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Review of the Strategic Development Plans in Scotland

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Brownfield site: A site which has previously been developed or used for some purpose which has ceased. (Planning Aid for Scotland, 2013, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 2).


Development Plan: A generic term for the Structure and/or Local Plan, or Strategic Development Plan and/or Local Development Plan, which apply to a planning authority area. Any planning application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. (Planning Aid for Scotland, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 3).

Local Development Plans (LDP): Part of the Development Plan – a statutory document required to be prepared (as of 2009), after full public consultation, by all planning authorities in Scotland to replace existing Local Plans. The LDP is the basis for making planning decisions in a given area. It must contain a spatial strategy and a vision statement, planning policies and maps. In the four city-regions, the LDP will be supplemented with a Strategic Development Plan; elsewhere the Development Plan will compromise only the Local Development Plan. (Planning Aid for Scotland, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 4).

Greenfield Site: Land which has not been developed, in either urban or rural areas. (Planning Aid for Scotland, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 3).

Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA): A method for building the evidence base for determining the housing needs and demands in region. Housing need covers households that lack adequate or suitable housing, and housing demand covers the quantity, type and quality of house that households are able to buy or rent in a region.

Infrastructure: Utility services (roads, sewers, and supplies of gas, water, electricity) or social/community services (schools, community halls, health centres etc.) which are needed to allow a development to take place. (Planning Aid for Scotland, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 4).

National Planning Framework (NPF): The Scottish Government’s strategy for the long-term development of Scotland’s towns, cities and countryside. It sets out a vision for Scotland’s development for the next 20 to 25 years and designates developments of national importance. Development Plans must have regard to the content of the NFP. (Planning Aid Scotland, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 5).

Strategic Development Plans (SDP) – SDPs apply to the 4 city-regions (Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and their surrounding areas) and cover several local authority areas. SDPs are required to be prepared jointly by planning authorities acting as Strategic Development Planning Authorities (SDPAs) as of 2009 to replace existing structure plans. SDPs will set parameters for Local Development Plans; contain Vision Statements and Spatial Strategies; and will consider how land use proposals for neighbouring areas will impact on the SDP area. (Planning Aid for Scotland, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 8).

Structure Plan: A statutory document prepared after full public consultation containing strategic policies which can cover several local authority areas. As of 2009 all planning authorities are required to replace these with Strategic Development Plans in the four city regions; elsewhere Local Development Plans only are required. (Planning Aid for Scotland, *Glossary of Common Planning Terms in Scotland*, 8).

Supplementary Guidance: guidance under Section 22 of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 that runs in association with an approved and adopted development plan and which has been through consultation.
Scotland's city regions in perspective

The four city regions of Scotland account for some 80% of its population. They are characterised by the relationships between the core cities and their surrounding towns. This is determined by their interdependent housing and labour markets, shared higher order services for health and education, and water catchments and environmental resources. This underpins the competitiveness of the city and their regions reflecting in the patterns of economic activity, movement and quality of life and environmental conditions.

It is recognised that there is great diversity in Scotland’s city regions, visible in their geography, history and local culture. Differences are also visible in their character, with Edinburgh the historic capital and administrative centre, Glasgow the industrial engine, Dundee and Perth transforming cities of culture and heritage, and Aberdeen the oil and energy capital of Britain, if not Europe.

Although this diversity requires each city region to find its own solutions to its problems, there is a shared role as the key drivers of economic growth in Scotland, the backbone of its competitiveness. In terms of social issues, it needs to be recognised that the major social needs are also concentrated in the major cities, reflected in such indicators as unemployment, affordability of housing, health standards, educational standards or crime. Similarly, environmental sustainability is driven by the demands of urban living and patterns of development. Such factors as waste generation, energy consumption, and land consumption depend largely on the way our city regions are managed. Therefore the future of Scotland depends on meeting these common opportunities and challenges, which can only be effectively achieved by a strategic approach to development planning.

In this context the relationship of the core of the city regions to their developed and rural hinterlands is critical. Over half of the population that is dependent on their services, or serves the cities in terms of labour supply, lies outside their administrative boundaries. There is therefore an overwhelming interdependence between the core cities and their adjoining council areas. Their current conditions and future prospects are interlocked. This relationship is not just about economic and social interdependency, but also impacts on the quality of life and environment in rural areas around each city region.

The great cities of Scotland, and their regions, therefore require planning above the local level, working together to solve ‘local’ problems or in the case of infrastructure, cooperating with national agencies and business. On all levels, strategic planning is of key importance to link power and resources especially in terms of transport and housing delivery.
Without this cooperation and shared strategic vision between authorities and agencies, there would be a disconnect between the power to plan effectively and the responsibility to deliver these plans. What is required is collaborative action if the challenges to the future of cities are to be overcome. These challenges include the need to promote their competitiveness whilst ensuring social cohesion/equity, the need to secure integration between and across the layers of government, and the need to take a longer term perspective in decisions engaging all the communities of interest.

At its heart, strategic development planning is concerned with the interdependence of communities, whether neighbourhoods or nationally. If there is to be sufficient focus on economic, social and transport problems of Scotland’s core cities, strategic development planning needs to recognise that ‘real’ communities of interest lie cross-boundary. Without it there is no clear view of the relative role of each city-region. Without it, there can be no confidence about future infrastructure networks or development upon which economic investment relies, and it will inevitably under-perform.

Scotland has a longer tradition of strategic thinking than any other part of the UK or arguably Europe. This has been possible over the last sixty years or so in Scotland by reviewing and applying the lessons learnt and responding to new demands and circumstances. Administrative arrangements for strategic planning in Scotland have more recently been promoted through joint working between councils, strengthened recently by a new national planning framework. There is a need to ensure that the system continues to be refreshed and updated, in order to be able to meet the aspirations of Scotland and its local communities for greater and sustained well-being.

This review is a contribution to that strategic tradition of learning and responding.
Executive Summary

This report has been commissioned by the Scottish Government to find out if the new system of Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) is fit for purpose. These plans cover Scotland’s four main city-regions, focused around Aberdeen, Dundee-Perth, Edinburgh and Glasgow. This new system was introduced in 2006 and has been operational since 2009, when the relevant Regulations came into force and detailed guidance was issued by the Scottish Government.

In 2013, the Scottish Government therefore commissioned Kevin Murray Associates working with the University of Glasgow to undertake a short review of the process by which Strategic Development Plans are devised and the content on which they are focused.

This report seeks to understand what has been happening recently in Scotland, how well it works, and how it might be improved. Much of the researchers’ time has been spent on talking to people closely involved in making the new Scottish planning system work at a strategic level; listening to, and seeking to understand their experiences, and from this close-hand knowledge, gain a better appreciation of the pressures and constraints within the current system, and how they might be resolved or eased.

These direct conversations through workshops held in each of the four SDP areas, and through telephone and face-to-face interviews with those with the closest knowledge, were preceded by our own textual analysis of each of the SDPs already approved or in preparation, and by an online questionnaire allowing all those with direct experience of the SDP process to make their views on the issues known. In all we received around 500 contributions from people involved in strategic planning across Scotland.

The research explores a range of themes and draws out findings that act as a basis for improvement. As far as the process is concerned, the research aims have been:

- By engaging with a selection of stakeholders, to establish whether engagement with stakeholders has been effective and where it has clearly resulted in the aims of planning policy and advice being met;
- To establish whether or not the governance arrangements (including for example, the way in which the SDPAs are governed, the involvement of members, liaison with constituent authorities, resources, SDPA and plan boundaries etc.) have worked well;
- With particular emphasis on the key areas of housing and transport, and taking into account the relevant Scottish Government policy and guidance, to consider what evidence base has been used to inform each plan;
- To consider the extent to which the decision-making processes within each SDPA have, where necessary, supported the making of strategic decisions in the interests of the city-region; and
- To examine how the deliverability of the plans has been considered during the preparation process.
As far as the **content** is concerned, the research aims have been:

- To examine whether the plans are spatial and place-based;
- Looking at the topics that plans are expected to cover, to consider whether the plans have provided too much or too little detail, illustrated by examples;
- To examine whether the plans are providing/will provide the appropriate level of guidance for Local Development Plans, especially where cross-boundary infrastructure issues have been identified;
- To review the funding/contribution mechanisms relating to cross-boundary strategic infrastructure which have been considered by each of the 4 SDPAs and how these have fed into the relevant SDP;
- While recognising that each plan is responding to a different context, to consider the extent to which the content of each plan is generally consistent and if not, the main ways in which it differs and why; and
- To consider whether the length and style of the plans and the way in which they have been communicated graphically has been effective in meeting the aims of planning policy and advice.

Chapter 2 provides the context and approach to the research, including the different methods and levels of participation.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 provide a description and analysis of the governance, content and delivery related aspects respectively. This includes evidence from the various stakeholder viewpoints expressed in the different parts of the research, alongside our own interpretation of this.

Chapter 6 comprises reflections upon many of the key themes arising from the research, including both content and process aspects. Then a set of findings on how to improve the system are made. These are summarised below, with the lead/priority finding annotated in bold for each theme.

**Overview theme 1: Collaborative leadership & governance**

The success or otherwise of the SDP teams depends on effective partnership working across administrative, sectoral and often political boundaries. The evidence suggests that because of this broad scope, the nature of the cross sectoral, multi agency working is pivotal in creating strategic visions and action plans that can be effective.

It is clear that consistent, coherent and sustained leadership is required, both politically and professionally, to deliver the necessary strategic planning. Planners, politicians, agencies and communities are still learning how to operate the new SDP system as it beds in. The function, purpose and relevance of SDPs needs to be communicated more clearly to these various audiences to improve both awareness and effectiveness.

In this respect the system is working, but not as well as it might particularly where there is scope for more effective collaborative leadership.
We have found that:

1.1 There is a need to build greater capacity, awareness and more effective behaviours in strategic planning through annual training of political and professional leaders. Events such as the annual Development Planning National Forum, an annual conveners meeting and Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) meetings contribute to this.

(all SDPAs with Scottish Government, HOPS, RTPI)

1.2 There is a need to invest further in effective partnership approaches, and in the trust that underpins them, by aligning vision, strategy and delivery mechanisms.

(all SDPAs and agency partners)

Overview theme 2: Effective engagement and scrutiny

The research evidence suggests that appropriate engagement builds awareness, comprehension, and even ownership, of the vision and emerging strategy of an SDP. Indeed, communities and even agencies that have only limited appreciation of the SDP are more likely to challenge it and cause delay. This highlights the value of cross-sectoral and community engagement around the objectives and themes of the SDP. It is clear from many community and individual responses that there is scope for greater engagement with the wider community, with professionals outside direct SDP production, and with politicians beyond those with formal SDPA roles.

We have found that:

2.1 There is a need for more targeted engagement with the wider community at different levels to build awareness and knowledge of the SDP role, purpose and implications

(all SDPAs, Scottish Government – with RTPI, Planning Aid Scotland)

2.2 The use of a variety of mechanisms to enhance engagement, appropriate to local circumstances, including the potential use of a representative forum or sounding board, should be supported.

(SDPA teams)

2.3 Outreach promotion of the SDP function and relevance to politicians beyond those directly involved is required, to deepen understanding. In this context, previous activity such as the leaflet and video produced on strategic planning by Architecture and Design Scotland and the SDPAs with the Scottish Government serves as an example of this type of outreach.

(SDPA teams, Scottish Government)
2.4 As the normal default position, the Scottish Government should hold hearings as part of SDP examinations. The issues would continue to be determined by the reporter but there would be a greater presumption towards holding such hearings. A body of opinion (Annex E) from a range of stakeholders suggested that public examinations could form a standard part of the process. This came from written submissions, questionnaire feedback and two of the workshop events. However, we understand that the level of resource required for this would be higher, and appear counter to a more streamlined planning system. Despite these points to the contrary we have some sympathy with the stakeholders. A public element to the examination would be an important opportunity to raise concerns and build confidence in the strategic planning system.

(Scottish Government)

Overview theme 3  Housing and community building

Housing, and the building or extension of communities, is a major theme of most SDPs, and one that drew some criticism from review participants across the spectrum, notably from communities themselves. The criticisms related to the general approach to the calculation of numbers, and to the spatial articulation or lack of it.

The process of assessing need seems to be bedding down and will be enhanced by additional guidance and tools that have been developed by the Scottish Government. The bigger challenge is to ensure that the plans do not simply distribute housing numbers between areas but help create sustainable and well balanced communities that are integrated more effectively with infrastructure and other investment, including green networks.

That requires a more integrative approach that looks beyond housing per se, to the concept of building communities and creating positive places. The various elements, including transport and infrastructure, need to be viewed and aligned within this wider framework. The evidence gathered through the interviews and workshops indicate that this is a positive emerging trend that is to be encouraged.

We have found that:

3.1 There is a benefit in nurturing the positive emerging trend for a ‘placemaking approach’ to areas of major change, that seeks to explore and articulate the creation of positive communities by exploring spatial implications of infrastructure, development and green networks at a framework level, ideally as a special inset of the plan. These are to provide a framework for masterplans at the next level with LDPs.

(SDPAs, supported by Scottish Government, A&DS and others)

3.2 As an important input into the placemaking approach, the housing needs and demand assessment (HNDA) process be reviewed, so as to streamline where possible and contextualise the tool for a placemaking approach, while retaining an agreed system all can support. Key concerns reported were:
- the high level of staff time and other resources required for the HNDA process
- the level of technical proficiency required
- concern that the output value was not high enough to warrant the level of input
- concern that the General Register Office for Scotland statistics used did not provide an accurate enough picture (stakeholders reported that this either led to gross over or under supply rather than the correct level).

Additional Scottish Government guidance has mitigated some initial concerns, and further guidance is expected shortly which may address some of the these additional concerns. Staff at one SDPA raised the point that wholesale change at this stage could undo a lot of the learning and resources that have already been put into this system.

(Scottish Government, with SDPAs)

3.3 Further investigation is required to determine if the plans should provide a focus to ensure that infrastructure required is provided alongside, or in advance of, the proposed development. Such focus would be gained through the strategic plan creating an integrative pathway for the delivery of infrastructure – giving a greater degree of certainty to either developers or those responsible for delivering infrastructure.

(SDPAs, RTPs and infrastructure partners)

Overview theme 4 Transport & infrastructure role

The allocation and co-ordination of future transport and infrastructure, including green infrastructure, was identified as one of the most significant roles of SDPs. However, from the review of the SDPs and evidence from different sources, there is not yet optimal alignment of strategy, integration, nor adequate connection to mechanisms for funding or delivery. Some of the issues are passed on the LDP level, like waste. Other dimensions of the mismatch appear to arise from different time horizons, and different levels of commitment from respective partner bodies. This needs to be resolved at a Scottish-wide level, as it affects matters like economic performance and development potential, and congestion, carbon emissions all at a macro scale.

Similar issues can arise with energy, water and flooding, but so far have not been as pronounced as with transport and waste. Nevertheless, all these matters need to be better co-ordinated by taking a ‘Team Scotland’ approach that prioritises integration, and avoids seeing each aspect of infrastructure as an isolated or ‘separate’ system.

We have found that:

4.1 There is a benefit in working in close partnership to create a fully integrated land use and transport approach to each SDP. This would mean that the SDP provides a Joint Development and Transport Strategy, for the medium to long term, that addresses both strategy and phased delivery through investment over time. Currently barriers that prevent this close alignment are cultural and
institutional, timeframes (cf. chapter 3, Timescales p35) and plan boundaries that are not aligned (see 4.2).

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs, RTPs)

4.2 Closer alignment of the SDPA boundary areas and the RTP boundary areas could aid closer strategy and project working, with a view to producing co-ordinated investment programmes that align land use and transport

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs, RTPs)

4.3 Inclusion and agreement should be established within the joint Development and Transport Strategy as a prerequisite for evaluating and supporting funding bids.

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs, local government)

4.4 Further investigation should determine if a review is required of the Transport Scotland guidance on Development Planning and Management (DPMTAG) to align with recently updated and emerging policy and ensure that SDPAs, key stakeholders and partners are aware of and use the approach set out to provide appropriate and proportionate transport appraisals to support SDPs.

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs)

Overview theme 5 The influence on delivery

A recurring comment about the new SDPs, from different user sources, was that as they have become more strategic and succinct, as intended, they appear to have become more detached from obvious modes of delivery. Much now rests on the subsequent LDP level and on the private sector, as well on a myriad of partner public agencies. More could be done to connect to, enable and co-ordinate delivery, particularly on matters addressing greater levels of change. There appears to be scope for identifying strategic urban transformation projects that have a strong focus on delivery, such as the Dundee Waterfront. These types of projects can bring benefits in operational terms and strategic impact.

We have found that:

5.1 There is a benefit in aligning and integrating the relevant SDP strategy and project components within the work of the respective Community Planning Partnerships and Single Outcome Agreement.

(Scottish Government, SDPAs, CPPs, local authorities)
5.2 Further investigation is required to determine if better delivery outcomes can be achieved through use of the strategy themes and component projects within the SDP as a basis for funding and delivering key strategic infrastructure.

(Scottish Government, SDPAs, CPP, Transport Scotland)

5.3 There is a need to augment existing monitoring with an annual public statement (moving up to annual from every two years) of SDP Action Programme progress, highlighting triggers and delay factors by organisation.

(SDPAs)

5.4 Each SDPA should clearly identify a small number of headline strategic urban transformation projects that can have strategic impact across the area over time. These would be identified priorities that have a broader knock-on effect in the wider area.

(SDPAs)

5.5 Consideration should be given to extending the various SDP specialist topic groups to include more representative and third sector bodies, (such as universities or professional bodies) to enhance knowledge and research input into the overall process.

(Each SDPA as appropriate)

Overview theme 6 Resourcing and skills

The various SDP teams have managed a significant workload, using small teams, augmented with specialists from local authorities, agency partners and consultancies. Most of these teams are small in comparison to the value and complexity of the challenges they address.

With respect to the overall cadre of strategic planners in Scotland, there is now a much-diminished cohort (under 20 from 2,200 professionals, less than 1%), particularly when compared to the high watermark of the regional structure plan era (over 200 from under 1,500 professionals, over 10%).

Without the necessary resourcing, we expect that SDPAs will find it difficult to produce plans that will be properly fit for purpose. Currently this is not the case, but as even more strategic professionals retire, there is a clear need to grow and support the skills, knowledge base and strategic culture at a national level to serve future planning requirements, not only of city-regions, but for the prosperity of Scotland as a whole.

We have therefore found that:

6.1 To boost the existing skilled cohort, the Scottish Government should consider scope to provide an extra level of resource, either through a pool of skilled practitioners in graphics and GIS, or for HNDA through funding for specialist consultants (as has been provided in the past) that can be drawn down
as required, or as a financial share (equivalent to the constituent local authorities’ share) or some combination of the two.

(Scottish Government)

6.2 To aid consistency of investment and skills levels, the Scottish Government should set an indicative budget benchmark for strategic planning in each city region, equivalent either to a per capita cost, some proportion of gross planning fees, or some proportion of overall investment in the respective built environment.

(Scottish Government)

6.3 There is a benefit in moving to an approach whereby all SDPA teams are part of a shared national resource, whose time and expertise can be traded across the four SDPAs to balance peaks and troughs.

(Scottish Government, SDPAs)

6.4 There should be an explicit programme to develop strategic planning skills, to grow awareness and competence across Scotland. This would include philosophy, techniques and creative partnering and be applicable to key agencies and community players as well as planners.

(Scottish Government, RTPI, Improvement Service)

In terms of immediate next steps, we propose

1. adoption of a relaunch approach to strategic planning, possibly including a link to NPF role;
2. promotion and explanation of themes at appropriate training and conference events; and
3. implementation of our findings.
1 Introduction

This report has been commissioned by the Scottish Government to find out if the new system of Strategic Development Plans (SDPs) is fit for purpose. These plans cover Scotland’s four main city-regions, focused around Aberdeen, Dundee-Perth, Edinburgh and Glasgow and require much collaborative working between local authorities, key government agencies and other important actors, including the private sector and local communities. Although some of these city-regions had varying prior traditions of collaboration, the concept of a Strategic Development Plan, both in content and process, represented a new and exciting venture for Scottish planning.

This new system was introduced in legislation in 2006 and has been operational since 2009, when the relevant Regulations came into force and detailed guidance was issued by the Scottish Government. But already, four SDPs (or equivalent) have been approved and one more is in an advanced state of preparation. This in itself is an important achievement. But how helpful are such plans and how difficult are they to put together? What would be lost, if anything, were the strategic element of development planning to be abandoned in Scotland and reliance placed instead wholly on more local development planning? These are important questions and indicate why, even at this early stage in the process of strategic development planning in Scotland, it is necessary to ask whether the system introduced in 2006 is really fit for purpose. In 2013, the Scottish Government therefore commissioned Kevin Murray Associates working with the University of Glasgow to undertake a short review of the process by which Strategic Development Plans are devised and the content on which they are focused.

Although informed by the researchers’ knowledge of strategic planning approaches elsewhere in the UK, Europe and beyond, this report is not an academic review of strategic planning in general. Instead, it is a very clear attempt to understand what has been happening recently in Scotland, how well it works, and how it might be improved. Much of the researchers’ time has been spent on talking to people closely involved in making the new Scottish planning system work at a strategic level; listening to, and seeking to understand their experiences, and from this close-hand knowledge, gain a better appreciation of the pressures and constraints within the current system, and how they might be resolved or eased.

These direct conversations through workshops held in each of the four SDPA areas, and through telephone and face-to-face interviews with those with the closest knowledge, were preceded by our own textual analysis of each of the SDPs already approved or in preparation, and by an online questionnaire allowing all those with direct experience of the strategic development planning process to make their views on the issues known. In all we received around 500 contributions from people involved in strategic planning across Scotland. Although some types of stakeholders were more represented in this total than others, this scale of involvement provided a very strong basis for us to judge what is and what is not working well with the new system.
The brief set for the research by the Scottish Government was helpfully specific in that it identified five key areas of enquiry for the research in relation to the planning process, and six in relation to the plan content. These set the main aims of the research.

As far as the **process** is concerned, the research aims have been:

- **Process Issue 1** – To establish whether or not the governance arrangements (including for example, the way in which the SDPAs are governed, the involvement of members, liaison with constituent authorities, resources, SDPA and plan boundaries etc.) have worked well
- **Process Issue 2** - By engaging with a selection of stakeholders, to establish whether engagement with stakeholders has been effective and where it has clearly resulted in the aims of planning policy and advice being met
- **Process Issue 3** - With particular emphasis on the key areas of housing and transport, and taking into account the relevant Scottish Government policy and guidance, to consider what evidence base has been used to inform each plan
- **Process Issue 4** - To consider the extent to which the decision-making processes within each SDPA have, where necessary, supported the making of strategic decisions in the interests of the city-region
- **Process Issue 5** - To examine how the deliverability of the plans has been considered during the preparation process

As far as the **content** is concerned, the research aims have been:

- **Content Issue 1** - To examine whether the plans are spatial and place-based
- **Content Issue 2** - Looking at the topics that plans are expected to cover, to consider whether the plans have provided too much or too little detail, illustrated by examples
- **Content Issue 3** - To examine whether the plans are providing/will provide the appropriate level of guidance for Local Development Plans, especially where cross-boundary infrastructure issues have been identified
- **Content Issue 4** - To review the funding/contribution mechanisms relating to cross-boundary strategic infrastructure which have been considered by each of the 4 SDPAs and how these have fed into the relevant strategic development plans
- **Content Issue 5** - While recognising that each plan is responding to a different context, to consider the extent to which the content of each plan is generally consistent and if not, the main ways in which it differs and why
- **Content Issue 6** - To consider whether the length and style of the plans and the way in which they have been communicated graphically has been effective in meeting the aims of planning policy and advice. (See Annex B)

The next chapter provides the context for the research and explains the approach and methods of inquiry, including the plan review, questionnaire, interviews and workshops. This is supported by a more detailed analysis of each plan included as Appendix 2. The online questionnaire provided a scoping of the relevant issues from a wide base of participants, whilst the follow-up interviews and workshops all provided a more detailed interrogation of the workings and potential improvements to the system.
The subsequent three chapters each explain more detail of the issues and analysis drawn from the different dimension of the research. In Chapter 3 we draw together evidence and analysis from the different sources on aspects of governance and engagement. This includes both how the SDPAs have been set up and are operating, and on how they engage with stakeholders.

In Chapter 4 we explore the content of the plans in more depth, and the views and evidence gathered on these. Crucially, it became apparent that the particular geographical and political circumstances of each city-region were important in explaining how the new strategic development plan system has been interpreted and applied somewhat differently in different parts of Scotland. We take the view that this is a potential strength rather than a weakness, since it provides a varied source of experience allowing each area to learn something from what has been achieved in other areas.

In Chapter 5 we explore issues relating to implementation and skills that arose from the research. To provide an international perspective on how other cities in Europe and North America address similar spatial challenges faced in Scotland, we include four short case studies within Appendix D that enable the Scottish experience to be placed in a broader context.

In Chapter 6, we draw the research as a whole together, highlighting key points and findings that can form the basis for future improvement. This chapter summarises our key message from the whole of the report, which is that the new system of strategic development planning in Scotland is mostly settling in, and working well, but with certain well-defined improvements, could be made to work even better.
The aims and requirements of the new development planning system

The Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 introduced a new statutory basis for development planning in Scotland which confirmed development plans as the main basis for planning decision making (Scottish Government, 2013a). In the four largest city regions, the development plan now comprises a strategic development plan and a local development plan, both of which may be supported by supplementary guidance.

This new development planning system is intended to make Scottish planning fit for purpose (Scottish Executive 2005). The reform is meant for ensure the development planning system deals more effectively with the relative size and impact of particular planning issues. The National Planning Framework provides a context for development planning (Purves, 2006, 110). It was established as a spatial tool to secure the delivery of national policies and programmes (Scottish Executive, 2005). These now include the Government Economic Strategy (Scottish Government 2011a), the Infrastructure Investment Plan (Scottish Government 2011b) and other legislation with land use implications, including the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The NPF has grown in influence and project specificity as reflected in the recent Proposed NPF3 (Scottish Government, 2014).

Scotland’s main cities have been recognised by the modernised planning system as ‘drivers of the economy’ (Purves, 2006 115). Strategic Development Plans in city regions focus on key land and infrastructure issues, such as housing and transport, which cross local planning authority boundaries. Setting out a clear vision and spatial strategy for development over a period of up to 20 years, SDPs are accompanied by an action programme that details actions, responsibilities and timescales for implementing the SDP. Detailed policy and specific land allocation are then provided in Local Development Plans (LDPs) which must adhere to the SDP. This new development planning system is intended to be more efficient, producing more accessible, responsive and inclusive plans.

It is important to recognise that the new system continues to evolve through an ongoing process of modernisation. Planning Reform: Next Steps (Scottish Government, 2012) encourages further improvement in the performance of the development plan system, including greater contribution towards sustainable economic growth. Alongside the proposed NPF3, a revised Scottish Planning Policy will be published in summer 2014. The review of the Strategic Development Plan system undertaken here is part of that continued modernisation process. It aims to ensure that the planning system remains fit for purpose and specifically that SDPs are capable of aiding the delivery of development.

Drawing on Circular 6/2013 Development Planning (Scottish Government, 2013a, 6-10), it is important to summarise what are regarded as the main priorities for development plans in Scotland. With a focus primarily on place, SDPs and LDPs are
intended to guide the future use of land by addressing the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change. They should apply land use elements of the Community Plan, alongside Local Authority and Scottish Government strategies, to provide a joined-up message about place and development delivery in the areas they cover. They should be ambitious, but realistic, long term visions for those areas, providing confidence to investors and communities alike. In accordance with SPP, they should be kept up to date and provide a practical framework within which planning applications can be determined with certainty and efficiency. As succinct and map-based documents with explanatory written material, they should be engage user interest and commitment. As a result, development plans should help deliver high quality outcomes and promote good placemaking. Plan makers should engage all interests as early and as fully as possible and, specifically, should achieve greater integration with Community Planning Partnerships.

Paragraphs 39 to 42 of Circular 6/2013 provide guidance on what a strategic development plan is expected to contain. These may be summarised as:

- **A vision statement** of how the development of the area could and should occur, covering matters that might be expected to affect that development, including the principal physical, economic, social and environmental characteristics of the area; the principal land uses in the area; the size composition and distribution of the area; the infrastructure of the area (including communications, transport, and drainage systems and systems for the supply of water and energy); how that infrastructure is used; and any anticipated change in these matters.

- **A spatial strategy.** A broadly based statement of proposals for the development and use of land in the area

- An analysis of linkages to the development and land use proposals in neighbouring areas

- Any other matters the Strategic Development Plan Authority (SDPA) consider appropriate.

To implement this new strategic planning system, Strategic Development Planning Authorities (SDPAs) were designated, comprising groups of planning authorities working together to prepare SDPs. This new arrangement replaced the more informal arrangements that operated under the previous Structure Plan system, which was abolished by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006.

In summary, an SDP should be a concise visionary document that sets clear parameters for subsequent LDPs and informs decisions about strategic infrastructure investment, including across boundaries. Vision statements should provide a realistic expression of what the plan area could be like in 20 years. The spatial strategy should encapsulate the headline changes that the plan seeks to achieve, providing an indication of the scale and direction of growth up to 12 years ahead and a broad indication of the scale and direction of growth up to 20 years ahead. The spatial strategy should be specific enough to limit the options available for subsequent LDPs to those that would have a broadly similar impact on (a) other planning authorities in the SDPA; and (b) strategic infrastructure and greenspace networks.
The principal topics for SDPs are expected to comprise land for housing, business, shopping and waste management development, strategic infrastructure (including transport, water supply, and waste water) and strategic greenspace networks (including green belts). SDPs may be site specific, especially where there are no realistic alternative sites. Bearing all this in mind, the research study has investigated all five of the SDPs produced so far.

**Research Methodology**

The research comprised a mixed methods approach with five inter-related elements:

1. Analysis of all SDP plan documents
2. A questionnaire survey
3. Telephone interviews
4. Face-to-face interviews
5. Four workshops, one in each city-region location

Details of each of these are listed below. The feedback and analysis of the different aspects is combined in the subsequent chapters.

**Research method 1: An analysis of the Strategic Development Plans**

An analysis of the main features of each of the strategic development plans produced in Scotland was undertaken. Details of each plan, set out according to the criteria indicated in Planning Circular 6/2013 *Development Planning*, are provided in Annex B. The five plans are shown below.
Three SDPs have so far been approved by Scottish Ministers:

- TAYplan, covering the Dundee-Perth city-region
- Glasgow & Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan (GCVSDP) and
- SESplan, covering the Edinburgh city-region.

The fourth plan, covering the Aberdeen city-region (the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan) has now been considered by Scottish Government reporters and the examination report has now been received by Scottish Ministers and the SDPA. In addition, the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (approved in August 2009) was in the style of a Strategic Development Plan, so is considered as part of this review.
Previous related research

This research builds upon previous assessments of Strategic Development Planning in Scotland, including:

- **Scottish Government’s own Review of Proposed Plans (2012)**

This assessment of emerging SDPs was carried out in early 2012 by a secondee to the Scottish Government.

- **Graphical Presentation in Development Plans (2012)**
  

This report, commissioned jointly by the Scottish Government, the Strategic Development Plan Managers and Architecture and Design Scotland, examined graphical communication in SDPs. It was produced in June 2012 before SESplan and the Proposed Aberdeen City and Shire SDP (ACS) were published. The mapping style of ACS was subsequently altered towards a more contemporary, conceptual and indicative style compared to its earlier format. Greater details were provided and a key of proposals added, providing some improvement in graphic communication, though there is scope for more.

The report also highlighted ways of improving online mapping, but it is too early to decipher the precise impact of this on SDPs and subsequent LDPs. As might be expected from their greater specificity, online spatial planning tools appear to have been given more consideration at LDP level.

- **Modernising the Planning System, Audit Scotland 2011**
  

This Audit Scotland report focused on implementation in the modernised planning system, asking important questions such as *Have delays been minimised, are adequate resources in place; and, is engagement better and more creative?* These are questions that have been taken up in this research. In parallel with an examination of the SDP documents, the research team combined the emerging issues from three evidence-gathering sources – questionnaire, interviews and workshops – generating more detail as each stage progressed. Each of these information-gathering methods is now summarised.

Research method 2: Questionnaire

As an initial quantitative approach, the online questionnaire was designed to be accessible to as wide a range of respondents as possible who had previously interacted with the strategic development planning process. These ranged from planning professionals to private individuals. The questionnaire was purposefully designed to cover a broad range of topics in a bid to uncover relevant issues.
The questionnaire was thus a purposive sample, not a randomly selected one. It was carefully structured to allow respondents to complete it based on their experiences either of a specific plan, of several, or of all SDPs. The collected data was analysed at both the aggregate level across all SDPs, and for each SDP individually. Respondents were also asked to indicate their role or interest in which they interacted with the SDP process (see Annex C: Statistical Data for the full list of options presented to respondents).

The questionnaire was divided into 4 main sections:

Section A: The Plan and its Contents

Section B: The Statutory Arrangements

Section C: The Process

Section D: Implementation

The questionnaire used closed response questions with a five-point scale as the main form of interrogation. Each section concluded with an opportunity for respondents to give an open-ended response in a text box. These Likert Scale (tick box) responses conveyed a clear signal on how each aspect of the SDP process was seen to be performing. The opportunity to elaborate on responses and summarise the key issues at the end of each section improved the depth of the data, since most respondents took advantage of this. This enhanced the descriptive statistics generated by the Likert Scale responses.

The response rate for section D ‘Implementation’ was lower than for the other three sections and many respondents provided a ‘could not decide’ response. This may be due to the relatively recent adoption of SDPs and the limited number of individuals with working knowledge of implementation issues. However, identification of such gaps in collective knowledge provided findings in themselves. These gaps, along with the other key issues raised, were explored in the subsequent qualitative stages of the research.

Respondents were also asked at the end of the questionnaire if they were willing to be contacted by a member of the research team for a more detailed discussion.

The questionnaire was administered via Survey Monkey, with the web-link sent out through each SDPA’s customer database. The link was also put on the webpages of each SDPA. The survey initially went live on 18 November 2013, with an anticipated closing date of 6 December 2013. This was later extended to 9 January 2014 to enable all workshop participants to complete the questionnaire.

2.1 Questionnaire responses

The questionnaire generated a total of 359 responses, of which 216 were complete and 143 were partial. These 359 responses were sufficient to provide a reasonable representation of the key issues. Development professionals and private individuals might be seen to be under-represented if a comparison is to be made with their
engagement with actual SDP processes. However, this was not considered significant, since the focus of this research is primarily on the importance of the issues raised, rather than the relative strength of any particular stakeholder group.

The largest category of respondents came from local authorities, making up 27.6% of responses. The next four categories by volume were private individuals (16.4%), local community councils or groups (11.1%), development professionals in the private sector (including architects, planning consultants and surveyors) (9.5%) and Scottish Government agencies other than Scottish Water or Transport Scotland (6.7%). The full table of responses is contained with the full questionnaire data set in Annex C: Statistical Data.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the responses by plan. In descending order, this was:

1. (South East Scotland) SESplan 31%
2. TAYplan 25%
3. Glasgow and Clyde Valley SDP 18%
4. Several/all Scottish SDPs 9%
5. Aberdeen City and Shire Proposed SDP (2013) 8%
6. Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009) 7%
7. None of the above 3%

(Figures rounded to whole integers).

![Figure 1: Distribution of Questionnaire Response by Strategic Development Plan (Source: Questionnaire Return).](image)
Each SDP area had a different balance of questionnaire respondents, which highlights important differences between them.

Although the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009) attracted a well-balanced questionnaire response, the proportion of commercial, industrial, retail or tourist business responses (at 20%) was slightly higher than the average across all plan areas.

The subsequent Aberdeen City and Shire Proposed Strategic Development Plan (2013) had a proportionately greater questionnaire response from local government staff (31%). TAYplan, by contrast, attracted a large questionnaire response from private individuals (36.7%). This reflected the extensive database of individuals who had previously made representations during the plan-making process, held by the SDPA.

SESplan attracted three large groupings of questionnaire respondents: local government staff (26%), local community council or group (20%) and private individuals (15.5%).

Of those who responded in the ‘several/all SDPs’ category, there was a proportionately higher rate of response from development professionals (42%) and landowners (13%), as might have been expected.

It should be noted that, in the case of Fife Council, whose area is split between SESplan and TAYplan, responses could be given either to both plans separately, or a single response that used the open-ended questions to make specific comments on each plan.

**Research method 3: Telephone Interviews**

The third key strand of research entailed conducting supplementary telephone interviews with a sample of questionnaire respondents, who had indicated their willingness to be contacted further. These were conducted with a range of agencies, community representatives and individuals for each of the plan areas. Most telephone interviews took place between 9 and 20 December 2013, but some occurred immediately after the New Year.

The purpose of the telephone interviews was to interrogate issues of process and content in more detail, and encourage respondents to expand on their questionnaire responses. The format for the telephone interview reflected an initial analysis of questionnaire responses received by 6 December 2013, and focused on eight emerging issues.

The questions used were as follows:

**Process:**

1. How clear was the *engagement process* in making the plan from your perspective? Do you think the process allows for a balance of views to be expressed?
2. Do you think the SDPA has the **capability to provide clear strategic guidance** for downstream local decisions?

Content:

3. From what you understand – have the factors behind decisions on the housing allocation/transport/other infrastructure been **well researched and properly explained**?

4. From what you understand – have the **relationships between different elements**, such as development and transport and infrastructure, been well established?

Other comments:

5. Do you have any further comments on the process or the content?
6. What improvements would you like to see made to the process and content of Strategic Development Plans?
7. **Additional question for those who responded to Several/All Scottish SDPs:** What are the key differences between the SDPs that you have experience of?

### 2.1 Telephone Respondents

In total, 40 telephone interviews were conducted. The distribution of these according to the particular plan with which the interviewee was most familiar was as follows:

![Figure 2: Telephone Interview Respondents by SDPA.](image-url)
Research method 4: Face-to-face Interviews

Face-to-face interviews were held primarily with the SDP Managers and their teams, with additional interviews conducted with the Head of Planning for Aberdeen City, a politician in the SESplan area and representatives from Transport Scotland. The SDP Managers and teams were interviewed ahead of the workshop in each area using a semi-structured interview format. This format allowed the research team to draw out issues that were unique or specific to each SDPA, some of which had also been raised in the telephone interviews.

The respective interviews were conducted on the following dates:

Aberdeen City and Shire – 6 December 2013

SESplan – 10 December 2013

TAYplan – 9 January 2014

Glasgow and Clyde Valley – 10 January 2014

The respondents were from the following areas and agencies:

![Figure 3: Face-to-face Interview Respondents by SDPA](image)

Research method 5: Workshops

Workshops were used as a mechanism to engage a wide range of stakeholders in each SDPA area in a dialogue around issues raised in the questionnaire and interviews, and to discuss some emerging propositions for improvement of parts of the process.
One workshop was held in each SDPA area over December 2013 and January 2014. A later workshop was held with the SDP Managers to update them collectively on the emerging research findings.

5.1 Workshop participation

Workshop dates and participant numbers are provided below; a full list of the people and organisations represented is contained in Annex A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 December 2013</td>
<td>Aberdeen City and Shire</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 December 2013</td>
<td>SESplan</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 January 2014</td>
<td>TAYplan</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 January 2014</td>
<td>Glasgow and Clyde Valley</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Role of research methods

Together these research methods provided nearly 500 contributions to the SDP review process, from a very wide range of participants, to differing levels of depth. Together with the review of the plans themselves, these form the basis of the analysis in the next three chapters.
This chapter covers aspects first of governance, then engagement. As with the next two chapters, it draws together evidence from all parts of the research methodology. It also provides, where appropriate, our interpretation and analysis of the issues that arose.

The internal governance arrangements

A key research question in the brief was

Process Issue 1 - To establish whether or not the governance arrangements (including for example, the way in which the SDPAs are governed, the involvement of members, liaison with constituent authorities, resources, SDPA and plan boundaries etc.) have worked well

Our analysis explains the situation at each SDPA.

Figure 4: Map of Scotland’s four SDPAs (Source: Glossary, National Records of Scotland, http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/glossary-of-terms).
Glasgow Clyde Valley

There are sixteen councillors on the GCV Joint Committee, two representing each of the eight constituent authorities. The location of Committee meetings rotates between each authority. Importantly, the Joint Committee convenor is intended to hold that position for the duration of the plan-making process, which provides stability for longer than most of the other SDP areas.

The Core Professional Team is made up of one manager, one assistant manager, three strategic planners, one planning analyst and two administrative officers. A management team, made up of the eight planning and technical directors of each authority plus the core team managers, supports the work of the Joint Committee and sets the broad direction of strategy, organisation, integration, work programming, and budgeting for the plan process. The SDP is informed by a Strategic Futures Group made up of key public and private stakeholders with a variety of interests in the future of the city region.

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport works alongside the SDPA on regional transport issues (although it covers a wider area). In 2013/14 the SDPA is projected to break even with costs and revenues of £596,000. This represents £0.33 per head of population (Audit Scotland, 2013a)

GCV has managed to benefit from many of the relationships established during the previous structure plan regime, and has a degree of stability and positive co-operations due to earlier working.

SESplan

There are twelve councillors on the SESplan Joint Committee, two representing each of the six constituent authorities. The Committee chairperson rotates annually between authorities. The core professional team is made up of one manager, one lead officer, and one planner. A project board manages the core team and has responsibilities including agreeing reports to be presented to members.

South East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership works alongside the SDPA on regional transport issues. A system of secondment between planning authorities to the SDPA is in place. In 2012/13 the SDPA had an income of £249,000 with a surplus generated by staff savings and lower than expected Examination costs. This represents £0.21 per head of population (Audit Scotland, 2013b).

SESplan has experienced a degree of difficulty in getting some elected members at the different levels to think strategically about the whole of the city-region. The Joint Committee cycles for SDP1 did not run for the full duration of the plan-making process, and it has been acknowledged by interviewees that there was a lot of change in the committee throughout the plan-making cycle. This has arguably made it harder for committee members to understand what the SDPA was trying to, or indeed could, achieve.

The Project Board has engaged well at the city-region level, but there is still appears to be some in the Operational Group (the tier below the Project Board) who have difficulty in thinking and acting strategically across the city-region, rather than simply pursuing the interests of their own local authorities. Recent leadership changes have fostered
genuine efforts to tackle this, but the risk of participants defaulting to a narrow authority position is still present.

**TAYplan**

There are twelve councillors on the Joint Committee, three representing each of the four constituent authorities. The Committee chairperson rotates annually between authorities. The core professional team comprises of one manager, one senior planner, and one planner. The manager reports to the TAYplan board which is made up of the four heads of planning of the constituent councils. In addition there is a steering group comprising four managers from the constituent councils and a key stakeholders group comprising Government agencies and other government organisations which meet at regular intervals. Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership works alongside the SDPA on regional transport issues. In 2012/13 TAYplan’s requisition income from constituent authorities was £240,000 with a surplus generated due to lower than expected Examination costs. This represents £0.50 per head of population (Audit Scotland, 2013c).

The TAYplan governance arrangements add additional time to the process, with each constituent authority requiring separate ratification. Although the preparatory work required to achieve ratification incurs delay, it does help build a strong cross-partner sense of ownership.

**Aberdeen City and Shire**

There are twelve councillors on the Joint Committee. The role of chairperson and vice-chair revolves between each council every two years, providing some consistency. A management group made up of the heads of planning at each local authority and the SDP manager oversees the SDPA work programme. The SDPA is closely involved in working with the regional public private-partnership known as Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future, which seeks to drive the region’s economic development. North East Scotland Transport Partnership works alongside the SDPA on regional transport issues, while the SDPA chair and vice-chair are also members of the NESTrans committee, which further aids integrated thinking across land-use and transport planning.

In 2012/13 ACS operated with a budget of £160,000. This was reduced by £40,000 compared to the previous year due to the reduction of staffing to one manager and one senior planner for the period. This represents £0.34 per head of population (Audit Scotland, 2013d). Staff at the constituent councils have been seconded to the SDPA when required. The ratification process can mean that the strategic plan risks being viewed from a purely local authority perspective, rather than a city-region perspective, but the system appears to work well provided there are no major disputes or disagreements.

**Governance overview**

Overall, the governance mechanisms appear to function, particularly where there are established and trusted leadership and relationships. However, there are difficulties when everyone is not pulling in the same direction, as evidenced with SES plan.
It should also be emphasised that the core professional teams are generally very small, yet they are responsible for preparing large and complex strategies worth many billions of investment for the local area. This highlights the significant issue of whether they have the resources, flexibility and depth of capability to address all of the necessary issues, including any new initiatives and promotional and partnering work. There is scope for technical support from constituent authorities, and potentially generic support from Scottish Government, for instance on graphics and GIS. These matters are picked up later in this report.

Democratic oversight

Although most of the SDPAs appear to work reasonably well functionally, the impression of democratic oversight is mixed, as the questionnaire response below shows.

![Figure 5: Democratic Oversight Responses](Source: Questionnaire Return).

The democratic oversight of the process was considered to be ineffective or very ineffective by 33% of respondents, although many could not decide. Three types of commentary, sometimes contradictory, were given:

- There is not always a clear link to the democratic functions of the main agencies, including formal public ratification. This was felt to be the case by some community groups.

- Some SDP operators and contributors felt democratic processes and timescales can actually hinder the plan-making process. Within three SDPAs, each separate planning authority has its own committee cycles that must ratify the SDP, which has a knock-on effect on timescales. According to one questionnaire
respondent: “Governance arrangements (delegation) in TAYplan takes away 9-12 months of what could be preparation time of an MIR (when compared to GCV SDPA process timescales).”

- Examination and transparent scrutiny was a recurring theme from several contributors, who emphasised the lack of this ‘test’ in the new system so far. Without a public element to examinations to ensure effective scrutiny, some communities, landowners and individuals felt that their comments and objections to SDPs were simply being dismissed without proper consideration. In addition to this comment being made by several questionnaire respondents, the RTPI’s written submission also highlighted as a concern that there was yet to be a Public Examination on an SDP, leaving the process open to criticism by some community sectors that not enough was being done to listen and respond to objections. (See Annex E).

- Some suggested the current system relies too much on reaching a consensus, resulting in often banal documents that lack deliverable objectives – the lowest common denominator patchwork – and which in turn exacerbates public apathy.

All of these concerns have some validity. Indeed, while resources and documentation have been streamlined in the new planning system, expectations remain very high, especially as difficult judgements and trade-offs still have to be made. Issues related to this are picked up in the following sections.

Timescales

The Aberdeen City and Shire experience showed how timeframes can be affected by local elections cycles, with councillors reluctant to approve a plan in the months leading up to an election. Other unforeseen external circumstances can also delay intended timescales. The Aberdeen City and Shire forthcoming LDPs will need to be produced quickly following the approval of the SDP. If there were to be any delay arising from the SDP examination stage there could be a serious knock on effect. The level of complexity is however lower in Aberdeen City and Shire (as compared to SESplan or Glasgow and Clyde Valley with more partners), which reduces the risk of delays through external circumstances.

The SESplan experience further highlighted the complexity of plan cycles. Strategic and local development plans are currently being published in the SESplan area at quite different timescales. Indeed, the Main Issues Report for SDP2 is already underway before some local authorities have produced a local development plan based on SDP1.

As already noted at TAYplan, since ratification decisions need to be made individually by each constituent authority’s planning committees, this adds additional delay to the whole process.

Yet, despite all the difficulties, including around politics and the governance arrangements, it is worth noting that SDPs have broadly been produced within the expected time period outlined in Circular 1/2009 and the subsequent Circular 6/2013, and therefore represent a big improvement when compared to the preparation of plans.
before modernisation. There have been some notable delays, such as the adoption of SESplan without fully resolving housing allocations. As a result, additional supplementary guidance on housing had to be produced by SES Plan within 12 months of SDP adoption. This type of scenario was not envisaged in the original guidance.

Figure 6: Statutory Timescale Response (Source: Questionnaire Return).

The issue of timescales was addressed by respondents to the questionnaire, as shown above. Although a majority considered the timescales appropriate, 26% of respondents deemed the statutory procedures and timescales for the preparation of an SDP to be inappropriate or highly inappropriate. Three main reasons were given for this:

1. The 5 year review timeframe does not allow enough time for the local development plans to implement the strategies in the strategic plan (so grounding the SDP in local realities). This caused a reported degree of confusion in areas where the next phase of SDP Main Issues Reports are being prepared before many Local Development Plans have responded to the first Strategic Development Plan.

2. The timeframe of the governance arrangements was seen as another weakness. Dependent on the level of delegation to the SDPAs’ Joint Committees, ratification of a plan could add an additional 9-12 months to the process. While Glasgow and Clyde Valley has delegated decisions to its Joint Committee, in other SDPAs ratification by each of the constituent local authorities adds both additional time and work. However, in workshop discussion, the level of SDPA delegation witnessed in Glasgow and Clyde Valley was not necessarily sought elsewhere.

3. The timing of engagement drew a negative response from some. This was due to the relatively early stage at which engagement normally takes place, compared to previous regimes, and the perceived lack of subsequent opportunities to suggest changes to the plan. Some communities and individuals wished to be involved in a more continuous dialogue on plans as they evolve.
There could certainly be benefit in greater synchronisation and alignment of plan cycles with partner agencies responsible for other fields such as infrastructure and transport. The topic of engagement is picked up in the next section.

Greater autonomy and authority for SDPAs

There was a recognition of the tension between making independent decisions for the good of the city-region and the need for ownership among constituent authorities. In all workshops there was a discussion of the merits of giving greater autonomy to the SDPAs. However, the success of the plans depend heavily on ownership and buy-in. More autonomy for SDPAs would probably undermine this. On balance therefore, while there was acknowledgement for greater support for SDPAs from both Scottish Government and even the Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals, there was no strong call for more autonomous bodies.

There was also minimal support for national control of regional planning issues. However there was support for a stronger lead being given at the national level in indicating which areas of the country would be subject to larger scale growth and change.

Local development plans need to be given a strategic lead at a lower spatial level than national and the more specific level of city-region strategy provides tangible hooks for the local development plans that would not be present if there was no tier between NPF and LDPs.

Engagement

Engagement was a major theme of the research, both in questionnaire responses and in discussions at interview and workshops stages. The research question posed in the brief was:

Process Issue 2: By engaging with a selection of stakeholders, establish whether engagement with stakeholders has been effective and where it has clearly resulted in the aims of planning policy and advice being met.

Although all the respective SDP processes have technically conformed to their plan Participation Statement and met the legally required standards, each of the plans reveals important differences in the method and extent of stakeholder engagement. These are summarised below:

Glasgow and Clyde Valley

The GCV Participation Statement included the use of newsletters and an awareness raising leaflet; public consultation events in each Local Authority area; numerous meetings with a Strategic Futures Group; and, meetings with public, private and
environmental sector stakeholders. Precise details on the specific number of responses to the MIR and Proposed Plan were not available.

All telephone interviewees were positive about the level of engagement. However, one even considered that there might have been too much engagement, and that this process could have been further streamlined.

The public sector seems to have been more engaged with the GCV SDP than the private sector and it was acknowledged that there was scope to achieve greater balance in future.

Aberdeen City and Shire

There were seven dedicated events for the Proposed SDP (2013), with mixed attendance levels. Presentations were made to other events and fora across a range of interest groups and sectors. The MIR generated submissions from 85 individuals or organisations. Twelve of these were late and 68% were made via email. Only one adjoining authority responded. Developers and businesses made up 47% of responses. This process followed a more extensive consultation process that informed the earlier transformational Structure Plan (2009).

It was contended that engagement for the SDP (second plan) struck the right balance, and it was difficult to justify a full intensity of engagement as there were so few changes from the preceding structure plan, which had already generated substantial engagement. Despite the well-known difficulty of engaging communities at the strategic level, in Aberdeenshire the community councils were the group that participated most. In the city, the most useful method of engagement was through the civic forum which brought community councils together. There was also an experience of receiving representations when it was too late, so it is recognised that the timing and deadlines of engagement may need to be given more consideration next time.

Although engagement in Aberdeen City and Shire was generally considered to have been good, some felt that the processes were rushed, with insufficient time allowed to take account of public consultation feedback.

SESplan

The specifics of the consultation for both the MIR and Proposed Plan were not very clear in the documentation provided for the Plan examination. However, it appears that some 18 public events were held at the MIR stage and 180 representations were received on the Proposed Plan.

Responses to this research indicated that there was a considerable level of engagement, although its timing and communication were sometimes criticised. In addition, some respondents questioned the effectiveness of engagement with communities at a strategic level. It was suggested that it would be beneficial in the future to target specific issues or themes for engagement, rather than the whole
strategy. There was some comment from developers that the emphasis on engaging the public sector meant they felt they were left out.

In discussion, the SESplan team perspective was that communities and individuals are certainly capable of engaging more effectively at the strategic level, particularly if the SDP role and purpose is communicated properly. Engagement was viewed as a matter of culture, not ability, even though people are more used to engaging on local rather than strategic issues. Although engaging with the private sector has not always been easy, new communication lines have recently opened up, creating scope for future enhancement.

**TAYplan**

Relative to the other SDPs, extensive and detailed information on the Tayplan MIR and Proposed Plan consultations was available. 81% and 75% of representations were made online at the respective MIR and Proposed Plan stages respectively. While an emphasis was placed on public events, the authority also decided to undertake consultation events with high school children in order to increase the participation of younger age groups.

For SDP1 TAYplan engaged with 600 people. In parts of the region, where there was a lot of objection to change, face-to-face meetings were arranged to discuss the issues and to allow the individual or community council to make their case directly to the SDPA.

The majority of those interviewed thought this had been a good process and that a lot of effort had been put into creating a balanced and wide ranging engagement process. Those who criticised the engagement process often came from more rural locations, and argued that the process had privileged people and organisations in urban areas. The TAYplan experience was also that engagement with the local authorities, key agencies and the private sector has been important and beneficial. For instance, a helpful working relationship has been established with Transport Scotland, enabling each organisation to better understand the goals and constraints of the other. This has facilitated negotiation of mutually agreed wording in the SDPs for strategic transport proposals that have yet to secure committed funding.

**Engagement overview**

Most questionnaire respondents were generally positive about the adequacy of engagement opportunities. However some 31% considered to have been inadequate or highly inadequate. Four main reasons were given for this:

1. General understanding of the nature of strategic development planning, and the role that it plays, has been poor, indicating a need for greater effort in communicating the purpose of the plan. SDPA staff felt that communities often did not engage until the local LDP level because this deals with more immediate and specific concerns.
2. Issues that have been previously agreed, either as a carry-over from the old structure plan system, or through a higher order document such as NPF, cannot readily form the basis for effective fresh engagement.

3. Some respondents felt that public consultation makes little difference to the final plan. Several respondents believed that the level and value of input had not made any discernable change to the direction the plan would have taken anyway.

4. Engagement starts to fade-out as the process nears completion. As one questionnaire respondent said: “The process from my experience as set out in Fig 1 of [the] planning circular was followed by GCVSDP. In general this process saw lots of engagement in the pre MIR/visioning stage but the closer the plan got to a published proposed plan there were less and less opportunities to engage and I didn’t feel there was an “ongoing process of engagement that will last throughout the period of plan preparation” as set out in the circular.”

![Questionnaire Response Graph](image)

**Figure 7: Opportunities for Engagement Response (Source: Questionnaire Return).**

Engagement with communities at the strategic level is a difficult process, not least in helping communities to understand what strategic planning is all about. Community councils are a key point of access for engaging effectively with communities, but not the only route.

A variety of modes and methods have been used to boost engagement on strategic planning, with mixed results, but it is clear that there is scope to do more to build greater engagement and awareness among the wider community of the key strategic decisions and the reasons behind them. This issue is discussed further in subsequent sections of the report, as it arose from different parties in different contexts.
Collaboration and strategic guidance

At the heart of the purpose of strategic planning is the ability to work across boundaries in a collaborative manner, either to undertake or to inform strategic decision making. A key strand of the research was:

Process Issue 4 - To consider the extent to which the decision-making processes within each SDPA have, where necessary, supported the making of strategic decisions in the interests of the city-region.

Aberdeen City and Shire

Aberdeen City and Shire's plan is a high-level document that has provided a positive strategic framework for Local Development Plans to follow. Despite its effectiveness in providing strategic level guidance, some interviewees felt that more detail on policy would have provided greater clarity to the strategy.

Glasgow and Clyde Valley

Good collaborative working at Glasgow and Clyde Valley encouraged constituent local authorities to take ownership of the strategic plan and fostered innovation and leadership around issues such as resilience and climate change. Significantly, the green networks were conceived within the strategic planning process.

The Glasgow and Clyde Valley collaborative topic groups, in particular, created an important platform for dialogue and mutual understanding among constituent local authorities, while the preceding structure plan relationships served to embed effective working relationships.

Most respondents felt that Glasgow and Clyde Valley SDP provided clear strategic guidance. Some were concerned about the perceived politicisation of the process by one or two individuals, through this did not come through as a recurring theme.

SESplan

It can be argued that the lack of cohesive collaboration in the Edinburgh sub-region, which dates back from well before SESplan days, produced a plan that was closer to a stitching together of approved policies, than a fresh city-vision.

A clear lesson learnt at SESplan was that elected members were not as fully engaged as they should have been, resulting in less political ownership. This weakened the first SDP, turning it primarily into a bridging document between the structure plan and SDP2. There is much that can be learnt from this experience and indeed several comments indicated that, with new leadership in place, there is greater potential for a clearer city-region strategy, even though this has yet to be achieved. One interviewee noted that the production of a strong local development plan can be undermined by a weak strategic development plan. This highlights the importance of an effective SDP, around which a strong consensus now appears to be emerging.
In the TAYplan experience, members of the Project Board (a group of senior managers from the constituent local authorities) have all worked together for a long time and developed a history of good working relationships. This has been critical to an effective collaborative partnership. Indeed, the four local authorities of TAYplan openly make reference to ‘our’ plan, showing a strong sense of collective commitment. Yet, as members of the Board, or the key agencies group move on and are replaced, it remains crucial to brief new participants so that they can quickly engage with the process.

An example of good practice is the TAYplan system of integrating a self-evaluation and reflection process at the end of each key stage (such as after the MIR) to ascertain what lessons can be learnt. This process involves the core team, the four constituent local authorities and the 14 members of the key agencies group. Research responses from both TAYplan and elsewhere indicate that the ability of the SDP to provide strategic guidance is dependent on good relationships with the constituent local authorities, in particular through the Project Board and Joint Committee. This is essential to create good communication and dialogue on aspects of the plan that require mutual ownership, such as to the regional sequential approach to development. It highlights the significance of collaborative leadership from both political and professional participants in underpinning success.

Chapter summary

Overview theme 1: Collaborative leadership & governance

The success or otherwise of the SDP teams depends on effective partnership working across administrative, sectoral and often political boundaries. The evidence suggests that because of this broad scope, the nature of the cross sectoral, multi agency working is pivotal in creating strategic visions and action plans that can be effective.

It is clear that consistent, coherent and sustained leadership is required, both politically and professionally, to deliver the necessary strategic planning. Planners, politicians, agencies and communities are still learning how to operate the new SDP system as it beds in. The function, purpose and relevance of SDPs needs to be communicated more clearly to these various audiences to improve both awareness and effectiveness.

In this respect the system is working, but not as well as it might particularly where there is scope for more effective collaborative leadership.

Overview theme 2: Effective engagement and scrutiny

The research evidence suggests that appropriate engagement builds awareness, comprehension, and even ownership, of the vision and emerging strategy of an SDP. Indeed, communities and even agencies that have only limited appreciation of the SDP are more likely to challenge it and cause delay. This highlights the value of cross-sectoral and community engagement around the objectives and themes of the SDP. It
is clear from many community and individual responses that there is scope for greater engagement with the wider community, with professionals outside direct SDP production, and with politicians beyond those with formal SDPA roles.
This chapter looks at the content of the SDPs, arising from a mix of direct document review and feedback from the other methods such as the questionnaire and workshop.

Analysis of the Plan Process and Content Outputs

This section reviews the three SDPs adopted so far, along with the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009, to identify how far they meet the aspirations for SDPs and help reveal whether the new arrangements are fit for purpose. It should be read in conjunction with the matrixes analysing each plan provided in Annex B. The themes are structured around the inquiry lines of the Scottish Government brief, beginning with:

Process Issue 3: With particular emphasis on the key areas of housing and transport, and taking into account the relevant Scottish Government policy and guidance, consider what evidence base has been used to inform each plan.

Housing

Housing is an important consideration within each SDPA and in all the plans was highlighted by some respondents as a major issue, both in terms of quantum and spatial configuration, and in the methodology used to arrive at that. The Housing Need and Demand Assessments (HNDAs) used were the first of their type to operate at SDP level. These involved developing new partnerships and synchronising local authority level data, set within the context of a severe downturn in construction activity.

The inherited local authority level housing need assessments were at various stages of completion and contributed to the adoption of different approaches. For instance TAYplan and, initially SESplan, sought to produce combined local authority level ‘overview’ HNDAs. In contrast, Glasgow Clyde Valley (GCV) and Aberdeen City and Shire (ACS) started afresh to produce SDPA level assessments.

Aberdeen City and Shire produced the first robust and credible HNDA in 2010 (which actually informed their LDPs), drawing on the detail of a draft version that had previously informed the approved Structure Plan (2009). The evidence base for the HNDA used General Register Office for Scotland (now National Records of Scotland) statistics for population and growth, with an additional ‘reality check’ provided by the SDPA. The check was in the form of additional research with stakeholders in the region, such as major employers and Scottish Enterprise, to gain any additional understanding of the regional employment and growth figures.

At Glasgow and Clyde Valley the regional approach, engendering major investment, appears to have progressed without major delays. However, there had been some tension around greenfield land release, as some of the local authorities have political sensitivities with regard to this. There is evidence of a strategic tension between the
urban agenda and a more developer-oriented housing market agenda, especially in a
time of recession when difficult sites are unappealing

At SESplan the HNDA took a significant amount of time to proceed to ‘robust and
credible’ level. It differed from the others by not specifically allocating housing
requirement to the local authority level, but deferring this task to associated
Supplementary Guidance. The experience has been that raw HNDA figures appeared
challenging, if not undeliverable, on the ground. Beyond the HNDA there is a positive
trend emerging in terms of translating the outcomes of the HNDA into a placemaking
approach, building communities in a spatial way, rather than simply allocating figures to
a region. This aspiration involves a positive placemaking approach, rather than
dependence on generated numbers by an assessment model.

TAYplan recognised that the HNDA is a massive piece of technical work. It is
appropriate to ask if there is an alternative method of getting as good an output with
fewer resources invested, but there is a consensus that it has value now that it has
been tested.

From the perspective of the SDPAs, the preparation of the HNDA was considered a
challenging and resource intensive exercise. This was an issue raised in all of the in-
person interviews with the SDPA teams. While the utility of such an exercise is clear,
the question was raised as to whether or not there was a method that got an output of
equal utility with lower levels of input. Nevertheless, the process has been signed off as
robust, and value realised for local planning authorities and for house builders through
the market information is provides. All SDPAs used consultants to varying degrees to
help produce these documents. ACS’s subsequent HNDA Update 2011 for their SDP
2013 appears to have been a far less resource-intensive process. This offers some
pointers for less complicated working in future cycles, but still requires strong core skills
and collaborative housing partnerships.

Apart from SESplan, all the other SDPs identified strategic development areas as well
as local authority housing requirements and expected annual building rates. Despite
some criticism from the development industry, notably in relation to GCV’s emphasis on
brownfield development, there is a clear and strong evidence base for housing. The
actual construction has been problematic primarily because of the sustained downturn
in most housing market areas. This has even been an issue for large-scale housing
developments in the North East of Scotland where the housing market has remained
relatively buoyant.

In addition to this, further guidance has been provided by the Scottish Government’s
Centre for Housing Market Analysis which has produced generic tools under the banner
of ‘HNDA Refresh’ to further refine the HNDA tool and its operation. There is a now a
sense that, with a current cycle of updating (planned for Spring 2014), these should be
sufficiently well bedded in to run more smoothly in future.

The perception of how the housing issues were dealt with by those who interacted with
the SDP process gives further evidence of the contentious nature of this aspect.

Some 38% of respondents thought housing had been dealt with badly or very badly at
the aggregated Scottish level. However, this result has great variance when each plan
was examined individually, as shown below.
As noted already, SESplan published its housing allocations through supplementary guidance, rather than in the main plan. This caused delay and uncertainty for developers, private individuals and communities, as well as for public agencies, which may help explain the stakeholder reactions to SES Plan on housing (column four). In the questionnaire, a question was specifically targeted at the relationship to local property market conditions, with the aim of drawing more information on these aspects.
In response, shown below, 32% thought that local property market conditions had been badly or very badly considered, while only 26% thought this had been dealt with well or very well.

The negative response is partly connected to question 14, which explored the clarity of the SDP in terms of communicating the intended quantity and location of development. Here, 35% of respondents said that the plan had been unclear or very unclear. The main reasons given for this were not always consistent, depending on the sector responding:

- Growth figures used for the HNDA calculation were considered by some to be over generous, resulting in a similarly over generous provision of housing land.
- Community and individual respondents thought housing allocations seem predicated on what house-builders want, rather than on what a sustainable housing strategy for the city-region would comprise.
- Land-owners, house-builders and development professionals also thought that in dealing with quanta, the basis for allocations did not necessarily relate properly to what they considered to be the spatial demand.
- The housing market basis has changed – a contracted market has not been accounted for. Sites that are more difficult to deliver (brownfield sites within established urban areas) are the preference in the strategic plans - without the more buoyant housing market, such sites will remain undeveloped.

Local property market conditions

![Pie chart showing the response to question 11 regarding how well the SDP took account of local property market conditions.](Figure_10_Local_Property_Market_Conditions_Response.png)

In conclusion on housing we may state that the HNDA process produces a strong coherent evidence base, but a considerable resource and expertise is required to achieve that. The spatial outcomes are challenging in some instances, but there is a positive trend emerging to focus more on placemaking and community building than simply dispersal of numbers.
Perhaps the biggest challenge has been running the process in a time of recession and austerity when future allocations do not appear to sit well with development and financial realities.

**Transport**

The transport dimension of SDPs is very important as this contributes one of the most self-evidently strategic cross-boundary elements. Producing an evidence base for strategic transport seems to have been less complex than for housing, although some difficulties have still arisen.

The SESplan, ACS and TAYplan SDA’s all commissioned the same consultancy to carry out city region transport studies. SESplan’s study provides what appears to be a strong level of detail. However the key government agency Transport Scotland, has identified concern at the nature and level of detail of all SDP transport evidence to help deliver strategic development.

In ACS, the transport evidence needed to determine strategic level developments was produced after the adoption of the Structure Plan (2009) and during the production of the region’s two LDPs. However, this evidence then aided the development of an SDPA Strategic Transport Fund, an important innovation which has now begun gathering contributions.

GCV has a long history, through Strathclyde Regional Transport, of public transport integration. This combined with a back-loaded SDP development strategy to create the transport evidence base.

Although transport exemplifies the variable evidence base across SDP’s, and some reservations arose from Transport Scotland, no specific issues were raised on its adequacy that triggered public examination. It could be argued that this has left much further work to be undertaken at LDP level, which might have benefitted from closer alignment at the earlier strategic stage.

From the experience of those involved, much depends on personal and functional relationships. For instance, the Aberdeen City and Shire team experienced sharing an office with NESTrans, the regional transport body, which was helpful in terms of integrating land-use planning and transport planning perspectives.

Likewise, at SESplan this integration has been a key issue, as without infrastructure being committed ahead of development taking place, the delivery of housing or business growth areas becomes uncertain.

There is a core contradiction at the heart of the inadequate alignment of transport and land use policy. Transport Scotland, working to a shorter timescale, require a higher level of evidence and justification than is normally achievable for an SDP operating across a generation. Some SDPAs do not consider that the level of detail required in a full STAG transport appraisal is appropriate at the strategic development plan level, as the appraisal process draws the SDPA into too great a level of specificity.
This evidence and certainty gap is at the heart of one of the key mismatches of the new SDP system.

This is further evidenced by the responses to the questionnaire on strategic transport.

*Strategic transport*

![Pie chart showing responses to Q8: How well has the SDP dealt with Strategic Transport?](image)

Figure 11: Strategic Transport Response (Source: Questionnaire Return).

Although the majority of respondents said that transport had been dealt will well or very well, 31% said that strategic transport had been dealt with badly or very badly. Issues raised were largely due to the lack of integration between land-use planning and transport planning. Three points, in particular, were highlighted:

- It was argued that housing allocations were made without full enough consideration of their impact on transport, roads and other infrastructure.

- Housing allocations are not spatial enough in their articulation, which makes the integration with transport, education and other policy areas very difficult at the strategic level, often resulting in these key decision areas being passed down to LDPs.

- Strategic transport proposals made by SDPs cannot always be connected directly to funding and delivery. For example in TAYplan, the wording in the plan notes that while transport delivery is essential it cannot necessarily be committed to: "Although not all projects are worked up or have committed funding and not all sites and routes have been finalised, they have been identified as priorities". (Source: TAYplan Approved Plan, June 2012, 14).

This last point reinforces the disconnect between the transport elements, which may not be deliverable, and are certainly not committed, and the development components, which are necessary to underpin them.
For Scotland, and its respective city regions to be able to function effectively, and for the respective communities to prosper, this disconnect needs to be addressed and better aligned.

**Plan content and consistency**

A key strand of the research was around the content and consistency or difference between the respective plans.

Content Issue 5: *While recognising that each plan is responding to a different context, consider the extent to which the content of each plan is generally consistent and if not, the main ways in which it differs and why*

Much of this depended on the manner in which the SDP was researched and put together, including the relationships between the different elements.

**Aberdeen City and Shire**

The proposed strategic development plan (2013) was an evolution of the 2009 structure plan, and as such has been partly grounded in that earlier research. Communication and explanation of how the housing allocations were arrived at has been called for by some professionals in the development sector, partly because of what appears to be a convenient split between the two areas. However, there is also some support for this balanced approach.

As noted already, the Aberdeen City and Shire plan appears to have developed a good relationship between development and transport. However, some interviewees still noted that development sites and infrastructure connections did not have a clear or consistent lead, with either infrastructure unlocking development sites or vice versa. A transport infrastructure fund had been established, although delivery of infrastructure from this fund is still to happen.

The level of specific policy articulation in the Aberdeen City and Shire SDP has been purposefully toned down to make the plan more accessible, but this has meant there has been criticism that it has not been as precise or specific a plan as it could be, and therefore less useful. There is a question around whether something been lost by not having 'policy'.

Despite these concerns about infrastructure and specificity, including the manner some issues are passed on to LDPs, there is a fair measure of support for what is viewed as a consistent, pragmatic plan.

**Glasgow and Clyde Valley**

As noted earlier, the established relationships helped with the shared production of both research and content. The formation of topic groups to work on issues drew different people into evidence-building. All respondents were pleased with how this process had worked in generating credible output.
From the different sources of interviewees there is a sense that the different elements were well related and produced a coherent and consistent strategic vision. However, where the document became more technical, it was harder for some to establish its meaning or intent.

**SESplan**

The first cycle of the plan borrows much in content from the earlier plans that it follows, in what has been termed a ‘bridging document’ approach. There was a consensus that there had been an adequate level of research, but that the communication of the outcomes had perhaps been sub-optimal. There was also concern from some that the evidence base on cross-boundary issues was weak, and would benefit from strengthening.

In terms of securing consistency, respondents suggested that communication between the partner local authorities, key agencies (Transport Scotland, for instance) and the SDPA could have been more effective at key stages, particularly early ones. Specifically, this could have improved the connection between housing allocations and the infrastructure investment necessary to deliver that housing.

There is a sense that the next cycle is moving in a better, more co-ordinated direction, but that the trust and confidence in the SDP process, and therefore its content, was undermined by the difficulties of the first phase, including the separation of the housing element into supplementary guidance.

**TAYplan**

Overall the level of research was considered appropriate, but concerns were raised about the complexity of the HNDA process and that the growth projections used as an input are not based on reality and therefore produce an over-estimate.

The consensus view is that TAYplan has been successful in setting a consistent strategic direction that connects housing, transport and other infrastructure (especially in directing large-scale development away from land between Perth and Dundee, back towards the urban cores). This outcome was the result of collaborative working practices and a high level of agreement from the local authorities impacted by this strategic approach. This has been reinforced by a sequential approach that guides the allocation of development.

Ensuring that the SDP is as useful for local development plans as it is to delivery the National Planning Framework is an important outcome – the SDP needs to integrate into the planning system at large up and down the scale.

Therefore, at a general level, each plan adheres to the Scottish Government guidance. The ACS plans propose development of a more ambitious scale than the others, but that is logical in that particular context. All plans broadly follow the order of ‘background’, ‘vision’, ‘aims’, ‘spatial strategy’, and ‘objectives’ or ‘targets’ followed by ‘delivery’. TAYplan differs in its use of ‘policies’ and in this respect is more traditional. SESplan and GCV are laid out and graphically presented in the most coherent and
legible way. They all refer to existing background topical papers to justify much of the content, not all of which are easy to obtain. Each plan nevertheless attempts to be understood by the widest possible audience. The ACS plans are the easiest to understand, and even achieved Plain English crystal mark status.

Institutional innovation in developing evidence bases does appear to be occurring. All SDPs have created regional level planning partnerships and topic groups of varying formats, including the GCV Futures Group (which had its origins in 1996 under the former structure plan arrangements). These clearly have potential to bring public and private interests together and so improve consistency and implementation in the longer term. However, it can be argued that too much detailed evidence gathering is still left to the LDPs, thereby leaving detail and the certainty that arises from it, to much later, with consequence for the investment and delivery sector.

Nevertheless, despite the issue of where the evidence lies in terms of document sequence, is considered that these plans are generally as consistent as they need to be from a presentational perspective, but also allow for difference in local circumstances and approach.

Spatial and place-based

A key test for the new regime of SDPs is whether they are spatial and place-based. The inquiry line in the brief simply states:

Content Issue 1: Examine whether the plans are spatial and place-based

This may seem logical and self evident now, but in a previous era many plans were sectoral, target or criteria-driven, and sometimes with limited, if any, spatial expression. All of the SDP plans currently under review are spatial and place-based, in that they provide spatial strategies with a varying articulation and scale of geographic focus.

With its tradition of planning at this level, GCVSDP reflects a clear spatial strategy that is consistently carried through to a place-based hierarchy of development locations but with detailed allocations left to the LDPs.

TAYplan’s fitting together of the various SDAs is slightly less clear and this possibly reflects the more complex nature of parts of this city-region in a territorial sense.

SESplan provides a clear spatial strategy with a place basis. SDAs are identified and appear meaningful for communities and developers interpreting the plan. Care is taken to explain what ‘place based strategic planning’ actually means through a separate SPG.

ACS has a simpler structure to its city region compared with some of the others. It has a clear spatial strategy with a place basis in both plans. However, both plans provide only a limited spatial basis for their successor LDPs.
Detail

With regard to the content of the plans, there has been a concern that the new breed of plans should be concise, focused and less voluminous than their predecessors.

Content Issue 2: Looking at the topics that plans are expected to cover, consider whether the plans have provided too much or too little detail, illustrated by examples.

Overall there appear to be no case where too much detail has been provided, and in this respect the plans meet the aspiration for succinctness. There are however some areas where more detail is needed for the plans to be more effective especially in terms of infrastructure requirements, waste and green networks.

Information on Strategic greenspace networks lacks detail and, aside from GCV, which has driven forward the creation of the Central Scotland Green Network, and more recently TAYplan, the significance and detail of this does not appear to have been fully grasped by all SDPAs, especially on their funding and implementation. Greenbelt reviews have not taken place through the SDPs and are generally left to LDPs to finalise when they might have been considered to be of strategic significance.

Waste management is one topic area where there is a lack of useful detail either on waste projections or the associated need for new facilities to accommodate both growth and the implementation of legislation. Waste management planning has considered the impact of the national Zero Waste strategy. However, whilst identifying waste management shortfalls, SDPs have generally not chosen to identify specific locations for strategic facilities, leaving this to LDPs. New strategic facilities are notoriously difficult to plan for politically and, given the potential cross boundary significance of this, it is an aspect where more detail might have been expected, rather than leaving LDPs to address this.

As discussed elsewhere, strategies for Transport leave many details to be analysed at the LDP and Supplementary Guidance level. There is scope for more detail illustrating better alignment with Transport Scotland, for instance around the co-ordination of land use and transportation in specific areas of change.

In ACS, water supply is identified as a potential issue with a strategic impact but potential solutions appear to be left as an issue for future plans. Most plans identify major existing or agreed strategic investment and from this they develop settlement strategies. The plan process therefore is not the source from which new ideas and investments for the region appear to emerge. Rather they straddle a line between pragmatic delivery of known commitments and visionary aspiration, and so can appear to lack ambition for the future in some respects.

Housing, referred to in detail elsewhere, is dealt with adequately by all plans except for SESplan, which has specifically dealt with the detail through Supplementary Guidance.

Creating an Economy and Business strategy can be highly problematic in spatial terms given the nature of economic cycles. Economic growth projections have been particularly difficult in the context of recession. SDPs have used input from public-private partnerships and external consultancies to help inform their strategies. All plans
have taken an optimistic, even generous, approach in their allocation of land for employment-related development. However, they generally leave the specifics of this to the successor LDP level. GCV identifies specific strategic economic investment locations as well as broad areas. ACS, particularly in the second plan, supports certain economic development projects, but expects the details to be decided through LDPs or SG.

Retail needs analysis at the regional level has not been tackled in much detail, although this is understandable given the cost and likely marginal gains from such information. Retail elements are largely confined to providing hierarchies and avoiding constituent authorities engaging in unsustainable inter- and intra- regional competition. Despite the policy focus on supporting regional retail hierarchies, this still leaves unresolved important regional economic issues for instance in the GCV area.

On aspects of detail there are certainly areas where the SDPs could be more explicit, and more co-ordinated with the strategies of partner agencies, including on the themes of waste, transport and economic development, as well as greenspace networks in some instances. This could include an alignment on the detail of partners, timescales, objectives and spatial articulation across a number of relevant partners.

Integration

31% of respondents said the relationship and integration of the content issues highlighted in the questionnaire (housing; economic development, employment and retail; waste, water and energy infrastructure; strategic transport) was dealt with badly or very badly. Whilst this is not a hugely problematic proportion, it does suggest there is room for improvement.

Cross boundary issues

The strategic nature of the plans was considered with respect to the cross authority dimension, which is at the heart of the rationale for strategic planning.

Content Issue 3: Examine whether the plans are providing/will provide the appropriate level of guidance for Local Development Plans, especially where cross-boundary infrastructure issues have been identified.

As noted in consideration of their spatial manifestation, the articulation of most plans provides a level of guidance that LDPs can use, though this is much less detailed than the previous Structure Plan format, notably for those at the development management level. However, this is a clearly intended aspect of these more visionary plans, a factor not always appreciated by those at the development management end of the user spectrum.

In addition there are supporting tools for the LDPs to use, such as GCV’s ‘Sustainable Location Assessment’ for guiding LDP policies and allocations, as well as major investment applications. GCV’s Schedule 21 details a long list of settlements with challenges and actions for each LDP to address, and to facilitate this an ‘LDP Overview’ was published in 2013 to guide local authorities in implementing the SDP.
TAYplan provides significant detail for LDP’s to implement in policy terms across their respective boundaries. SPP also contains much of this information.

The issue of cross boundary infrastructure was considered:

Content Issue 4: Review the funding/contribution mechanisms relating to cross-boundary strategic infrastructure which have been considered by each of the 4 SDPAs and how these have fed into the relevant SDP

This appeared to us to be a major omission from virtually all the SDPs and yet could have been their most crucial contribution. To some degree this omission could be affected by the formative nature of the SDPs, the emerging collaborative partnerships and the context of economic downturn. ACS clearly tried to address this with its innovative Strategic Transport Fund, while GCV is now also organising a strategic infrastructure fund.

However, too much is generally left to LDPs with very few identifiable strategic projects and proposals set out at the SDP level. Even regional funding mechanisms for cross boundary issues such as new school provision have been largely omitted, and offer scope for future consideration. This raises some issues concerning the need for consistency in the breadth and scope of cross boundary planning, programming, including across budgetary cycles and horizons.

We believe that it is surely an expectation that SDPs should comprise strategic cross border partnerships, strategy, but also projects and mechanisms to deliver those projects. As the SDPAs are all bedded in now, the expectation is that they should be able to move towards that stage.

Proposition to update area boundaries

The concept of amending boundaries was discussed in all workshop sessions and most interviews, but not considered to be a major issue. The Fife split appears to work as the SDP boundaries bear a strong relationship to the two functioning city-regions. Regional transport boundaries and SDPA boundaries could be better aligned, but were not completely impractical.

Chapter summary

Overview theme 3 Housing and community building

Housing, and the building or extension of communities, is a major theme of most SDPs, and one that drew some criticism from review participants across the spectrum, notably from communities themselves. The criticisms related to the general approach to the calculation of numbers, and to the spatial articulation or lack of it.

The process of assessing need seems to be bedding down. However the bigger challenge is to ensure that the plans do not simply distribute housing numbers between
areas but help create sustainable and well balanced communities that are integrated more effectively with infrastructure and other investment, including green networks.

That requires a more integrative approach that looks beyond housing per se, to the concept of building communities and creating positive places. The various elements, including transport and infrastructure, need to be viewed and aligned within this wider framework.

Overview theme 4 Transport & infrastructure role

The allocation and co-ordination of future transport and infrastructure, including green infrastructure, was identified as one of the most significant roles of SDPs. However, from the review of the SDPs and evidence from different sources, there is not yet optimal alignment of strategy, integration, nor adequate connection to mechanisms for funding or delivery. Some of the issues are passed on the LDP level, like waste. Other dimensions of the mismatch appear to arise from different time horizons, and different levels of commitment from respective partner bodies. This needs to be resolved at a Scottish-wide level, as it affects matters like economic performance and development potential, and congestion, carbon emissions all at a macro scale.

Similar issues can arise with energy, water and flooding, but so far have not been as pronounced as with transport and waste. Nevertheless, all these matters need to be better co-ordinated by taking a ‘Team Scotland’ approach that prioritises integration, and avoids seeing each aspect of infrastructure as an isolated or ‘separate’ system.
5 Analysis: Delivery & Skills

Delivery Issues

In addition to considering the governance and content issues, the research considered dimensions of implementation and deliverability, including skills and capacity issues. The research inquiry line was:

Process Issue 5: Examine how the deliverability of the plans has been considered during the preparation process.

The GCV SDP takes a cautious approach to deliverability in the initial stages of the plan, reflecting its economic context. However, the plan promotes a more ambitious growth strategy in the medium and longer terms. It identifies Strategic Development Priorities to accommodate and aid delivery. Its Action Programme provides a strong and clear link with the SDP, but that link is not always very clear within the SDP itself. The plan aims to ensure long term sustainability, which creates a potential trade-off with immediate deliverability in this respect. It does however set specific housing targets for each market area, which gives a degree of clarity of aspiration, but does not guarantee delivery.

With SES Plan, aside from identifying transport requirements, there is no strong steer on the detail of infrastructure deliverability. The plan’s general emphasis on existing LDP allocations, and leaving new allocations to a separate Supplementary Guidance document, has reduced its sense of immediate delivery focus.

TAYplan provides a clear strategy through strategic development areas and definitive housing requirements for each housing market area and local authority. However, infrastructure priorities to kick-start delivery are not necessarily included and the difficult economic context heavily influences the plan.

The local economic context for both ACS plans distinguishes it from the other plans. The 2009 plan represents a vision for major growth of the region, while the 2013 plan continues with this. Both plans operate in a more ‘deliverable’ economic and land use context, so allocate large-scale greenfield development. However, both plans lack strong detail on delivery, instead leaving this to the respective LDPs.

Action Programmes

Action Programmes for all the plans helpfully focus on identifying projects, timescales and responsibilities, but these do not necessarily ensure deliverability, as evidence on the ground may reinforce. Given the requirement for succinct visionary documents, Supplementary Guidance can be expected to detail some mechanisms for deliverability. Often this does not appear to be very strong at the SDP level and the dimension can be left to the subsequent LDPs, certainly from a landowners or developer perspective.
The Action Programmes of the first wave SDPs were generally constructive allocations of roles, capable of serving as tracking devices. The Action Programme, for instance at TAYplan, currently aims to align what has already been committed, but could probably go even further in acting as a tool for integrated planning.

Generally, from review of both the Plans and Action Programmes, it is difficult to confirm whether the two documents were produced symbiotically. There is generally a one directional flow with strong detail on requirements, timescales and delivery partners provided in the Action Programmes with frequent reference to the Plan. Some plans however appear to stand alone without a strong synergy linking them to the Action Programme. This is may be a presentational issue and does not necessarily mean the two elements have not actually been produced in close concert.

Because the Action Programme should be the device that provides a clear route from the SDP through to the LDP and implementation, it will help if there is a strong presentational linkage to the Action Programme, helping to give an even greater degree of certainty to LDPs than is the case now.

Through the questionnaire, at a broad level, private sector respondents were far more likely to consider Action Programmes to be ‘ineffective’ or ‘highly ineffective’ compared to public sector respondents. However, opinions still varied within those broad sectors.

The qualitative research revealed that partners identified in Action Programmes are still seeking earlier and more constructive collaboration in the planning process in order to ensure SDPs and subsequent LDPs are more deliverable. This points towards a need for a more symbiotic process in the development of Plans and Action programmes.

**Development Management**

There was feedback from questionnaires and workshops that the SDPs were not as helpful to the development management function, in terms of their substance, when compared to the old style structure plans. For instance, it was noted in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley context that the change from the structure plan to the strategic development plan regime has seen some confusion between the two systems and there remains an expectation from some planning professionals that the SDP will provide tools for development management in the way that the structure plan did. However, the SDP has moved away from the technical and policy detail of the structure plan regime to a more strategic vision level. There is a need, therefore to educate and communicate the differences between the structure plan and the SDPs to professionals and local politicians who are in a transitional phase.

**More inclusive plan making body**

To help the thinking about plan content, plan-making, and also alignment towards delivery, some consideration was given in the workshop sessions to the creation of even more inclusive networks and partnerships. The potential for a model based on urban design panels, using a more formal, qualified group that offered a broader base
of representation, was considered. There was some support for this as a mechanism to get a broader representation of views on evidence, inputs, and ways to take forward.

It was felt a panel of non-voting professionals and lay persons could act as key advisors to the Joint Committees, adding knowledge and consistency to decision making. However, there was also a nervousness about involving some market players who might not operate in the wider public interest.

The model of the existing partnership groups, which most SDPs currently employ, was therefore thought most stable, with any external advice coming from a University or equivalent. The main implementation aspects to be related to the public agency partners, but with better optimised alignment.

**Adjust & align strategy and plan timescales**

One of the biggest challenges that emerged was that of different strategies being either out of time sequence synchronization (for instance the two SDPs that affect Fife), or out of time horizon (most SDPs and Transport Scotland timeframes). Ideally the different plans should nest into one another more comfortably in their timing and hierarchy, for instance, of national, regional and local development plan scales.

There was a lot of support for better alignment of the cycle of plans, particularly translating from their strategic to delivery aspects, notably of transport, infrastructure and development. This means each plan must align strategy, timeframes and also projects, particularly those for the 0-5 year timeframe.

**More directive, clearly prescriptive plan**

There was also serious exploration of the idea that plans need to set down even more clearly the strategic direction for LDPs to follow, to aid implementation. If LDP planners are working to the SDP’s strategic direction, with clearer spatial policy, there is also greater benefit in terms of development management and other downstream activity.

As referenced elsewhere, there was exploration of a role for place-making driving the agenda, whereby these plans need to consider the kind of place the city-region will become, rather than simply act as a document guiding quanta development alone.

**Overview theme 5: The influence on delivery**

A recurring comment about the new SDPs, from different user sources, was that as they have become more strategic and succinct, as intended, they appear to have become more detached from obvious modes of delivery. Much now rests on the subsequent LDP level and on the private sector, as well on a myriad of partner public agencies.
More could be done to connect to, enable and co-ordinate delivery, particularly on matters addressing greater levels of change. There appears to be scope for identifying strategic ‘flagship’ projects that have a strong focus on delivery, such as the Dundee Waterfront. These types of flagship projects can bring benefits in operational terms and strategic impact.

**Resources**

A key aspect of being able to deliver or guide implementation of the SDP, as opposed to simply research and produce it, is linked to the skills and resources available to the SDPA for production and follow-through, most notably in partnership working. All of the four city region teams have worked with a very limited resource base. Getting people with strategic planning experience has been difficult for most, and this is becoming more challenging year on year as the cohort depletes through retirement.

At the outset in 2009 the Aberdeen City and Shire team consisted of two planners, two senior planners, a part-time administrator and the SDP manager, although this level of staffing was soon cut. The City Council, A+DS and a graphic designer in Glasgow provided graphic output for SDP1, but this will be a challenge for SDP2 as there will neither the finance to hire a graphic designer nor ability to draw graphic support from the local authorities. This seems a very small and potentially restricted team, but they have managed to deliver a well-balanced SDP with considerable endorsement.

At Glasgow and Clyde Valley the level of resources do not allow for the same level of ambition or ability to cope with change (such as an ability to change the direction of a strategy in the event of an economic crisis or other) as there was when there was a larger team and a broader spread of skills. The team has been stable for the last 5-6 years, which is beneficial, although there is concern that staff may not have a clear career path in strategic planning beyond their immediate role.

The SES Plan situation indicates that it is possible to produce a plan with the available resources (core team and contributions-in-kind), but it does limit the aspiration of the SDPA as the volume of technical work can squeeze out the strategic planning work. Technical support would be beneficial in creating additional capacity within the core team, freeing up a strategic planner to do less technical evidence base work and more strategic planning and partnering. Co-location of teams has had an impact on the level of ‘symbiosis’ between departments such as with the regional transport partnerships (Aberdeen City and Shire and NESTrans, SES Plan and SESTrans) has been beneficial.

TAYplan identified that resourcing will change between SDP1 and SDP2. There was initially the ability to take staff on secondment from the local authorities, but as local authorities resources have become more limited this model will have to change.

The issue of resourcing was picked up in the questionnaire and, although many people could express no real view or decision, there was a majority who said it was adequately resourced.
Resourcing

Figure 12: SDP process resourcing response (Source: Questionnaire Return).

It should also be noted that resourcing (in particular staff levels, financial resources for procuring external specialists and the ability to draw contributions from constituent local authorities) is not scoring highly on very well resourced, nor on very poorly, though there is a fair proportion who said poorly.

We believe it is generally fair to observe that that resourcing, particularly in terms of staffing relevant to the scale and value of the task, is low across all SDPAs. This affects the capability to do other things like be more strategic, engage more widely or build stronger delivery-oriented partnerships.

Overview theme 6 Resourcing and skills

The various SDP teams have managed a significant workload, using small teams, augmented with specialists from local authorities, agency partners and consultancies. Most of these teams are small in comparison to the value and complexity of the challenges they address.

With respect to the overall cadre of strategic planners in Scotland, there is now a much-diminished cohort (under 20 in 2,200 professionals), particularly when compared to the high watermark of the regional structure plan era (over 200 from under 1,500 professionals). There is a need to grow and support the skills, knowledge base and strategic culture at a national level to serve future planning requirements, not only of city-regions, but for the prosperity of Scotland as a whole.
Greater Integration

There is a fundamental need to integrate transport and infrastructure planning more effectively with land-use planning. At the moment this does not function sufficiently well due to different time horizons, lack of commitment due to funding regimes and a mode of delivering infrastructure that is dependent on development being delivered.

Economic planning also needs to be more integrated with land-use planning. If a primary function of the strategic plan is to deliver a growth agenda, then it needs to be integrated with the plans that implement that dimension of growth.

In terms of integrative partnership relationships, TAYplan had looked to the established Glasgow and Clyde Valley model at the outset and followed this. Good relationships have been a core part of the success of TAYplan with a high level of buy-in from its constituent local authorities that view it as ‘our’ plan. As noted already their ratification process does add a lot of time, approximately 9-12 months, to secure this.

These reflect the wide range of viewpoints from stakeholders through the different modes of collecting evidence. They are important as informed insights, and not merely opinions. These were reviewed across themes and formulated into the analyses and recommendations that follow in the next section.
6 Analysis and findings

The following findings have been drawn from reflection upon the contributions from consultees and findings of the different aspects of the research, including discussion at the review workshops. They are expressed as a series of headline themes, each with one or two priority actions itemised in bold.

Overview theme 1: Collaborative leadership & governance

The success or otherwise of the SDP teams depends on effective partnership working across administrative, sectoral and often political boundaries. The evidence suggests that because of this broad scope, the nature of the cross sectoral, multi agency working is pivotal in creating strategic visions and action plans that can be effective.

It is clear that consistent, coherent and sustained leadership is required, both politically and professionally, to deliver the necessary strategic planning. Planners, politicians, agencies and communities are still learning how to operate the new SDP system as it beds in. The function, purpose and relevance of SDPs needs to be communicated more clearly to these various audiences to improve both awareness and effectiveness.

In this respect the system is working, but not as well as it might particularly where there is scope for more effective collaborative leadership.

We have found that:

1.1 There is a need to build greater capacity, awareness and more effective behaviours in strategic planning through annual training of political and professional leaders. Events such as the annual Development Planning National Forum, an annual conveners meeting and Heads of Planning Scotland (HOPS) meetings contribute to this.

(all SDPAs with Scottish Government, HOPS, RTPI)

1.2 There is a need to invest further in effective partnership approaches, and in the trust that underpins them, by aligning vision, strategy and delivery mechanisms.

(all SDPAs and agency partners)
Overview theme 2: Effective engagement and scrutiny

The research evidence suggests that appropriate engagement builds awareness, comprehension, and even ownership, of the vision and emerging strategy of an SDP. Indeed, communities and even agencies that have only limited appreciation of the SDP are more likely to challenge it and cause delay. This highlights the value of cross-sectoral and community engagement around the objectives and themes of the SDP. It is clear from many community and individual responses that there is scope for greater engagement with the wider community, with professionals outside direct SDP production, and with politicians beyond those with formal SDPA roles.

We have found that:

2.1 There is a need for more targeted engagement with the wider community at different levels to build awareness and knowledge of the SDP role, purpose and implications

(all SDPAs, Scottish Government – with RTPI, Planning Aid Scotland)

2.2 The use of a variety of mechanisms to enhance engagement, appropriate to local circumstances, including the potential use of a representative forum or sounding board, should be supported.

(SDPA teams)

2.3 Outreach promotion of the SDP function and relevance to politicians beyond those directly involved is required, to deepen understanding. In this context, previous activity such as the leaflet and video produced on strategic planning by Architecture and Design Scotland and the SDPAs with the Scottish Government serves as an example of this type of outreach.

(SDPA teams, Scottish Government)

2.4 As the normal default position, the Scottish Government should hold hearings as part of SDP examinations. The issues would continue to be determined by the reporter but there would be a greater presumption towards holding such hearings. A body of opinion (Annex E) from a range of stakeholders suggested that public examinations could form a standard part of the process. This came from written submissions, questionnaire feedback and two of the workshop events. However, we understand that the level of resource required for this would be higher, and appear counter to a more streamlined planning system. Despite these points to the contrary we have some sympathy with the stakeholders. A public element to the examination would be an important opportunity to raise concerns and build confidence in the strategic planning system.

(Scottish Government)
Overview theme 3 Housing and community building

Housing, and the building or extension of communities, is a major theme of most SDPs, and one that drew some criticism from review participants across the spectrum, notably from communities themselves. The criticisms related to the general approach to the calculation of numbers, and to the spatial articulation or lack of it.

The process of assessing need seems to be bedding down and will be enhanced by additional guidance and tools that have been developed by the Scottish Government. The bigger challenge is to ensure that the plans do not simply distribute housing numbers between areas but help create sustainable and well balanced communities that are integrated more effectively with infrastructure and other investment, including green networks.

That requires a more integrative approach that looks beyond housing per se, to the concept of building communities and creating positive places. The various elements, including transport and infrastructure, need to be viewed and aligned within this wider framework. The evidence gathered through the interviews and workshops indicate that this is a positive emerging trend that is to be encouraged.

We have found that:

3.1 There is a benefit in nurturing the positive emerging trend for a ‘placemaking approach’ to areas of major change, that seeks to explore and articulate the creation of positive communities by exploring spatial implications of infrastructure, development and green networks at a framework level, ideally as a special inset of the plan. These are to provide a framework for masterplans at the next level with LDPs.

(SDPAs, supported by Scottish Government, A&DS and others)

3.2 As an important input into the placemaking approach, the housing needs and demand assessment (HNDA) process be reviewed, so as to streamline where possible and contextualise the tool for a placemaking approach, while retaining an agreed system all can support. Key concerns reported were:

- the high level of staff time and other resources required for the HNDA process

- the level of technical proficiency required

- concern that the output value was not high enough to warrant the level of input

- concern that the General Register Office for Scotland statistics used did not provide an accurate enough picture (stakeholders reported that this either led to gross over or under supply rather than the correct level).
Additional Scottish Government guidance has mitigated some initial concerns, and further guidance is expected shortly which may address some of the these additional concerns. Staff at one SDPA raised the point that wholesale change at this stage could undo a lot of the learning and resources that have already been put into this system.

(Scottish Government, with SDPAs)

3.3 Further investigation is required to determine if the plans should provide a focus to ensure that infrastructure required is provided alongside, or in advance of, the proposed development. Such focus would be gained through the strategic plan creating an integrative pathway for the delivery of infrastructure – giving a greater degree of certainty to either developers or those responsible for delivering infrastructure.

(SDPAs, RTPs and infrastructure partners)

Overview theme 4 Transport & infrastructure role

The allocation and co-ordination of future transport and infrastructure, including green infrastructure, was identified as one of the most significant roles of SDPs. However, from the review of the SDPs and evidence from different sources, there is not yet optimal alignment of strategy, integration, nor adequate connection to mechanisms for funding or delivery. Some of the issues are passed on the LDP level, like waste. Other dimensions of the mismatch appear to arise from different time horizons, and different levels of commitment from respective partner bodies. This needs to be resolved at a Scottish-wide level, as it affects matters like economic performance and development potential, and congestion, carbon emissions all at a macro scale.

Similar issues can arise with energy, water and flooding, but so far have not been as pronounced as with transport and waste. Nevertheless, all these matters need to be better co-ordinated by taking a ‘Team Scotland’ approach that prioritises integration, and avoids seeing each aspect of infrastructure as an isolated or ‘separate’ system.

We have found that:

4.1 There is a benefit in working in close partnership to create a fully integrated land use and transport approach to each SDP. This would mean that the SDP provides a Joint Development and Transport Strategy, for the medium to long term, that addresses both strategy and phased delivery through investment over time. Currently barriers that prevent this close alignment are cultural and institutional, timeframes (cf. chapter 3, Timescales p35) and plan boundaries that are not aligned (see 4.2).

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs, RTPs)

4.2 Closer alignment of the SDPA boundary areas and the RTP boundary areas could aid closer strategy and project working, with a view to producing co-ordinated investment programmes that align land use and transport

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs, RTPs)
4.3 Inclusion and agreement should be established within the joint Development and Transport Strategy as a prerequisite for evaluating and supporting funding bids.

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs, local government)

4.4 Further investigation should determine if a review is required of the Transport Scotland guidance on Development Planning and Management (DPMTAG) to align with recently updated and emerging policy and ensure that SDPAs, key stakeholders and partners are aware of and use the approach set out to provide appropriate and proportionate transport appraisals to support SDPs.

(Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, SDPAs)

Overview theme 5 The influence on delivery

A recurring comment about the new SDPs, from different user sources, was that as they have become more strategic and succinct, as intended, they appear to have become more detached from obvious modes of delivery. Much now rests on the subsequent LDP level and on the private sector, as well on a myriad of partner public agencies.

More could be done to connect to, enable and co-ordinate delivery, particularly on matters addressing greater levels of change. There appears to be scope for identifying strategic urban transformation projects that have a strong focus on delivery, such as the Dundee Waterfront. These types of projects can bring benefits in operational terms and strategic impact.

We have found that:

5.1 There is a benefit in aligning and integrating the relevant SDP strategy and project components within the work of the respective Community Planning Partnerships and Single Outcome Agreement.

(Scottish Government, SDPAs, CPPs, local authorities)

5.2 Further investigation is required to determine if better delivery outcomes can be achieved through use of the strategy themes and component projects within the SDP as a basis for funding and delivering key strategic infrastructure.

(Scottish Government, SDPAs, CPP, Transport Scotland)

5.3 There is a need to augment existing monitoring with an annual public statement (moving up to annual from every two years) of SDP Action Programme progress, highlighting triggers and delay factors by organisation.

(SDPAs)
5.4 Each SDPA should clearly identify a small number of headline strategic urban transformation projects that can have strategic impact across the area over time. These would be identified priorities that have a broader knock-on effect in the wider area.

(SDPAs)

5.5 Consideration should be given to extending the various SDP specialist topic groups to include more representative and third sector bodies, (such as universities or professional bodies) to enhance knowledge and research input into the overall process.

(Each SDPA as appropriate)

Overview theme 6 Resourcing and skills

The various SDP teams have managed a significant workload, using small teams, augmented with specialists from local authorities, agency partners and consultancies. Most of these teams are small in comparison to the value and complexity of the challenges they address.

With respect to the overall cadre of strategic planners in Scotland, there is now a much-diminished cohort (under 20 from 2,200 professionals, less than 1%), particularly when compared to the high watermark of the regional structure plan era (over 200 from under 1,500 professionals, over 10%).

Without the necessary resourcing, we expect that SDPAs will find it difficult to produce plans that will be properly fit for purpose. Currently this is not the case, but as even more strategic professionals retire, there is a clear need to grow and support the skills, knowledge base and strategic culture at a national level to serve future planning requirements, not only of city-regions, but for the prosperity of Scotland as a whole.

We have therefore found that:

6.1 To boost the existing skilled cohort, the Scottish Government should consider scope to provide an extra level of resource, either through a pool of skilled practitioners in graphics and GIS, or for HNDA through funding for specialist consultants (as has been provided in the past) that can be drawn down as required, or as a financial share (equivalent to the constituent local authorities’ share) or some combination of the two.

(Scottish Government)

6.2 To aid consistency of investment and skills levels, the Scottish Government should set an indicative budget benchmark for strategic planning in each city region, equivalent either to a per capita cost, some proportion of gross planning fees, or some proportion of overall investment in the respective built environment.

(Scottish Government)
6.3 There is a benefit in moving to an approach whereby all SDPA teams are part of a shared national resource, whose time and expertise can be traded across the four SDPAs to balance peaks and troughs

(Scottish Government, SDPAs)

6.4 There should be an explicit programme to develop strategic planning skills, to grow awareness and competence across Scotland. This would include philosophy, techniques and creative partnering and be applicable to key agencies and community players as well as planners.

(Scottish Government, RTPI, Improvement Service)
7 Overview and next steps

This report has addressed the core question of whether the strategic development planning system in Scotland is fit for purpose. The answer is that the system is still bedding in; it is not ‘broken’, nor is its potential yet fully optimised. A great amount has been achieved, often within very limited resources. However, much more could be achieved in terms of substance and outcomes, if some of the processes and practices could be made more effective.

Across all sectors, many still do not understand the role and scope of SDPAs, including some in the planning community. This has in part arisen as SDPs have become more strategic and as the size of the practitioner base has diminished in number Scotland needs an awareness of the significance of this function if it is to plan for long term investment and prosperity around its major urban areas, and if the necessary coordination of infrastructure and development is to take place.

We have therefore drawn findings that act as a basis from which to address both awareness and practice in relation to leadership, engagement, training, and even resourcing, to address these various areas for improving efficacy.

In addition we believe there is an urgent need to undertake a refresh & relaunch initiative to improve the understanding of strategic development planning, in particular

- to reinforce its role, significance & validity at different levels
- to promote a positive community building approach that uses integrative placemaking to address the main geographic areas of change over the next generation
- to advocate and deliver update awareness training & Continuing Professional Development and
- to facilitate more effective outreach and engagement with the communities that may be affected.

All of this is predicated on continuing to grow the necessary collaborative leadership and effective relationships that is so crucial, and problematic where absent. Any such initiative needs to have Ministerial support across departments, including infrastructure, economy and environment and not remain a narrowly based planning function. The failure to integrate, for instance, transport or energy and waste dimensions at a city region level, will only reproduce the shortcomings of the past. This will not be achieved by delegation down to each Local Development Plan.

We strongly believe that such Ministerial advocacy, cutting across and integrating themes and departments, to be the most coherent and effective way to plan for prosperity over the next generation and beyond.
In terms of immediate next steps, we propose

1. adoption of a relaunch approach to strategic planning, possibly including a link to NPF role;
2. promotion and explanation of themes at appropriate training and conference events; and
3. implementation of our findings.


Annex A  List of Consultees and Participants

Interview respondents

As per the ethics approval and permission granted by participants to use the material from workshops in reporting, respondents are listed by the category used to respond to the questionnaire (telephone interviews) or organization, agency, business or interest (face-to-face interviews).

**Aberdeen City and Shire**

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority
Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority
Aberdeen City – Planning

Development professional in private sector
Development professional in private sector
Health authority or organization
Local community council or group
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Private individual
Scottish Government
Scottish Government agency other than Scottish Water or Transport Scotland

**Glasgow and Clyde Valley**

Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority
Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority
Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority
Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority
Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Planning Authority

Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Private individual
Scottish Government agency other than Scottish Water or Transport Scotland
Scottish Water
SESplan
City of Edinburgh Councillor – SES Plan Joint Committee
SESplan Strategic Development Planning Authority
SESplan Strategic Development Planning Authority
SESplan Strategic Development Planning Authority
SESplan Strategic Development Planning Authority

Development professional in private sector
Development professional in private sector
Development professional in private sector
Housing association/social rented landlord
Landowner, house-builder or property developer (or organisation representing such interests)
Local community council or group
Local community council or group
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Other – Residents’ Group
Private individual
Scottish Government
Scottish Government agency other than Scottish Water or Transport Scotland

TAYplan
TAYplan Strategic Development Planning Authority
TAYplan Strategic Development Planning Authority
TAYplan Strategic Development Planning Authority

Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Local government staff employed in planning, transport, housing, etc.
Other – O.A.P.
Private individual
Private individual
Workshop Participants

As per the ethics approval and permission granted by participants to use the material from workshops in reporting, participants are listed by the organisation or business that they represented.

Aberdeen City and Shire

1. Aberdeen City Council – Planning
2. Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority
3. Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority
4. Aberdeenshire Council - Planning
5. Burness Paull
6. Knight Frank
7. NHS Grampian
8. Private Individual (RTPI member)
9. Scottish Natural Heritage
10. Scottish Water
11. Stewart Milne Homes

Glasgow and Clyde Valley

1. East Dunbartonshire Council - Planning
2. East Renfrewshire Council - Planning
3. East Renfrewshire Council - Planning
4. Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan Authority
5. Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network
6. GVA James Barr
7. Inverclyde Council - Planning
8. North Lanarkshire Council - Planning
9. Renfrewshire Council - Planning
10. South Lanarkshire Council - Planning
11. Scottish Property Federation
12. SPT (Strathclyde Partnership for Transport)
13. Scottish Natural Heritage
14. SEPA
15. Transport Scotland
16. West Dunbartonshire Council - Planning
17. West Dunbartonshire Council - Planning
**SESplan**

1. City of Edinburgh – Planning  
2. Cockburn Association  
3. Fife Council – Planning  
4. First Group  
5. Midlothian Council – Planning  
6. Planning Aid Scotland  
7. RSPB  
8. RTPI  
9. SESplan  
10. SESplan  
11. Taylor Wimpey  
12. West Lothian – Planning

**TAYplan**

1. Angus Council – Planning  
2. Angus Council – Planning  
3. Barton Wilmore  
4. Dundee City – Planning  
5. Dundee City – Planning  
6. Dundee University  
7. Fife Council – Planning  
9. Forestry Commission  
10. Homes for Scotland  
11. Muirhead, Birkhill and Liff Community Council  
12. NHS Tayside  
13. Perth and Kinross – Planning  
14. Scottish Enterprise  
15. Scottish Natural Heritage  
16. Scottish Water  
17. St Andrews Greenbelt Forum  
18. TACtran (Tayside and Central Transport)  
19. TAYplan  
20. TAYplan  
21. TAYplan  
22. Transport Scotland
Annex B  Summaries of plan content

The following tables provide summaries of the plan content for each plan. After each summary table the main discussion points relating to each SDPA from the questionnaire, interviews and workshops are related.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part A: Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption Date</strong></td>
<td>May 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time period covered</strong></td>
<td>2012-2035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local authorities covered</strong></td>
<td>East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, South Lanarkshire and West Dunbartonshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population of area covered</strong></td>
<td>1.76 million (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Replaces</strong></td>
<td>Clyde Valley Joint Structure Plan 2000 (and its alterations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document and supporting documents</strong></td>
<td>SDP is 72 pages long. Accompanied by: Development Plan Scheme, Action Programme; SEA. Ten Background Reports 1 Economic outlook and scenarios; 2 Projection of Population and Households to 2025; 3 Strategic Futures Group Visioning; 4 Vacant and Derelict Land 2010; 5 Strategic Economic Investment Locations; 6 Greenhouse Gas Audit and Scenarios; 7 Land-use and transport integration; 8 Green Network Spatial Priorities; 9 Forestry and Woodland Framework; 10 Minerals Search Areas; 11 Wind Energy Search Areas; 12 Housing Need and Demand Assessment; 13 Urban Capacity Study 2009; 14 Network of Strategic Centres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues arising from MIR which the SDP intends to tackle</strong></td>
<td>Breaking down distance to economic markets; supporting a sustainable economy; promoting environmental action: an economic necessity; promoting sustainable locations for development; tackling risk; strategic development priorities. In the MIR, there was an effort to highlight the economic importance of protecting the environment and promoting environmental action and sustainable economic development. The risks posed by limited capital investment particularly in the first phase of the plan period required recognition and a number of strategic priorities were identified.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part B: Analysis</td>
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<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concise, easily understood, makes effective use of maps</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set out clearly in four sections: Philosophy and Principles; Economic and Demographic Framework; Spatial Vision; Spatial Development Strategy. Philosophy and Principles section sets out a clear understanding of how the plan is supposed to be used, how its sections are interlinked and how it works. Five thematic spatial frameworks are identified here Competitiveness; Environmental Action; Sustainable Communities; Infrastructure; Strategic development priorities. 72 pages long, so it is not concise but it deals with the largest and the most populous city-region in Scotland. Extensive use of diagrams and flow charts improves generally understanding but they are possibly overused at times. Extensive use of mapping and these are used appropriately and are clear. However, some maps would be difficult to understand if printed. Section on housing figures is complex but this is difficult to avoid, particularly in a city-region of this scale.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Provides a vision statement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is no catch-all statement to define the vision, but a 'compact city growth model' is discussed within the document. This seems to set the tone for the spatial strategy. The vision is conveyed through five key components, the drivers of change are then identified and this is followed by responses to these changes. The vision is ambitious but realistically accounts for the region’s short term difficulties and sets out a rationale for the expected higher growth levels in the later period. Economic and demographic forecasts are provided but generally the evidence supporting the vision is provided in background reports. However, these are difficult to find on the website. These need to be easily obtainable to provide context even after the plan has been approved.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Provides a spatial strategy</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Clearly communicates what will happen, where and when. A place basis is clearly communicated particularly through Spatial Development Strategy Model (Diagram 10) and Spatial Development Priorities (Diagram 20). Housing development provides LDP specific detail and necessary phases. Constraints to development and the need for land use protection are set out and are communicated, where appropriate, visually.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sets clear parameters for LDPs and is site specific where appropriate, dealing with the principle topics required</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Deals with the principal strategic topics. Provides a framework for types and quantities of development and a rationale for this. The Spatial Strategy sets out Fifteen &quot;Strategy Support Measures.&quot; These provide varying degrees of flexibility for the formulation of LDP policies. It is clear that it continues a legacy from previous Structure Plan, rather than starting afresh. Thus the LDPs should continue along this existing trajectory as well. 'Fundamental Principles' in section 1 are clear on how SDP is to be used. Diagram 4 'Sustainable Location Assessment' provides a useful tool for guiding LDP policies and allocations as well as providing a clear position which could guide decision makers and...</td>
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</table>
investors considering major investment and applications.

Schedule 21 provides detail on a large list of settlements with challenges and actions for each LDP to address. LDP Overview published in 2013 to guide LA’s on implementing the SDP.

| Informs decisions on strategic infrastructure investment – Delivery of development | At the outset, Diagram 3 flags up Sustainable Development Locations, Strategic Economic Investment Locations and Environmental, and natural resource investment and protection areas. Infrastructure investment constraints and opportunities for investment forms a thematic framework so is easily followed throughout the document. A clear steer is provided in terms of the ‘energy paradigm shift’ and ‘areas of search’ for turbines. Waste as a resource as well as a problem is highlighted. Identifies further work required for dealing with waste management. No commitment to specific facilities and their location, rather an appreciation of scale and nature of requirements. Strategic Development Priorities are set out at the end. The action programme could come through stronger. The Action Programme actually provides a strong and clear link with the SDP, but that is not very clear in the SDP itself. |
| Analyses relationship with development and land use proposals in neighbouring areas | Refers to this where necessary, for example transport connections. Generally there is little mention of any such issues. |

**Glasgow and Clyde Valley discussion points**

- Engagement in the communities – experience suggests that communities being engaged on strategic development plans will default to local or site-specific thinking. Engagement output that has focused on local issues does not give the SDP the value it needs; so much consideration was given as to how to deal with communities effectively. Engaging on topics and issues is one way of getting communities to think more strategically, as is enabling communities to understand the role the SDP plays in shaping the LDPs. Community planning may be another way of engaging effectively, currently community planning is primarily resource based, but communities are inherently embedded in place and there is a clear role for strategic planning.

- Land supply and property markets – engagement with the property sector has been better than in other SDPAs in Glasgow and Clyde Valley, particularly on retail. However, commercial and residential developers have different approaches (residential developers look for land release, while commercial developers look to protect values) therefore the way that land supply is dealt with needs to be tailored to these sectors. For example there is a generous supply of land for commercial development, but this is not necessarily what this sector is looking for. Land is not easily de-allocated, which is what needs to happen if the commercial property sector are not able to deliver a site.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART A: Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>South East Scotland Strategic Development Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption Date</strong></td>
<td>June 2013 (proposed plan published Nov 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time period covered</strong></td>
<td>up to 2032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local authorities covered</strong></td>
<td>Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife (part), Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population of area covered</strong></td>
<td>1.2 million (2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documents and supporting documents</strong></td>
<td>SDP is 65 pages long. It is accompanied by: Supplementary Planning Guidance on Housing Land (undergoing consultation); Action Programme Sept 2013; Development Plan Scheme 5 March 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edinburgh Greenbelt Study Stages 1 and 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues arising from MIR which the SDP intends to tackle</strong></td>
<td>Not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part B: Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concise, easily understood, makes effective use of maps</strong></td>
<td>65 pages long. Intro flowchart is very clear shows drivers and government policy requirements and is clear on how the plan contents will proceed: vision, strategy, framework for delivery. These sections are aided with a consistent layout presenting background information, strategies and policies. These are aided with clear, engaging, and informative maps and graphics. The plan is place based organised along the basis of Strategic Development Area which will make sense to many non-professional users, however the issues underlying the plan are also explained clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provides a vision statement</strong></td>
<td>The vision is provided in a short statement; however it is not very place specific. A large part of this section focuses on the current profile of the region at times asserting some aspects which the SDP intends to maintain or improve. This is followed by topic specific aims to achieve the vision. However, these are not very place or project specific. There is more emphasis on a current snapshot than a vision. This reflects one interpretation of the guidance provided in Circular 1/2009. The actual development implications of the vision becomes clearer upon reading the subsequent sections of the plan and it appears to focus more on continuing with existing development strategies, plans and allocations. Generally there is an aim to maintain the qualities of the region rather than engage in any major increase in development or change the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provides a spatial strategy</strong></td>
<td>Identifies Strategic Development Areas. Identifies priority strategic improvements to transport and other infrastructure which are required to support existing and future development. Graphically very clear and legible in figure 1. However, the strategy is largely made up of existing allocations. Strategic infrastructure is displayed usefully in figure 2. However, actual infrastructure requirements other than those for transport are vague. It is clear that significant development outside the SDAs is not supported. However, although providing a clear spatial strategy, the actual content of the strategy is lacking, possibly because of the focus on committed development and the requirement for subsequent SPG to detail new housing allocations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sets clear parameters for LDPs and is site specific where appropriate, dealing with the principle topics required</strong></td>
<td>The housing figures are ‘potential completions’ rather than specific new allocations required by Local Authority Area. The plan is clear that there is a lack of information in this respect. Accordingly supplementary guidance is required (within one year of the SDP’s adoption) to confirm in detail “how the housing needs and demands of theSESplan area as a whole can best be met across each of the six LDP areas for both periods 2009 to 2019 and 2019 to 2024.” This issue can partly be attributed to the MIR not being informed by a completed HNDA, a process problem with plan content outcomes. Due to this omission the SDP does not provide clear parameters for this topic which is the major component of LDPs. In other respects, such as employment land, specifics are clear. The plan does not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informs decisions on strategic infrastructure investment – Delivery of development</td>
<td>The last part of this three part plan is the section on ‘delivery’. This provides a clear acknowledgement of the importance of infrastructure delivery. There is not strong steer on specific infrastructure requirements, their broad locations, and expected cross authority funding and delivery mechanisms. This possibly arises from the requirement for supplementary guidance on housing development. The plan does not over-prescribe where it does not need to, for example no strategic scale waste facilities were judged to be required so the plan only has to set out the policy approach to waste management. The action programme is detailed on regional transport requirements and national developments, but not as detailed on other topics. Aside from providing a clear broad SDA location strategy, actual infrastructure implications are generally to be dealt with through LDPs or SPG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses relationship with development and land use proposals in neighbouring areas</td>
<td>The relationship is conveyed through the acknowledgement of the NPF allowing the reader to understand where the region sites within the national picture. However, it does not identify and particular aspects of the spatial strategy which will impact on neighbouring areas. That said, the technical documents such as the SEA, Habitats Assessment and the HNDA recognise that the region does not exist in isolation, but the SDP itself does not dwell on these matters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SESplan discussion points**

- Transport and infrastructure – Development that would take the area towards its sustainable city-region aims cannot be realised as there is a lack of integration with the public transport system needed to achieve this. Participants indicated that the relationship with Transport Scotland has not been constructive, other than on technical work. There is a tension between the agency and local authorities on the commitment to strategic interventions that support strategic aims.
- Relationships – Good working relationships are a key part of the process and this came unravelled at some point shortly after the SDPAs inception. There has been a high level of competing issues and interests in the SESplan area due to the tension between local authorities needing to be competitive and needing to be cooperative. However, participants noted that relationships appeared to be becoming more stable and on an upward trajectory. High political turn over has done little to engender the necessary trust, but again this is stabilising with a longer committee cycle (from 1 year to 2 years) that will allow for greater consistency.
- Engagement – there has been a high level of interest in SESplan, particularly as green belt pressures in the area are quite acute. This explains the high level of responses to the questionnaire from private individuals. A representative from the development industry stated that they felt the engagement had been tokenistic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART A: Information</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption Date</strong></td>
<td>August 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time period covered</strong></td>
<td>2009-2030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local authorities covered</strong></td>
<td>Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population of area covered</strong></td>
<td>440,000 (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Replaces</strong></td>
<td>North East Scotland Together (2001-2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documents and supporting documents</strong></td>
<td>Not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issues arising from MIR which the SDP intends to tackle</strong></td>
<td>Not specifically mentioned as the main issues. However, significant differences in wealth and opportunity between communities in the region; dealing with changes in North Sea oil and gas production; the effects of climate change; effects of reduction in global resources are described as some of the challenges facing the region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part B: Analysis**

<p>| Concise, easily understood, makes effective use of maps | Very concise, only 32 pages. Written in Plain English (approved) and contains a useful glossary which goes beyond technical terminology to include explanations of terms such as ‘knowledge economy’ and ‘strategic’. Maps appear quite primitive in graphical terms, but they communicate the message and spatial strategy of the plan to the general user. A consistent format is used with the core of the plan being the vision, aims and spatial strategy. These are supported by objectives with targets, actions which need to be taken, and monitoring arrangements. These components of the plan are easily identified through colour coding and layout. The purpose of spatial planning as a concept as well as this particular spatial plan itself is discussed, this provides non-technical users with a greater sense of the plan’s purpose. This SDP does not make frequent reference to the background information documents and is read more as a standalone document. |
| Provides a vision statement | The vision statement could apply to any region. However this seems difficult to avoid given the nature of the task. This is presented alongside a series of aims which add more substance and the plan’s one use of a policy. The vision prioritises economic growth as well as dealing with climate change. Like other macro level planning processes the balance which must be struck between the two is open to interpretation. The ambitious scale of growth contained in the plan and the sense that this is a plan dealing with a major moment in the region’s evolution comes through elsewhere but is not really apparent in the vision itself. |
| Provides a spatial strategy | A clear spatial strategy is provided. It is easy for users of the plan to envisage the scale of development and the balance of development which will take place across the region. Infrastructure requirements resulting from this, including education provision, also appear to be quite well understood. The definable city-region context of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire helps in this respect. Some elements such as regeneration priority areas seem to lack a real strategy and definition. The non-strategic areas are still subject to major growth but this is not very clear in this section. |
| Sets clear parameters for LDPs and is site specific where appropriate, dealing with the principle topics required | Clear allocations to implement with a place basis particularly for the strategic growth areas. Key thematic issues of economy, population growth (housing), environment, sustainable development and climate change, accessibility, sustainable mixed communities are presented. These contain clear basis of future LDP policies, with targets and objectives and monitoring arrangements. Housing and employment requirements and allowances to meet that requirement are clear and detailed by specific SGA. Given the unique urban/rural and two authority make up of the plan there are some issues, for example wind turbine location, which are important but not necessarily strategic and so the SDP may not be a suitable document for addressing these. |
| Informs decisions on strategic infrastructure investment – Delivery of development | The scale of development requirements and its strategic location are clearly set out. There is a strong appreciation of the type of infrastructure which will be required to accommodate the growth requirement. A list of specific infrastructure proposals is provided. This is linked to the action plan which provides more detail and identifies milestones and responsibilities. |
| Analyses relationship with development and land use proposals in neighbouring areas | As with other SDPs direct references to any particular issues for neighbouring authorities are very limited. However, the evidence base, particularly the environmental aspects of the plan consider the region in relation to its neighbours. The general impact of development on the Cairngorms National Park is mentioned. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART A: Information</th>
<th>Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (Proposed Plan)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td>Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (Proposed Plan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adoption Date</strong></td>
<td>2013 (Proposed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time period covered</strong></td>
<td>Up to 2035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local authorities covered</strong></td>
<td>Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population of area covered</strong></td>
<td>465,000 (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Replaces</strong></td>
<td>Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documents and supporting documents</strong></td>
<td>MIR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Monitoring Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Housing Need and Demand Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e) Structure Plan Risk Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f) Transport Background Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g) Climate Change Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h) Habitats Regulations Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i) SEA Interim Environmental Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Habitats Regulations Appraisal (Appendix 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Environmental Appraisal (Appendix 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Appendix 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (Appendix 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues arising from MIR which the SDP intends to tackle</td>
<td>Build regional role as energy capital of Europe, lead Scotland on path to economic recovery, maintain economic and environmental attractiveness, deal with climate change changes in North Sea oil and gas production, deal with regeneration needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part B: Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concise, easily understood, makes effective use of maps</td>
<td>52 pages. This is longer than the previous Structure Plan (2009). However, it does not appear to be more ‘wordy’. There is a greater use of maps and images than the Structure Plan (2009), particularly the maps. The language is easily understood in approved Plain English. Again the purpose of strategic planning is explained along with the actual planning strategy, this is aided by an accessible glossary. The layout is clear and legible. Some of the maps are very conceptual even compared to the previous Structure Plan (2009). This might put off some users. However, it illustrates the message that the plan does not allocate specific developments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a vision statement</td>
<td>The vision has not changed from the Structure Plan (2009). The theme presented is one of continuing to deliver that vision which has been established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a spatial strategy</td>
<td>The spatial strategy has not changed from the Structure Plan (2009). The strategy is rolled forward and aims to continue implementation of the Structure Plan (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sets clear parameters for LDPs and is site specific where appropriate, dealing with the principle topics required</td>
<td>Provides the same degree of clarity as the Structure Plan 2009 but with updated evidence and development requirements. It provides a greater depth of information on some projects and identifies the locations of many of the infrastructure improvements which are required to accommodate growth. The SDP is unique in that it is building upon a Structure Plan 2009 which met the requirements of an SDP and is being implemented by adopted LDPs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informs decisions on strategic infrastructure investment – Delivery of development</td>
<td>Updated to account for national waste strategy and its impact on the region. There are additional strategic proposals and new strategic transport funding mechanism is referred to, this has been developed and implemented by the SDPA in the interim period between the plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses relationship with development and land use proposals in neighbouring areas</td>
<td>As with other SDPs direct references to any particular issues for neighbouring authorities are very limited. However, the evidence base, particularly the environmental aspects of the plan consider the region in relation to its neighbours. The general impact of development on the Cairngorms National Park is mentioned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aberdeen City and Shire discussion points

- Transport and infrastructure - There is a perception that the transport system is already unable to cope with the level of traffic generated in the region, therefore the question is asked, how can you have more houses? The Strategic Transport Fund might have an influence. An example of a lack of integration given was of a new community planned for Aberdeenshire, had it been two miles further east on the train line there would have been objections as funding for delivering a new station would not be committed. Decisions are often based on what capacity is currently available in the existing infrastructure – this can be limiting and not lead to the best decisions.

- Housing – specific allocations are best made at the local level. There would be a ‘bun fight’ over these allocations regardless of whether this took place at the strategic or local level. The issue of housing and community resources was raised in relation to health. More rural areas of Aberdeenshire have issues with resources for health, they have a more elderly demographic and it is difficult to ensure there is the right level of provision for this, not just in terms of health centres, but also in getting the health professionals to locate to these areas. In terms of strategic infrastructure, communities are better placed where provision is already in place, or can be grown rather than newly seeded.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART Information</th>
<th>A:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>TAYplan: Scotland’s SusTAYnable Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption Date</td>
<td>June 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time period covered</td>
<td>2012-2032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authorities covered</td>
<td>Angus Council, Dundee City Council, Fife Council (North), Perth and Kinross Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population of area covered</td>
<td>485,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents and supporting documents</td>
<td>SDP is 22 pages long. It is accompanied by: Approved/Adopted Action Programme (June 2012); Proposed Strategic Development Plan (June 2011); Proposed Action Programme (October 2011); Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (October 2011); Habitats Regulations Appraisal; Report on Conformity with Participation Statement (October 2011); Note of Representations, Overall Summary and Issues 001 through 024; Documents published for the Proposed Strategic Development Plan Period for Representations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Issues arising from MIR which the SDP intends to tackle | 1. Recognising that some places (built, cultural, natural heritage) are of international and regional significance and respect their quality and character in how they develop.  
2. Providing quality places, and enhancing the quality of life for all, through the delivery of services and facilities, whilst respecting environmental limits.  
3. Planning for mitigation of and adaptation to the impacts of climate change  
4. Improving accessibility, especially in rural areas, and promoting alternative travel modes to road based travel for people and freight.  
5. Neighbourhoods that satisfy population changes and people’s needs and aspirations.  
6. Growing and diversifying the economy in a sustainable manner. |
### Part B: Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concise, easily understood, makes effective use of maps</th>
<th>The document is very concise at a total of 22 pages. The main body of the plan is organised around 8 policies that are clearly tied to the vision of the plan, and applied in the document. Graphically the plan is kept simple with several clear maps. The spatial articulation in the mapping can be quite general – although this is often due to being tied to another policy. For example housing allocations are mapped very generally, but when considered alongside the mapping of the strategic growth areas it becomes clearer. These connections are not necessarily made explicit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provides a vision statement</td>
<td>The document begins with a very clear vision statement. The title of the document states the visionary intent. The vision as it is presented is clearly tied into a set of principles and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a spatial strategy</td>
<td>Spatial articulation of policies is at a high level – Policy 1: Location Priorities sets out a clear sequential strategy for determining where housing/development should be located which is represented graphically. One page is dedicated to explaining what place-based strategic planning means in the context of this specific plan. This helps the user gain a strong sense of the spatial strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sets clear parameters for LDPs and is site specific where appropriate, dealing with the principle topics required</td>
<td>The plan also provides direction for LDPs on requirements for strategic development land. Broad development areas are identified on maps. Housing allocation is dealt with again at a high level, represented graphically in broad terms but providing appropriate policy and location guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informs decisions on strategic infrastructure investment – Delivery of development</td>
<td>The plan is strong on identifying strategic development areas, but appears to be lacking in giving direction on infrastructure that joins these up. There is a section dedicated to energy and waste management infrastructure – but there is no guidance committed to transport infrastructure. Infrastructure needs are dealt with through Policy 8: Delivering the Strategic Development Plan which seeks developer contributions towards infrastructure. The sequential approach in policy 1 assumes infrastructure exists and would need upgraded to mitigate impacts of increased development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyses relationship with development and land use proposals in neighbouring areas</td>
<td>Policy 7: Town Centres provides a sequential approach to development. This presumes in favour of larger settlements for retail/commercial development rather than considering impact on individual areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TAYplan discussion points

- Fife split – there is a greater level of complexity for Fife as the local development planning team makes reference to both TAYplan and SESplan. SESplan is more complex to deal with, both technically and politically. However, there is a positive relationship between Fife and the north of Tay authorities. A representative from Fife Council noted that Fife are comfortable with the boundaries, there are issues but these concern resourcing, process, contributions and timing rather than the boundary or relationship. From a northeast Fife community perspective, there has been an empathetic relationship. The northeast of Fife has more in common with the TAYplan area than with the rest of Fife. In terms of city-regions there is a clear relationship within Fife between the north of the area and TAYplan, and the south of the area and SESplan.

- Housing Market Areas – the administrative boundary has been drawn quite tightly around Dundee, therefore community councils in Angus need to consider two local authorities due to their interest in the housing market area, rather than the administrative area. Similarly, parts of rural Kinross would look to the Edinburgh HMA rather than to Perth.
### Annex C  Statistical Data

#### Table 1: Statistical Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private sector</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local governments and municipalities</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authorities and other governmental bodies</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Chart 1: Pie Chart of Participated in the Process
Q2 Please answer all questions to the best of your knowledge, drawing on your experience of Strategic Development Planning in Scotland, and helping us by specifying which. Are your comments mainly related to experience with (please answer only one)

- Highly effective
- Effective
- I cannot decide
- Ineffective
- Highly ineffective
- No response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2006)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Aberdeen City and Shire Proposed Strategic Development Plan (2013)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tayside</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. South East Scotland RIS Plan</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Glasgow and Clyde Valley</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Scottish Councils - (partly)</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. None of the above</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q4 How robust do you consider the evidence base and justification used in the SDP preparation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very robust</td>
<td>7.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robust</td>
<td>35.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>19.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>21.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very weak</td>
<td>19.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>216</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5 How well has the SDP dealt with Housing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>7.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>37.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>19.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badly</td>
<td>23.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very badly</td>
<td>12.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>6.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>212</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q6 How well has the SDP dealt with Economic Development, Employment and Retail?

Answer Choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>4.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>36.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>20.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badly</td>
<td>14.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very badly</td>
<td>5.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>9.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q7 How well has the SDP dealt with the Strategic Waste, Water and Energy Infrastructure?

Answer Choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>4.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well</td>
<td>37.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>36.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badly</td>
<td>14.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very badly</td>
<td>4.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>8.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q8 How well has the SDP dealt with Strategic Transport?

Answer Choices | Responses
--- | ---
Very well | 6.46% 15
Well | 32.38% 60
I cannot decide | 21.66% 54
Realy | 22.27% 55
Very badly | 8.04% 21
No response | 8.04% 21
Total | 247

Q9 How well has the SDP dealt with Strategic Greenspace Networks (including green belts)?

Answer Choices | Responses
--- | ---
Very well | 16.19% 23
Well | 34.55% 83
I cannot decide | 26.32% 64
Realy | 15.45% 29
Very badly | 6.04% 8
No response | 4.09% 12
Total | 248
Q1: How clear are the graphics used in communicating the contents of the SDP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Very Clear</th>
<th>Clear</th>
<th>Fairly Clear</th>
<th>Unclear</th>
<th>Very Unclear</th>
<th>No Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2: How clear is the language used in communicating the contents of the SDP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Very Clear</th>
<th>Clear</th>
<th>Fairly Clear</th>
<th>Unclear</th>
<th>Very Unclear</th>
<th>No Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q14 How clear is the SDP in terms of communicating the intended quantity and location of development?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very clear</td>
<td>10.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unclear</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>247%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q15 What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the SDP in relation to its contents?

Answered: 171  Skipped: 185
Q18: How appropriate are the statutory procedures and timescales to be followed in the preparation of an SPD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too lenient</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current limits</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited scope</td>
<td>8.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not appropriate</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q19: How helpful would you describe the general guidance and advice from the Scottish Government on the preparation of an SPD?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current limits</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited scope</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not helpful</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unhelpful</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Q20. How appropriate do you consider the administrative boundaries approved by the Scottish Government for an SDP?

![Pie chart showing percentages of responses to Q20](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly appropriate</td>
<td>6.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
<td>46.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>15.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate</td>
<td>17.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly inappropriate</td>
<td>6.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>7.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q24 How helpful has the contribution of environmental organisations and local communities been in producing and implementing the SDP?

Answered: 235  Skipped: 134

- Very helpful: 8.22% 14
- Helpful: 21.58% 71
- I cannot decide: 30.52% 60
- Unhelpful: 9.22% 16
- Very Unhelpful: 3.84% 8
- No response: 16.88% 35
- Total: 235

Q25 How adequate have the opportunities for engagement with the public been in the SDP process?

Answered: 235  Skipped: 134

- Highly Adequate: 8% 18
- Adequate: 33.6% 76
- I cannot decide: 14% 34
- Inadequate: 13.22% 41
- Highly Inadequate: 12.88% 30
- No response: 9.53% 22
- Total: 235
Q28. What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the process for creating the SDP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High influence</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorist</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Decides</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High influence</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q29. How effective is the SDP and its action programmes as a basis for influencing Local Development of Pantom?

[Circle chart showing various categories with percentage values]
### Q30 How effective is the SDP and its action programme as a basis for transport strategies and decision making?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly effective</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>24.77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>30.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>19.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly ineffective</td>
<td>6.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>15.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Q31 How effective is the SDP and its action programme as a basis for influencing Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choice</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly effective</td>
<td>1.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>5.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cannot decide</td>
<td>46.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective</td>
<td>11.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly ineffective</td>
<td>6.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>21.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q32 How effective is the SDP and its action programme as a basis for influencing waste strategies and decision making?

Answer Choice | Responses
--- | ---
Highly effective | 9.84% 2
Effective | 19.72% 42
I cannot decide | 46.01% 106
Ineffective | 11.73% 25
Not effective | 6.63% 13
No response | 15.99% 34
Total | 213

Q33 How effective is the SDP and its action programme as a basis for influencing decisions on cross boundary infrastructure?

Answer Choice | Responses
--- | ---
Highly effective | 2.52% 6
Effective | 25.62% 65
I cannot decide | 33.91% 85
Ineffective | 19.76% 49
Highly ineffective | 4.66% 10
No response | 7.46% 17
Total | 213
Q36. What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the SDPs as a guide for subsequent action by others?

Answered: 112  Skipped: 247

Q37. Are there alternative ways of dealing with the strategic development issues which arise in city-region contexts? This is an opportunity for you to suggest alternatives or highlight what is important about the current process and content of SDPs.

Answered: 140  Skipped: 210
Q38 The research team are intending to speak to a representative sample of those completing this questionnaire to find out more about the SDP process. Would you be happy for us to contact you?
Answered: 221  Skipped: 138

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q39 Would like a copy of the report, or to be updated on the progress of the review?
Answered: 93  Skipped: 235

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>42.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>57.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of questionnaire themes by plan area
From the questionnaire responses, the following strengths and weaknesses were identified by respondents with respect to each SDPA.

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Constructive relationships between the SDPA, the constituent local authorities and key agencies.</td>
<td>• Level of engagement – criticism that there was not enough political and civic involvement in making the Strategic Development Plan (2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Crystal Mark for Plain English a noted strength of the document.</td>
<td>• Small team relative to the size of the task (SDPA Manager, plus one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lower level of complexity – particularly on cross-boundary issues</td>
<td>• Need for broader ownership and commitment to the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing considered to have been dealt with well</td>
<td>• Criticism of the HNDA methodology remains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SDPA seen as providing a strategic vision for the city-region</td>
<td>• Mixed views on strategic infrastructure and transport.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mixed views on strategic infrastructure and transport.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Glasgow and Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan Authority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Delegated decision making speeds up the process.</td>
<td>• Integration of other strategic documents would enhance the value of the document – e.g. economic, transport, community planning, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Positive role of partnership working. This is a positive legacy from the structure plan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Positive strategic vision for the city-region</td>
<td>• Guidance on retail and energy could be improved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Positive work on green networks</td>
<td>• HNDA resourcing – the HNDA process has been incredible resource intensive (both in terms of SDPA staff time and the cost of external consultants) that does not seem to result in an output of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Generational items – items that have a long term reach and set a positive strategic context for the future. An example of such an item is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network.

- Language not as accessible as other SDPs – considered by some (even planners) to be too technical.
- Strategic planning appears increasingly irrelevant to the decision making process of development management staff.

## SESplan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>- Level of engagement and evidence gathering has been good.</td>
<td>- Housing – supplementary guidance has meant the approved plan is less coherent than if it had been delayed to allow the housing allocations to be integrated into the plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- More complex than other SDPAs – relationships between constituent local authorities have been historically difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Political involvement has been less consistent, with less genuine commitment – constituent authorities likely to revert to local area agendas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Timeframe implications – alignment of LDPs is in some instances trail too far behind the SDP process. The result can be confusing when the SDPA has entered the process of forming a second plan before the LDPs have responded to the first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>- Thematic structure, language and graphics combine to create a clear and concise plan that is usable</td>
<td>- Acknowledgement that the strategic plan has acted as a bridge between from the structure plan, rather than as an opportunity to consider a new regional vision and strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Identifies clear areas for growth in the city-region (Strategic Development Areas)</td>
<td>- Housing – concerns have been raised on communicating the methodology, integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and growth corridors) into the plan and spatial allocations (both communities and developers raise the issue).

- Infrastructure – concerns over commitment to funding and delivery, and the absence of making the connection to strategic decisions that would help the area become a more sustainable city-region (i.e. new housing development not necessarily connected to good travel corridors, remaining reliant on private vehicles).

### TAYplan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>• Positive role of project planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Positive role of partnership working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ratification process – adds additional time (9-12 months).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Criticism of public engagement timing – private individual and community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>council respondents felt the opportunity to make comment was too early,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and by the time there was a draft plan in place it was too late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>• Positive strategic lead for LDPs – for example Policy 1: Locational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Priorities presents a sequential approach for development that has given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the local development plans a strong lead on which areas can accommodate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>differing scales of development change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• HNDA resourcing – this has been an intensive process in terms of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rural respondents are critical of what they perceive as an urban bias.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex D Comparator places and processes

European Comparator: Malmö, Sweden

The Oresund area is a transnational region in Northern Europe centered on the cities of Copenhagen, Denmark and Malmö/Lund in Sweden. Historically divided by the Oresund strait, construction of the Oresund Bridge in 2000 physically united the distinctive cultures and economies of eastern Denmark and Southern Sweden for the first time. The 16km bridge and tunnel link included vehicular traffic, freight rail and passenger rail lines, allowing for an integration of the region’s economy while encouraging cross-border collaboration. Using this investment in infrastructure to unite a region required extensive cross-boundary coordination and communication, as illustrated by the decision to build the bridge between the population centers of Copenhagen and Malmö and not at the narrowest point in the strait (between Elsinore and Helsingborg) (Matthieson, 2000). An added benefit of locating the bridge at this location was that it provided direct access to Copenhagen’s international airport, a key piece of infrastructure that southern Sweden had previously lacked.

Modern proposals for a physical link connecting the Oresund region can be traced back to 1973, when the Danish and Swedish governments first agreed to build a link (source). Governance, economic and environmental issues were the key reasons for the 22-year delay between this agreement and the commencement of construction. The major issues included differences in their banking and financing systems, land use issues and EU membership barriers (Denmark joined in 1973 and Sweden in 1995). The two countries’ parliaments approved a combined road/rail bridge option in 1990, and in 1991 each formed a state-owned stock company responsible the financing, design, construction and operation of the link. Loans were raised on the international finance market, and were repaid by revenues from user fees and guaranteed by the two countries (Matthieson, 2000). The joint delegation’s recommendation to fund the project entirely outside of public sector budgets was fundamentally important to the financing structure. While the final project cost overruns exceeded 39% of the budget and it ran at a loss until 2009, surpluses from road tolls financed land-based connecting infrastructure, and the payment of fixed fees by the national rail agencies to use the rail tracks, were amongst the issues covered in negotiations between the two governments (Matthieson, 2000).

In the decades prior to the opening of the Oresund Bridge, Malmö was a declining manufacturing city, losing population while suffering to adjust following post industrialization. At the same time Copenhagen, Denmark’s signature city, suffered from economic stagnation. The Danish government sought to lift Copenhagen higher in the European urban hierarchy through the integration of the Danish and Swedish urban areas in the Oresund region (Matthieson, 2000). Economically, the combined Copenhagen and the Malmö/Lund urban agglomerations allowed two non-interdependent urban economies access to additional economic specializations, creating industrial synergy and further new specialization (Mandag, 1998). Construction of the bridge/tunnel began in 1995, which was also the last year that Malmö lost population. Opening of the link spawned further economic activity and infrastructure upgrades, such as the 17 km City Tunnel rail project that greatly reduced travel times between Malmö’s central station and Copenhagen’s international airport and city centre.
Additionally Mercedes Benz’s relocated their Swedish headquarters to Malmö from Stockholm to be closer to their Danish markets, symbolic of the estimated 65% of Oresund business’s which operate various cross border business activities (Copenhagen, 1999).

Despite differences in currencies, cultures and industrial structures, an economically unified Oresund region has the opportunity to increase the level of specialization in Malmö/Lund to the present Copenhagen level (Matthieson, 2000). The Oresund Bridge was the key piece of infrastructure that provided this opportunity; further enabling Malmö to become a knowledge based economy while making it part of an international market and economy.


European Comparator: Rotterdam, Holland

The Randstad region of the Netherlands is home to over 7 million people and is one of the largest and most important urban conurbations in Europe. Primarily consisting of the country’s principal urban agglomerations (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht), it is the cultural, economic and industrial centre of the Netherlands. With the location of these cities inadvertently forming a ring, the area between them became known as the Groene Hart (the green heart). Initially created centuries ago due to its unsuitable building conditions, the Dutch central government created a policy in 2003 to preserve it, taking preventative action against urban sprawl at a national scale. Forming the southern edge of the Groene Hart. Rotterdam is the second largest city in the Netherlands and is the busiest port in Europe by volume. Long known in Holland as ‘The Industrious City’, Rotterdam suffered extensive bombing in the Second World War and its rebuilding efforts have made it an international example of governance, land use, transportation and regeneration policies.

Following the devastation that the country suffered during World War II, limited local resources led the central government to assume more power and take the lead in the decades that followed. As the economy and rebuilding efforts stabilized a distinction was made between ‘autonomous tasks’, where local authorities are free to make their own decisions, and ‘delegated tasks’, which are specified by the central government (URBED, 2009). Central policies are directly connected to funding mechanisms, underlined by The Financial Relations Law, requiring that any new policy approved by the central government be accompanied with the funding to implement it (Falk, 2011). Further, speciality banks, such as the Bank Nederlandse Gemeenten, provide municipalities with low-cost long-term loans for infrastructure, removing dependence on bidding to government, and further separating planning from politics. Local taxes and user charges raise additional funds, as do municipal bonds. Being a part of the Randstad region requires extensive cross-boundary coordination, and the Dutch have been exceptionally successful as this. There is a Code of Relations, which sets out the rules that govern how different levels of government work together, and notably local authorities are seen as the ‘first level’ (URBED, 2009). Cooperative governance allowed for ‘proportionality’, maintaining the local share of the national budget, which is known as ‘ascending and descending the stairs together’.

With planning in the Netherlands not seen as a politically sensitive topic, as it is in the UK, it is approached as a necessary tool that provides for a system of using national resources in ways which promote a better quality of life for the ordinary citizen (Falk, 2011). The differences between the two planning systems are illustrated in their approaches to masterplanning. In the UK the primary approach is that of blueprint masterplans, specifying a single intended outcome, whereas the Dutch framework masterplans generally set out broad urban design and place-making aspirations and principles (Falk, 2011). This allows for local authorities to be the main drivers in the development process, rather than reacting to private developers. Transportation networks are prioritized in Holland and are connected to residential and economic development. Dutch parking policy identifies sites as ABC in terms of their accessibility by public transport. Aiming to encourage development around locations with the highest accessibility, the places with the best transport systems are allocated the most parking spaces, and hence attract the most offices (URBED, 2009). The Dutch planning system emphasizes place making and enhanced quality of life for all residents. With project funding guaranteed by the government, implementation is ensured and the process is
removed from political pendulums that inhibit planning and progress in the UK (Falk, 2011). Municipal banks and bonds help mitigate the financial strains of new developments on existing infrastructure, as they provide mechanisms for expanding existing systems, specifically transportation. The key distinction that makes the Dutch planning system admirable is the linkages that it creates, between policy and funding, development and transport, and housing to quality of life. This allows for a neighborhood approach to development, including social-mix, relaxed design codes and open space patterns, furthering Holland’s renowned quality of life.


European Comparator: METREX Benchmarking System

METREX is a network of practitioners, including professionals, politicians, officials and their advisors, who share an interest in spatial planning and development at the regional level. With the aim of pursuing these interests in the approximately 120 metropolitan regions and areas with populations over 500,000 in the European Union (including non-EU and Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC)) it seeks to promote competence, capability and planning process analysis through benchmarking.

Through this network, the METREX Practice Benchmark has been developed to provide a practical tool that allows spatial planning authorities to self assess their practice. Through self assessment continual and incremental improvements can be made that are contextual to the self assessor's own metropolitan region. The benchmarks provide a scale ranging from baseline effective practice, through improving practice, to most effective practice (InterMETREX Partnership, 2006). There are 29 benchmarks which are gathered under the following 5 themes:

1. Competence to Plan Strategically at the Metropolitan Level
2. Competence to Implement a Metropolitan Strategy
3. Capability for Informed Decision Making at the Metropolitan Level
4. Process and Participation
5. Process and Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Each benchmark indicator under these themes provides enough detail for a realistic comparison to be made. Practice benchmarks do not seek to benchmark the entire management process, but allow a wider governance framework that takes into account the varying institutional arrangements across Europe including the quality of civic leadership, professional skills and management styles (Darley, 2006). In this sense, the process is not prescriptive of what should be done, but provides on how practice can be developed more effectively.

Governance arrangements are a key dynamic in the planning process, and analysis of them in benchmarked comparators is important to understanding the differences between comparators. The founding partners of the METREX system recognised that: “Committed civic leadership can markedly improve the credibility and effectiveness of the metropolitan planning process.” They also identified the influential role of a dominant local authority in a metropolitan area in supporting the concept of mutual responsibility (Darley, 2006). Conflicting priorities are common in regional planning systems, and complex government arrangements can place additional pressures on them. The use of benchmarking systems is not meant to be used, or seen, as an absolute solution, as it is necessary to balance conclusions against external conflicting priorities. A noted example of this is the common need for increased inclusion of the public and stakeholders in planning processes, which may often conflict with the desires for an expedited process (Darley, 2006). Final benchmarking outcomes are the product of judgments between these conflicting priorities, but this process facilitates that it will be an informed judgment.
The European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP) recognised that spatial policy, which requires cooperation at the European and transnational levels, is dependent upon complementary implementation at the regional level. Further, ESDP noted that it is at the regional level of spatial planning that the application of the goals of the ESDP can be implemented most effectively e.g. through land use and transportation planning (Darley, 2006). With the regional planning level identified as the most appropriate means of ensuring that European-level spatial disparities are overcome, there is greater benefit in improving regional spatial planning practice.

The use of benchmarks provides a ‘snapshot’ of a period in time, and continued updating will be necessary for it to evolve and further develop. ESDP sought to achieve a better urban balance throughout Europe, finding it is important for Europe’s largest metropolitan areas to contribute collectively to this strategy through effective spatial planning and development. Each of the metropolitan regions needs to address their weaknesses and support its strengths. The Revised Practice Benchmark is an aid to the achievement of this objective (Darley, 2006).


Urban Comparator: Portland, Oregon

Portland, located in America’s Pacific Northwest, is Oregon’s largest city and has long been recognized as a pioneer for North American planning policies. The city’s innovative urban strategies began in 1973 when the State legislature’s Senate Bill 100 Oregon’s system of land-use regulation was enacted (Oates, 2006). While the policy was meant to contain urban sprawl at a State level, it directed management of lands to regional and local authorities, who were required to align zoning to correspond with the State’s policy. The legislation required all cities to prepare and submit their proposed urban growth boundaries (UGB) to the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC), justifying them according to “19 Statewide Planning Goals.” Oregon’s land use policy stated that all lands outside of an UGB, with noted exceptions, were designated for the management of natural resources and were protected from urban development (Daniels, 2001). With focused urban development and environmental protections established, a framework was in place to encourage high-quality, livable cities while increasing urban density, improving public transit options and preventing piecemeal rural development. Additionally, the system placed planners in a proactive position, putting power back into the local authorities from private developers (source).

In 1979, Portland area residents responded to the legislation and voted to create Metro, a regional government authority. While statewide UGBs in the United States are unique to Oregon, notably the Portland area is the only region in the country to have an elected regional body. This allows for the development and implementation of a unified regional vision. The role of Metro includes management of the UGB, regional land use planning, transportation planning, and data management (Daniels, 2001). While the agency lacks authority to zone and impose specific subdivision regulations, it can require local governments to revise their plans and regulations if it finds that they do not serve regional goals (Oates, 2006). Furthermore, Metro can require its cities and counties to amend their comprehensive plans to ensure compliance with their Urban Growth Management Functional Plan (Metro Government, 2014). Due to its unique position of authority Metro has been influential in establishing Portland as an international model of urban management and growth.

Today, Metro encompasses parts of 3 counties, 24 cities, over 1.3 million people and borders the State of Washington to the north (Daniels, 2001). As one of the 240 UGB throughout the state, the urban zones are required to adjust their UGBs every five years in effort to maintain a twenty-year supply of land for future development (Oates, 2006). In addition to locating development within the UGBs, cities are additionally required to locate all major infrastructures within the urban zone as well, including roads, sewers, schools, water and public transport. The regional approach in Portland has delivered population densities that support a world-class light rail and tram system, leading the area to pioneer the concept of ‘transit-oriented developments’ (Oates, 2006). Tying compact and mixed-use developments to public transport has helped the city to combat the urban sprawl that plagues most American cities.

According to one researcher: “Portland has become a sort of living laboratory for efficient urban planning and living. The results are benefiting both the environment and the region’s economy” (Benfield, 1999). The region cooperates and works together to prepare a coordinated vision involving land use, transportation, infrastructure major funding, eliminating the competition for resources that inflicts most regions.
regional ‘smart growth’ policies in Portland have allowed it to manage growth that will produce the best of both worlds: economic growth without the ugliness, congestion, environmental degradation, and wasteful public subsidies of sprawling development (Glendening, 1997). While there is no single blueprint to successful regional planning. Oregon’s efforts, and Portland’s in particular, have highlighted the important connections between land-use patterns, transportation, the loss of open space, the costs of public services, and their effects on resident’s quality of life (Oates, 2006).


Annex E Comments related to Examinations

Below is a summary of evidence related to the finding that the Scottish Government should consider publicly conducted examinations as part of the SDP process and governance arrangements.

A number of questionnaire responses in particular either make a direct call for some form of examination, or raise the criticism of the engagement or objection and response process that may be answered should a publicly conducted examination be a standard part of the process.

Summary of strengths identified in questionnaire responses:

- Examinations have become quicker
- It has been helpful to have a similar process to that for LDPs

Summary of weaknesses identified in questionnaire responses:

- Lack of thorough opportunity to test contents of the plan at examination, particularly where there was feeling of a lack of meaningful engagement during plan preparation
- Concern that earlier engagement had been tokenistic so a thorough examination is critical
- Individual representations not being seen to be addressed
- The need for the examination to be inquisitorial, not just accepting the SDPA’s views
- The need for public examination to ensure that the SDP is not being unduly influenced for commercial or political gain
- Too much focus on adhering to examination timetables and not enough on making sure the plan is fit for purpose
- The scope for the examination to remedy major problems in a plan is very limited
- The language of the plan can be too technical, as a result the whole process, including the examination may be weighted too much towards technical experts or vested interests.