



Aberdeen Local Development Plan Review

Main Issues Report Response Form 2019

Aberdeen City Council has published a Main Issues Report (MIR) which is part of the process of preparing a new Local Development Plan. It is designed to gather views on specific proposals and sets out options for dealing with the key planning matters facing Aberdeen over the next 20 years such as the location of new housing and employment development, the future of retailing and the City Centre, housing needs and tackling climate change. It also includes a number of potential new policies which would be used in the determination of planning applications.

The MIR has been published alongside a Monitoring Statement and Environmental Report. Copies are available to view at Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen. These, and other supporting documents, are available at: - www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/aldp2022

Everyone now has the chance to comment on the report and associated documents. All comments received will be considered and used to inform the preparation of the Proposed Aberdeen City Local Development Plan. There will be a further opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan when it is published in early 2020.

The consultation runs from 4 March 2019 to 13 May 2019.

Responses to the published documents can be:

- made online at:- <http://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning/mir2019>;
- emailed to:- ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk; or
- by post to:- Local Development Plan Team, Strategic Place Planning, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB.

Completed response forms should be with us no later than 13 May 2019.



YOUR DETAILS

Name	Alexa Martin
Organisation (if relevant)	Halliday Fraser Munro
On behalf of (if relevant)	J Nairn, John Adam & Sons
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone	
E-mail	

Thank you for taking the time to complete this response form. If you wish to be added to the LDP e-mailing list to be kept informed of our progress in producing the next Local Development Plan, please tick here



If yes, please provide an e-mail address

PRIVACY STATEMENT

As part of the review of the Local Development Plan, Aberdeen City Council (ACC) will offer you several opportunities to submit your views and comments. These opportunities will range from the current consultation stage, the Main Issues Report, where we will ask you to comment on specific proposals and alternatives to the Proposed Plan stage where the set view of ACC has been established.

ACC are legally required to consult at this stage and at Proposed Plan stage. This is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) and supporting regulations. The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 also requires us to consult on a Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report.

By submitting a response to the consultation, you understand that ACC can use the information provided in this form, including personal data, as part of the review of the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan. ACC will not share or disclose any personal data about you to any organization or person unless it is authorized or required to do so by law.

The data controller for this information is ACC. We understand our legal basis for processing this information as Article 6(1)(c) of the General Data Protection Regulation as this is an activity we are legally required to carry out under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) and supporting regulations and The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The data on the form will be used to inform the preparation of the Proposed Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2022. At the end of the consultation, where contact details have been provided, the Local Development Plan team will provide you with a respondent number. You may also be contacted about the comments you have made and, as obliged by the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) and supporting regulations, the Local Development Plan team will contact you to inform you of the publication of the proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan in early 2020. If you chose not to provide your contact details, your comments will still be valid but we will not be able to contact you in the future.

Responses will be collated, redacted, summarised and stored electronically or in locked cabinets in Marischal College. All redacted responses will be published, alongside the respondents name (if provided), on the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan website. Contact details will not be made public, but your name and respondent number will be published.

Aberdeen City Council will only keep your personal data for as long as is needed. Data will be kept until the emerging Local Development Plan is itself replaced – this is likely to be around 5 years following its adoption in 2022 – so 2027. Following this, data will be disposed of in a secure manner.

YOUR DATA, YOUR RIGHTS

You've got legal rights about the way ACC handles and uses your data, which include the right to ask for a copy of it, and to ask us to stop doing something with your data. Please contact the Council's Data Protection Officer by e-mailing DataProtectionOfficer@aberdeencity.gov.uk or writing to Data Protection Officer, Aberdeen City Council, Governance, Level 1 South, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB. More information is available at: - <https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/your-data>

YOUR COMMENTS

<p>Which document(s) are you commenting on?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main Issues Report• Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report• Monitoring Statement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please indicate the document and the specific Issue, Question, Site, Policy, Map or Table you are commenting on. Please provide your comments below and explain your reason for supporting, opposing or commenting on this specific part of the document.

Please see attached response for development bid B0945, Shepherd's Retreat and letter in support of development from Visit Aberdeenshire.

YOUR COMMENTS CONTINUED



HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS & PLANNING CONSULTANTS

ABERDEEN CITY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

RESPONSE TO MAIN ISSUES REPORT

SITE B0945 – Shepherd's Retreat

MAY 2019

On behalf of J Nairn, John Adam & Sons



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1. Introduction and Bid Summary

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Halliday Fraser Munro, Town Planning Consultants and Chartered Architects, on behalf of J. Nairn. It is written in response to the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan Main Issues Report 2019 (MIR).
- 1.2. Bid B0945 Shepherd's Retreat presented a proposal for a luxury 'glamping' and edu-tourism destination on Royal Deeside. The proposed development takes the increasing trend of 'glamping' with the staycation and international visitor markets and offers a bespoke, quaint and characterful holiday experience maximising the local environment for visitors. The development would support local businesses, visitor attractions and services in Peterculter and the surrounding area which are not always readily accessed by visitors.
- 1.3. The proposal bid was for a high quality 'glamping' holiday retreat experience both in terms of accommodation and substantial well designed and managed landscaped open spaces where people can go to relax or be creative and learn a new skill at residential on-site workshops and courses. The proposed development is supported by Visit Aberdeenshire who have provided a letter of support which accompanies this MIR response.
- 1.4. The indicative site plan presented in the bid showed up to 36 shepherds hut holiday units set within landscaped grounds. The units in the visual style of traditional temporary accommodation for shepherds as they tended their flocks are now manufactured as themed fully functioning holiday units like caravans or other mobile homes with small kitchen areas, a shower and toilet, lounge or seating area, a wood burner feature and bedroom area. along with each unit there is a secluded private patio area and a private hot tub. The private patio area will be screened via landscaping and planting to provide a tranquil, secluded and private atmosphere whilst still providing views of Deeside.
- 1.5. The indicative plan included in the bid showed a potential position of the Club House and it is envisaged that this would be built in the exterior character of a traditional Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire farm building in a vernacular style so that it would blend in with the surrounding countryside.
- 1.6. The site is bordered to the north by trees and it is proposed to plant further landscaping features and woodland areas throughout the site to add to the 'into nature' feel of the development. The additional woodland and landscaping would enhance wildlife habitats.
- 1.7. The site has views of the Deeside Valley and is currently used for grazing sheep. The tranquil setting provides an ideal site for a low-density holiday destination of shepherds huts which complement the idyllic rural setting which is only a mile from the village of Peterculter and the AWPR Milltimber junction. This junction provides excellent travel links to the north and south.



The site is also just a few hundred yards from Malcolm Road (B979) which is the main route into Westhill and linking the wider Aberdeenshire area particularly along the A93 to Deeside.

- 1.8. The proximity of the site to Peterculter provides employment opportunities within the local area. There will be a requirement to employ workshop leaders for specialist courses such as yoga teachers, local historians or wildlife photographers. Further employment opportunities will include staff for the club house and beauticians and therapists for the spa.
- 1.9. The site is 15 acres of agricultural land at Woodend Farm, off Culter House Road. The proposed development has been masterplanned to make the most of the existing topography, natural features, views and characteristics of the area. The density of development is very low to respect the character and amenity of the surrounding area and the use of shepherds huts as opposed to any other type of accommodation was chosen because of their appropriateness to the former use of the site and its agricultural heritage.
- 1.10. The land which makes up the site is poor quality agricultural land under the control of the proposer. To the north of the site there is an existing woodland, on the north west there is an area of rough ground and belt of trees, masking a small-scale Scottish Water pipe storage facility. Additional planting proposed will provide a natural corridor for wildlife travelling between these and other local sites.
- 1.11. Due to the nature of the business Shepherd's Retreat must be in the countryside in a habitat rich area but still be accessible. The site is well related in this respect to the existing settlement of Peterculter and existing major road networks.
- 1.12. There is excellent direct access to the site from the AWPR at its Milltimber Junction so there is a short and convenient link for guests travelling from the north and Aberdeen Airport or from the south. Also, at the same junction, access is very straightforward for guests travelling from Aberdeen City via the new North Deeside Road link road. Other major routes likely to be used by visitors are the A93 from Banchory or the A944 Alford/Westhill both these routes access the site via a short drive on Malcolm Road, which is a main route in the local area. Therefore, visitors will not be adding any strain on minor or less major routes locally, but staying on major, well sign posted routes.

2. MIR Bid Assessment Summary

- 2.1. The Main Issues Report (officer's summary and assessment of bid) states:

'B0945 Shepherd's Retreat

The proposal is for 36 no. single storey shepherd huts and a main club house, to develop a luxury 'glamping' destination and short break retreat for adults. The club house would accommodate



courses, workshops, craft events, have guest reception and shop, area for celebrations, small weddings, spa-treatment rooms and caretaking accommodation.

The proposal is located in the greenbelt and is isolated from Peterculter. Access to local facilities, such as shops, cafes, restaurants is poor but will still be required, as is outlined in the proposal. Increasing visitor numbers to these local facilities will support their use, however, access to Peterculter by footpath or cycle route is limited, therefore vehicular trips and car dependence may increase. Although the development is small scale and low density, its location on the slope of a hill means it will be visible and will have an impact on landscape. It is also fairly exposed. The requirement for connection to utilities has not been outlined’.

- 2.2. The Officers’ view and associated issues can be broken down and will be examined in more detail below. We do not consider that the glamping concept proposed has been fully appreciated by the bid assessors.
- 2.3. The MIR includes a Bid assessment summary, with the B0945 site being awarded a score of 40 out of a possible 63. We have reassessed the bid using the Council’s criteria and would suggest that a scoring of 57 would be more appropriate. The detailed narrative and reasoning are contained in Appendix 1.
- 2.4. ***The proposal is located in the greenbelt and is isolated from Peterculter. Access to local facilities, such as shops, cafes, restaurants is poor but will still be required, as is outlined in the proposal. Increasing visitor numbers to these local facilities will support their use, however, access to Peterculter by footpath or cycle route is limited, therefore vehicular trips and car dependence may increase.***

The site being within the Green Belt should not be treated as a constraint to development. In the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 it is stated that ‘*The aim of the Green Belt is to maintain the distinct identity of Aberdeen and the communities within and around the city, by defining their physical boundaries clearly. Safeguarding the Green Belt helps to avoid coalescence of settlements and sprawling development on the edge of the city, maintaining Aberdeen’s landscape setting and providing access to open space’.* **The development proposed in Bid B0945 does not undermine this aim.** The development will not result in coalescence between any settlements. It is well contained within the site and situated on the rural north western edge of Peterculter.

We do not consider that being one mile from Peterculter results in the proposal being isolated from the settlement.

The idea behind the proposal presented in Bid B0945 is to provide tourist accommodation that will bring visitors to the area and encourage them to go out and explore. It is unrealistic to expect that tourists visiting Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire can access all they have to offer by public transport or active travel therefore we think it short sighted to label this development as undesirable as people will have to travel by car.



The development will provide facilities on site for visitors who do not wish to leave the development.

2.5. ***'Although the development is small scale and low density, its location on the slope of a hill means it will be visible and will have an impact on landscape. It is also fairly exposed'***

The development is screened from Contlaw Road by woodland. Some views will remain and our client does not view the site being visible as a disadvantage to the development.

The proposed development will be sensitively designed to minimise any impact on landscape. New landscaping and woodland planting will create a secluded cluster of shepherds huts that are partially screened from the surrounding area. The landscaping and woodland planting will also minimise the effects of exposure. The existing mature woodland to the north east of the site will provide shelter.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. We do not consider that the glamping concept proposed has been fully appreciated by the bid assessors and the bid has been assessed as if it was for a traditional residential development.
- 3.2. The main objection presented in the assessor's report is distance and access to shops, cafes and restaurants, however, the proposal presented detailed that these would be provided on site.
- 3.3. The proposed development does not threaten the function of the Green Belt and we do not consider Green Belt a justifiable constraint to development.
- 3.4. We would request that the land put forward as bid site B0945, Shepherd's Retreat is included in the proposed LDP as land for tourist accommodation.



Appendix 1: Development Options Assessment Report

Development Options Assessment Report on the Pre-Main Issues Submissions 2018 (Appendix 3 to the Main Issues Report)

Criteria	Officers Score	Justification	Proposed Score	Justification
Exposure	1	The site is exposed to northern winds. A clump of trees is present to the north east of the site which will provide shelter. There are linear tree belts along field boundaries. The site rises to a high point at Ben View.	2	The existing area of woodland to the north east and the linear tree belts will provide shelter.
Aspect	1	The majority of the site is north west facing.	2	Areas of the site will be south facing.
Slope	2	There is a relatively steep slope with a gradient of 1 in 12.	3	We do not consider the slope as a constraint to development. The topography can be used to enhance the design of the development.
Flood Risk	3	SEPA flood maps indicate there are no known flood risks. There is an open water course at the northern boundary of the site, which may be vulnerable to flooding in future, although there are no recorded flooding incidents, which indicate it is not likely to be a significant issue.	3	Agree with justification.
Drainage	3	There no known drainage issues. There is an open water course to the north of the site.	3	Agree with justification.
Built/Cultural Elements	3	There will be no loss or disturbance of built and natural elements.	3	Agree with justification.
Natural Conservation	2	There will be no loss or disturbance of natural conservation. The site is also within the catchment	3	We consider the Officers scoring is not justified. There will be no loss of or disturbance to natural



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		of the River Dee, which is an SAC, but is unlikely to have any significant impact.		conservation. The site will not impact on the River Dee SAC.
Landscape Features	2	There are tree belts and stone dyke boundaries on the site. There is some potential loss or disturbance of these features.	3	There is no loss or disturbance planned or indicated in the plans of dyke boundaries. This is minor point and Scottish Heritage have given permission to remove, alter and make safe stone dykes for agricultural and tourism/leisure reasons as long as it is done sympathetically.
Landscape Fit	1	The proposal will intrude on landscape fit; the buildings proposed are small scale single storey shepherd huts, but additional infrastructure includes a main accommodation building, additional toilet blocks, and vehicle tracks. Due to the elevated position of the site on hill slopes, the site would be visible from Malcolm Road.	3	We do not consider that the proposed development would intrude significantly into the landscape. We are not sure why the development being visible from Malcolm Road would be a disadvantage, particularly if sympathetically landscaped as proposed.
Relationship to existing settlement	1	The site is isolated from Peterculter. Given the nature of the proposal, as a glamping retreat, this is viewed as a positive by the proposer. The closest development, with the exception of single units, is OP109 which is allocated for 19 residential units.	3	Being outwith a settlement is advantageous for a development of this nature. We would disagree that the site is isolated from Peterculter is just over 1 mile from the site, therefore the site benefits from having a remote and rural feel but with facilities and services in close proximity.
Land Use Mix / Balance / Service Thresholds	2	The nature of the proposal as a tourist glamping retreat would bring other uses to an area with predominantly agricultural and residential uses. The Rob Roy Caravan Park,	3	We consider that the proposed use for tourism and leisure would improve the land use mix in the area and there would be no land use conflict.



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		approx. 650m to the west of the site, is being re-developed at present.		
Accessibility	1	The site is over 1km from the nearest bus service and bus stop. The bus routes available are 19/201/202/203.	2	We agree that the nearest bus stop is over 1km, however we do not foresee bus travel being the primary means of accessing the site.
Proximity to facilities / shopping / health / recreation	1	There are no available facilities within 800m of the site.	3	The proposed development will provide facilities on site. The likelihood is that guests will travel to this development by car and so distance to facilities outwith those provided on site is not considered a problem.
Direct footpath / cycle connection to community and recreation facilities and resources	2	There are limited connections to facilities. Access to Peterculter centre is possible via path which connects to core path 52.	2	Facilities will be provided on site. Core Path 52 is advantageous.
Proximity of employment opportunities	1	There are no significant employment opportunities with 1.6km of the site. The proposal would generate small scale development opportunity in its own right.	3	Not relevant as the proposal is for tourist accommodation. The development will provide development opportunities.
Contamination	3	There are no known contamination issues.	3	Agree with justification.
Land Use Conflict	2	The site and surrounding area is currently in agricultural use.	3	We do not consider that the proposed tourist accommodation and facilities will conflict with agricultural use.
Physical Infrastructural Capacity	1	No utility services are available. The proposer has not indicated if these will be required or extended to the site. The proposer notes spa-treatment would be proposed, along with the shepherd huts (each with	2	There are well recognised ways of servicing caravan parks and glamping sites which are not the same as traditional residential developments.



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		bathroom facilities and hot tub) and main building complex and additional toilet blocks on site, it is expected there will be water and waste water requirements, along with electricity and possibly gas.		
Physical Infrastructure Future	2	There is no high-speed broadband at present. This is proposed.	2	Agree with justification.
Service Infrastructure Capacity	3	Due to the nature of the development there will be no pressure on Culter Primary School or Cults Academy. Culter Primary School has capacity; however, Cults Academy will be over capacity by 2021.	3	Agree with justification.
Other Constraints	3	No other known constraints.	3	Agree with justification.
	46		57	

27th March 2019

To whom it may concern,

I would like to endorse the development bid for inclusion in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022 (REF: B0945) which has been submitted by Julie Nairn in relation to Shepherd's Retreat, a development comprising of a club house and 36 single storey shepherd huts providing "glamping" accommodation near Peterculter.

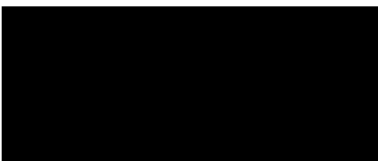
Tourism is one of the key economic drivers to the North East economy and investment in new products and services for visitors is fundamental in helping the region achieve its ambition to grow the value of tourism to Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire to £1bn per annum by 2023.

The provision of glamping accommodation in the Peterculter area builds upon the existing accommodation, attraction, activity and natural landscape products in Lower Deeside and this development may act as a draw for visitors to base themselves in at the edge of Aberdeen city within easy reach of both city attractions and the wider Aberdeenshire region thanks to the proximity of the AWPR. The provision of high-quality accommodation will increase the attractiveness and dwell time of visitors to the area and associated economic benefits.

The proposal aligns with the competitive strength of Touring and the Great Outdoors in the new Destination Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Tourism Strategy 2018 – 2023.

The development provides employment opportunities and strengthens the overall tourism offering in North East Scotland and I am happy to offer my support to this application.

Yours sincerely



Chris Foy
CEO VisitAberdeenshire