

SEA SCREENING REPORT (COVER NOTE)

PART 1

To: SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk
or
SEA Gateway
Scottish Executive
Area 1 H (Bridge)
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

PART 2

An SEA Screening Report is attached for the plan, programme or strategy (PPS) entitled:

Aberdeenshire Council Economic Development Priorities

The Responsible Authority is:

Aberdeenshire Council

COMPLETE PART 3 or 4 or 5

PART 3

Screening is required by the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. Our view is that:

an SEA is required because the PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(3) of the Act and is likely to have significant environmental effects **or**

an SEA is required because the PPS falls under the scope of Section 5(4) of the Act and is likely to have significant environmental effects **or**

an SEA is not required because the PPS is unlikely to have significant environmental effects

PART 4

The PPS does not require an SEA under the Act. However, we wish to carry out an SEA on a voluntary basis. We accept that, because this SEA is voluntary, the statutory 28 day timescale for views from the Consultation Authorities cannot be guaranteed.

PART 5

None of the above apply. We have prepared this screening report because:
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PART 6

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PART 7

Signature (electronic signature is acceptable)	M Harper
Date	14 June 2007

SEA SCREENING REPORT - KEY FACTS

Responsible Authority	Aberdeenshire Council		
Title of PPS	Aberdeenshire Economic Development Priorities		
Purpose of PPS	To promote economic development in Aberdeenshire		
What prompted the PPS (e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	Administrative		
Subject (e.g. transport)	Economic Development		
Period covered by PPS	2007 – 2011		
Frequency of updates	Every 2 years		
Area covered by PPS (e.g. geographical area – it is good practice to attach a map)	Some selected locations within Aberdeenshire		
Summary of nature/ content of PPS	The Aberdeenshire Economic Development Priorities covers priorities, objectives and action plan.		
Are there any proposed PPS objectives?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Copy of objectives attached	<input type="checkbox"/> Y	YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO
Date			

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Our determinations regarding the likely significance of effects on the environment of **Aberdeenshire Economic Development Priorities** is set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1 – LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

TITLE OF PPS		
Aberdeenshire Council Economic Development Priorities		
RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY		
Aberdeenshire Council		
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (1(a), 1(b) etc. refer to paragraphs in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
1(a) the degree to which the PPS sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	Yes	The Economic Development Priorities set the framework for encouraging biomass/biofuels production, hydrogen fuel technology, recreational tourism, creative industries and industrial land supply. This goal will be achieved through other PPS being drawn by Aberdeenshire Council. The priorities will encourage working relationships with the private sector, local and national bodies to bring about vertical integration in the agricultural and fisheries sectors. This would mean that primary producers would work in partnership with those selling goods to the public. The priorities will also stimulate research and new product development in food and fish processing through innovation and processing activities. This integration and innovation will be achieved within the context of the existing

		business environment and facilities – not through new developments.
1(b) the degree to which the PPS influences other PPS including those in a hierarchy	Yes	The Economic Development Priorities will support industrial land supply envisaged within the proposed Structure Plan. It will also support renewable energy strategies proposed by the Aberdeenshire Supplementary Planning Guidance for renewable energy and the reduction of energy in existing buildings. The priorities will support communities in the development of Aberdeenshire towns through the proposed Aberdeenshire Towns Housing Strategy. Also, the Priorities will promote tourism. In this respect, the Priorities will encourage working with the Cairngorms Park authorities within the existing Cairngorms National Park Plan framework to implement its tourism objective. The Priorities will also have regard to the proposed Coastal Flooding Policy being developed by Aberdeen City & Shire in promoting tourism along the Banffshire coast.
1(c) the relevance of the PPS for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	Yes	The central goal of the Priorities is to safeguard the environment and promote sustainable development. For instance, the priorities will promote biomass as a substitute for existing fuels in certain appropriate businesses. They will encourage engagement with industry to displace electricity as a source of process and space heating.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (1(d) etc. refer to paras in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the PPS	Yes	The economic development strategy acknowledges that industry in Aberdeenshire depends highly on electricity as a source of process and space heating. This has implications for CO2 emissions among other environmental effects. Besides, Aberdeenshire and the business community in the northeast depend on the oil industry. Oil is a limiting resource and any downturn in the oil industry will affect the economy of Aberdeenshire. Exploring the potentials of the renewable industry will help maintain a stable industry in the northeast.
1(e) the relevance of the PPS for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, PPS linked to waste management or water protection)	Yes	The EC Air and Waste Directives, and the EU Directive on Energy Performance of Buildings, are relevant to the strategy.
2 (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	Yes	The Priorities seek to promote renewable energy technology and green industry in Aberdeenshire. These green-energy initiatives are likely to have long-term positive environmental effects. On the other hand, the promotion of industrial land supply, development and operation is likely to have some environmental effects depending on the way the priorities are implemented.
2 (b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No	The objectives in the Economic Development Priorities aim to promote the environment. The

		development actions envisaged in the strategy are not in the scale of the local plan, local housing strategy or the local transport strategy. Projects within the priorities will focus on some selected businesses and sites that already exist. Any negative effects from development proposals will be neutralised by the positive environmental effects. The Priorities are therefore not expected to have cumulative effects.
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (2(e), 2(f) etc refer to paras in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005)	Likely to have significant environmental effects? YES/NO	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
2 (c) transboundary nature of the effects (i.e. environmental effects on other EU Member States)	Yes	To the extent that climate change impacts, CO2 emission and global warming are transboundary in nature, the proposals in the Economic Development Priorities seeking to reduce CO2 emissions will be positive and transboundary in nature.
2 (d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	Yes	The promotion of any technology like a green energy industry has inherent risks to human life.
2 (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Yes	The Economic Development Priorities cover pockets of sites within Aberdeenshire. In its implementation, the Priorities will support some selected individual businesses in Aberdeenshire, which already exist. It is not envisaging

		any new or substantial developments.
2 (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to- (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use.	No	The Economic Development Priorities will encourage industrial land supply proposed in the structure plan and does not set the framework for separate developments outside the provisions in the existing PPS. The Priorities do not envisage any new development that will affect designated sites.
2 (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	No	The Priorities do not envisage any new development that will affect landscapes at local, national and international level. The current planning regime in Aberdeenshire Council will not permit any effect on these areas

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A summary of our considerations of the significant environmental effects of [Aberdeenshire Economic Development Priorities] is given below.

TABLE 2 – SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The Economic Development Priorities will support the supply of industrial land through the new structure plan. The Priorities will also encourage biomass/biofuel production and hydrogen technology. Part of these green priorities will be implemented by working with communities and business to promote energy efficiency in buildings. In this respect, this green energy goal will be achieved through the SPG for renewables and energy reduction. The Priorities will encourage working with communities in the development of Aberdeenshire towns through the Aberdeenshire Towns Housing Strategy. The tourism priorities will be implemented through the existing Cairngorms National Park plans and the proposed Coastal & Flood Management plans for Aberdeen City & Shire. Overall, the Priorities will focus on selected sites and businesses within Aberdeenshire subject to available funding. It is therefore our view that the Priorities will have minimal effects on the environment.

Because all the Priorities will be covered by other SEAs the residual Priorities will have minimal effect on the environment. The other SEAs being undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council include the Structure Plan (for industrial land supply), Aberdeenshire Towns Local Housing Strategy (development of towns), SPG for Renewable Energy & Energy Reduction (green energy), Coastal Flooding Policy (Coastal impacts) and existing Cairngorms National Park plans (tourism). Since the matters in the Priorities are more appropriately assessed in other PPS, Aberdeenshire Council would not like to duplicate other assessments. For these reasons, SEA not required.

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**TABLE 3
SUMMARY RECORD OF COMMENTS FROM CONSULTATION
AUTHORITIES**

GUIDANCE NOTE

It is not a statutory requirement to include this section in the screening report. However, the Responsible Authority may find it useful for record purposes.

TITLE OF PLAN, PROGRAMME OR STRATEGY

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY

DATE COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM CONSULTATION AUTHORITIES

Consultation Authority	Views (if known at this stage)
Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Significant environmental effects - YES/ NO
	If YES, note SEA topics/issues here (e.g. soil and water)
Scottish Natural Heritage	Significant environmental effects - YES/ NO
	If YES, note SEA topics/issues here (e.g. flora, fauna and biodiversity)
The Scottish Ministers	Significant environmental effects - YES/ NO

Ministers (Historic Scotland)	If YES, note SEA topics/issues here (e.g. landscape and cultural heritage)
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TABLE 4 – RECORD OF POST SCREENING ACTION

<p>GUIDANCE NOTE</p> <p>It is not a requirement to include this section in the screening report. However, the Responsible Authority may find it useful for record purposes.</p>			
<p>TITLE OF PLAN, PROGRAMME OR STRATEGY (PPS)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>			
<p>RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>			
<p>1 Responsible Authority and Consultation Authorities in agreement – PPS <i>is</i> likely to have significant environmental effects</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>Date of determination</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>2 Responsible Authority and Consultation Authorities in agreement – PPS <i>is not</i> likely to have significant environmental effects</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>Date of determination</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>3 Responsible Authority and Consultation Authorities cannot reach agreement – referred to the Scottish Ministers for their determination</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>Date referred to the Scottish Ministers</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>4 Scottish Ministers' determination</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>Date of determination</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 30px; width: 100%;"></div>		
<p>5 Publicity requirements met</p>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; width: 50%; padding: 5px;">YES</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center; width: 50%; padding: 5px;">NO</td> </tr> </table>	YES	NO
YES	NO		

6 Signature

Date

Attached vision, aims and objectives

Table 1: List of the proposed **objectives**.

By 2011 Aberdeenshire will:

1. Lead the UK in biomass/biofuels production and related technology
2. Be known as the location for innovative energy related and hydrogen fuel technology.
3. Have acquired a world-class reputation for recreational tourism and creative industries.
4. Have appropriate supply of marketable industrial land and units to enable the expansion of Aberdeenshire businesses and to attract businesses from elsewhere.
5. Be home to vertically integrated agriculture and fisheries industries.
6. Be nationally recognised for the self-sufficient and inclusive communities in its area.