



# 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)

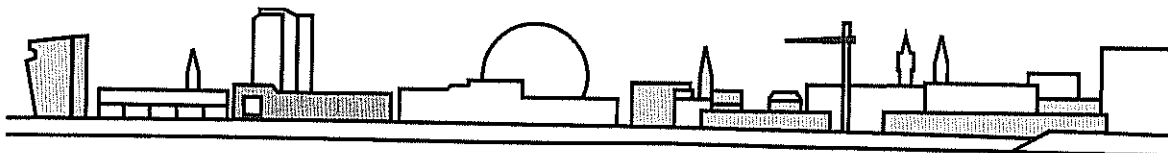
**Please ensure your proposal is with us by 14th June 2013.**

### 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:  on behalf of Landowner

Date:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

2

Name of landowner:

Address:

Address:

### The site and your proposal

3 What name would you like the site to be known as?

- 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).

N/A

- 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.]

- 12 Will the proposed development be phased? Yes  No  N/A

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.**

The Landowner is seeking removal of the Green Belt Designation on the site on the basis that it does not meet the terms of the Green Belt Policy. It is submitted that this is a matter to be agreed with the Council in the first instance and consulted upon through the Local Development Plan review process.

## 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: N/A

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 N/A
- 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? N/A

- Yes

If yes, approximately how much (hectares or %)

- No

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

- 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 N/A

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 N/A
- 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 N/A
- 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      N/A
- 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      N/A
- 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 type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Access between 400-800m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Access within 400m	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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

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

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ভাষা/ইন্টারপ্রেটিং 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)

Aberdeen Local Development Plan Review

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Paper Apart on behalf of First Construction

### Other Information

It is submitted that the Bid site should be removed from the Green Belt in the Review of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP). The review provides an opportunity to critically assess the Green Belt boundaries in the Plan against policy intentions.

Policy NE2 Green Belt is aimed at maintaining the identity of Aberdeen and the communities within and around the City by defining their physical boundaries clearly, avoiding coalescence and urban sprawl, maintaining the landscape setting and providing access to open space.

Scottish Planning Policy requires green belt boundaries to be clearly identifiable on the ground, using strong visual or physical landscape features such as rivers, tree belts, railways or main roads. It specifically warns against using Green Belt policies when other designations can provide an appropriate context for decision making.

The landowner has appointed KCC Consulting to prepare a Landscape and Green Belt Appraisal Report which identifies the landscape qualities of the area and consider whether the site can be released from the Green Belt without compromising either the local or wider landscape setting.

As it stands, the site is a small pocket of Green Belt surrounded by residential land. Green Belt zoning of such a small area of private land is not in accordance with the intended use of Green Belt protection. The site sits within the Pitfodels Conservation Area and is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. These designations provide an appropriate context for decision making and provide sufficient protection without the use of Green Belt policy. It is not clear how a Green Belt zoning can be justified on this small area. Indeed the line has been so arbitrarily drawn that it does not follow any clear boundaries on the ground.

Figure 4 of the KCC Consulting report demonstrates how the ALDP would look following removal of the Green Belt designation from the site. The Green Belt as shown in Figure 4 has a more defensible boundary.

Reference should be made to the accompanying report produced by KCC Consulting and the accompanying figures which outlines in further detail the reasons why the Green Belt designation of the site is inappropriate..

It is submitted that the Green Belt zoning should be removed from the site and the land allocated as part of the existing residential area which surrounds it.

### Appendices

- 1 Landscape and Green Belt Appraisal Report by KCC Consulting



# Aberdeen Local Development Plan Review

## Pre- Main Issues Report Questionnaire 2013

Aberdeen City Council is currently in the early stages of reviewing the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012 (ALDP). The 2013 Development Plan Scheme provides a timetable for the review of the ALDP and the opportunities to participate throughout the process.

It is available to view online at: [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan)

This questionnaire forms part of the pre-Main Issues Report consultation activities we are undertaking. It is designed to gather views on the main planning issues in Aberdeen to be considered by the next ALDP.

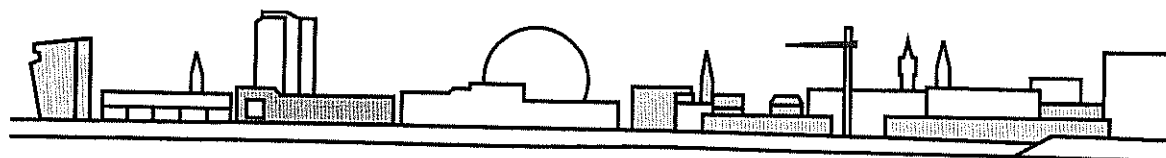
### Using your Personal Information

Information you supply to Aberdeen City Council (ACC) in this questionnaire will be used to prepare the Local Development Plan. ACC will not share the personal information provided in this questionnaire with other parties or organisations. ACC will not disclose any information about you to any organisation or person unless it is authorised or required to do so by law.

The Local Development Plan team may use your contact details to contact you about the comments you have made. Your name and organisation may be published alongside your comments but contact details will not be made public. If you chose not to provide a name or contact details, your comments will still be valid but we will not be able to contact you in the future.

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.

A separate form for submitting development sites for consideration can be found on our website at: [www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan](http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan)



## 1. YOUR DETAILS

- 1.1 Please let us know the capacity in which you are completing this questionnaire. Are you...

- A member of the public
- A community representative e.g Community Council

If yes, which area do you represent?

- A developer/ their agent

- A landowner/ their agent
- From a Key Agency
- Other

## 2. ABERDEEN'S MAIN PLANNING ISSUES

Feel free to continue on separate sheets if necessary and attach to the questionnaire. You do not have to answer every question.

### Vision

- 2.1 What do you think are the most important things that make Aberdeen a good place to live, visit and/or work?

- 2.2 What do you think should be the Council's top priorities for the next Aberdeen Local Development Plan?

## Policy Topic Areas

**What do you think should be our main planning priorities for...**

- 2.4** ...the City Centre? (For example, what should the role of Union Street be? Does the City Centre have all the uses we want, or should there be more uses there - and if so where could they go?)

- 2.5** ...providing infrastructure? (For example, how should new infrastructure be provided and how might it be paid for?)

- 2.6** ...transport and accessibility? (For example, how can we make it easier to travel in and around Aberdeen? Should we look at pedestrianisation in the City Centre?)

- 2.7** ...ensuring we have high quality buildings and places? (For example, how can we better protect our built heritage and ensure high quality and sympathetic architecture and landscape design?)

- 2.8** ...meeting the needs of business and industry? (For example, what can be done to retain existing businesses and attract new employment opportunities to Aberdeen?)

- 2.9** ...meeting Aberdeen's housing and community needs? (For example, how can we meet the needs of people who cannot afford mainstream housing?)



**2.10** ...supporting retail centres across Aberdeen? (For example, should we be safeguarding existing centres, and what are your thoughts on new out-of-town retail parks?)

**2.12** ...ensuring that resources and waste are managed sustainably? (For example, can we make more innovative use of waste as a resource? Should we encourage renewable energy use? How could we do these things?)

**2.11** ...protecting and enhancing the natural environment and preventing flooding? (For example, what areas or features should we be safeguarding?)

**2.13** If you have any views on topics not covered above, please write them below.

Review of Green Belt boundaries

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please return completed questionnaires 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

Twitter: @AberdeenLDP

You can also visit the Aberdeen Local Development Plan Facebook page.

**COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES SHOULD BE WITH US BY NO LATER THAN 14 JUNE 2013.**

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 email address

# Landscape & Green Belt Appraisal

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Aberdeen City MIR Consultation  
Wellwood, Pitfodels



First Construction  
June 2013



## **ABERDEEN CITY MIR CONSULTATION WELLWOOD, PITFODELS**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 KCC Consulting Ltd. was commissioned by Mr. Ian Suttie to undertake an independent landscape appraisal of land at Wellwood, Pitfodels to: firstly, assess the contribution of the land to the role of the Green Belt in the area, taking into account the existing planning policy context as well as the landscape character and visibility of the area; and secondly, determine the most appropriate long term defensible Green Belt boundary as it relates to the site.
- 1.2 The site at Wellwood, Pitfodels, is located towards the western edge of Aberdeen City and on the eastern boundary of the community of Cults. The primary road serving the area is the A93, North Deeside Road, which connects a number of small ‘settlements’ with Aberdeen City centre and its orbital road, Anderson Drive, which provides connections to the wider area and region.
- 1.3 The site sits within a larger landholding at Wellwood which is accessed directly off the North Deeside Road. The extended land holding is also bounded by Bairds Brae to the east and Rocklands Road to the north. An existing housing estate on the edge of Cults is located immediately to the west. To the north of Rocklands Road is the Woodlands housing development and development in and around The Ranch. The overall Wellwood site extends to approximately 11.3 hectares, however the site which is the subject of this appraisal extends only represents a small percentage of this. **(Figure 1, Landscape Context Plan)**
- 1.4 Within the **Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012** the site is covered by Policy **NE2**, Green Belt. In addition, the site forms part of the Pitfodels Conservation Area (10), and is covered by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 21. The TPO covers a larger area than just the site.

## 2.0 The Green Belt

### Policy Context

2.1 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) states that **“the purpose of green belt designation in the development plan as part of the settlement strategy for an area is to:**

- **direct planned growth to the most appropriate location and support regeneration,**
- **protect and enhance the quality, character, landscape setting and identity of towns and cities, and**
- **protect and give access to open space within and around towns and cities (Para. 159).”**

2.2 Importantly, SPP states that **“Green belt boundaries should be clearly identifiable on the ground, using strong visual or physical landscape features such as rivers, tree belts, railways or main roads.” (Para 162)**

2.3 Paragraph 160 makes it clear that **“Land should only be designated by a planning authority as green belt where it will contribute to the settlement strategy for an area.”** In addition it advises that **“Most settlements do not have or need green belts because other policies or designations, such as countryside policies, provide an appropriate context for decision making.”**

2.4 At a local level the **Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) 2012** acknowledges that the aim of the Green Belt is to **“maintain the identity of Aberdeen and the communities within and around the city by defining their physical boundaries clearly, avoiding coalescence and urban sprawl,**

**maintaining the landscape setting and providing access to green space.”**  
**(Page 204).**

2.5 In addition to **Green Belt Policy (NE2)**, the ALDP also promotes **the Green Space Network (Policy NE1)** to **“add value to the provision, protection, enhancement and connectivity of open space and habitats around cities.”** The Green Space Network is seen by Aberdeen City Council as a tool for **“providing an enhanced setting for development and other land uses and improved opportunities for outdoor recreation, nature conservation and landscape enhancement.”** (Page 203)

2.6 Finally, in relation to Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment, **Policy NE5, Trees and Woodlands**, of the ALDP, sets out to **“protect and enhance Aberdeen’s trees and woodlands with the aim of doubling the existing tree cover of the city.”** (Page. 207) Supplementary Guidance has also been published by the City Council on protecting trees and woodlands.

### **3.0 Landscape Context Appraisal**

3.1 As noted above, the site is located immediately to the north of the A93, North Deeside Road, within a settled landscape dominated by the River Dee corridor. The northern bank of the River Dee is located approximately 600 metres to the south of the site entrance to the Wellwood site with the general land form benefiting from a south facing aspect with views extending across the Dee Valley to the south.

3.2 This is a settled landscape as a range of settlements have established across the rising land form taking advantage of the south facing aspect and all linked by the A93, North Deeside Road, with Aberdeen City. However, a key characteristic of this landscape is the presence of a mature treescape which has established across these settlements to form a soft green context for the various communities. Tree belts, woodlands, as well as individual and groups of specimen trees, have matured to form a series of layers across the communities which, when seen from the south (**Photo 3, Figure 2**) visually



connect to set the context for a range of built forms. This soft context is a key characteristic of the landscape and one that should be protected and actively maintained for the future.

3.3 Across the more densely developed part of the valley the tree cover is more limited as tree belts and woodland areas are restricted to parks and river valleys. A significant proportion of the tree cover has matured within private gardens, with a range of tree species thriving within this context. This adds to the layering effect when seen at both a local, street level (**Photo 1, Figure 2**, view of the Wellwood site frontage on the A93, North Deeside Road) and in the wider context (**Photo 3, Figure 2**, view looking north from Banchory-Devenick).

3.4 Whilst the settlement pattern is continuous across the landscape extending out from Aberdeen towards Cults and beyond, it is acknowledged that the density of the settlement pattern also varies. In this respect, within close proximity to the land at Wellwood, the proportion of residential development to tree cover and private open space is reduced in comparison to the established communities at Cults to the west and Airyhall to the east. As a result, the scale and form of the tree cover appears more significant, with larger specimen trees, including avenues, established across the site. This reflects the history of the area and its previous predominant use as private gardens to larger mansion houses. However, when viewed from the south, the tree cover, whilst more extensive, blends in with the tree cover established across Cults and Airyhall, setting the context to a range of high quality, predominantly residential areas. The site is not distinguishable from the general tree cover in the area (see **Photo 3, Figure 2**).

3.5 To the east of the site is a range of non-residential land uses, including: the Marcliffe Hotel, the International School and a leisure club at Woodbank, which all retain many of the characteristics of the area: mature specimen tree cover, managed open spaces and formal leisure/recreation facilities. Development has continued to be realized within the area, however, as new facilities have been added, including the housing developments along Craigton

Road, but the importance of the tree cover is widely acknowledged and in this respect, forms an integral reason for the establishment of the Pitfodels Conservation Area as Aberdeen City Council recognized that, in addition to the quality of the buildings in the area, **“the theme of structural tree planting... makes the character of the overall area so distinctive.”** The Conservation Area designation extends from the edge of Airyhall/Garthdee to Cults, as well as between Craigton Road to the north and the River Dee to the south. **(Figure 3, Current Green Belt and Planning Policy Context)**. The designation of the Conservation Area provides protection to the treescape in this area.

- 3.6 The Conservation Area also applies to the land associated with Wellwood where new-build high quality housing and sensitive conversions have added to the population of the area, but importantly have been set within the existing landscape framework. The important components of the established tree structure have been retained as new residential development has been built into under-utilized and/or surplus open space and glades. The result is a vibrant landscape where change is and can be accommodated, but importantly without affecting or undermining the quality of the landscape setting. The dense ornamental tree cover lining the North Deeside Road frontage has been retained and indeed, enhanced, as the new developments have come on stream. Despite the changes through recent development, the setting has remained unaffected at a local level, when viewed from the North Deeside Road **(Photo 1, Figure 2)** or from the wider perspective to the south. **(Photo 3, Figure 2)**
- 3.7 Consistent with the wider context, the mature tree cover continues to visually contain both the more established and newer development forms which often only become visible as the viewer crosses the wider Wellwood area or approaches the core of the site on the main driveway. This approach to delivering development in the area is fully consistent with the aims and objectives of the Pitfodels Conservation Area designation that allows for sensitively planned new development to come forward. In turn, whilst it is acknowledged that the landscape between Airyhall/Garthdee and Cults is a



settled landscape of a different character and residential density than the two adjoining communities, importantly, there is still a clear visual separation between them. This is illustrated in views from outside the area and specifically from the south (**Photo 3, Figure 2**) where the mature tree cover, forming a key characteristic of the Pitfodels Conservation Area, essentially dominates the built form in the area and in turn, maintains this area's distinct **sense of place**.

### **Local Context**

- 3.8 As stated above, the site is set in the context of a mature landscape structure which extends across the Pitfodels Conservation Area and beyond, into the communities of Cults to the west and Airyhall to the east. (**Photo 3, Figure 2**) The Pitfodels area is covered by a number of planning policies, ranging from **Policy H1, Residential Areas**, through to **Policy NE2, Green Belt**. Wellwood House sits within a residential zone which extends along Airyhall Road.
- 3.9 There is also a pocket of established residential development along the North Deeside Road. The Green Belt then runs from the east of these houses along both sides of the North Deeside Road and down to the south across the River Dee Corridor landscape.
- 3.10 Established pockets of housing and more recent developments are excluded from the Green Belt with the result that the site which is the subject of this bid appears isolated from the remainder of the Green Belt. Its boundaries are defined partly by the driveway to Wellwood and Wellwood itself, partly by the housing to the west and partly by the residential units on North Deeside Road.
- 3.11 It is submitted that the site does not serve any function within the Green Belt policy. It is considered that there is an opportunity to rationalize the Green Belt boundary at Wellwood, taking into account **Scottish Planning Policy** and its objective that "**Green belt boundaries should be clearly identifiable on**



**the ground, using strong visual or physical landscape features.” (Para, 162, SPP)** and recognizing that there are other designations which protect the area.

- 3.12 The important features across the site holding are already protected by planning policy through the **Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012** and the **Pitfodels Conservation Area** designation. The Conservation Area designation makes specific reference to the mature **“structured tree planting”** which helps make **“the character of the overall area so distinctive.”** In addition, the existing Tree Preservation Order that covers part of the Wellwood site also reinforces the importance of the tree cover in the area and importantly, as highlighted above, combines with other mature tree cover in the area to, not only provide a distinct sense of place but also, visually separate the two communities of Cults and Airyhall when viewed from the south. **(Photo 3, Figure 2)**
- 3.13 Releasing the site from the Green Belt will not impact upon the identity of the communities, nor will it lead to urban sprawl since it is a small pocket of land within a residential area. The site does not provide access to green space for public recreational purposes as it is private ground. It is considered that the only purpose of the current Green Belt designation across the site is to protect the landscape setting of the area and that this can be achieved through other planning policies and designations.
- 3.14 The Green Belt boundary should be redrawn at this location to follow the A93, North Deeside Road, removing the site **(Figure 4, Proposed Green Belt and Planning Policy Context)**. This approach takes into account the fact that there are established residential areas already on either side of this parcel of land and the key landscape features, namely the mature tree cover, are protected and in turn, will be retained to help **“maintain the identity of Aberdeen and the communities within and around the city.” (ALDP, Page. 204).**

3.13 **Figure 4** illustrates how the Green Belt boundary in this area should be redrawn to help establish a clear, well defined long term defensible Green Belt which can be readily understood on the ground without undermining the overall policy context. It is proposed that the land removed from the Green Belt should be re-designated under **Policy H1, Residential Areas** to be consistent with the surrounding land uses and again, reflect a more consistent approach to policy designations.

## 4.0 Conclusions

4.1 In conclusion:









- **Firstly**, it is acknowledged that the key characteristics of the land at Wellwood form an important role in the landscape setting to the west of Aberdeen City and the **communities** set out along the A93, North Deeside Road;
- **Secondly**, there is scope within Scottish Planning Policy, for Green Belt boundaries to be adjusted to reflect ‘local’ circumstances and to ensure that **“Green Belt boundaries should be clearly identifiable on the ground.”** (SPP, Para, 162);
- **Thirdly**, the land at Wellwood, Pitfodels benefits from mature tree cover consisting of tree belts, woodlands and specimen trees which combine to form the setting to a high quality residential environment that continues to see change and new forms of development coming forward. The tree cover on the site however, remains intact and acts as a key component in the local and wider landscape setting, whether viewed from the North Deeside Road (**Photo 1, Figure 2**) or from further afield to the south (**Photo 3, Figure 2**). This contributes importantly to the landscape setting of Aberdeen itself and also the individual communities set out along the A93, North Deeside Road;
- **Fourthly**, the current Green Belt zoning of the site is poorly defined. On the ground the Green Belt boundary is unclear and imprecise. There is an

opportunity through the current review of the Development Plan to rationalize the Green Belt boundary at this location;

- **Fifthly**, the site and its key characteristics are protected by the Conservation Area designation and TPO 21 which can be used to adequately control and protect the tree coverage on the site. Scottish Planning Policy advocates against using the green belt when other designations provide an appropriate context for decision making. ;
- **Sixthly**, in light of Scottish Planning Policy and the need for clearly identifiable Green Belt boundaries, “**using strong visual or physical landscape features such as** (inter alia)...**main roads**” it is recommended that the Green Belt boundary at Wellwood should be redrawn to exclude the site and that the new Green Belt boundary should follow the A93, North Deeside Road, as illustrated in **Figure 4, Proposed Green Belt and Planning Policy Context** ; and,
- **Finally**, it is considered that through this approach the Green Belt policy in the area will have a more robust, long term, defensible Green Belt boundary at Pitfodells, Aberdeen.





- LEGEND**
-  SITE BOUNDARY
  -  EXISTING BUILDINGS
  -  EXISTING DEVELOPMENT / PLOTS
  -  EXISTING ROAD NETWORK
  -  EXISTING TREES / WOODLAND
  -  EXISTING OPEN / GREEN SPACE
  -  AGRICULTURAL LAND
  -  PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS



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LAND AT WELLWOOD, PITFODELS  
 LANDSCAPE & GREEN BELT APPRAISAL

**FIGURE 1**

**LANDSCAPE CONTEXT PLAN**  
 Scale: 1:5,000 (A3) Date: June 2013





Viewpoint 1: View looking north towards the site from North Deeside Road (A93)



Viewpoint 2: View looking south from North Deeside Road (A93)



Viewpoint 3: Distant view looking north towards the site from the minor road which extends southwards from Banchoory-Devenick

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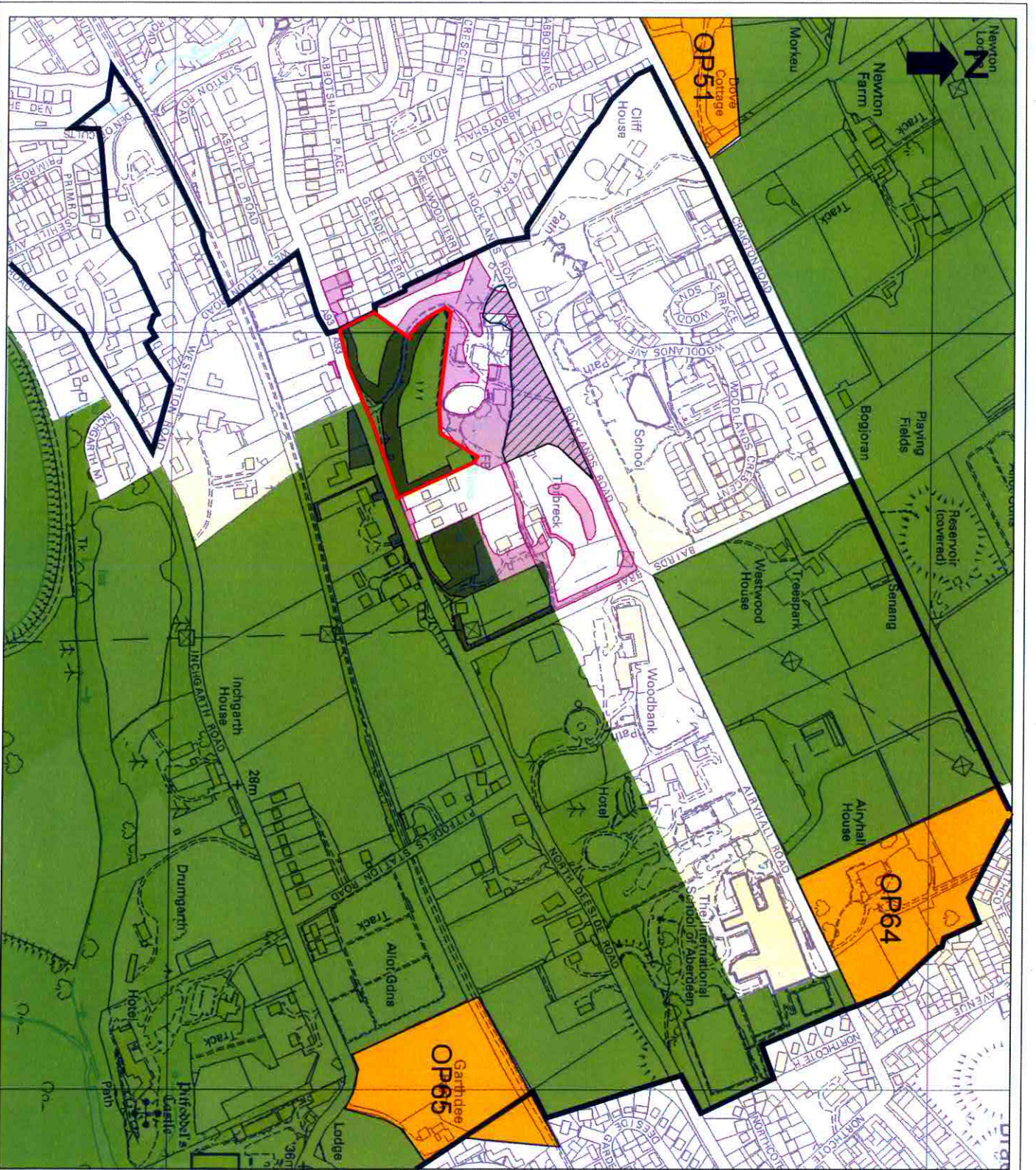
LANDSCAPE & GREEN BELT APPRAISAL







FIGURE 2

PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWPOINTS

Scale: N/A Date: June 2013





- LEGEND**
-  SITE BOUNDARY
  -  GREEN BELT (POLICY NE2)
  -  GREEN SPACE NETWORK (POLICY NE1) RELATED TO THE SITE AT WELLWOOD
  -  CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
  -  OPPORTUNITY SITES IDENTIFIED IN THE ABERDEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012
  -  EXTENT OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (TPO)

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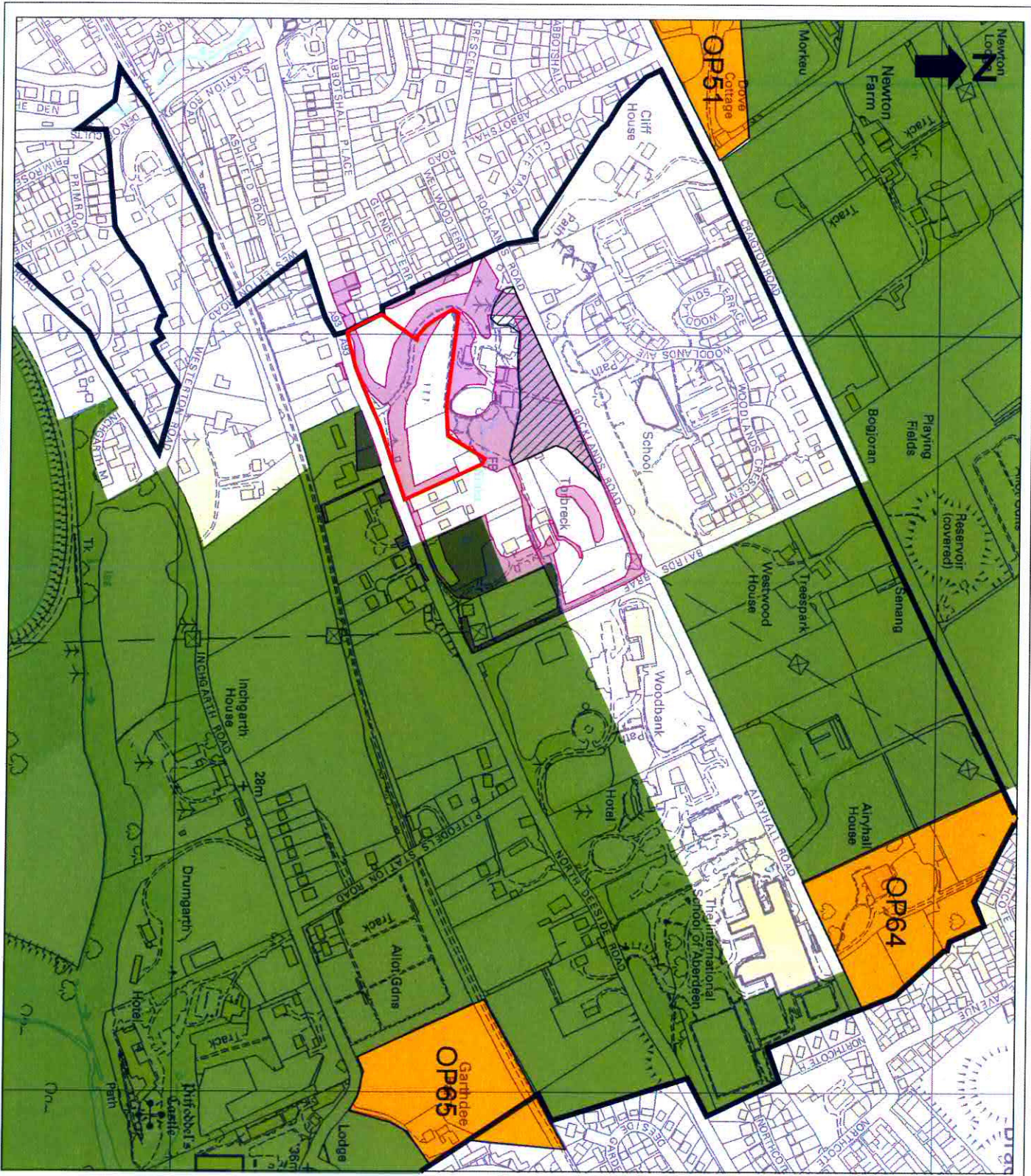
LAND AT WELLWOOD, PITFODELS

FIGURE 3







**CURRENT GREEN BELT & PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

Scale: 1:5,000 (A3) Date: June 2013





**LEGEND**

-  SITE BOUNDARY
-  GREEN BELT (POLICY NE2)
-  GREEN SPACE NETWORK (POLICY NE1) RELATED TO THE SITE AT WELLMOOD
-  CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY
-  OPPORTUNITY SITES IDENTIFIED IN THE ABERDEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2012
-  EXTENT OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (TPO)

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 LANDSCAPE & GREEN BELT APPRAISAL

**FIGURE 4**

**PROPOSED GREEN BELT & PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

Scale: 1:5,000 (A3) Date: June 2013