

Response ID ANON-B3JU-DSG4-6

Submitted to **Local Development Plan Main Issues Report 2019 Consultation**
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About You

What is your name?

Name:

Grant Neil McKay

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

independent by associated with and support the community group "Protect Banchory Devenick"

On behalf of:

How can we contact you?

Email:

[REDACTED]

Telephone:

Address:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1 Introduction

Section 1 provides a context for the Main Issues Report Do you have any comments in relation to this section?

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Additional Documents

Please include comments on other documents below:

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Feedback on B1308 Royal Devenick Park Phase 1

I would like to support the planning officers' views to reject the above urban development plans that were proposed on the currently Green Belted land in Banchory Devenick.

Background

Aberdeen City and Shire are recognised nationally and internationally for their high quality of life. With unspoilt river, ancient trees, hills, and diverse and thriving wildlife, Banchory Devenick is an essential part of this. It provides a beautiful green setting for the vibrant and historic granite city built between its rivers and coast, and is vital to the character of the city – being visible from much of lower Deeside and Aberdeen itself. This is recognised by its greenbelt status.

Banchory Devenick is used by many people from the area for recreation, including cyclists, ramblers, orienteers and dog owners. It represents the closest area of unspoilt countryside to Aberdeen city.

The proposal to (ultimately) turn Banchory Devenick into a new suburb of several thousand houses, is in contravention of numerous current policies to protect our environment and habitats.

The development would be enormously damaging to the character of Aberdeen, the quality of life of the people in southern and western Aberdeen, and the wildlife population of lower Deeside.

[REDACTED] The development would result in these areas of spectacular wildlife diversity being cut off from one another and becoming smaller, isolated pockets of trees among large-scale urban style flats and suburban housing.

Housing is a vital component of a vibrant city. However, there are numerous unsold properties and many housing developments already approved but as yet un-built (e.g. Chapelton, Blairs, Countesswells). The Bridge of Dee remains a major traffic black-spot, which would be worsened with another several thousand

residents located next to it. Development has its place, but large-scale destruction of our natural heritage and recreation space is unnecessary.

Key Arguments:

- The crucial importance of the green belt (as Banchory Devenick is designated) as a 'lung' for the City and an essential habitat for a wide range of wildlife.
- The Den of Leggart - a Local Nature Conservation Site and a designated a Prime Landscape (DWP) Area - lies inside the Phase 1 Royal Devenick Park site. The Den comprises semi-natural and ancient woodland, and provides a habitat for a number of protected species.
- The landscape vistas of Banchory Devenick (especially Tollohill Wood) from, for example, Holburn Street, Duthie Park, the riverside, Garthdee and Cults would be degraded. With regard to this particular Phase, views from Kincorth and the A92, of the Wood, the Dee Valley and Aberdeen west would be particularly adversely affected, significantly impacting on the green belt and landscape setting of Aberdeen.
- The images attached in the additional file are from the information provided by Comer Homes Group (<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans-and-policies/ldp-2021/development-bids-2018/?area=Kincardine%20and%20Mearns#list> - accessed 4/5/2019). The part of the development considered under the City's MIR is only a small part of the developer's ambition and represents the 'thin end of a wedge' if approved. Royal Devenick Park Phase 1 City comprises ten buildings - all six storey - 4 as rectangular blocks (bordering the A92), 4 as 'courtyards', and 2 L-shaped ones bordering the south western end of the Burn of Leggart and Causey Mounth Road. These include commercial units at ground level. The architectural design is completely out of character and scale with existing housing e.g. Deeside Braes, Kincorth Estate, and with the wider landscape of the area.
- Road upgrades would be necessary for site entry - presumably from Deeside Braes (constrained by the Den of Leggart), the A92 and from the ancient Causey Mounth itself.
- Phase 1 City is just a small part of the overall proposed developments (see image below showing all 4 Phases). If the City Phase is eventually approved it would constitute 'the thin end of the wedge', paving the way for further unwanted developments.
- With regard to the provision of additional housing in the city and Shire, there is definitely a case for 'finishing what you started' - completing the numerous housing developments that are already in approved and in part progress (though often stalled due to lack of demand).
- Banchory Devenick currently provides a fantastic backdrop to the City of Aberdeen in southwest facing vistas. An attractive view from a huge area of the town from Cults to Ferryhill. From Duthie Park, and the riverside, you are connected to the Harbour to the East and looking along the riverside, the viewer is presented with a fantastic view that has changed little in over a century: looking up the River Dee through the arches of the Bridge of Dee and into the rural farm land and forestation on Tollohill, Banchory Devenick where the developers want to urbanise.

I please with the Council to support the planning officials views in the MIR and reject the proposals to develop on this important green belt area.

Neil McKay

Additional Files

If you have further information you would like to provide you may upload it here.:

The thin end of a wedge.JPG was uploaded

The part of the development submitted to the City Council is just part of a four phase plan. It represents the thin end of a wedge which would destroy this valuable rural asset that connects the city and the shire.

