

Aberdeen Local Development Plan Review

Proposal for a site to be included in the Main Issues Report

The Proposed Strategic Development Plan does not require us to allocate extra housing or employment land in the next Local Development Plan (LDP). Because the 2012 LDP identified a significant number of greenfield sites to accommodate these requirements, we are not looking to allocate any more greenfield housing or employment land in this plan. It is for this reason that we are not asking for greenfield development options this time around. However, we are always keen to identify new brownfield sites for housing or for other uses. Please use this form to provide details of the site that you wish to have included in the Main Issues Report for consideration as a proposal in the next Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

One of the purposes of this form is to inform a public debate on the merits of the different sites being proposed. All information submitted will therefore be made available to the public to promote a transparent and open process.

Please feel free to provide any further information you feel appropriate to support your submission. The City Council has produced a Sustainability Checklist which provides guidance on the issues which will be used to help us judge the merits of competing development options. This can be found on www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan

Please ensure your proposal is with us by 14th June 2013.

Using your personal information

Information you supply to Aberdeen City Council (ACC) in this form will be used to prepare the Local Development Plan. The information provided will be made public and will be placed on the Council's website. This will include the name and address of the proposer and landowner.

The Local Development Plan team may also use your contact details to contact you about the information you have provided.

For further information on how your information is used, how ACC maintain the security of your information, and your rights to access information ACC holds about you, please contact Andrew Brownrigg, Team Leader, Local Development Plan Team, Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 4 Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB.



1

Name of proposer:

Date:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

2

Name of landowner:

Address:

The site and your proposal

3 What name would you like the site to be known as?
[The site name could be descriptive or an address]

Have you any information for the site on the internet? If so please provide the web address:

4 Please provide a map showing the exact boundaries of the site you would like considered.

Map Provided

5 Please provide the National Grid reference of the site.

6 What is the current use of the site?

Has there been any previous development on the site? Yes No

If so, what was it?

7 What do you propose using the site for?

- 8 If you are proposing housing on the site please provide details of what you think would be appropriate, both in terms of the number of dwellings, and their forms (flats, detached houses, terraces etc).

167 units in total at a density of around 30 dwellings per hectare.

- 9 It is likely that there will be a requirement for 25% of the housing within the development to be affordable. If applicable, are you considering more or less than this figure?

25% More Less

- 10 If you are proposing business uses please provide details of what you would market the land for? [Please make sure the area of land proposed for business use is shown on the site plan]

Business and offices (Use Class 4)

General industrial land (Use Class 5)

Storage and distribution (Use Class 6)

Do you have a specific occupier in mind for the site? Yes No

- 11 If you are proposing uses other than housing or business please provide as much detail as possible on what you propose. [Examples could include retailing, tourism, renewable energy, sports, leisure and recreation, institutions and education.]

Recreational facilities to be retained within Area 1 on the Indicative Masterplan (see paper apart)

- 12 Will the proposed development be phased? Yes No

If yes, then please provide details of what is anticipated to be built and when.

To be confirmed

- 13 Has the local community been given the opportunity to influence/partake in the development proposal?

Yes No Not Yet

If there has been any community engagement please provide details of the way in which it was carried out and how it has influenced your proposals. **If no consultation has yet taken place, please detail how you will do so in the future.**

Extensive consultation to be carried out in line with Council guidance, national policy and statutory requirements.

Sustainable Development and Design

14 Have you applied principles of sustainable siting and design to your site? The City Council has produced a Sustainability Checklist which provides guidance on the principles of sustainable siting and design and other issues which can be found on www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan

Please provide the following information:

A) Exposure – does the site currently have

- Little shelter from northerly winds
- Some shelter from northerly winds
- Good shelter to northerly winds

B) Aspect – is the site mainly

- North facing
- East or west facing
- South, south west or south east facing

C) Slope – do any parts of the site have a gradient greater than 1 in 12?

- Yes

If yes, approximately how much (hectares or %)

- No

D) Flooding – are any parts of the site at risk of flooding?

- Yes

If yes, approximately how much (hectares or %)

- No

E) Drainage – do any parts of the site currently suffer from poor drainage or waterlogging?

- Yes

If yes, approximately how much (hectares or %)

- No

F) Built and Cultural Heritage – would the development of the site lead to the loss or disturbance of archaeological sites or vernacular or listed buildings?

- Significant loss or disturbance
- Some potential loss or disturbance
- No loss or disturbance

G) Natural conservation – would the development of the site lead to the loss or disturbance of wildlife habitats or species?

- Significant loss or disturbance
- Some potential loss or disturbance
- No loss or disturbance

H) Landscape features – would the development of the site lead to the loss or disturbance of linear and group features of woods, tree belts, hedges and stone walls?

- Significant loss or disturbance
- Some potential loss or disturbance
- No loss or disturbance

I) Landscape fit – would the development be intrusive into the surrounding landscape?

- Significant intrusion
- Slight intrusion
- No intrusion

J) Relationship to existing settlements – how well related will the development be to existing settlements?

- Unrelated (essentially a new settlement)
- Partially related
- Well related to existing settlement

K) Land use mix – will the development contribute to a balance of land uses, or provide the impetus for attracting new facilities?

- No contribution
- Some contribution
- Significant contribution

L) Accessibility – is the site currently accessible to bus, rail, or major road networks?

	Bus Route	Rail Station	Major Road
Access more than 800m away	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access between 400-800m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access within 400m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

M) Proximity to services and facilities – How close are any of the following?

	400m	400m-800m	>800m
Community facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local shops	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public transport networks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Primary schools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

N) Footpath and cycle connections – are there any existing direct footpath and cycle connections to community and recreation facilities or employment?

- No available connections
- Limited range of connections
- Good range of connections

O) Proximity to employment opportunities – are there any existing employment opportunities within 1.6km for people using or living in the development you propose?

- None
- Limited
- Significant

P) Contamination – are there any contamination or waste tipping issues with the site?

- Significant contamination or tipping present
- Some potential contamination or tipping present
- No contamination or tipping present

Q) Land use conflict – would the development conflict with adjoining land uses or have any air quality or noise issues?

- Significant conflict
- Some potential conflict
- No conflict

If there are significant conflicts, what mitigation measures are proposed?

R) Physical Infrastructure – does the site have connections to the following utilities?

- Electricity
- Gas
- Water and Sewage

If you are proposing housing, is there existing school capacity in the area?

Secondary Capacity

Primary Capacity

Are there any further physical or service infrastructure issues affecting the site?

See Paper Apart

15 No site is going to be perfect and the checklist above will inevitably raise some potential negative impacts from any development. Where negative impacts are identified, please provide details of their nature and extent and of any mitigation that may be undertaken. Listed below are examples of further information that may be included in your submission;

	Included	Not applicable
Contamination Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Flood Risk Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Drainage Impact Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Habitat/biodiversity Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Landscape Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other as applicable (e.g. trees, noise, dust, smell, retail impact assessment etc please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

16 Does the development proposal give any benefits to the community? If so what benefits does the development bring, and how would they likely be delivered?

Community benefits can include new community facilities (such as local shops, health, education, leisure and community facilities), affordable housing, green transport links and open spaces. Include elements which you anticipate may be required as developer contributions from the development. (Please note, specific contributions will have to be negotiated with the Council on the basis of the proposal.)

See Paper Apart

17 If you have prepared a framework or masterplan showing a possible layout for the site, please include it with this form.

Masterplan/ Framework attached

If you need help reading this document
(for example if you need it in a different
format or in another language), please
phone us on 01224 523317.

ভাষা/ইন্টারপ্রেটিং এবং অন্যান্য ফরমেটের
যোগাযোগ সাহায্যের জন্য দয়া করে
: 01224 523317
নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

如果需要語言/傳譯及其他形式的傳訊支援服務，
請聯絡：01224 523317。

Если требуется помощь при выборе
языка /переводчика или других
способов общения, звоните по
телефону: 01224 523317

للحصول على مساعدة بخصوص اللغة/ الترجمة
و وسائل الاتصال الأخرى، الرجاء الاتصال
بالرقم التالي: 01224 523317

Lai saņemtu palīdzību sakarā ar
valodu/tulkošanu un citiem iespējamiem
komunikāciju atbalsta formātiem, lūdzu
zvanīt 01224 523317

Jej jus turite sunkumu su kalba/ vertimu
ar kitomis bendravimo formomis,
skambinkite 01224 523317

Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy językowej /
tłumacza lub innej pomocy w
porozumiewaniu się, proszę zadzwonić
pod numer: 01224 523317



ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.
Please return completed forms to:

Local Development Plan Team
Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Ground Floor North
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

Or email it to: ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk

March 2013
www.aberdeencity.gov.uk



University of Aberdeen

**Development Bid for land at
Balgownie**

June 2013

Ryden LLP

25 Albyn Place

Aberdeen

AB10 1YL

Tel; 01224 588866

Fax; 01224 589669

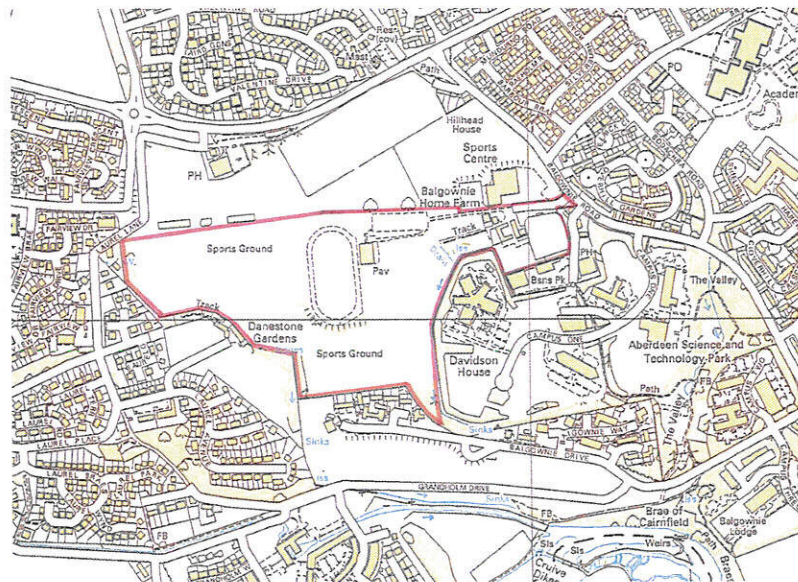
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This development bid is submitted on behalf of the University of Aberdeen who own land at Balgownie Playing Fields, to the north of Aberdeen, at the Bridge of Don, as highlighted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Site Location Plan



- 1.2 The University of Aberdeen was founded in 1495. It opened with 36 staff in 1497 and boasted the first chair of medicine in the English speaking world. A second University was founded in 1593 and until Kings College and Marischal College were united to form the University of Aberdeen in 1860, the City had two Universities. It is the third oldest University in Scotland with a student population of 14,500, studying 700 programmes across 85 subject areas. The University community represents 10% of the City's population.
- 1.3 One of the key development priorities of the University relates to physical infrastructure. This includes the need to work independently and in partnership to provide a suitable physical infrastructure within which cultural engagement can flourish. This includes developing infrastructure to enhance the University's support for cultural and community activity, in particular through major capital projects such as the new library and sports facilities.
- 1.4 The University are currently undertaking an ambitious capital investment programme to create appropriate physical infrastructure for staff and students. This

has amounted to over £200 million invested over the last decade, generating considerable employment opportunities for local industries. This investment has been led by three flagship projects, one of which is the Aberdeen Sports Village which opened in August 2009. The capital investment programme for the next decade is equally ambitious with more than £200 million allocated to be spent over the next ten years.

- 1.5 Aberdeen Sports Village is a joint development between the University, Aberdeen City Council and SportScotland who themselves have invested £7 million in this development due to their desire for a regional sports facility in the City. This world-class facility providing a host of sporting amenities previously unavailable in the area, resulting in top class sporting facilities for the whole of the City, not just the University. These include: a sports hall with space for 9 badminton courts, a third-generation indoor football pitch; a new athletics arena; an indoor athletics area; hockey pitches; squash courts; a gym; studio space; a fitness suite and performance clinic; and a café and crèche facilities. The facility also includes significantly improved disabled access. An aquatics centre with a 50m swimming pool is due to open in early 2014.
- 1.6 Bridge of Don is a suburb located 4 miles north of Aberdeen City Centre. Within the last 30 years, it has become one of the largest suburbs in Europe with an estimated population of over 22,000. It is well served by a number of facilities, including shops; restaurants; hotels; exhibition centre; library; swimming pool; two secondary schools; eight primary schools; a park and ride facility; and a number of industrial estates. It lies on the southern tip of the Energetica corridor, which looks to create a sustainable, low carbon investment location along the 30-mile strip of coastline to Peterhead.
- 1.7 Given the sites strategic location within the built up area of Bridge of Don, the bid site is an ideal location for development and can therefore contribute to the land requirements and objectives identified through the Strategic Development Plan. Further justification is provided below.

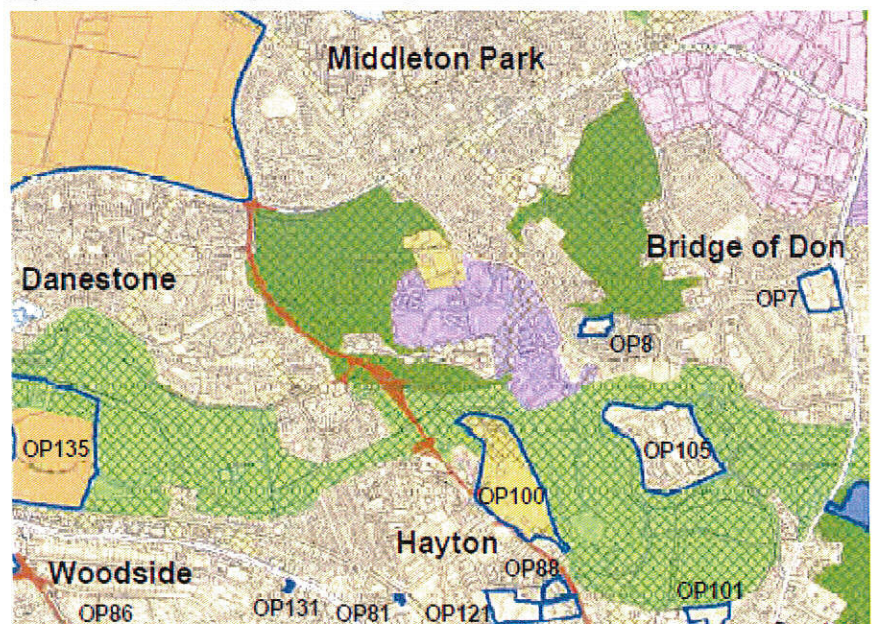
2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The Balgownie Playing Fields lie within a predominantly residential area within Bridge of Don. The land covered by this bid extends to approximately 16.7 hectares (41.2 acres) and is bound to the north by the remainder of the Balgownie site which is owned by Aberdeen City Council and beyond this the A90/Parkway; to

the south by residential dwellings and beyond this the River Don; to the west by further residential dwellings. To the east the site is bound by Balgownie Road; residential dwellings; a mixed use area comprising a bowling alley and five aside football pitches, and the Aberdeen Science and Technology Park.

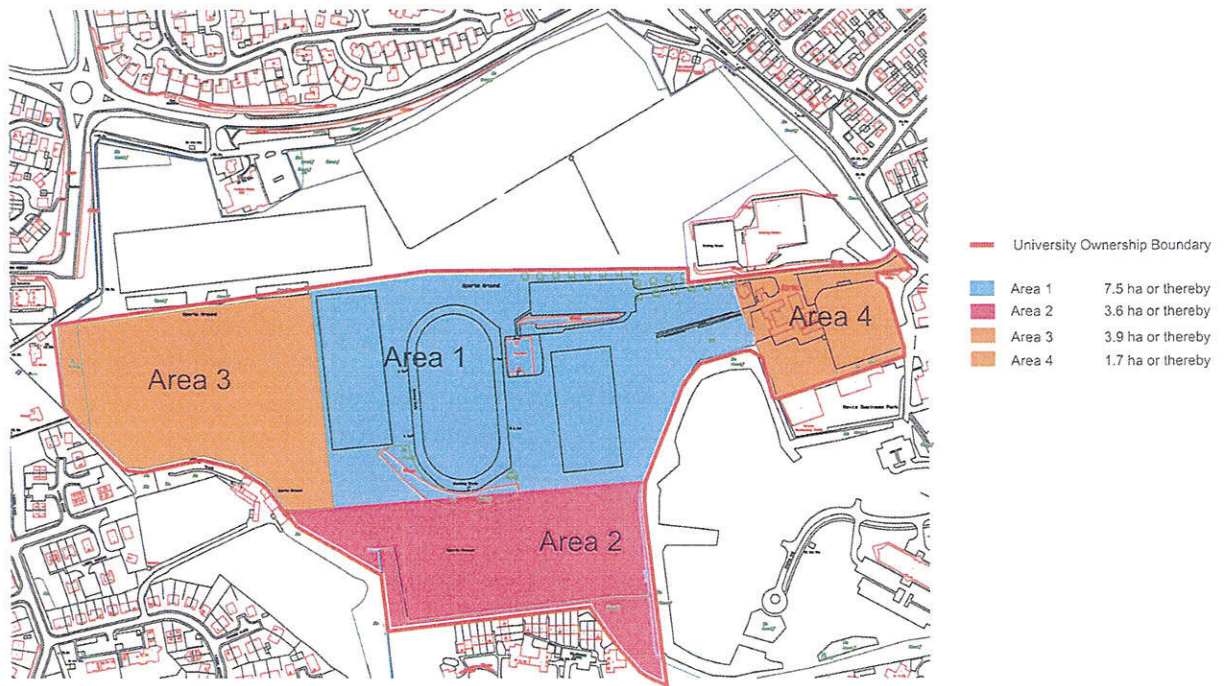
- 2.2 In topographic terms, the site slopes from a high point of approximately 55 metres AOD in the north east corner north to a low point of around 40 metres AOD in the south. The site has a number of different tiers with large parts of the site generally flat. The aspect of the site is south facing.
- 2.3 The majority of the landscaping on the site exists along the eastern and western boundaries, with further pockets of landscaping and tree belts throughout the site. The majority of the site is open due to the use of the site being for playing field purposes. Balgownie Playing Fields were used by the University of Aberdeen and plaed host to football, shinty and gaelic football. The site consists of a number of grass pitches, running track, changing facilities, a pavilion and car park. Some of the facilities, including the running track and pavilion are dilapidated and require significant upgrading. The remainder of the site is used for informal purposes.
- 2.4 The site is identified in the extant Aberdeen City Local Development Plan as part of the Green Space Network (Policy NE1) and as Urban Green Space (Policy NE3). An extract of the proposals map is shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2012



- 2.5 The proposals involve a mixed use development, comprising residential use, improved sporting and leisure facilities and potentially an extension to the Aberdeen Science and Technology Park. Access could be gained from a number of locations, including Balgownie Drive to the east; and, Laurel Lane or The Science and Technology Park to the west. Land would also be made available to implement the Third Don Crossing which would provide an additional point of access to the site.
- 2.6 Figure 3 below highlights an indicative masterplan for the site. Area 2 to the south of the site, which extends to approximately 3.6 hectares, is considered suitable for a potential extension to the Aberdeen Science and Technology Park. Access would be taken from the Park. Land in Area 3, to the west, extending to approximately 3.9 hectares is suitable for residential use considering it is immediately adjacent to the existing built up area. At a rate of 30 dwellings per hectare, this area could accommodate up to 117 dwellings. Also, land to the west of the bid site has been the subject of a Compulsory Purchase Order to achieve the Third Don Crossing proposals. Land to the east in Area 4, extending to approximately 1.7 hectares, is currently the subject of a residential development. At a similar density, this could accommodate approximately 50 dwellings. Land in the centre of the site at Area 1 would be retained for sporting/leisure facilities and managed open space to provide a focal point for the development. Use of this area would be shared with Aberdeen Football Club and other community users. This would tie in with the remaining open space to the north in the ownership of Aberdeen City Council.
- 2.7 The University wishes to stress that, whilst this bid site as a whole is very ambitious and forward thinking, the four separate component areas are effective sites individually and not dependent on each other. This gives the whole site a flexibility that is required by an effective site, one that can respond to changing market conditions and types of development.

Figure 3: Indicative Masterplan



3.0 SCOTTISH PLANNING POLICY

3.1 The 2010 consolidated document on Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) places sustainable economic growth at the heart of town planning policy in Scotland. It is designed to encourage the right development in the right place, which enables social, environmental and economic benefits to result from land use change. This “triple-bottom line” approach to spatial planning is recognised as the best way to promote sustainability which will help this generation meet its needs without compromising future generations’ ability to meet theirs.

3.2 Paragraph 3 of SPP explains that the purpose of planning is to guide the future development and use of land.

“Planning is about where development should happen, where it should not and how it interacts with its surroundings”.

3.3 Development plans are discussed in paragraphs 10 – 21 of SPP. In monitoring development plans, SPP directs local authorities to focus on key assumptions previously made and whether or not they remain valid and whether or not land allocations proved viable. Monitoring plans are a key practice for local authorities and should set the direction for the future review of the plan.

- 3.4 SPP is split into various subject policies that deal with the composite elements of town planning. The first of these that concerns this development bid is housing. SPP affirms the Scottish Government's commitment to providing new homes and ensures that the planning system is fully committed to supporting this aim. A generous supply of effective housing land is one of the ways planning authorities can support this aim. Development plans should provide a housing land supply that is effective and robust enough to ensure that there are no unnecessary impediments to housing developments coming forward.
- 3.5 The key aspect of a local authority's housing land supply should be flexibility. In this sense, the supply of housing land should be adaptable to changing conditions and able to react to external circumstances or failures within existing supply. SPP also directs local authorities towards the possibilities of the siting of specific housing land requirements in an attempt to achieve other non-housing policy objectives, such as promoting active lifestyles and place-making.
- 3.6 High-quality design of new residential development is a key policy objective of the Scottish Government and should guide the whole process of delivering new housing. The aim for this policy is to create places that are distinctive, with a good mix of integrated land uses including homes of varied types and tenures. Fundamental to this policy is the integration with new residential development of active travel solutions, including walking and cycling as well as public transport. This will reduce reliance on the private car and encourage easy access to local services and promote healthy lifestyles.
- 3.7 To this end, SPP promotes new housing land that is located within or adjacent to existing settlements. This helps to reduce costs in terms of servicing sites but also helps to sustain local services, schools, shops and community facilities, as well as encouraging investment in new services. Paragraph 40 explains that the *"settlement strategy set out in the development plan should promote a more sustainable pattern of growth for an area, taking account of the scale and type of development pressure and the need for growth and regeneration"*.
- 3.8 SPP makes it clear that affordable housing needs should be met within the housing market area that the need is based. It sets a benchmark of 25% of new housing to be affordable yet allows for an increased allocation where the housing need and demand assessments identifies areas with acute need.

- 3.9 SPP encourages development to consider carefully the opportunities to strengthen local ecosystems, such as habitat networks and wildlife corridors, which re-establish broken links and fragmented ecologies. Open space, which enables the enjoyment and appreciation of natural heritage, can have a profound impact on the sustainability of new developments. Landscapes constantly change and evolve and the aim of Scottish Planning Policy is to facilitate this change whilst enhancing the distinctive character of places. What is clear from careful reading of Scottish Planning Policy is that, whilst concerns over landscape and natural heritage conservation may act as a constraint on development, more often than not, careful planning and design can minimise potential conflict and maximise the potential for positive enhancement of the natural environment.
- 3.10 The links between spatial planning and transport are vital to ensuring new development contributes towards sustainable economic growth. These links are addressed by SPP, which aims to encourage new patterns of travel behaviour that are more active (i.e. walking and cycling) or more sustainable (public transport and car-sharing). The planning system in Scotland should support a pattern of development which limits the need for car-based travel and supports a range of travel options.
- 3.11 This theme is explored more thoroughly in Planning Advice Note 75: Planning for Transport. It recommends local authorities create accessibility profiles for sites in the production of development plans. The profile should reflect the catchment areas served, likely quality of service and result in indicators of accessibility. A maximum threshold of 1600m from local services and 400m from bus stops should be achieved by new developments.
- 3.12 Open Space and Physical activity is addressed by SPP in paragraphs 149 and 150. These paragraphs stress the importance of open space relative to the health and well-being of the population and encourage easy access to a range of facilities that will allow people to engage in physical activity in the most convenient way. SPP encourages local authorities to support the enhancement of open spaces and proposals that safeguard and protect open space from inappropriate development.
- 3.13 The outcomes of these subject policies should be to encourage sustainable and well-designed places that are accessible to as many people within the community as possible. The key to a successful place does not just rest with the buildings themselves, but the function of the space between buildings and their ability to adapt to the changing circumstances of local residents and visitors. These

outcomes form the basis of all planning policy documents including for Aberdeen City.

4.0 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009

- 4.1 The Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan approved by Scottish Ministers in 2009 sets growth targets for the city region and promotes a spatial strategy designed to accommodate this growth in the most sustainable locations. It identifies a requirement for 72,000 houses within the Structure Plan area over the period to 2030. Aberdeen City is identified as one of three Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) which will be the main focus for development in that period. Around half of all new development is likely to be located in Aberdeen City. Of those 36,000 houses required within the City it is envisaged that 21,000 will be provided on greenfield sites with a further 15,000 split between brownfield sites and identified regeneration areas within the City. In terms of phasing of greenfield housing, 12,000 are anticipated to be required between 2007 and 2016; 5,000 between 2017 and 2023 and 4,000 between 2024 and 2030.
- 4.2 The Structure Plan advocates sustainable mixed communities with new housing and developments for employment and commercial use well related to each other to improve people's quality of life and opportunity. One of the targets to meet the sustainable mixed communities objective is for all housing development over 1 hectare in the Strategic Growth Areas to be in line with approved supplementary guidance and generally have no less than 30 dwellings per hectare.
- 4.3 With regard to economic growth, the plans objective is to provide opportunities which encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate and attractive to the nature of different industries. The Plan seeks to ensure that at least 60 hectares of land available to businesses at all times in a range of locations within the City. New employment land allocations in the City between 2007 and 2023 require to total 105 hectares, with 70 hectares identified as strategic reserve land to come forward in the period between 2024 and 2030.

Proposed Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan

- 4.4 The proposed SDP for the Aberdeen city region was published in February 2013 for consultation. It is expected that a finalised Plan will be sent to Scottish Ministers in the coming weeks for approval. The Plan sustains many of the fundamental principles contained in the Structure Plan. As in the preceding Structure Plan, Aberdeen City is identified as a Strategic Growth Area with around half of all new development in the SDP area to be located here.
- 4.5 The Plan acknowledges the scale of growth expected in the City region, and anticipates that a significant proportion of development will be located on greenfield sites. The housing and employment allowances for Aberdeen are set out in the table below.

Figure 4: SDP Land Allowances

	Housing Allowances		
	Existing LDP allocations to 2016	2017 – 2026	2027 – 2035
Brownfield	4,500	3,000	3,000
Greenfield	12,000	5,000	4,000
	Employment land allowances (hectares)		
	105		70

- 4.6 Economic Growth is a key objective for the SDP. The Plan looks to provide opportunities which encourage economic development and create new employment in a range of areas that are both appropriate for and attractive to the needs of different industries. It acknowledges the success of the area’s economy during the recent global downturn and looks to capitalise on this by continuing to diversify the economy into other key sectors such as life sciences, food and drink and tourism.
- 4.7 On sustainable development and climate change, this objective looks at the energy resource use in new developments and stipulates the need for employing energy saving technologies in all new development. The target for this policy is for all new buildings to be carbon neutral by 2020. Transportation use, as it impacts on climate change, is another focus of this policy and new developments are encouraged to consider a proposal’s impact on the environment from increased unsustainable forms of transport.

4.8 With regard to population growth, the region's population has risen in recent years and the plan is based on the assumption that this will continue to grow up to 500,000 people by 2035. However, as many stakeholders have argued during the recent consultation on the proposed plan, these projections significantly underestimate the anticipated population growth published by the National Records of Scotland (NRS). They project the population of the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan Area to rise to 567,800 by 2035. This is reinforced by the projections for household growth published by the NRS which is set to increase by 35% over the period from 2010 – 2035. Overall, whilst the SDP sets an annual average housing requirement of 2,159 units for the period 2011 – 2035, according to realistic projections, this figure is more likely to be 2,815 units a year, creating an annual shortfall of 656 units across the plan period. Over the plan period, this points to a requirement for an additional 16,400 houses for which the Local Development Plan Review should be seeking to identify sites for.

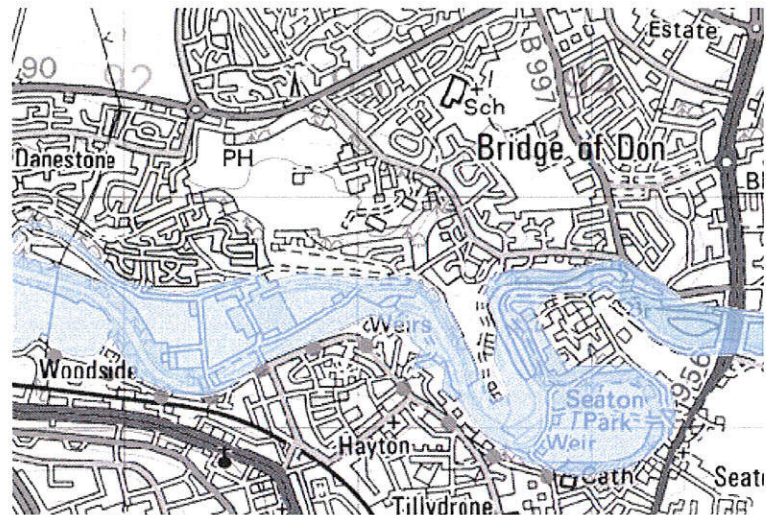
4.9 Another key objective of the plan is the creation of sustainable mixed communities, where housing, jobs, services and recreation facilities are available to as wide a range of people within existing settlements as possible. The Plan states that within the SGAs, services and facilities for the community must be part of a development. Employment and commercial use must be well integrated with new housing to maximise the benefits for the environment and the quality of life of local residents.

5.0 SERVICES

5.1 Mains drainage and gas are available in the surrounding area. An extension would be required to service the development of the site.

5.2 SEPA's Flood Risk Map is shown below in figure 5. The extent of the flood risk associated with the site ends at the boundary of the site. Given the difference in levels along the southern boundary there is no flood risk associated with the site.

Figure 5: Flood Risk



- 5.3 Braehead Primary School was created in 2007 following the amalgamation of Balgownie and Upper Westfield schools. The 2012 based school roll forecasts indicate that Braehead Primary School has a capacity of 279 pupils. In 2012, it was operating at 61% of capacity. This was forecast to increase to 69% of capacity by 2017. If 450 houses were developed on the site, this would push the primary school beyond its capacity. Developer contributions could therefore be provided to alleviate this.

6.0 DEVELOPMENT JUSTIFICATION

- 6.1 The development of green belt land is necessary to allow the future growth of the City and this is acknowledged in the Strategic Development Plan¹. There is a strong argument that available land within the built up area should be developed in advance of sites on the periphery. This is an example of such a site and in the first instance, there is a strong justification for the removal of this site from its current Urban Green Space/ Green Space Network designation. Policy NE3 in the extant Local Development Plan states that the redevelopment of Urban Green Space will only be permitted where an equivalent and equally convenient area for public access is made available.
- 6.2 This land is owned and used by the University of Aberdeen as sports pitches, however current usage is low. The University in conjunction with Aberdeen City Council and SportScotland have built a new, state-of-the-art Aberdeen Sports

¹ Proposed SDP, paragraph 3.16

Village at Linksfield, which opened in August 2009. This includes a full size indoor sports pitch; 135 metre indoor running track; 9 court size hall; 4 squash courts; performance gym; 2 exercise studios; floodlit outdoor pitch; 400 metre outdoor running track; sports science facilities; café and conference facilities. The indoor Astro turf pitch is one of the first of its kind in Scotland, thereby highlighting the national importance of the Aberdeen Sports Village.

- 6.3 It provides a modern facility which significantly improves both the range and quality of sports facilities in the City. It is argued that the provision of this facility more than meets the requirements of the extant Local Development Plan Policy NE3 in relation to Urban Green Space. The Aberdeen Sports Village will provide everything and more than that the Balgownie pitches currently provide. Future development plans for the Aberdeen Sports Village include the new Aquatics Centre, to be opened in February next year, as well as further expansion to accommodate growing demand. All future investment in sport and leisure facilities by the University, the City Council and SportsScotland in the north of the city will be focused on this facility. Therefore, all other facilities in the surrounding area will be underused, unviable and no longer supported by investment or patronage. This makes the bid site an ideal location for redevelopment.
- 6.4 SPP paragraphs 149 – 150 on Open Space and Physical Activity supports the extant Local Development Plan position in that it states that sports pitches can be redeveloped where it can be demonstrated that the playing field which would be lost would be replaced by a playing field of comparable or greater benefit for sport in a location which is convenient for its users. As previously highlighted, the replacement is the Aberdeen Sports Village and is of much higher quality, with a wider variety of sporting opportunities available. It is in a convenient location, approximately 3.5 kilometres from the bid site. It is also located to the north of the City, therefore users of the current pitches will not have significant distances to travel to access the new facilities. It enhances public access to high quality sporting facilities because it is available to the whole of the city rather than just University students. Disabled access has also been improved enabling people with mobility issues to benefit from the facilities as well. It should also be remembered that sports facilities will continue to be provided on this site. These will be refined therefore providing an improvement to the facilities in this area.
- 6.5 Now that the Aberdeen Sports Village has been established, the Balgownie pitches are surplus to requirements and should be identified for appropriate alternative uses in the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan. Any funds realised by the University

through the development of this site will be used towards other University infrastructure, which could include sporting facilities in the City.

6.6 The strategic location of the site within one of the Strategic Growth Areas and adjacent to a major transport network through the City, makes it an ideal location for development. The site is located within the Energetica corridor, a key economic development initiative for the City region. This bid site is also an infill site surrounded on all sides by development, including both residential properties and business uses at the Aberdeen Science and Technology Park.

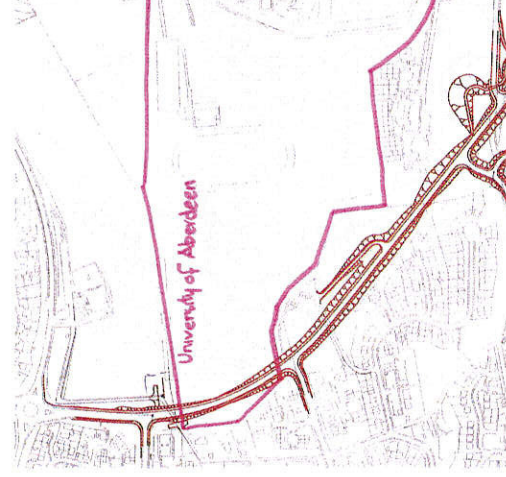
6.7 The proposals for the redevelopment of this site would sit comfortably with the surrounding uses. It would help realise the housing objectives of the Proposed Strategic Development Plan, due to its location within the city, where around half of new development is proposed. It would contribute to the Greenfield housing allocations for the city. Any extension to the Science and Technology Park would contribute to the employment land requirements of the Proposed Strategic Development Plan. It is close to existing transport links and enjoys pedestrian links with the surrounding area. The uses proposed would meet the sustainable mixed communities objective of the Proposed Strategic Development Plan and provide the integration of a mix of uses to reduce the need to travel. The majority of the site will be retained for football/leisure purposes and managed open space and offer opportunities for continued use of the site for sporting and recreational use, currently used by Aberdeen Football Club. The site to the north in the ownership of Aberdeen City Council will ensure a large element of greenery and open space is retained.

6.8 Further to this it is argued that there would be no significant loss to the landscape character and amenity of the site and adjoining areas, as the new uses would sit well with those existing. Access to the site and new development and facilities would be maintained and enhanced. The site is of no significant wildlife or heritage value and there would be no significant loss to any areas of landscaping or mature trees. Therefore, there is justification for the redevelopment of this site for alternative purposes.

6.9 The Third Don Crossing is identified in the Proposed Strategic Development Plan as an important improvement in the transport infrastructure in the City, required to serve new development². Proposals for the Third Don Crossing include the creation of a new road to the west of the bid site, commencing at the existing roundabout on the A90/Parkway to the north east of the site as shown in Figure 6.

² Proposed SDP, paragraph 3.18

Figure 6: Third Don Crossing Proposals



- 6.10 University owned land has been acquired to achieve this via Compulsory Purchase Order. The development of this site can therefore provide land required to deliver the Third Don Crossing. The provision of this crossing is the driver for opening up development and aiding growth to the north of the City, thereby contributing to the land requirements for Aberdeen City. The land at Balgownie is therefore significant in creating an opportunity for development in this area.
- 6.11 SPP specifically encourages the coordination of housing land provision with improvements in transport infrastructure, as a means of promoting sustainable economic growth. In this case, the improvements in infrastructure would be the provision of the Third Don Crossing. The provision of residential development on this site, along with other community facilities and potential extension to the Science and Technology Park would make efficient use of this improvement and be entirely in line with this policy.
- 6.12 The site is well-connected and close to a wide range of services within walking distance. There are a number of employment areas located within 1.6 km of the bid site for people living on the proposed development site. Aberdeen Science and Technology Park is located immediately adjacent and Bridge of Don Industrial Estate is approximately 1.1 km to the west. The site is accessible to bus and road networks in the area, providing clear linkages with other parts of the City. Bus stops are located on Balgownie Road, Balgownie Drive and Fairview Street, and all are within the 400m requirements contained within PAN75. Shops can be found on Braehead Way, approximately 600m from the site and Bridge of Don Academy is closer at approximately 400m. Braehead Primary School includes community

facilities and an all weather pitch. A pub and carvery restaurant are located to the north of the site on the Parkway.

6.13 The site is surrounded by footpath connections with the wider area, encouraging active travel and healthy lifestyles. The Council's Core Path Network runs along Fairview Street to the west of the site and along the Parkway to the north. Cycle pathways will form part of the proposals on the access road to the Third Don Crossing leading to safer and quicker cycle routes through the city.

6.14 With regard to the natural environment, the current use of the site is for playing fields. Therefore, the wildlife habitats on the site would be concentrated in the trees and woodlands around the site. These would be retained where possible. Much of the site will be retained for sports facilities and open space, with the areas of open space providing continued and improved habitats for wildlife to thrive. Trees located on the site are mostly along the boundaries of the site. Nevertheless, there are some small areas of landscaping within the site. These will be retained where possible if worthy of retention. The retention of these features would add maturity to the proposals and a tree survey would be undertaken prior to development to determine their significance.

6.15 It is argued that development would not be intrusive in the surrounding landscape. The site is bound by existing development to the east, west and south and by landscaping along the eastern and western boundaries. Any development would be both well screened and seen in the context of the adjacent uses. In addition to this from the south, the flats at Balgownie Drive are the highest point and these are visible to the surrounding area. They screen the site lying to the north and therefore the playing fields are not visible from this point. Any development would therefore be well integrated into the existing built landscape with minimum visual impact.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Sports pitches can be redeveloped when they are replaced by playing fields of comparable or greater benefit for sport. The development of the Aberdeen Sports Village at Linksfield provides state-of-the-art sports facilities. The range of sporting amenities has been significantly enhanced for the whole community, providing facilities which were previously unavailable in the City.

- 7.2 Linksfield is also located in the north of the City, accessible by a range of means of transport and the provision of this facility justifies the redevelopment of part of the Balgowrie playing fields which will be surplus to requirements. It should be highlighted that sports facilities will be retained and enhanced on this site also.
- 7.3 The proposals involve a mix of uses which would not only meet the anticipated land requirements identified through the Proposed Strategic Development Plan, but would contribute to a sustainable mixed use development in line with the objectives of the SDP. The majority of the site would be retained for continuing football/leisure use and maintained open space providing a focal point to development and retaining a sense of greenness in the development.
- 7.4 Monies achieved through the redevelopment of the site would contribute towards other University infrastructure which could include sports facilities in the City. The proceeds of a private sale to developers will be reinvested back into the City, most likely directed towards the improvement plans for Aberdeen Sports Village. Therefore, not only will the redevelopment of the Balgowrie playing fields provide improved sports facilities on site, but could potentially contribute to funding for the enhancement of further facilities in the City.
- 7.5 The bid site is a suitable location for development at the heart of Bridge of Don, surrounded by existing development of varying types. Development of this site would constitute infill development and would fit well in the surrounding landscape. It could be integrated well in the surrounding network of footpaths and roads and is accessible to a wide variety of services and by a range of means of transport. It is a good example of sustainable development and therefore has significant potential.
- 7.6 Land covered by this bid site is required to deliver the Third Don Crossing, which is essential in improving accessibility to the north of the city and facilitating development opportunities. Housing would be developed in coordination with improvements in infrastructure which is encouraged through SPP.
- 7.7 On the basis of the above, this land at Balgowrie playing fields should be considered favourably as a location for development within the review of the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan to meet the requirements for the Aberdeen City area as identified in the Strategic Development Plan.

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