

Review of SG Safeguarding 4: Safeguarding transportation facilities

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to review the current Local Development Plan (LDP) policy approach to developer contributions and make recommendations in light of changes in national policy and the local context. In this case the policy under review is Supplementary Guidance, SG Safeguarding 4: Safeguarding transportation facilities (SG Safe 4).

2. Approach

- 2.1 In order to ensure that potential future transportation routes are protected, any site safeguarded for a transportation project, whether an identified road infrastructure project or within land associated with the safe operation of an airfield or airport requires to be protected from inappropriately located developments. Development will not be approved where either a core path or a closed railway line would be negatively affected by the proposal.
- 2.2 The aim of the policy is to ensure that current developments do not prejudice any existing and future transport routes such as land required to facilitate future strategic roads transportation requirements as specified in Schedule 3.

3. Background

National Context

- 2.1 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) advises that transport links are considered to be a critical component in the support of economic growth by providing a national network of rail, road and sea routes. Furthermore these facilities generate employment opportunities in their own right. Current and future road networks and facilities should be protected from development which may compromise safety, efficiency and expansion. The National Planning Framework for Scotland 2 (NPF2) aims to reduce travel times and emissions and improve public transport. The Strategic Transport Projects Review sets the Scottish Government's 29 transport investment priorities for the next 20 years. Three of these relate principally to Aberdeenshire: Rail improvements around Kintore; physical works to the A96 to provide better overtaking opportunities; and replacement of the Inveramsay Bridge.

Strategic/Regional Context

- 2.2 The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009 promotes economic growth, part of which includes the improvement of the road and rail network into the northeast. Future development should allow for transportation improvements while land required for the delivery of the local and regional transport strategies should be protected from development. In section 5 of the current plan "Putting the plan into practice" a number of proposals are made relating to park and ride services and road and rail improvements to make environmentally friendly methods of transport more attractive. These proposals are indicated on the key diagram. These have been carried forward into the new Strategic Development Plan although the aspiration for park and ride sites has been reduced to two, on the outskirts of Aberdeen City. These sites should continue to be protected by specific allocation in the plan.

4. Drivers of Change

- 4.1 The Scottish Government continues to promote the importance of efficient transport links to encourage economic growth and provide a variety of modes of transport in order to reduce emissions. The overall aim of the policy continues to align with the aims of the Government.
- 4.2 Current protections provided to the AWPR and Balmedie Tippetty Dual carriageway scheme are anticipated to be largely complete by 2016, but should remain within the revised plan to ensure protection until construction is completed.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 While the policy specifically protects existing and future road, non-motorised and air travel infrastructure, ports and harbours are only mentioned within the Reasoned Justification. It may be preferable for ports and harbours to be included within the actual policy. This modification is not of such significance that it requires to be discussed within the Main Issues Report.

6. Summary of main points

- 6.1 This supplementary guidance addresses the key issues on how current and future road and air transportation links should be protected from inappropriate development and how a wider range of modes of transport should be provided to help to reduce emission. The guidance also protects both the existing core footpath network and any former railway line. While ports and harbours are mentioned within the Reasoned Justification, they are not mentioned in the policy itself. An additional criterion should be added to the policy to include “operational areas of ports and harbours”.

Bibliography

- Aberdeenshire Council (2012) *Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2012*
- Scottish Government (2010) *Scottish Planning Policy*
- Scottish Government (2009) *National Planning Framework for Scotland 2*