



# 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](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan)

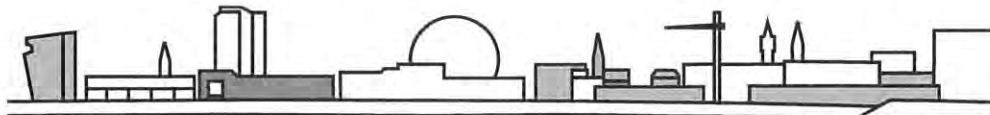
**Please ensure your proposal is with us by 14th June 2013.**

### 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: BARRATT EAST SCOTLAND (PER HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO) Date: 14/06/2013

Address: CARDEN CHURCH, 6 CARDEN PLACE,  
ABERDEEN

Postcode: AB10 1UR

Telephone:

Email:

2

Name of landowner:

Address: PER AGENT

- 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).

MIX OF HOUSES. NUMBERS TO BE DETERMINED BY SITE CONTEXT.

- 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?

AFFORDABLE HOUSING WILL BE CONSIDERED IN MORE DETAIL AT ANY APPLICATION STAGE

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.]

N/A

- 12 Will the proposed development be phased? Yes  No

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

- 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.**

PUBLIC CONSULTATION WAS UNDERTAKEN DURING THE PREPARATION OF THE EXISTING LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN. FURTHER CONSULTATION WILL TAKE PLACE IN LINE WITH THE PROGRAMME SET OUT BY ACC AS PART OF THE LDP PROCESS.

A FLEXIBLE APPROACH WILL BE TAKEN.

## 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](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan)

Please provide the following information:

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED STATEMENT

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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sports facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Public transport networks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Primary schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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



NEW SCHOOLS AND CATCHMENT CHANGES ARE CURRENTLY BEING CONSIDERED TO SERVE EXISTING AND FORTHCOMING ALLOCATIONS

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

NONE.

**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 type="checkbox"/>
Habitat/biodiversity Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Landscape Assessment	<input checked="" 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 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.)

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED STATEMENT

**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.

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

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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。

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

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

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

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

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



**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](mailto:ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

March 2013  
[www.aberdeencity.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk)



# Development Bid Supporting Statement

Thornhill, Craigton,  
Aberdeen

On behalf of Barratt East Scotland

June 2013

**Halliday Fraser Munro**

Chartered Architects & Planning Consultants

Carden Church 6 Carden Place Aberdeen AB10 1UR  
Tel: 01224 388700 Fax: 01224 388777

Aberdeen - Belfast - Dundee - Edinburgh - Glasgow

e-mail: [planning@hfm.co.uk](mailto:planning@hfm.co.uk)

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

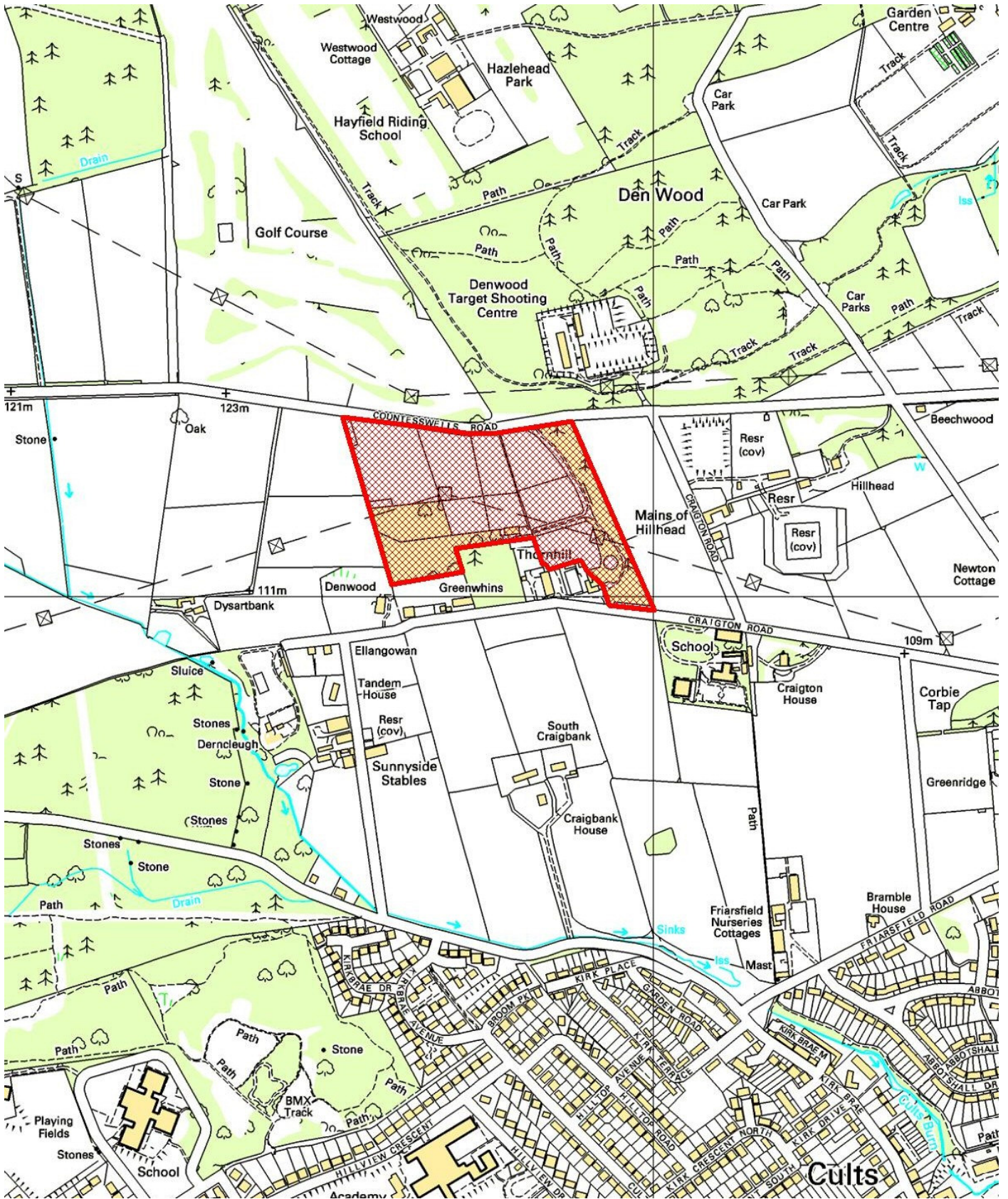
This supporting statement is to be read in conjunction with a Local Development Plan (LDP) bid submitted to Aberdeen City Council proposing the allocation of 7.8 ha of land for residential development on land to the north of Cults adjacent to Countesswells Road and Craigton Road. The bid is submitted on behalf of Barratt East Scotland, who control the land. The site is suitable for residential development as an extension to the current residential land allocated to the south of the site at Friarsfield and west at Countesswells. The location of the bid site between an existing development allocation and Countesswells Road make it an ideal location for the extension of residential development north of Cults to support the growth of the area. There is a considerable over-dependence on major sites to deliver the required housing numbers through the extant LDP. These sites have encountered delay in commencement and smaller sites such as Thornhill, which can deliver in the short term will support economic growth in the City. The following statement explains the bid in more detail and is structured around the Council's bid pro-forma.

## 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

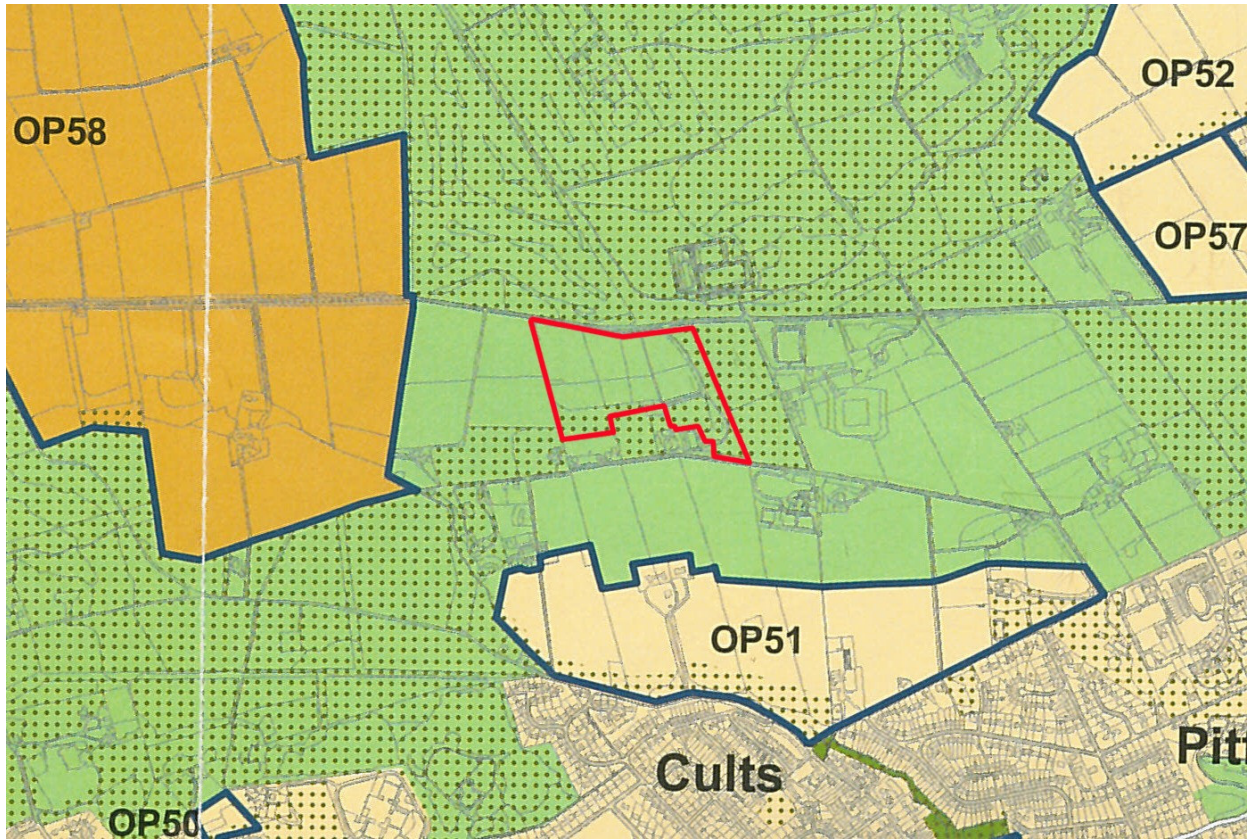
The development bid site comprises relatively flat grazing land, significant tree planting and Thornhill House. The site is broadly rectangular in shape and is located between Countesswells Road to the north and Craigton Road to the south. To the west is further open grazing land, to the east lies a reservoir and on the opposite side of Countesswells Road to the north lies Hazlehead Golf Course. The land south of the bid site at Friarsfield was allocated in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012) as OP51 for 280 dwellings, of which 81 have been approved at Committee. The Countesswells allocation (OP58) for 3000 homes and 10 ha of employment land is located to the west of the bid site. The proposed site has strong defensible boundaries that make it the logical site for residential development north of Cults.



SITE VIEWED FROM WEST - Note screening from trees.



PLAN OF SITE - Note surrounding development.



EXTRACT FROM LDP - Note surrounding allocations.



CONTEXT PLAN. Note site boundaries and developable area.

### **3.0 SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST**

The proposed bid site at Thornhill is deliverable, with no constraints being identified. The site is reviewed below, using the headings in the Council's Sustainability Checklist.

#### **3.1 Exposure**

The proposed bid site is well sheltered. Existing tree cover is located on the north, south and east providing shelter and screening from Countesswells Road and Craigton Road. Opportunities for additional landscaping exist within the site to maintain the character of the area.

#### **3.2 Aspect**

The site is flat with open aspects across the site, providing opportunities for passive solar gain in buildings.

#### **3.3 Slope**

The site gently slopes downwards from north to south. This can be designed into the layout of the site to minimise visual impact and enhance the south facing aspect of the land.

#### **3.4 Flood Risk**

The site is not subject to any flood risk.

#### **3.5 Drainage**

The site is not subject to any waterlogging issues. In terms of serving new development on the site, foul drainage would be connected to the public system that serves the surrounding development. On site SUDS would be provided.

#### **3.6 Built / Cultural Heritage**

The site is not subject to any built or cultural heritage features or constraints.

#### **3.7 Natural Conservation**

The site is not subject to any natural heritage features or constraints. The existing scrubland / grassland is of low ecological value. There are sections of the site which are allocated as Green Space Network in the LDP, however these areas will be located outwith the area identified for development.

#### **3.8 Landscape Features**

The site has a strong tree belt bordering the site on the southern, northern and eastern edges.

### **3.9 Landscape Fit**

The gently sloping site set against the woodland backdrop will ensure that the proposal fits with the surrounding character and setting. The open aspect within the site will provide an attractive residential layout, set within expansive tree planting and well screened from the public road. The strong northern, southern and eastern boundaries of the site, which are allocated as Green Space Network in the LDP will provide a defensible boundary for development in this area. The Dee Valley has a unique landscape and as such, the site will be developed accordingly to ensure a low landscape impact.

A Landscape Review has been undertaken (submitted with this bid) which states that the site is well screened from the south by a strong belt of trees.

### **3.10 Relationship to Existing Settlements**

The bid site is well related to the adjacent allocated residential developments at Friarsfield and Countesswells, and the existing settlements of Cults to the south and Craigiebuckler to the east, both physically and in terms of creating a viable and sustainable development. There are clear opportunities to encourage people to use public transport, which will effectively serve the surrounding area. The provision of an effective bus route between Aberdeen and Countesswells will ensure that Thornhill and the surrounding sites are well connected to the City and other employment centres.

### **3.11 Land Use Mix**

Quality housing, including an affordable element is proposed on the site, offering a greater mix of house types in the area. High quality residential development in this area is in high demand. The proposal will consolidate the existing development pattern and present no conflict with adjacent uses.

### **3.12 Accessibility**

Access to the general area has been considered acceptable by the City Council due to the allocation of Friarsfield and Countesswells, which are both accessed from the same road network as Thornhill. There is a main public transport route to Countesswells that runs past the site. Aberdeen City Council have recently reclassified Countesswells Road to a 30mph speed limit, which will improve the access and residential amenity of the site. During the preparation of the extant LDP, the Council suggested that road improvements would have to take place and that public transport in the area would have to be improved. The bid site can contribute to ensuring adequate public transport by facilitating a looped bus link, extending through Friarsfield, into Thornhill and back to the City or out to Countesswells. This would provide a high standard of access that would be suitable to support residential development on this site and in the surrounding area.

### 3.13 Proximity to Services and Facilities

The development bid site is well-related to the Friarsfield and Countesswells sites and associated proposed transport link. Local sports facilities are located around 400 metres away.

### 3.14 Footpath and Cycle Connections

The site is well connected to Hazlehead Park to the north of the site which has a number of footpath and cycle links around the City. The development on the bid site can easily connect to these links, providing options for those accessing the site for leisure or commuting purposes. Core Path 87 provides safe access to Cults, Bieldside and Hazlehead.

### 3.14 Proximity to Employment Opportunities

The large OP58 site to the west of Thornhill includes 10 hectares of employment land. Furthermore, the provision of a new public transport link through the Friarsfield and Thornhill sites will link these developments with employment opportunities further afield, including the Prime Four Business Park at Kingwells, located less than 3 miles away.

### 3.15 Contamination

There are no known sources of contamination on the site through previous use.

### 3.16 Land Use Conflict

The surrounding existing and proposed uses are entirely compatible with the development bid. Housing will be designed to complement the proposed development on the surrounding allocated sites.

### 3.17 Physical Infrastructure

There are no known constraints to development on the site. The surrounding residential developments indicate that the area is suitable for further residential development, and the physical infrastructure will be in place, or upgraded accordingly to support this. Overhead pylons cross the site, therefore development will not occur in this corridor and instead, can be used to enhance open space provision.

### 3.18 Community Benefits

Development on the bid site would bring benefits in the form of greater choice in the housing market and early delivery of residential units. Associated affordable housing and developer contributions will also benefit the existing and future community. Integrated development such as the proposals outlined at Thornhill and Friarsfield will help sustain services and community facilities.

#### **4.0 THE PROPOSAL**

7.8 ha of land at Thornhill are proposed to be allocated for residential development. Development on the site would have no significant landscape impact and will be well integrated and screened. This development would create an effective link from Countesswells through to Cults and provide a physical link to Friarsfield. It will facilitate the inclusion of a new loop road linking Countesswells Road with Craigton Road and onto Friarsfield Road / Kirk Brae. The site has no constraints to its development.

Although a small site, Thornhill can help supplement the housing allocations from larger sites that are not delivering. This proposal provides a containable site which is capable of immediate delivery. This will provide much needed short term delivery of housing to the Housing Market Area which will augment the existing supply. The existing LDP is heavily reliant on a relatively small number of large sites to deliver the housing requirements. These sites are taking significantly longer to deliver housing than had been anticipated with development still to occur on the majority. Consequently there is an acute shortage of new housing availability in the short term to support housing demand and assist economic growth. The proposed site at Thornhill represents a sustainable and well contained site capable of addressing this issue.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

As outlined above, we have considered various aspects of the residential development bid proposed at Thornhill. It has been shown that the site is deliverable, represents appropriate residential development in the area and will bring benefits to the community through supporting local services and facilities. The land should be allocated in the forthcoming Aberdeen Local Development Plan for residential development.



**Halcrow Group Limited**  
THORNHILL, CRAIGTON, CULTS  
landscape supporting statement

Jan 2006

**Halcrow Group Limited**  
THORNHILL, CRAIGTON, CULTS  
landscape supporting statement

Jan2006

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Landscape Character</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Visibility</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Landscape Capacity</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Development strategy</b>	<b>10</b>

# 1 Introduction

This statement has been produced by Halcrow Group Ltd . The authors are:

- Steve Crawford BSc (Hons) Town Planning RTPI Associate Consultant
- John Ramsay BSC MPhil MLI Principal Consultant Landscape Architect

The statement deals with the landscape character and visual implications of potential housing development on the Thornhill site. It sets out the existing landscape character and visibility and assesses the landscape capacity to absorb development.

The site is part of the Friarsfield/Craigton masterplan area and is bounded by Countesswells Road to the north and Craigton Rd together with the existing residential property Greenwells to the south. The east and west boundaries are both drystone dykes as existing field boundaries. The area is currently utilised as small paddocks for horses and ponies and as an extensive garden for the Thornhill property.

## 2 Landscape Character

### Landscape context

The wider landscape was considered as part of the assessment. The SNH/ACC Landscape Character Assessment No 80 for Aberdeen City 1996, identifies the site as lying in the southern edge of the “Countesswells/Milltimber/Kennerty Landscape Character area” adjoining the urban area of Cults. This is a Wooded Farmland Landscape character type. Many of the key distinctive landscape features identified in the assessment are present on the site:

- Mix of open and wooded areas
- Suburban edge visually contained by planting
- Softening effect of mature trees within the built up area
- Stone dykes as well as fences as field boundaries
- Distant views to hills

The site is close to the “Hazlehead Landscape Character area” which lies to the north. This area flat and is much more wooded. To the west is the “Kingshill/Bogskeathy Landscape Character area” which is a gently sloping plateau with an open character

The wider landscape pattern, of which the site is part, is one of small scale rectangular fields with a general north/south or north west/south east orientation. The fields are enclosed with stone walls and mature trees and there are small woods and shelterbelts reinforcing this pattern.

The area to the south of the site is more open in character with larger fields/paddocks sloping south. The existing suburban/urban area of Cults lies beyond these fields to the south of the site.

## Site character

### *Landform*

The landform is a key part of the site character. The site lies on the north east edge of Cults at the top of the slope of the Dee valley. The site lies on the south edge of a crest at the top of an even slope rising up from Cults. The land is flat at the north of the site but slopes off to the west and south. The highest point is some 126m AOD.

### *Landcover*

The main landuse is improved grassland for grazing by horses and ponies. The fields are small and are enclosed by drystone dykes generally in good condition.

There is substantial tree planting in belts on some field boundaries. There is an area of predominately coniferous woodland on the site.

The driveway and gardens of Thornhill occupy a significant area and are planted with beech and other substantial trees.

### *Manmade elements*

The house at Thornhill is a substantial suburban dwelling with several outbuildings, tennis court and garage/storage buildings.

North of the house there is a block of stables.;

Within the site there are dry stone walls forming the boundary of the existing paddocks.

There is an electricity transmission cable with pylons crossing the site and another immediately to the north

### ***Prospect/enclosure***

#### *View south*

Despite the trees within the site, there are limited views from the sections of the driveway south to the hills beyond the Dee valley. The southern edge of the site has views across the open fields of Friarsfield to Cults and beyond.

#### *Enclosure*

The mature trees surrounding the site create a sense of enclosure from the south and east. The paddocks to the north are more exposed

#### *Views into the site*

This is set out in detail in the visibility section.

Despite the recent tree planting on the northern boundary there are still views in from parts of Countesswells Rd. . Only distant receptors from south of the river Dee have clear views into the site [ upper sections only ] and these are greatly restricted by the perimeter trees. It is difficult to make out the site from these receptors as it is part of a generally wooded slope.

The existing landscape character is one of small paddocks and large suburban gardens. Significant tree planting and limited views in and out create a sense of enclosure



## 3 Visibility

Following the desk assessment and site inspection the visibility of the site was assessed. The significant potential visual receptors were identified:

### *Residential*

#### *Greenwhins*

No views into site due to woodland

#### *Denwood*

No views into site due to woodland

#### *Mains of Hillhead*

Potential views into site blocked by perimeter tree belt on eastern boundary.

#### *West Craigbank*

Views into site from south limited by tree planting on Craigton Road

#### *South Craigbank*

Views into site from south limited by tree planting on Craigton Road

#### *Colthill*

Views into site from west limited by landform

#### *Cults*

Views into site from south limited by tree planting on Craigton Road

## ***Transportation***

### *Countesswells Rd*

There are views into the site from sections of Countesswells Rd. These views only cover the northern section of the site. There is some tree planting adjoining the road which does limit the views in. There is no pedestrian footpath alongside the road.

### *Craigton Rd*

The boundary wall, hedging and mature trees on the north side of Craigton Rd limit views into the site

### *Mains of Hillhead Rd*

Potential views into site blocked by perimeter tree belt on eastern boundary.

## **Other**

### *Waldorf School Craigbank*

The boundary wall, hedging and mature trees on the north side of Craigton Rd limit views into the site

### *Denwood target shooting area*

The perimeter trees of Den Wood screen views into the site

### *Hazlehead Golf Club*

Some views from the south east corner of the Golf course across Countesswells Rd into the north section of the site are possible. However these are mostly screened by the existing line of mature conifers.

*Dee valley slopes*

Only distant receptors from south of the river Dee have clear views into the site [ upper sections only ] and these are greatly restricted by the perimeter trees. It is difficult to make out the site from these receptors as it is part of a generally wooded slope.

In summary it is clear that the existing landform trees and woodland greatly limit the visibility of the Thornhill site from the south.. The site is not visible from any A roads or from residential areas. The views from the north from Countesswells Rd will be reduced over time as the existing tree belts mature.

## 4 Landscape Capacity

The “landscape capacity” is defined as the measure of acceptable modification a landscape can absorb without loss of its character.. In accordance with the PPCA study of the adjoining Friarsfield site of November 2004, the following aspects of landscape capacity are assessed:

- Physical constraints
- Landscape constraints and opportunities
- Settlement form and landscape pattern
- Visual constraints

These criteria are then utilised to inform the development strategy.

### *Physical constraints*

The existing landform contributes positively to the landscape capacity in that the northern section of the site on the crest is screened to views from the lower slopes of the Dee valley. The over head electricity transmission lines are a significant constraint on development.

### *Landscape constraints and opportunity*

A number of the landscape features on site represent a constraint on development but provide an opportunity to retain the landscape character. The woodland and tree belts are key elements of the existing character and provide important screening. The drystone dykes that form the field boundaries are also key elements and the majority should be retained.

Non-visual character elements are limited. The non native woodland and garden planting will limit the wildlife. There is no recreational use of the site other than by the current owners. The character is not unique locally, the pattern of small paddocks and woodlands is well represented within the “Countesswells/Milltimber/Kennerty Landscape Character area”.

### *Settlement form and landscape pattern*

The existing settlement form is large detached, very low density housing.

Development would increase this density. The landscape pattern of small woods and paddocks would be retained albeit with a loss of the open space of the paddocks. The landscape grain is a grid with both north/south and east west elements and rectilinear blocks of woodland.

*Visual constraints*

The visibility of the site is limited as set out in section 3. The existing woodland and tree planting forms significant screening. Any development of the site would have to retain this screening if it is to reduce impact on the landscape character.

*Conclusions*

The site has significant capacity to absorb development due to the existing landscape features of the site. Additional tree planting on the northern boundary would increase the capacity further.

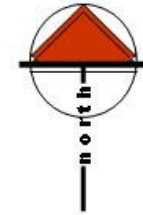
## 5 Development strategy

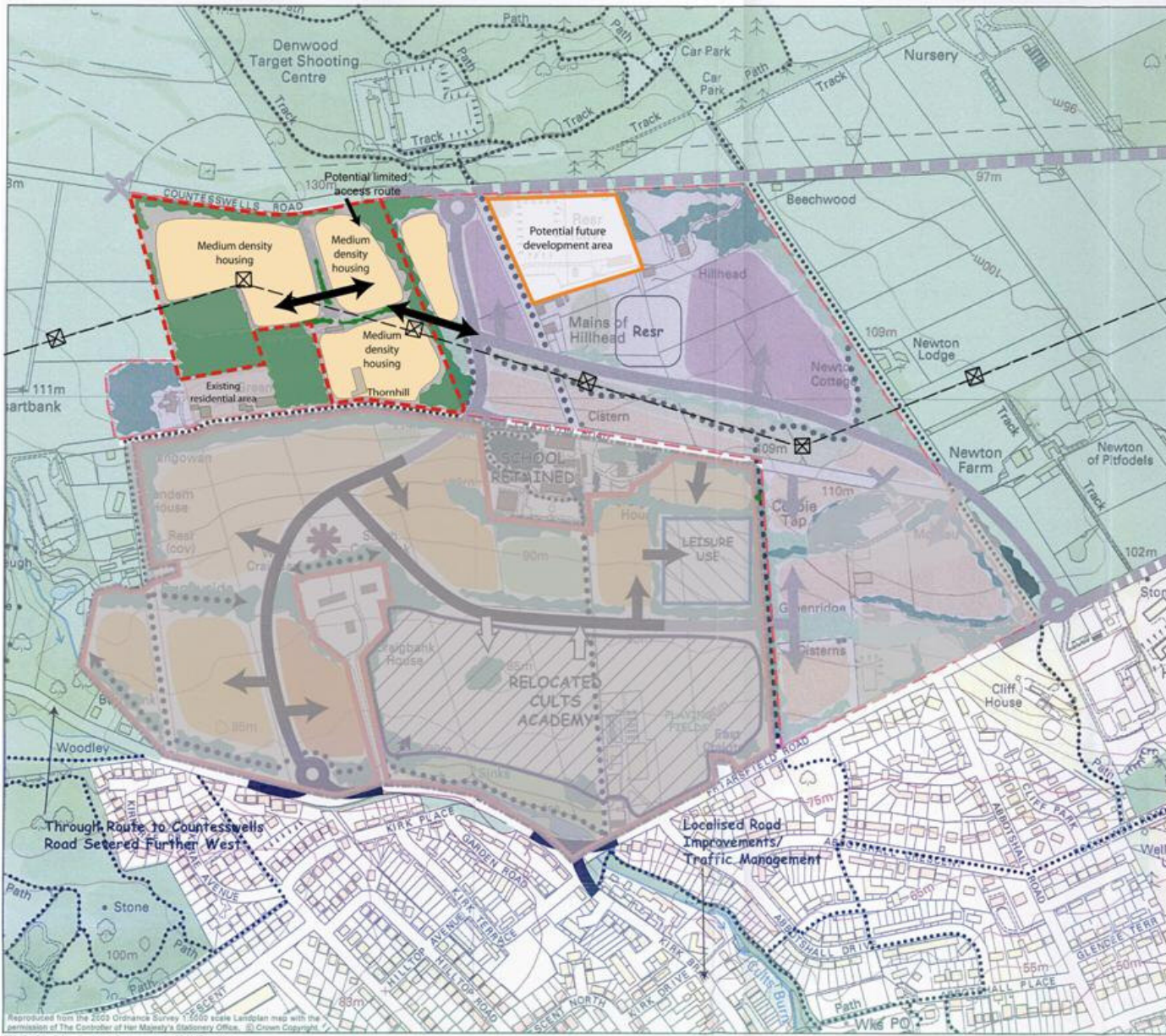
The aim in developing the site is to minimise landscape impact whilst introducing appropriate residential development onto the Thornhill part of the site. This sits well within the surrounding context and provides a natural progression from the Friarsfield site through the housing on Craigton Road and into the Thornhill site.

The key to this will be to retain the existing woodland and tree belts. The thinner belts should be supplemented with additional planting to maximise the screening benefits. This will minimise the impact of the development. It is not necessary to completely screen development particularly where this can contribute positively to the local landscape, however protecting the amenity of key receptors outwith the site is important. Development within the site will inevitably alter its the landscape character as much of the open space of the existing paddocks will be lost, however the key landscape features will be retained including an element of open space. The impact on the surrounding landscape will be limited and the landscape type is well represented elsewhere.

Business use on the site would be inappropriate as larger buildings would be more visible, more difficult to fit within the existing landscape and include requirements for significant surface parking.

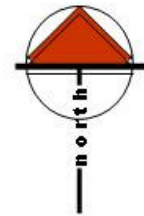
The development should be undertaken as part of a masterplan for the entire Friarsfield/Craigton area including the CALA and Scotia Homes sites. Further explanation of development Strategy is included within the Hearing Statement.





**Indicative Development Framework**

Thornhill, Craighton



Development proposals  
date: jan 2006.





Craigton Rd - looking west



Craigton Rd - looking east



Countesswells Rd view into site



Countesswells Rd view into site



View of western site boundary



View south from site boundary on Craigton Rd



Countesswells Rd view into site



Western paddocks



Paddocks