessment and Management of Flood Risks (known as the Floods Directive)</i> The date “2004” is omitted from the Nature Conservation Scotland Act <i>The Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c) Amendment (No 2)(Scotland) Regulations 2008</i> <i>Planning to halt the loss of biodiversity – Biodiversity conservation standards for planning in the United Kingdom – Code of Practice, 2006</i> <i>The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2002), “Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment” 2nd Edition</i> <i>Aberdeenshire Council (2008)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted Noted Consultation period set at 8 weeks Included in Chapter 3 Added Included in Chapter 3 Included in Chapter 3 Included in Chapter 3 as a precautionary measure Included in Chapter 3 Included in Chapter 3 Noted but Landscape scoped out Noted but Landscape scoped out Noted but Landscape scoped out Noted

	<p><i>River Dee Catchment Management Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Aberdeenshire Council (2005) Forest and Woodland Strategy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City</i> • <i>Cobham Resource Consultants (1997) National Programme of Landscape Character Assessment: Banff and Buchan, Scottish Natural Heritage review No 37</i> • <i>SNH's Landscape Policy Framework (Policy Statement No 05/010)</i> • <i>SNH Policy Summary: National Scenic Areas</i> • <i>SNH Policy Summary: Sustainable Development</i> • Appendix 2: Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 – we would suggest you clarify 'how it affects, or is affected by the CPP in terms of the SEA issues at Schedule 3 of the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 • Appendix 3: SEA Indicator – Water quality in Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protected Areas 'On page 30 there is a statement – '<i>The River Ythan has been adversely affected by high nitrate levels</i>'. However, diffuse pollution is a far wider issue than the Ythan catchment and this should be reflected in the report. In particular the River Dee Special area of Conservation and its catchment should be included and reference made to the River Dee Partnership and the River Dee Catchment Management Plan. • SEA Indicator – Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) – Please note that the national comparator figures for SACs (19) should be amended to reflect most recent data as of 31 September 2009. The latest data is regularly available online at www.snh.org.uk/snhi and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarified in Appendix 2 • Covered under Biodiversity • Noted and amended • Noted and amended • Noted. See Section 4.5.1 for full details of the Appropriate Assessment process for Natura sites • Noted • Noted – See Section 4.5.1
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	<p>explicitly, information in the Facts and Figures Section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On page 86 reference is made to Garron Point (cSAC) at Stonehaven. Garron Point was confirmed as SAC on 5 September 2008 • Assessment of Natura 2000 sites – Section 6.4: There is also the possibility of impacts on the Buchan Ness to Collieston Coast SAC and SPA as well those identified through scoping (see copy of original response attached). SNH considers the report is not clear as to how the assessment(s) under Regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) regulations as amended will be carried out and presented. It is very important that the assessment for both policies and/or plans that have the potential to impact on Natura sites are clear and follow the terminology set out in the regulations. SNH would expect an assessment of the implications of the core paths plan for Natura sites likely to be affected to be in a separate appendix to the SEA Environmental report/Core Path Plan. SNH suggests that it would be beneficial if the implications of the core path plan for Natura sites were discussed between SNH and Aberdeenshire Council to ensure that the assessment covers all the necessary issues and to identify the location and extent of any mitigation that may be necessary. • SEA Objectives – SNH welcomes the presentation of objectives and considers that the objectives cover a broad range of natural heritage issues. • Assessment methodology – SNH appreciates that table 6 and 7 show the framework that will be used to assess the environmental effects and this is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted
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	<p>provided as an example. However we re-iterate the importance of making clear how the impacts to Natura sites have been assessed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternatives and mitigation – we appreciate that the core path plan is a statutory requirement of the Land reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and that no strategic alternatives have been considered. However we welcome the statement that refers to the potential to find alternative alignments for individual paths that may be identified in the core path plan as likely to have an adverse effect on the natural and cultural environment. SNH welcomes the statement that refers to <i>‘where significant environmental effect is found the potential for mitigation will be considered and wherever possible implemented’</i> In addition to the reference to ongoing monitoring that will be required. We acknowledge that this will be addressed in the Environmental Report 	
<p>Historic Scotland by letter 7 October 2009</p>	<p>Detailed comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction, Key Facts and Description of Plan Contents – I found these helpful for setting the context of the Core Paths Plan • Relationship with other Plans, Programmes and Strategies - Additional documents for consideration that contain environmental protection objectives for the historic environment: Scottish Planning Policy 23 – Planning and the Historic Environment (SPP 23); Managing Change in the Historic Environment Guidance Notes • Section 4.2 does not include Archaeological Sites recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) but they are included the baseline data in Appendix 3 and I assume they will be included in the baseline data in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted • Noted: SPP23 included • Noted and included • Noted. GDLs are now covered by the SEA Objective for the historic environment and placed under historic environment topic in baseline data and SEA

	<p>environmental assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden and Designed landscapes are listed under historic environment topic at 4.2 but are under the landscape topic in Appendix 3. Garden and Designed Landscapes (GDL's) contribute to the areas historic environment and to the landscape. Potential impacts on GDL's could be considered using the SEA objective for the historic environment or for landscape, and I would welcome clarification in the Environmental report as to which will be used. However it should be noted that GDLs are included under the historic environment in the SEA objectives at Table 5 and you may therefore wish to place GDLs under the historic environment topic in the baseline data (Covers point 12 as well). • In the Environmental Report it would be helpful to provide separate maps showing the baseline data for the historic environment in relation to the CPPs proposals and actions. This will assist us in identifying and/or verifying potential impacts on the historic environment • Environmental Problems - I found the information included in Table 3 on the environmental problems useful. I agree that actions identified within the plan such as increased visitor access to sites (designated and non-designated) could have the potential to adversely affect the historic environment. • Alternatives – I note that there is no alternative to producing the CPP but alternative alignments will be sought for individual paths that are identified as the plan is developed. I am content with this approach. If alternative ways of delivering the CPP are 	<p>Objective 12 has been removed as now not applicable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. It is not possible to create a meaningful map of Aberdeenshire showing the impact of CPP paths on the historic environment at the scale available in the report. However a GIS overlay of CPP routes has been provided for Historic Scotland to import into their own GIS system. • Noted • Noted. All route, existing or new have been assessed but during the development of the Plan routes were selected that would have minimal impact on sensitive sites as part of the CPP route selection criteria • Noted. GDLs considered under objective 10 in the report. Objective 12 removed as not now relevant • Noted. Table 8 provides
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	<p>considered as the plan is being developed (perhaps different emphases for the overall strategy, e.g. a focus on existing routes rather than new ones) these should also be included in the environmental assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEA Objectives – Table 5 lists SEA objectives for each SEA topic that is scoped into the assessment. As a minor point GDLs would be considered under objective 10 in this table i.e. designated sites and buildings. It may be that objective 12 refers to gardens and designed landscapes that are listed for their importance on a regional/local basis. I would welcome clarification of this in the environmental report. • When documenting the environmental assessment it would be helpful to set out any assumptions that are made during the assessment e.g. relating to implementation of the plan. I would also welcome the inclusion of a commentary box in the assessment matrices to provide a short explanation of the conclusion of the assessments. This will assist in making the assessment transparent and the results accessible to the general reader. • No mitigation measures were identified in the assessment tables. As you will be aware, mitigation may involve making changes to the plan and/or developing more detailed mitigation proposals to be implemented as it is delivered. It would be helpful in the Environmental Report to clearly describe any changes made to the plan as a result of the environmental assessment and to clearly set out any recommendations or expectations for lower level projects or activities that are identified as mitigation measures. 	<p>a summary of the results of the assessment. No significant negative impacts were identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. Although no significant negative impacts were identified through the assessment, Table 10 sets out the proposed mitigation process for any environmental problems which may remain • Noted. Although no significant negative impacts were identified through the assessment, Table 10 sets out the proposed monitoring process for any environmental problems which may remain
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	<p>It would also be helpful to identify who will be responsible for ensuring that the mitigation measures are taken forward as the plan is implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One of the requirements of the SEA Act is to monitor the effects of the plan. The Environmental Report should therefore contain information on your monitoring strategy. The indicators chosen for the historic environment should reflect both the actions to be taken within the plan and the potential impacts identified in the course of the SEA.	
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