



ABERDEEN  
CITY COUNCIL

# Sustainability Checklist for Development Options

**Aberdeen Local Development Plan**

December 2008

Planning and Infrastructure  
Strategic Leadership  
Aberdeen City Council  
St Nicholas House  
Broad Street  
Aberdeen  
AB10 1BW

[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk)



TOPIC	SOURCE OF INFORMATION	COMMENT
<b>Exposure</b>	OS Mapping MLURI Land Capability for Agriculture Maps Climate Data Site Visits Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.	<p>Does the site have little, some or good shelter from northerly winds through topography, vegetation - and/or presence of frost pockets likely to occur? Can exposure impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>The higher parts or brows of hills, and flat sites with little vegetation are likely to be exposed to winds. The sides and bottoms of some valleys, gullies, and other depressions can be liable to colder air and frosts.</p>
<b>Aspect</b>	OS Contour Mapping Site Visits Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.	<p>Is the site north facing, east or west facing or south-west, south, south-east facing. Can aspect impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>This should be a fairly simple exercise. In cases where there may be a range of undulations across an area it is probably the overall sloping trend which is the important criterion gained by comparing the differences between the highest and lowest points at the opposite edges of a site.</p>
<b>Slope</b>	OS Contour Mapping Site Visits Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.	<p>Do any parts of the site have steeper slopes or undulations and if so, can they be mitigated?</p> <p>Slopes are considered steep if the gradient is more than 1 in 12. This is more of a 'rule of thumb' established through road engineering practice where mobility, or the presence of water, ice or snow, can become problematic.</p>

<p><b>Flood risk</b></p>	<p>OS Mapping SEPA Flood Map Flood Appraisal Group Historic evidence Site Visits Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Is there considerable, little or no risk of natural or man made flooding on the site? If there is, can flooding impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  SEPA points out that the types of potential flood risk can range from coastal, fluvial, pluvial, groundwater, drainage, and infrastructure failure flooding, or a combination of these. Attention should be given not just to existing flood risk, but to the potential for flooding arising from ground level changes caused by future development.</p>
<p><b>Drainage</b></p>	<p>OS and Geological Mapping MLURI Land Capability for Agriculture Maps Site Visits Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>How much poorly drained or waterlogged land is there on the site? Can drainage impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  In many places site visits during the early or late parts of the year are often reliable means of assessing whether water logging occurs.</p>
<p><b>Built/Cultural Heritage Elements</b></p>	<p>OS mapping Listed Buildings Register Sites and Monuments Record Site Visits Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Is there likely to be any significant or potential loss or disturbance of archaeological sites or listed and vernacular buildings. Can heritage impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  Where there is any doubt about the range of impacts that development may cause then consultation with the nominated experts must be carried out.</p>

<p><b>Natural Conservation</b></p>	<p>Scottish Natural Heritage records                  Nature Conservation Strategy                  Sites of Special Scientific Interest Register                  Site Visits                  Consultation                  Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Is there likely to be any significant or potential loss or disturbance of wildlife habitat or species. Can natural conservation impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>This can be assessed at a simple level of assuming what the likely tangible effects on a designated site might be from OS maps and site visits, or more reliably by consultation with experts as to the more intangible effects on habitat and species.</p>
<p><b>Landscape Features</b></p>	<p>Scottish Natural Heritage Landscape Character Assessment                  Site Visits                  Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Will there be some loss or significant loss or disturbance of linear and group features of woods, tree belts, hedges, and stone walls present. Can these landscape impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>The difference between ‘Some Loss’ and ‘Significant Loss’ will depend on individual cases. A significant loss would mean that the overall adverse and necessary effects on trees, walls, or vegetation would mean a loss of character. If only small elements would need to be removed and the presence of features would remain largely the same, then it would be regarded as having ‘some potential loss’.</p>

<p><b>Attractive/managed surroundings/ Landscape Fit</b></p>	<p>Landscape Character Assessment Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Will development intrude significantly or slightly into surrounding landscape or will it be unobtrusive. Can landscape fit impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  Although this may appear to be a relatively subjective matter, it should be possible to use objective assessment based on experience and knowledge. Consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage is advisable. Assessment may be aided through other professional assessment prepared by a landowner/ developer to support a proposal.</p>
<p><b>Relationship to existing settlement</b></p>	<p>Visual Assessment Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Will development be well related or partially related to existing settlement? Or will it be unrelated (for instance a new settlement). Can settlement impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  This is a matter of fact and degree. Developers should use objective professional assessment based on experience and knowledge. Assessment may be aided through other professional assessment prepared by a landowner/developer to support a proposal.</p>
<p><b>Land Use Mix/Balance/Service Thresholds</b></p>	<p>OS Mapping Local Plan Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Will development of either housing or employment land contribute to a better mix or balance of land-uses, or provide the impetus for attracting facilities? Can land use impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  Responses to this topic will depend on site location and the type of proposal. Examples include providing housing in a predominantly employment area or vice versa. Could additional development attract new facilities into an area where few currently exist?</p>

<p><b>Accessibility</b></p>	<p>OS Mapping Site Visits Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>How close is the site to the rail, bus, and major road network? Ideally, the closer the better with sites within 400m being the most favourable. Can accessibility impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  Access should be measured from the closest access or site boundary. Where sites are sufficiently large that only a small proportion of it would be within the recognised accessibility standard and the rest increasingly remote, then it might be reasonable to sub-divide the site in order to assess its accessibility.</p>
<p><b>Proximity to community and civic facilities - schools/shopping/health/recreation</b></p>	<p>OS Mapping Local Plan Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>How many existing community facilities are available within 1.6 kilometres of the site - a good range, limited range or none? Can accessibility impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  Responses to this topic will depend on site location and the type of proposal.</p>
<p><b>Direct footpath/cycle connection to community and recreation facilities and resources</b></p>	<p>OS Mapping Core Path Plan Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Is there is a significant or limited range of available footpath/cycle path connections to community and recreation facilities? Or are there no such links existing? Can connection impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?  Responses to this topic will depend on site location and the type of proposal.</p>

<p><b>Proximity of employment opportunities</b></p>	<p>OS Mapping Local Plan Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Are there significant, limited or no employment opportunities within 1.6 kilometres of the site? Can employment impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>Responses to this topic will depend on site location and the type of proposal. Significant employment areas include the main business and industrial estates at Dyce, Bridge of Don and Altens and the City Centre. Examples of more limited employment opportunities include Forresterhill, the Macaulay and smaller employment areas such as Northfield and St Machar.</p>
<p><b>Contamination</b></p>	<p>Planning Application Records Historic mapping Contaminated Land Unit Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Is there any significant or potential contamination or waste tipping present? Can contamination impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>This is a matter of fact and degree. Some contamination may be capable of remediation through development activity.</p>
<p><b>Land Use Conflict</b></p>	<p>OS Mapping Local Plan Maps Site Visits Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Is there any significant or potential conflict with adjoining land uses, air quality, or noise expected? Can land use conflict impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>The juxtaposition of some uses – particularly in the case of housing e.g. where close to industry, or next to some high traffic or noise generating uses, including sports arenas, airport, etc can cause problems. This is only likely to be an issue with some sites and may be capable of remediation.</p>

<p><b>Physical Infrastructural Capacity</b></p>	<p>Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Are there any significant constraints to physical infrastructural capacity? Can infrastructural impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>This will depend on the site location and type of development proposed. Infrastructural capacity is a general term for public and quasi-public utilities and facilities such as roads, bridges, sewers and sewer plants, water lines and power lines which are necessary for the proper functioning of an urban area. Consultation with appropriate staff and bodies may be required.</p>
<p><b>Service Infrastructural Capacity</b></p>	<p>Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>Are there any significant constraints to service infrastructural capacity? Can infrastructural impacts be mitigated without other harmful effects?</p> <p>Service infrastructure includes emergency services, health, education (such as school capacity), and other facilities</p>
<p><b>Other Constraints</b></p>	<p>Consultation Assessment provided by landowner/developer to support a development option.</p>	<p>This is a cover-all topic for elements that may be completely unknown at present but might arise as and when individual sites come forward.</p>

Dr Margaret Bochel  
 Head of Planning and Infrastructure  
 Aberdeen City Council  
 Strategic Leadership  
 Planning and Infrastructure  
 St Nicholas House  
 Broad Street  
 Aberdeen AB10 1BW

Telephone: 01224 523317  
 Fax: 01224 636181  
 E-Mail: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk