

Post-adoption Statement for Granite City Growing

PART 1

To	To Sea.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk Or SEA Gateway Area 1 H (Bridge) Victoria Quay Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
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PART 2

A Post-adoption Statement for the plan entitled

Granite City Growing: Aberdeen Growing Food Together

The Responsible Authority is:

Aberdeen City Council (ACC) leading on behalf of city stakeholders

PART 3

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Date	April 2021

INTRODUCTION

This document referred to here as the Post-Adoption SEA Statement) has been prepared in accordance with Section 18 of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

Website

The full PPS as adopted, along with the Environmental Report and Post-Adoption SEA Statement are available on the Responsible Authority's website at:

<https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/food-growing-strategy-granite-city-growing>

Office Address

Office-based inspection of the plan is not available due to pandemic restrictions.

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Times at which the documents may be inspected and a copy obtained:

Office-based inspection of the plan is not available due to pandemic restrictions

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1. Key Facts

Name of Responsible Authority	Aberdeen City Council (ACC) leading on behalf of city stakeholders.
Title of the PPS	Granite City Growing – Aberdeen Growing Food Together
What Prompted the PPS	Granite City Growing responds to the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 duty to prepare a food-growing strategy.
Subject	Community food-growing
Period Covered by the PPS	2020-2026 to align with the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.
Frequency of Updates	Granite City Growing will be reviewed every 5 years.
Area covered by the PPS	Aberdeen City
Purpose and/or objectives of the PPS	Granite City Growing sets a vision, objectives and key actions. It also sets out the reasonable measures Aberdeen City Council will take to respond to increasing demand.
Contact Point	Sandy Gustar Strategic Place Planning Place Aberdeen City Council Business Hub 4 Ground Floor North Marischal College Aberdeen, AB10 1AB

2. Strategic Environmental Assessment Process

Granite City Growing is a key document that sets a plan of collaborative action to strengthen capacity and to increase and support opportunities for food-growing in Aberdeen.

Aberdeen City Council has prepared and carried out the process of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) for Granite City Growing as required under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The process includes the following activities:

1. Considering the views of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland during the screening process, regarding aspects of Granite City Growing likely to have significant effects on the environment and to determine whether full SEA was required.
2. Taking into account the views of the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, NatureScot and Historic Environment Scotland about the scope and level of detail that was appropriate for the environmental report.
3. Preparing an environmental report on the likely significant effects on the environment of Granite City Growing including:-
 - The baseline data relating to the current state of the environment including the evolution of the environment without Granite City Growing, as well as identification of areas likely to be significantly affected;
 - Links between the plan and other relevant policies, plans, programmes and environmental objectives;
 - Existing environmental problems affecting the plan;
 - The plan's likely significant effects on the environment (positive and negative);
 - The mitigation measures envisaged;
 - An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives chosen;
 - Monitoring measures to ensure that any unforeseen environmental effects will be identified allowing for appropriate remedial action to be taken.
4. Consulting on the environmental report.
5. Taking into account the environmental report and the results of consultation in making final decisions regarding Granite City Growing.
6. Committing to monitoring the significant environmental effects of the implementation of Granite City Growing to identify any unforeseen adverse significant environmental effects and to taking appropriate remedial action.

3. Effects of the Environmental Considerations on the Action Plan

Table 3.1 summarises how environmental considerations have been integrated into Granite City Growing. This includes the measures that were taken to offset adverse effects or enhance positive effects, details of how the cumulative and other indirect effects of Granite City Growing have been considered and how these protective objectives were taken into account in the strategy in accordance with Section 18 (3)(a-b).

Table 3.1: Environmental Considerations

Environmental Problems relevant to Granite City Growing

SEA topics	Environmental Problem	Integrated into the Plan?	How integrated/Taken into Account or Reason for not being Taken into Account
Climatic factors	This SEA issue was scoped out of the Environmental Report with the agreement of statutory consultees.	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a
Air quality	This SEA issue was scoped out of the Environmental Report with the agreement of statutory consultees.	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a
Biodiversity (flora and fauna)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential loss of habitats from food growing spaces. Potential loss of greenspace and wildlife corridors to food growing areas. Potential decline in species population, loss of species and changes in wildlife distribution and numbers. Potential increase in pests and diseases. Potential wildlife disturbance and habitat degradation during the development of food growing at some sites. Trees will be vulnerable to severe weather events, with wetter ground affecting stability during storms; and an increased risk of wildfire. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Granite City Growing should mitigate the effects on biodiversity and on protected and non-protected designations. It should promote actions to reduce fragmentation and impacts for wildlife and habitats, as well as encourage natural flood management whilst looking to enhance biodiversity, supporting use of heritage species and ensure compliance with controlling non-native invasive species.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pressure on the River Dee SAC, through low flows and from reduced rainfall. • Pressure on European Protected Species. • Non-native invasive species. • Poor site waste management. • Potential for spread of genetically modified species 		
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential loss, erosion and a reduction in soil quality because of heavy rainfall, flooding and wind. • Potential erosion and a reduction in soil quality from food production. • Potential soil compaction and soil sealing from food growing site development, reducing the ability of soil to absorb heavy rainfall and pollutants. • Potential reduction in soil function, with impacts for biodiversity and food growing. • Soil contamination through flooding, soil being imported and use/poor storage of chemicals. • Loss of carbon from soil, due to food growing sites being developed on land. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granite City Growing should monitor and address climate impacts on soil quality, soil function and soil stability. • It should encourage greater use of permeable surfaces and promote the protection of soil carbon stores.
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projections for an increase in the severity and frequency of heavy rainfall, result in flooding, sediment and diffuse pollutants entering water courses affecting water quality and the health of invertebrates and fish. • Potential low flows in water courses, will be a risk to freshwater ecosystems and species (Atlantic Salmon, Brown Trout, freshwater pearl mussels). 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects under Granite City Growing should look to reduce impacts on water quality and ensure sustainable use of water. Dependent on scale abstraction of water might require licensing with the regulator. • Granite City Growing should promote actions to reduce run off to reduce the risks of diffuse pollution to watercourses.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential increased need to abstract water for food growing sites. • Potential increase in incidences of algal bloom because of chemical use. 		
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential increase in the frequency and severity of severe weather events could cause erosion, flooding and landslip. • The development of food growing sites could result in the change of landscape features, as well as changes to land-form, land use, land cover and setting. • New food growing sites, result in a reduction in greenspace able to act as natural flood management. • Visual impact. • Loss of land to non-food growing structures e.g. sheds, parking etc 	Yes	<p>Granite City Growing should promote resilient landscapes and protect landscape character. Promote actions to improve greenspace networks.</p> <p>Granite City Growing would consider visual impact on food growing on a project by project basis.</p>
Population and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A potential projected growth in city pop. • Climate impacts affecting food security. • Chemical use on food production. • Prevalence of pests and disease. • Trip hazards. • Poor diet. • Legionnaires disease from compost. • Medical conditions arising from food production. • Emissions produced by onsite equipment and composting. • Hayfever. 	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granite City Growing should increase the capacity and knowledge of local population in making food growing provision. • Granite City Growing should support good food growing and composting practice to ensure the health and wellbeing of people, plants and animals. • Granite City Growing would look to encourage production of fresh produce, supporting plant-based nutrition
Cultural Heritage	This SEA issue was scoped out of the Environmental Report with the agreement of statutory consultees.	n/a	n/a

Material Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased summer temperatures and a reduction in summer rainfall will increase need for water management and efficiency measures in buildings and demand for cooling. • Potential damage to infrastructure through vertical food production. • Vandalism and site security issues. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granite City Growing should promote sustainable use and management of material assets. Promote actions to protect resources.
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4. Effects of the Environmental Report on Granite City Growing

Table 4.1 summarises how the Environmental Report has been taken into account within Granite City Growing in accordance with Section 18 (3) (a-b) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. This table describes how the Environmental Report has been taken into account in the strategy and what specific changes were made, particularly where significant negative and cumulative effects were identified. It also highlights when the mitigation is to be considered if there is the need for a more detailed assessment at a later stage.

Table 4.1: Environmental Report

SEA Topic	Findings from Environmental Report	Integrated into the Plan?	How integrated/Taken into Account or Reason for not being Taken into Account	When should mitigation be considered?
Biodiversity Flora and Fauna	Projects to increase food-growing opportunities under Granite City Growing are considered to generally have a positive effect on habitats and species in Aberdeen.		Through site design and advice Granite City Growing will seek to mitigate any negative effects while promoting actions to enhance biodiversity, reduce fragmentation and impacts for wildlife and habitats. The Greenspace Network policy will be applied for sites where planning permission is required so that proposals ensure habitat links are maintained and enhanced. A Habitat's Regulation Appraisal (HRA) will be undertaken where a proposal is likely to affect the Natura 2000 sites which will outline site specific mitigation measures. Best practice will be signposted and supported through direct engagement with allotment-holders and community garden project leads. Existing biological records will be examined and advice taken on a project-by-project basis to protect and enhance the existing biodiversity through site-design and management. Opportunities to enhance conditions for pollinator species should be prioritised. Bee-keeping opportunities will be supported.	When projects are being developed and implemented.
Soil	It has been assessed that the effects of Granite City Growing on the soil environment may have positive and negative effects.		By communicating and supporting best practice Granite City Growing should improve soil health and stability over time.	When projects are being developed and implemented.

			Best practice will be signposted and supported through direct engagement with allotment-holders and community garden project leads. Those undertaking works will be required to ensure that every effort is made to minimise soil sealing and compaction and create permeable surfaces and to invest in the long-term health of the soil.	
Water	The implementation of projects under Granite City Growing may have positive and negative effects on the water environment.	Yes	Risks will be reduced by encouraging the best practice of rainwater harvesting and using organic techniques. Best practice will be signposted and supported through direct engagement with allotment-holders and community garden project leads. Rainwater harvesting and organic gardening techniques will be encouraged to prevent and reduce risks to the water environment. Appropriate measures to reduce risk of run-off will be considered on a case by case basis.	When projects are being developed and implemented.
Landscape	It has been assessed that the effects of Granite City Growing on landscape may have both positive and negative effects.	Yes	The implementation of projects under Granite City Growing may result in a small change to the landscape. Best practice will be signposted and supported through direct engagement with allotment-holders and community garden project leads. Good site management could improve visual amenity. Boundary and tree planting schemes will be encouraged as part of individual project plans where appropriate	When projects are being developed and implemented.
Population and Health	The effects of Granite City Growing on the population and human health have been assessed as positive overall.	Yes	Implementation will increase the opportunity for physical activity proven to increase mental wellbeing and it will also improve access to fresh fruit and vegetables. Best practice will be signposted and supported through direct engagement with allotment-holders and community garden project leads. Good site design and management should prevent risks of injury or harm.	When projects are being developed and implemented.

Material Assets	Granite City Growing would have a positive impact on material assets.	Yes	Implementation should support the efficient use of resources and through site design protect and enhance existing assets. Through the use of natural materials where possible and promoting composting it is not envisaged that there will be any adverse effects.	When projects are being developed and implemented.
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5. Taking Consultation Opinions into Account

As required by Section 18 (3) (c) and (d) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the opinion expressed during the consultation were given due consideration. Table 5.1 summarises how opinions expressed during the consultation have been taken into account.

Table 5.1: Analysis of Comments

Body/Person making comment	Comment	Response	Resulting change
NatureScot	NatureScot noted a stronger steer is needed to ensure Granite City Growing contributes to strategic green networks.	Welcomed and noted.	It is anticipated that the Open Space Strategy will address this.
NatureScot	NatureScot suggested strengthening the wording of Tables 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and 7.1.	Welcomed and noted.	The strengthened position relating to pollinators, rainwater harvesting and protected sites will be taken forward within the implementation phase.
NatureScot	NatureScot noted that the strategic outcomes and objectives of the strategy could be strengthened by including the inclusion of the points raised for tables 6.3, 6.5 and 7.1.	Welcomed and noted.	The strengthened position relating to pollinators, rainwater harvesting and protected sites will be taken forward within the implementation phase.
Historic Environment Scotland (HES)	HES requested a change to the title of a referenced document; this has been amended	Welcomed and noted.	This has been amended.

6. Reasons for adopting Granite City Growing

Consistent with Section 18(3)(e), Granite City Growing was assessed using the following reasonable options under Section 4.1 of the Environmental Report:

Table 6.1- Options Considered

Option	Description of Option
Option 1 – Do Nothing	Under this option city stakeholders carry on with business as usual and do not take steps to increase or support food-growing opportunities.
Option 2 – Do minimum	Under this option city stakeholders are responsible for developing individual plans and strategies to increase or support food-growing opportunities which could result in an ad hoc, inconsistent approach to food-growing.
Option 3 – Do optimum (Preferred)	Under this option city stakeholders work in partnership across all sectors to develop a food-growing strategy and implementation plan that seeks to increase and support food-growing opportunities for Aberdeen, sets shared objectives and highlights areas for action and collaboration across the whole city.

Option 3 is adopted in the light of the other two alternatives discussed for the following reasons:

- The results of the environmental assessment indicate that not only does the preferred option have the least adverse effect on the environment; it is also likely to have significant positive effects on the environment compared with the other two options.
- The preferred option is consistent with other relevant international, national, regional and local plans and programmes as well as environmental protective objectives listed in Section 5.1 of the environmental report.
- The identification of future monitoring aims to track progress, measure the effectiveness of systems and ensure flexibility so that action is appropriate to levels of change and identify any gaps in progress and impact.

7. Monitoring Measures

Aberdeen City Council is required under to Section 18(3)(f) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 to monitor the significant environmental effects when the plan is implemented.

A monitoring report in Table 7.1 below will form the basis of constant monitoring of significant effects.

Table 7.1 Monitoring Plan

Effects	What sort of information is required?	Where will information be obtained from?	Are there gaps in the existing information and how can it be resolved?	When should the remedial action be considered?	Who is responsible for undertaking the monitoring?	How should the results be presented?	What remedial actions could be taken?
Biodiversity	Qualitative and quantitative impact on the qualifying features of the River Dee SAC	Dee Catchment Management Plan	Projects details and implementation	When any Deeside projects are well defined in terms of how, what and where. Remedial action to be considered if water quality is likely to deteriorate or as a resource it is likely to be under pressure.	Project manager of each project. NatureScot, SEPA, Dee Catchment Partnership, North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership	As and when necessary	Take advice from relevant parties. Explore rainwater harvesting or other remedial actions.
	Volume of water abstraction	SEPA	Projects details and implementation	When there are changes to water supply / demand projections.	Project manager of each project. Scottish Water	As and when necessary.	Take advice from Scottish Water and SEPA.

Effects	What sort of information is required?	Where will information be obtained from?	Are there gaps in the existing information and how can it be resolved?	When should the remedial action be considered?	Who is responsible for undertaking the monitoring?	How should the results be presented?	What remedial actions could be taken?
	Degree of habitat fragmentation	Open Space Strategy, Nature Conservation Strategy, LBAP, and Greenspace Network reviews, NESBREC	Project detail and implementation.	If ecological surveys, assessments or monitoring suggests negative impact on habitats and species are likely	Project manager of each project. Aberdeen City Council Environmental Policy Team, NatureScot, SEPA, Dee Catchment Partnership, North East Scotland Biodiversity Partnership.	Open Space Audit	Take advice from NatureScot or ecological expertise within Aberdeen City Council.
Water	Qualitative and quantitative impact on the qualifying features of the River Dee SAC	Dee Catchment Management Plan NatureScot on the impact on the qualifying interests of the River Dee SAC North East Flood Risk Management Plan Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Project detail and implementation.	When projects are being designed. When data from SEPA and NatureScot indicate potential reduction in water availability and quality from the Dee causing ecological pressures on the SAC from low flows.	Project manager of each project. Relevant and statutory agencies.	As and when necessary	Take advice from statutory agencies like Scottish Water, NatureScot, SEPA.

Effects	What sort of information is required?	Where will information be obtained from?	Are there gaps in the existing information and how can it be resolved?	When should the remedial action be considered?	Who is responsible for undertaking the monitoring?	How should the results be presented?	What remedial actions could be taken?
Landscape	Visual impact assessment of food-growing spaces on visually prominent areas	Landscape appraisal Landscape character assessment Public complaints	Project detail and implementation.	When projects under Granite City Growing are being implemented and when landscape appraisal indicate it is an issue in a landscape or townscape setting. When there is a large amount of opposition to the project.	Project manager of each project. Environmental Policy Team, Aberdeen City Council	As and when necessary	Take advice from planning professionals.
Population & Human health	Evidencing positive effects. Number of people affected	Population Needs Assessment and the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Individual project monitoring.	Project detail and implementation.	When projects under Granite City Growing are planned and implemented.	Project manager of each project	As and when necessary	Take advice from relevant stakeholders and partners

Effects	What sort of information is required?	Where will information be obtained from?	Are there gaps in the existing information and how can it be resolved?	When should the remedial action be considered?	Who is responsible for undertaking the monitoring?	How should the results be presented?	What remedial actions could be taken?
Material Assets	Evidencing effects	Population Needs Assessment and the Local Outcome Improvement Plan. Individual project monitoring.	Project detail and implementation.	When projects under Granite City Growing are planned and implemented.	Project manager of each project	As and when necessary	Take advice from relevant stakeholders and partners

8. Conclusion

It is our view that this SEA has had a positive effect on the development of Granite City Growing. The SEA process has identified the key environmental issues, constraints and trends, as well as the likely significant effects on the environment. These are effects that were not all anticipated at the start of the planning process.

The process has, therefore, enabled appropriate mitigation measures to be set against such effects, and incorporated into the strategy and implementation plan. With the incorporation of mitigation measures and alongside ongoing monitoring of the significant effects identified, it is considered that the proposals included in Granite City Growing are in line with sound environmental principles.

The mitigation measures incorporated in the assessment of Granite City Growing identify measures that will prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects on the environment when implementing the strategy. Overall, the environmental assessment has helped to guide our preference for options on how we drive policies, plans, programmes, strategies and projects.