



News Release

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APPROVAL OF NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TOGETHER (NEST) STRUCTURE PLAN

Social Justice Minister, Iain Gray, today issued the decision to approve, with modifications, the NEST Structure Plan. The Plan sets out the long term strategic vision to shape development in the North East over the next 10-15 years and has been subject to widespread consultation.

The plan focuses on the integration of employment, housing and services in a hierarchy of communities in the North East, ranging from the city of Aberdeen to the smallest rural villages of Aberdeenshire.

Modifications to the plan have been prepared to ensure that it accords with published national planning guidance. The final modifications include amendments to cover issues concerning the following:

- telecommunication interests
- housing in the countryside
- a new football stadium in the Aberdeen area

The Minister said:

“Aberdeen is a city of international significance, as Europe’s oil capital and a key gateway to the North East. It is, therefore, vital that future development of the city and its hinterland is set within an appropriate and strategic framework.

“These final modifications will help ensure that the structure plan allows Aberdeen to continue to drive forward the regional economy in accordance with national planning guidance and that enough land is

allocated to allow the whole of the North East to accommodate significant levels of new development.

“Regarding the proposal by Aberdeen FC for a new football stadium, we considered it appropriate to maintain the Executive’s conditional support for a stadium as expressed at the draft modifications stage. This requires a site which meets National Planning Guidelines.

“Our support for the stadium is also conditional on a successful bid by the SFA to host Euro 2008, which has yet to go forward. This bid must also include the new stadium by Aberdeen FC. This modification will enable the proposal to proceed on a plan-led basis.”

NOTES TO NEWS EDITORS

1. The structure plan has been prepared jointly by Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Councils and was submitted for approval following a sustainability audit as well as widespread consultation.
2. The decision will be advertised, followed by a six week period for legal challenge. The decision letter and final modifications will be available for inspection at Council offices as will the report ‘Comments on Objections Not Accepted by the Scottish Ministers’.
3. To receive a copy of the decision letter, final modifications and ‘Comments Not Accepted by the Scottish Ministers’ report please contact the Social Justice Press Desk on 0131 244 2542.
4. The proposal by Aberdeen FC for a new football stadium requires a site which meets the requirements of NPPG11 – Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Spaces.

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