

**KENNERTY FARM, PETERCULTER
LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY**

On behalf of Bancon Developments
January 2009

**DAVID WILSON ASSOCIATES
landscape architects**

Landscape Design Landscape Planning Environmental Analysis Project Management



Tel: 01698 200035 Fax: 01698 200036
Aros House 121 Cadzow Street Hamilton ML3 6JA
Also at: 1 Berry Street Aberdeen AB25 1HF
www.davidwilsonassociates.co.uk



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Peterculter is a large village which lies to the west of Aberdeen City, in the River Dee valley. It is situated on the A93 road that connects Aberdeen with upper Deeside and Perth, 8 miles west of the city centre. The B979 also passes through the settlement, linking to Stonehaven to the south and Westhill to the north.
- 1.2 Several regular bus services connect Peterculter to Aberdeen and Braemar. The former Royal Deeside Railway was closed to passengers in 1966, and dismantled in 1972 (www.deeside-railway.co.uk).
- 1.3 According to the population estimates, Peterculter had a population of 4,693 in 2006 (www.aberdeencity.gov.uk). The new Aberdeen City and Shire Draft Structure Plan targets a high scenario population growth throughout the Aberdeen City Region, along with the requirement for an extensive provision of new homes. As a commuter settlement for Aberdeen, Peterculter could also take its share of the proposed greenfield allowances for the city (see table below).

Proposed greenfield housing allowances for Aberdeen City

2007–16	2017–23	2024–30
12,000	5,000	4,000

Source: Aberdeen City and Shire Draft Structure Plan

- 1.4 Bancon Developments have commissioned David Wilson Associates to prepare a landscape capacity study for the expansion of the settlement to the southwest, at Kennerty Farm. This has been prepared with regard to the review of Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan currently underway and also with an opportunity to contribute to the forthcoming new Local Development Plan.
- 1.5 A minimum of 500 units has been considered an economically viable proposition, on a potential 20 hectare site, so that formed the basis of the study.

- 1.6 The aim of this study is to identify the limits and opportunities for development in this area, and set out an optimal structure for the potential expansion.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Designation of the potential expansion area (see drawing no. L1) was based on a draft framework provided by Bancon Developments, showing the possible directions of development. It basically sits in a broad valley southwest of Peterculter. The existing settlement boundary (as shown in the Local Plan), Kennerty Farm and the woodland belt along the Culter Burn provide its eastern edge. The area extends to the A93 to the north, and as far west as Coalford, including some Aberdeenshire areas. Following the topography of the valley and also including the woodland at Normandykes to the south, it returns to the settlement boundary at Burnside. The scope of the study may extend beyond this contour, including the relevant neighbouring areas.

2.2. In order to establish the setting into which the new development should blend, the report starts with a description of the Landscape Character of the area. This is examined in relation to the "Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen" (LCAA) prepared by Ian Nicol, Anne Johnstone and Laura Campbell in 1996. This document sets out the officially accepted description of the character of the area. Its guidelines for development within this landscape character type are taken into consideration.

2.3. Following this, the existing urban pattern is introduced, starting with a brief historical overview. The settlement structure and its relation to the natural features and the road network are also described.

2.4. The potential expansion area is introduced in a general overview. This includes the description of both the relevant natural and cultural features, and the relationship of the area to the settlement.

2.5. The next chapter provides an analysis of the visual character of both the town and the potential expansion area. This is supported by pictures showing some characteristic views.

2.6. The use of the site is governed primarily by the policies of both the extant and emerging Structure Plan and Local Plans. These are




considered in detail, and the appropriate ones listed, and their relationship to the potential development discussed.

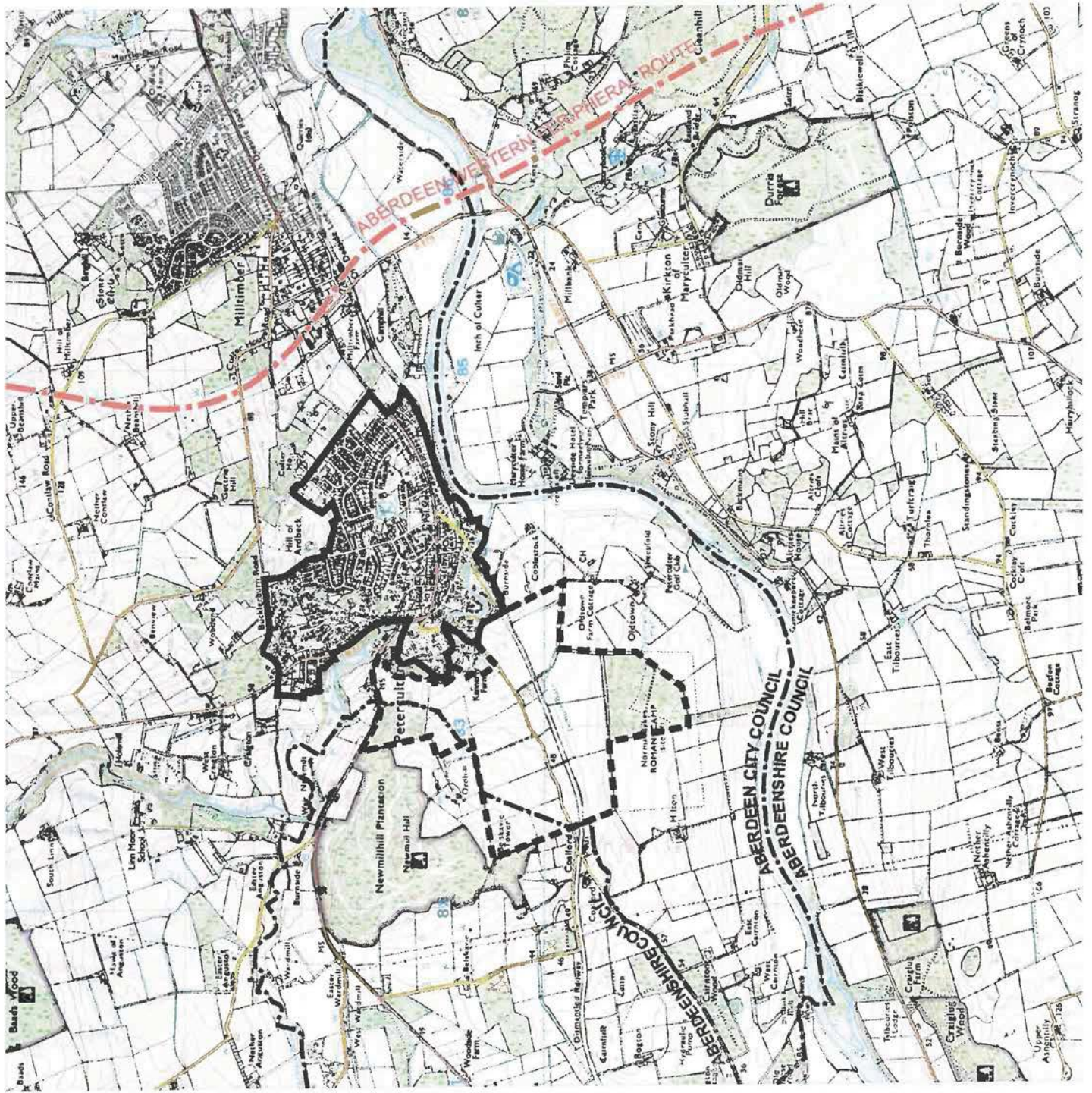
2.7. Having assembled all the relevant information, the landscape capacity of the potential expansion area is then determined in three steps. First, areas that are inevitably not suitable for any type of urban development are identified and excluded. Then, the rest of the area is assessed against several criteria in order to identify areas that are less favourable for development from that certain aspect. The overall result of this helps to identify the sites that are the least suitable for development. Finally, the potential visual impact of development is considered by establishing the view to the potential expansion area by the main receptors (elements which the sites could be seen from). The whole process is explained in detail in the course of the assessment.

2.8. Based on the result of the assessment, the study includes an outline layout proposal for the potential expansion. This is explained and the most important considerations for the potential development described in the last chapter.

2.9. Since there is no official methodology for landscape capacity assessment, the study is based on the recommendations of "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" published by the Landscape Institute in conjunction with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, applying them to this situation with a more comprehensive context. Results of similar studies have also been taken into consideration.

2.10. The study also takes into account the relevant national planning policies including Scottish Planning Policy 21 'Green Belts', Scottish Planning Policy Guideline 3 'Planning for Housing' and Planning Advice Notes 44 'Fitting New Housing Development into Landscape', 55 'Planning in Small Towns', 65 'Planning and Open Space' and 72 'Housing in the Countryside'.

-  Settlement Boundary
-  Potential Expansion area
-  Local Authority Boundary



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L1: Location

Scale: NTS

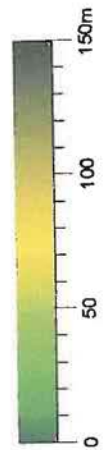
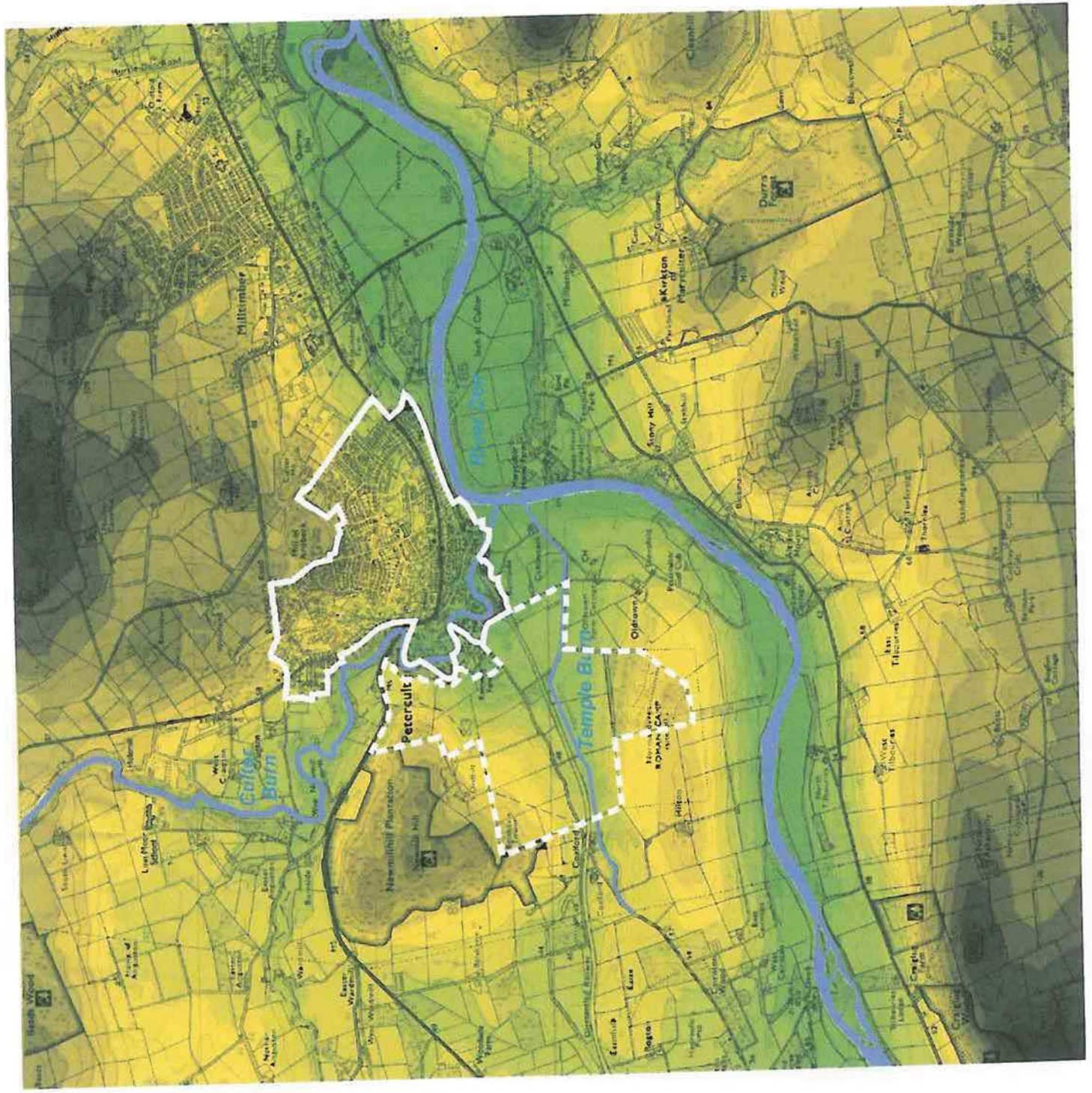
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- 2.11. The assessment is based primarily on the landscape and visual considerations (and also related to environmental sustainability). Other planning issues (such as distances to individual public services, development costs of public utilities etc.) should be considered at a later stage, when the exact nature of development will be specified within the designated areas. Although the study focuses primarily on residential development, other potentials have also been taken into consideration.
- 2.12. There has not been a separate ecological or tree survey prepared, but the character of the vegetation and limiting ecological features have been identified during the site survey.
- 2.13. The relevant Ordnance Survey Explorer map and an extract of the local plan were used to prepare the layouts. In addition to the various printed and electronic sources of information detailed amongst the references, the study was based on site visits in October and December 2008.

3. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 3.1 The aim of this chapter is to identify the main landscape character that is the setting of Peterculter and its potential expansion. This is based primarily on the "Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen" (LCAA) prepared by Ian Nicol, Anne Johnstone and Laura Campbell in 1996. This was complemented with further additions from the site visit and other sources.
- 3.2 Peterculter sits upon the northern bank of the River Dee, at the influx of Culter Burn. The topography of this area is diverse, with hills rising up to about 100m, dissected by several valleys (see drawing no. L2). The settlement basically occupies the southern, southwest and western slopes of the Hill of Ardbreck.
- 3.3 While at the higher grounds of the area, Precambrian to Permian Carboniferous bedrocks appear at the surface, the valley floors are covered by Pleistocene or recent deposits. Most of the soils are formed from glacial till, while in the river valleys they developed on alluvium or meltwater-sorted sands.
- 3.4 Patches of natural vegetation cover mostly land that is difficult to cultivate. These include the higher rocky hilltops and the floodplains and steep slopes along the River Dee and the burns. The River Dee is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (www.snh.org.uk), with qualifying features including Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) and Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*).
- 3.5 The climate is varied. The description of "The New Statistical Account of Scotland" (1845) is still valid:
"On the banks of the river the southern exposure, the thin, dry, sandy soil, the shelter afforded by the numerous enclosures and small plantations, - all combine in giving effect to the rays of the sun, in rendering the temperature high, the air most salubrious, and the climate remarkably genial." (p. 106)
- In the higher grounds and northern exposures:
"the situation is more bleak, the land in many places damp and marshy, the temperature low, and the climate proportionably more unfavourable; the crops are consequently later, the snow is often deeper, and frost more intense than on the river side." (p. 106)
- 3.6 The "Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen" report classifies the area as 'wooded farmland' where the "landuse is predominantly agricultural, with a mixture of arable and grazing." *"The small- to medium sized fields are divided by either stone walls (mostly) or fences."* *"There is also a good deal of woodland present throughout the area. It occurs in a variety of types:- as coniferous plantation, as mixed woodland, as clumps, as shelterbelts and as boundary trees."* (LCAA, p. 75)
 The overall appearance shows a
"considerable variety of this landscape". (LCAA, p. 75)
- 3.7 The main settlements developed on the northern Deeside along the main road that is now the A93. The countryside is linked to this transport route by a network of minor roads.
- 3.8 Settlements are
"reasonably well integrated into the surrounding landscape by mature tree and shrub planting" (LCAA, p. 75)
 and
"buildings tend to be traditional in style and are frequently associated with clumps of trees." (LCAA, p. 75)
- 3.9 *"The undulating ground and sequence of minor, generally quiet, roads provides opportunities for informal recreation that would be unlikely to have significant visual or landscape impacts."* (LCAA, p. 75)



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LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY**
L2: Topography
 Scale: NTS January 2009
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Major destinations include the Drum Castle with its historical castle, garden and old oak wood, and the 18-hole Peterculter Golf Club course.

- 3.10 The higher grounds provide some excellent viewpoints with long distance views across the open countryside. Although most of the area
- "is visually enclosed by rising land or woodland",*
the westernmost part is
- "overlooked by Peterculter and, therefore, has a higher degree of visibility." (LCAA, p. 75)*

Conclusions

- 3.11 With its undulating ground and agriculture as the predominant land use, the area has a rural character.
- 3.12 Settlements are reasonably well integrated into the landscape by planting. Buildings are usually traditional in style.
- 3.13 Although most of the area is visually enclosed, the part to the west of Peterculter has a higher degree of visibility (see Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen).

4. EXISTING URBAN PATTERN

Historical development

4.1 Peterculter, the "corner land of St Peter" (George Mackay, 2002) developed around a paper mill established in 1751 (Gazetteer for Scotland), to the north of the River Dee where it is joined by the Culter Burn. It was Patrick Duff of Premnay, the then lord of Culter Estate, who leased the Waulkmill on the Leuchar (Culter) Burn to Bartholomew Smith for the factory (www.culter.net).

4.2 In the mid-19th century the parish contained the mansion houses of "Culter, Murtle, Bingham, Countesswells, and Bieldside, with their respective grounds, gardens, and woods." (The New Statistical Account of Scotland, p. 106) Kennedy also appears on a map from 1869. However, it was not until the end of the 19th century, that the present centre of the settlement was established (www.old-maps.co.uk).

4.3 With the development of transport throughout the 20th century, the parish became a commuter settlement for Aberdeen. Built development grew towards the northeast, gaining grounds on the slopes of the Hill of Ardbeck. As a result, the historical town centre has geometrically lost its central position to the settlement.

4.4 The most recent developments appeared to the west, with some even extending to the western banks of Culter Burn. Realization of the proposed Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (www.awpr.co.uk), crossing between Peterculter and Milltimber (see on Layout 1) may possibly bring further development to the parish.

Structure

4.5 The settlement is bounded on the south by the River Dee. Culter Burn also set a boundary to the built areas throughout centuries of its history. However, some more recent developments appeared on the lower grounds west of the burn. (See drawing no. L3)

4.6 The basic character of the settlement is set by its location on the slopes of the Hill of Ardbeck, exposed to the west, southwest and south. The houses along the Culter Burn sit on low grounds, almost hidden by the containing topography and vegetation.

4.7 The centre of the parish developed along the main road running parallel to the river. This is where most of the retail units are to be found. Most of the neighbourhood streets are linked to this main road as well as School Road and Coronation Road.

4.8 The Local Plan designates two urban green spaces: one in the centre of the eastern part and another to the south, along the former railway line. Culter House also has a valuable garden with mature deciduous trees. The main axis of the proposed core paths is the former railway line, with links towards the north across the settlement.

Conclusions

4.9 The exposed hillside location, facing towards lower ground to the southwest provides the settlement with a strong character. Despite the expansion of the last decades, this has still been preserved.

5. POTENTIAL EXPANSION AREA

5.1 The potential expansion area is located southwest of Peterculter. It is shaped as a broad valley descending slightly towards the northeast. Parts of Hilton hilltop to the south and the Newmill Hill ridge to the north are also included. (See drawing no. L3).

5.2 The Temple Burn drains the waters of the area to the River Dee. According to the SEPA Indicative River & Coastal Flood Map for Scotland the area is not threatened by floods (see below).



5.3 The bedrocks, which appear at the northern part of the area at the surface, are mainly Dalradian gneisses with intrusions of granite. Most of the soils are formed from glacial till, while those at the valley bottom were developed on glacial meltwater deposits (LCAA).




















5.4 According to the relevant map of Soil Survey of Scotland, most of the agricultural land belongs to Class 3, 'Land capable of producing a moderate range of crops'. The northwest and northeast ends of the area belong to Class 4, 'Land capable of producing a narrow range of crops'. The southernmost part contains the best quality soil of Class 3.

5.5 The structure and the use of the land have not significantly changed since the 19th century (www.old-maps.co.uk). The land use is mostly agricultural, with a mixture of arable (predominantly on the northern part) and grazing land (predominantly on the southern part).

5.6 The Ancient Woodland at Normandykes (recently felled) is part of the area, while the one along the Culter Burn provides the northeast boundary. A minor woodland patch at Newmill Hill, managed by the Forestry Commission, is also included. This has been recently planted (see picture below) within the frame of the Woodland Grant Scheme (Forestry Commission Land Information Search). There is also a minor woodland in the centre of the area, at the Temple Burn.



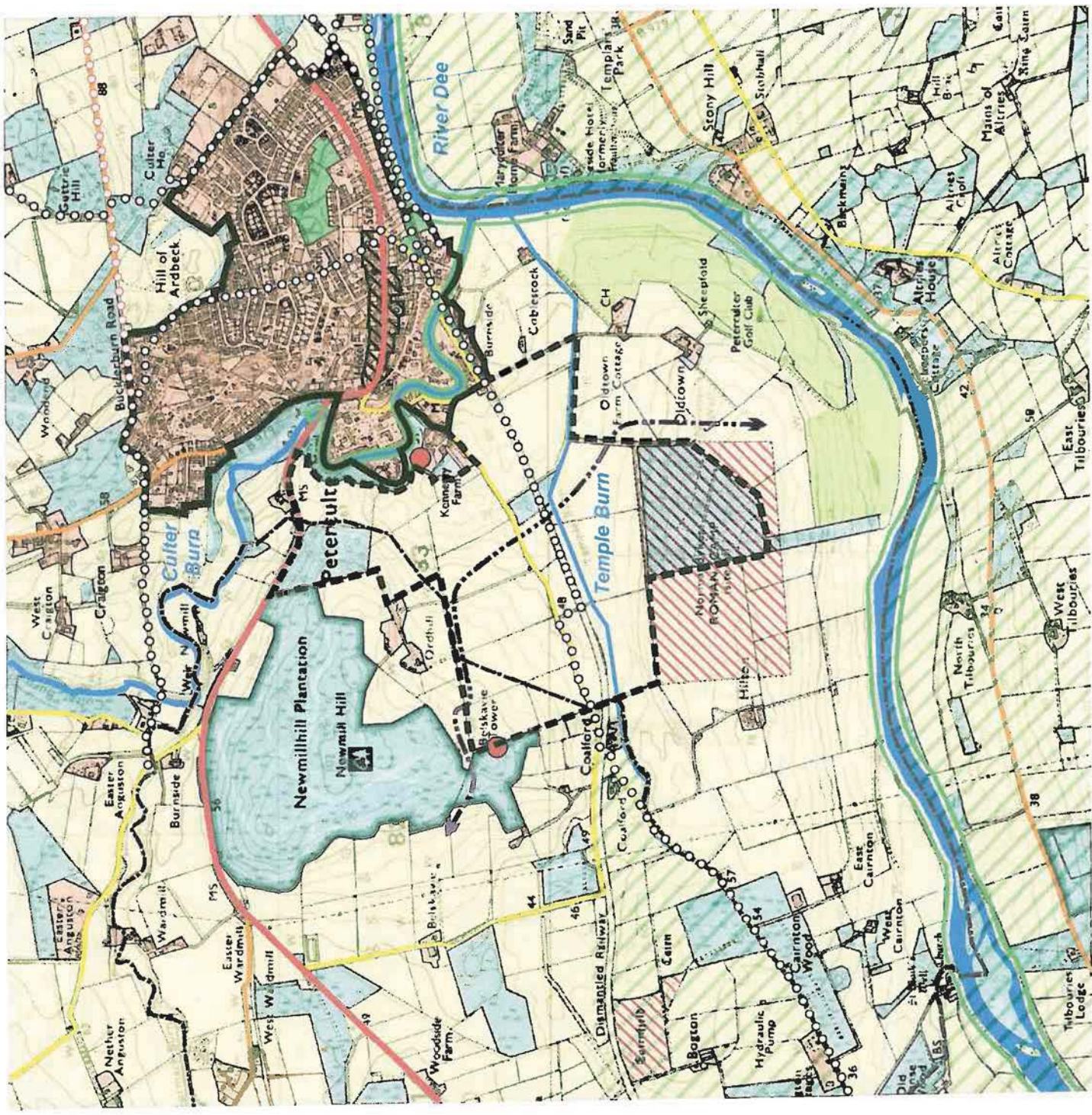
5.7 The eastern verge of the area, alongside Culter Burn is adjacent to the designated River Dee Special Area of Conservation.

-  Agricultural Area
-  Woodland
-  Golf Course
-  Settlement
-  Urban Green Space
-  District Centre
-  Settlement Boundary
-  Potential Expansion Area
-  River Dee SAC
-  Area of Landscape Significance
-  Scheduled Ancient Monument
-  Listed Building
-  Council Boundary
-  Main Road
-  Secondary Road
-  Other Road
-  Proposed Core Path
-  Aspirational Path
-  Underground Pipeline

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L3: Potential expansion area

Scale: NTS January 2009

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5.8 Amongst the relevant cultural features the most significant is the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Normandykes Roman camp at the southern boundary of the area. Listed buildings of the area include the early 19th century Beiskavie Tower (see picture) to the western, and Kennerty House, dated circa 1840, to the eastern edge (www.pastmap.org.uk). There is also a World War I memorial near the northeast edge, next to the A93. The drystone dykes along most of the field boundaries are also worth mentioning.



5.9 The former railway track is another historical feature, presently used as a pedestrian route, and designated as a proposed Core Path.

5.10 The main distribution gas pipe crossing the area from the northwest to the southeast is a significant underground structure.

Relation to the settlement

5.11 Though the steep banks of the Culter Burn separate the area from the main settlement, there is some modern development around Kennerty Farm, adding to what has historically existed. Also, planning permission has been issued to redevelop the Kennerty Farm steadings for 5 new houses.

5.12 There are currently two minor roads linking the area to the settlement and to the A93 across the burn, one from Coalford through Kennerty Farm and the mill to the west end of the village

centre, and the other leading from the Peterculter Golf Club along Burnside to the east end. As mentioned above, the former railway track currently provides a pedestrian link. (Visual aspects are discussed in the next chapter.)

Conclusions

5.13 The major constraint within the area is the underground gas pipeline. Relevant natural and cultural features, productive soils and woodland areas should also be considered.

5.14 The area has existing links to the settlement centre through low capacity roads.

6. VISUAL ANALYSIS

Settlement

6.1 With most of its area sitting on a hillside, the settlement is exposed to the west, southwest and south. However, the views from these directions are softened by the existing tree canopy. This is provided by the woodland on the top of the Hill of Ardbeck, the treebelt along the Culter Burn and some major groups of trees within the residential areas. As a result, the appearance of the settlement is not obtrusive (see below the view from Hilton).



6.2 This also relates to the western settlement boundary adjacent to the potential expansion area. Viewing from the west, this edge is almost hidden by the containing topography, and softened by the vegetation around Kennedy Farm. Although tree canopy is less to the south, buildings become obvious only from close proximity.

6.3 Regarding the views seen from within the settlement, many of the houses face the lower lying open countryside along the Dee to the south and southwest. Some of the potential expansion area forms part of these views (see pictures below and next page).



View from the centre towards Ordhill

Potential expansion area

- 6.4 The main attributes providing the character of the Temple Burn valley include:
- A longitudinal valley providing a sweeping view towards the southwest from the settlement
 - A high degree of visibility due to its exposure and open nature
 - Small-scale development consisting of scattered, stand-alone farm houses



The view of the potential expansion area from the residential areas on the Hill of Ardbeck

6.5 Due to its character, it is possible to see parts of the area from the higher ground almost all around (see Picture Sheet 1 on page 22). The landform and the agricultural landscape, without any significant obtrusive element, provide attractive views. These are especially eye-catching to the northeast with the backdrop of the settlement and to the southwest with the distant views of rural Deeside (see picture above). Visual sensitivity of this area is therefore generally high.

6.6 Since woodland cover and other screening elements are not significant, the range of internal views depends on the topographic location. At the valley floor it is limited by the surrounding ridges, while the higher ground may provide some more distant views, especially along the axis of the valley.

6.7 Belskavie Tower is probably the most attractive feature of the area and a main focus of many views. The rolling topography, field boundaries and drystone dykes are also significant visual elements. Sheltered mostly by treebelts, the farm houses are not so apparent; they sit in sympathy with the landscape.

6.8 The northernmost section of the area is visually separated from the Temple Burn valley by the ridge of Newmill Hill (see Picture Sheet 2 on page 23). The range of view is more limited here; with the World War I memorial as a unique visual feature.

Conclusions

6.9 Owing to its location and a rich canopy of trees, the settlement provides a pleasant view. Some of the houses enjoy excellent views towards the southwest, including the western section of the potential expansion area.

6.10 Providing clear rural views without any significant obtrusive element, much of the potential expansion area is visually sensitive to changes. Visual impacts therefore are a major concern.

6.11 The northernmost section is visually separated from the core of the area.

7. PLANNING CONTEXT

- 7.1 The development plan for the area is the Approved Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Structure Plan and the Aberdeenshire Local Plan, which cover most of the potential expansion area. However, since a minor section of it sits beyond the Council boundary, relevant policies of the Aberdeenshire Local Plan have also been taken into consideration and included where it was necessary.
- 7.2 The existing Structure Plan strategy aims at sustainable use of resources.
"Thus the core objectives are to focus future development on existing settlements, and to reduce both the need to travel and the environmental cost of travelling." (p. 11)
 This should be achieved through locating
"homes, jobs and services in scale with each other and with the role and function of each settlement." (p.12)
 Promotion of environmentally friendly forms of transport (walking, cycling, buses and rail) is also set as a priority.
- 7.3 Revision of the plan is currently underway. Peterculter is within the boundary of Aberdeen City Council's geographical zone, and as such falls within the Aberdeen Strategic Growth Areas in the Draft Structure Plan.
- 7.4 The Aberdeenshire Local Plan "Green Spaces, New Places" was adopted on 25 June 2008 to replace the former Aberdeen City District Wide Local Plan. The Aberdeenshire local plan was adopted in 2006.
- 7.5 The general considerations regarding landscape protection are set out in Aberdeenshire Local Plan Policy 31:
"One of the objectives of planning for future development will be to maintain and manage aspects of Aberdeen's unique landscape setting. Development will not be acceptable unless it avoids:
1. *adversely affecting landscape character and elements which contribute to, or provide, a distinct 'sense of place' which point to being either in or around "Aberdeen" or a particular part of it;*
 2. *obstructing views of the City's townscape, landmarks and features when seen from publicly accessible vantage points such as roads, railways, recreation areas and pathways and particularly from the main city approaches or 'gateways';*
 3. *disturbance, loss or damage to recognised recreation, wildlife or woodland resources or to the physical links between them;*
 4. *sprawling onto green spaces or buffers between places or communities with individual identities, and those which can provide opportunities for countryside activities.*
- All developments shall respect the quality of the local landscape character and contribute towards its maintenance and enhancement in terms of siting, scale, massing, colour, design, density, orientation, materials, planting/landscaping and boundary treatment. They should otherwise be capable of being absorbed within sites without significant adverse impacts upon existing landscape elements, including linear and boundary features or other components, which contribute to local amenity, and provide opportunities for conserving, restoring or enhancing them."* (p. 54)
- 7.6 It is also important to take into consideration that nearby parts of the Deeside are designated as Areas of Landscape Significance in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan.
- 7.7 Both local plans designate the potential expansion area as part of the Green Belt. Aberdeenshire Local Plan Policy 28 and Aberdeenshire Local Plan Policy Gen13 exclude any major developments within this area unless it is essential for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, informal countryside recreation, or mineral or landfill workings or if it is directly related to nature conservation.

- 7.8 For any other purposes, only minor developments may be permitted within the Green Belt, such as conversion of existing buildings or minor housing related to an existing primary industry appropriate to the Green Belt (Aberdeen Local Plan Policy 28 and Aberdeenshire Local Plan Policy Hou3, Gen13). However, the Green Belt is currently under review. This is expected to release greenfield sites for development within the Structure Plan. This may also provide an opportunity for housing in the potential expansion area.
- 7.9 Some areas along the former railway line and the Culter Burn and within Aberdeen City are also designated as parts of Green Space Network. These are important to protect for the purpose of public enjoyment and recreation. According to Aberdeen Local Plan Policy 29, proposals
- "for development that is likely to destroy or erode the character or function of the green space network will not be permitted."* (p. 52)
- Along with the Green Belt, the Green Space Network is also under review.
- 7.10 In Aberdeen City, there is no policy on the protection of agricultural land. Aberdeenshire Local Plan Policy Env11 on 'Agricultural Land' therefore relates only to a minor section of the area. Although the policy protects the agricultural area in general, there is no prime quality land within this area that would be a particular concern.
- 7.11 Due to the presence of some minor woodlands within the area, relevant Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire local plan policies are also important to mention:
- "The City Council will protect and enhance Aberdeen's trees and woodland with the aim of doubling the existing tree cover of the City.*
- 1. There is a presumption against all activities and development that will result in the loss of or damage to established trees and woodlands that have natural heritage value or contribute to the character, biodiversity or amenity of a particular locality.*
 - 2. Planning authorities have a duty to have regard to the planting of trees. Where proposed development unavoidably involves the loss*
- of trees, permission will normally be conditional on a replanting scheme with trees of appropriate species and numbers. New development should make a positive contribution to the enhancement of tree cover by, where appropriate, ensuring provision is made for new street and garden trees and community woodland. New tree planting should consist wholly or mainly of native species."*
- (Aberdeen Local Plan Policy 33, 'Protecting Trees and Woodlands', p. 55)
- "Development that would cause the loss of, or serious damage to, trees or woodlands, which are EITHER covered by an existing or proposed Tree Preservation Order OR of significant ecological, recreational, historical, shelter or landscape value, will be refused unless:*
- a) its public benefits at the local level clearly outweigh the value of the habitat;*
 - b) the development will be sited and designed to minimise adverse impacts on the biodiversity of the site, including its environmental quality, ecological status and viability;*
 - c) there will be no further fragmentation or isolation of habitats as a result of the development; AND*
 - d) the development incorporates satisfactory measures to replace and/or enhance existing trees and woodlands."*
- (Aberdeenshire Local Plan Policy Env8, 'Trees and Woodlands', p. 20)
- 7.12 Since the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Normandykes is included, the Aberdeen Local Plan Policy 16, 'Archaeology and Planning' should also be considered:
- "The City Council will refuse planning permission for development that would adversely affect any Scheduled Ancient Monument or its setting. (This will also apply to any other nationally important site, which at the time of application is unscheduled but has been identified by Historic Scotland in the non-statutory register for Aberdeen). Where a proposed development is otherwise acceptable but would affect any known or recorded archaeological site, or any archaeologically sensitive area, the City Council will*

require that provision be made at the developer's expense for appropriate recording of the site (before development takes place). Where there is reason to believe that a development proposal may affect an area containing archaeological remains, the City Council will request that the applicant provide an assessment and archaeological field evaluation (prior to determination of any planning application). The findings of this assessment and evaluation will be taken into account in deciding whether planning permission should be granted with or without conditions, or refused." (p. 41)

Conclusions

- 7.13 Aberdeen Local Plan Policy 31, 'Landscape Protection' contains the most important landscape issues that should be regarded in the course of the assessment. It is also important to take into consideration that the neighbouring Aberdeenshire area is designated to be of Landscape Significance.
- 7.14 Although the area is affected by Green Belt and Green Space Network designations, both are currently under review. Other relevant policies to consider include those related on woodland protection and archaeology.

8. LANDSCAPE CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

8.1 This assessment is carried out in three phases. First, those areas are listed which should be excluded from the development for some reason. In the second step, the rest of the area is assessed against several criteria. These include considerations of the sensitivity of the landscape which make development at certain locations less acceptable. Finally, visual impacts are assessed separately for the potential development.

Exclusions

8.2 The **Temple Burn** should have a buffer zone of at least 10m on both sides.

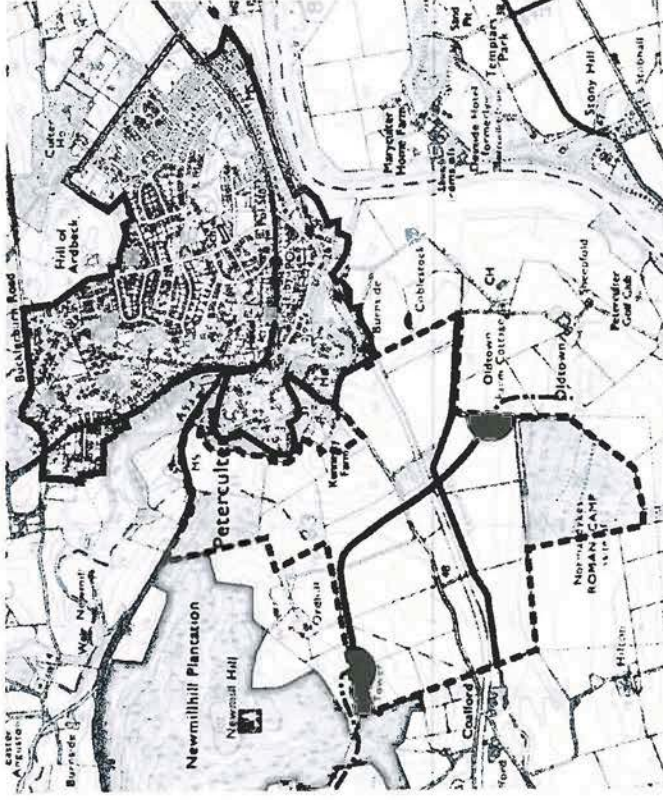
8.3 Special safety distances apply to the **underground gas pipe**. The inner safety zone (95m to both sides) imposes a strict exclusion of any kind of development. Our Client has declared that he would replace part of the pipe for one with higher safety standards. This would reduce the safety distance to only 3m both sides at the section concerned. However, a 12m easement corridor each side must remain clear. (Additional safety zones are considered under the next heading.)

8.4 Parts of the study area within both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire are designated as **Green Belt** where local plan policies exclude major residential developments. However, since this designation is currently under review, for the purposes of the study this has been set aside.

8.5 The figure opposite top shows the areas excluded within the potential expansion area in black.

Landscape considerations

8.6 The following is the assessment against a series of criteria regarding landscape considerations. Related figures show the areas less appropriate from that certain aspect in red.



8.7 The gradient of the slope is an important environmental consideration, since the lower gradient means less earth moving. This is also significant regarding construction costs. Slopes above a gradient of 20 % (one in five) are regarded as less advantageous (see figure).



8.8 Owing to its topographic position, **climatic conditions** are generally favourable throughout the area, and do not represent a significant basis for differentiation.

8.9 Although quality of agricultural land in Aberdeen City does not represent a policy concern, from the aspect of landscape protection, development should be steered toward land of lower quality. The figure to the left below shows Class 3₁ prime quality soils that are the best soils within the area.



areas concerned have not been excluded. Since designated areas along the valley floor and the Culter Burn appear as a corridor, some territorial change seems to be possible without threatening their function.



8.10 Although they do not completely exclude it, local plan policies severely restrict developments affecting woodlands areas. The figure to the right above shows the woodlands concerned. The one at Normandykes is an Ancient Woodland.

8.11 In the middle safety zone (95 to 240m to both sides) of the existing underground gas pipe development is not completely excluded, but densities of potential development are limited to 40 per hectare with a maximum of 30 houses built at any one time. This constraint does not apply to the upgraded section of the pipe. (See figure opposite to the left.)

8.12 Significant sections of the area are designated as part of the Green Space Network (see figure opposite to the right). Although the Green Space Network is also being reviewed, it is reasonable to anticipate that this designation will stay. Taking into consideration the extant policies (see in the previous chapter), this would exclude the expansion of the settlement into this direction. Therefore, for the purposes of the study, the designation was considered, but the

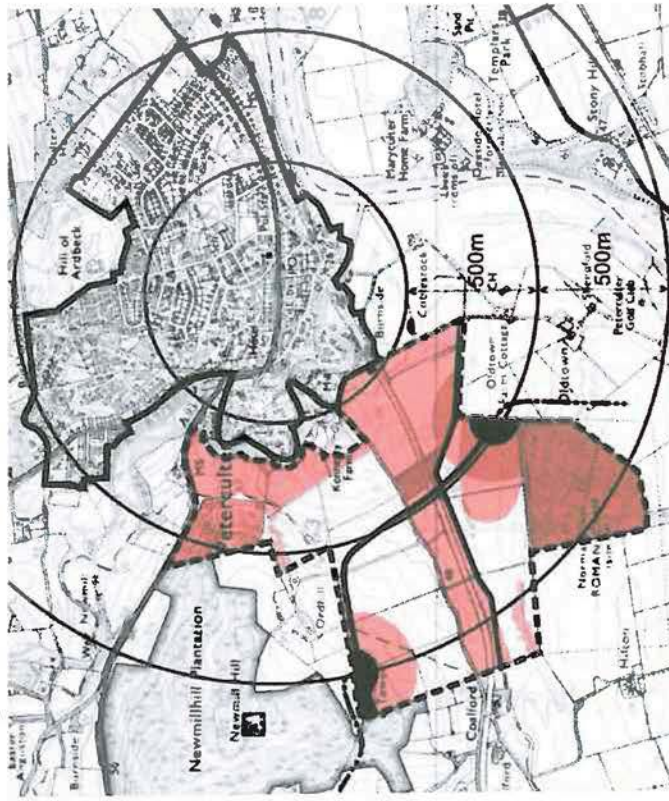
8.13

The distance from the settlement centre is a complex criterion including several considerations. Generally speaking, along with the Structure Plan strategy, it aims at a sustainable use of resources by reducing the distance between residential areas and local services. Thus, the more distant areas are less favourable for development.

Although the real distance may vary by the length and possible speed of access routes, this was simplified in the model using concentric circles at 500m distances from the parish centre. This criterion is also related to visual considerations, aiming at a compact settlement form.



8.14 The figure below combines all the considerations described above in a single layer. Areas affected by multiple limiting features appear especially to the south. Distance from the settlement centre was not added with shaded layer, but it should also be taken into consideration. The eastern part of the potential development area sits at a reasonable distance, closer to the centre than many already developed areas. On the other hand, the areas to the west would be farther from the centre than the most distant parts of the existing settlement.



Visual impacts

8.15 Since, as described in Chapter 6, the visual impacts are of major concern, this needs careful assessment. The potential receptors are identified first, and then parts of the potential expansion area

that are visible from the most significant visual receptors are designated.

8.16 The scope of potential receptors has been established through ground model analysis using KTF 6.7 software produced by Key TERRA-FIRMA Ltd and topographical Land-Form PROFILE data supplied by Ordnance Survey. Selecting three points of the area that represent three distinctive locations, the 'Zones of Visual Influence' output data (drawing no. L4) show the areas from which these could be seen based on the topography of the landscape.

8.17 The supposed height of development is taken to be 8m from ground level. The nearby woodlands were superimposed as visual barriers at a generic height of 15m. Ancient woodlands were regarded as existing, even if they have been recently cut. As the model takes no account of physical visual barriers such as individual houses or buildings and more distant tree cover, these will be discussed below.

8.18 It is also important to mention that woodland belts along the River Dee and the Culter Burn consist mostly of deciduous trees. Therefore their screening effect during the winter season will be more limited than that of the coniferous plantations.

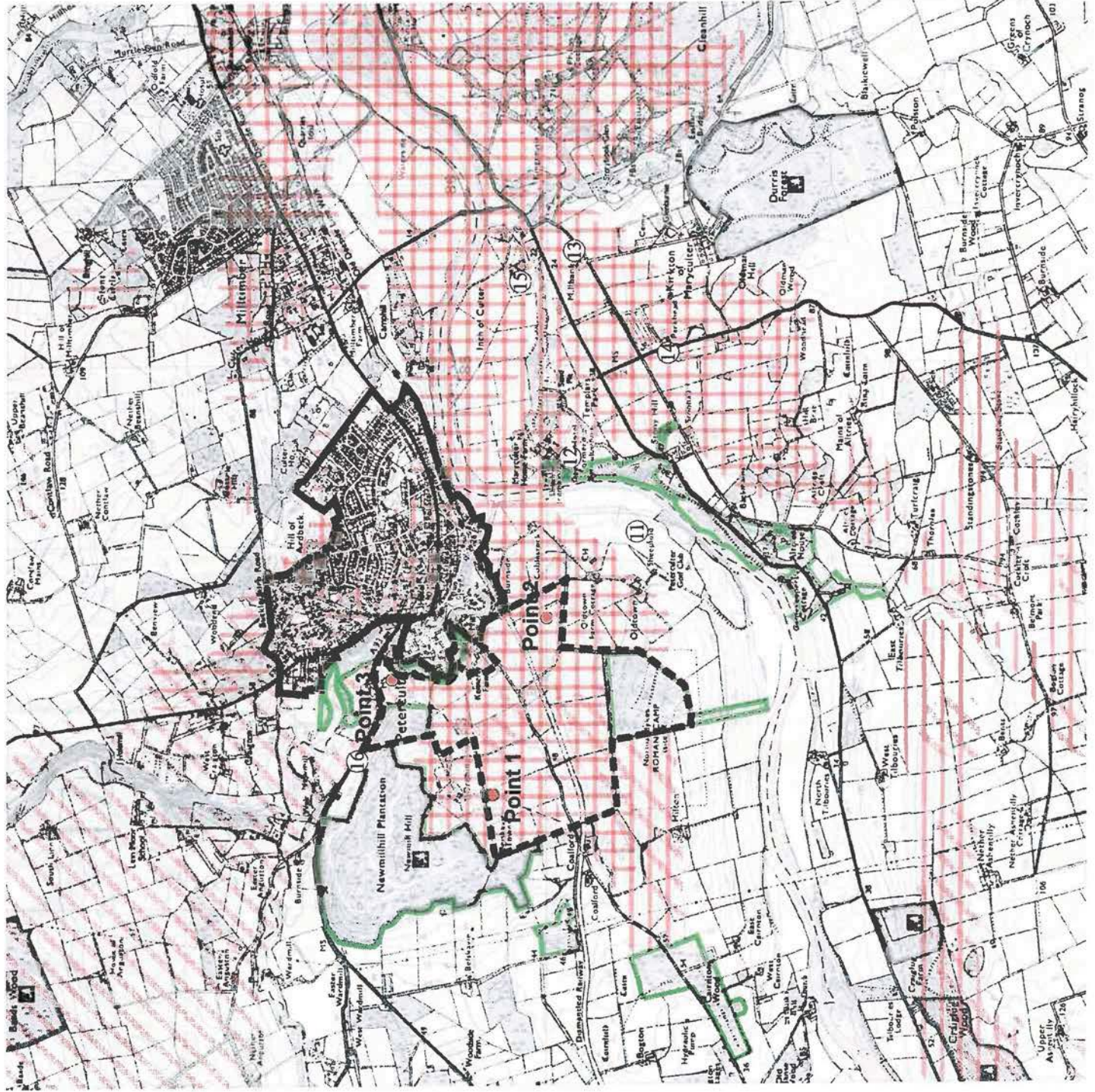
8.19 The most significant receptors are the residential areas of Peterculter. Although neighbouring buildings and nearby trees may locally screen the view, there are still plenty of houses, from which the area can be seen. (The picture at the bottom of next page shows these as seen from the centre of the potential expansion area.) The locations most concerned are at the higher Hill of Ardbeck slopes and in the parish centre (see pictures in Chapter 6). Views are also possible from the A93 road crossing through the centre. The scope of the view possible from within the settlement was established using three representative points (see figure on the next page), taking the viewpoint height at 5m. The direction of hatching corresponds to that of the central line of each point. As shown on the figure, most of the potential expansion area is affected. The impact is least along the southwest settlement edge and at the valley floor to the southwest.

-  Settlement Boundary
-  Settlement Boundary
-  Woodland Edges Considered

Visual Envelope of

-  Point 1
-  Point 2
-  Point 3

-  Visual Receptors (as referred to in text)



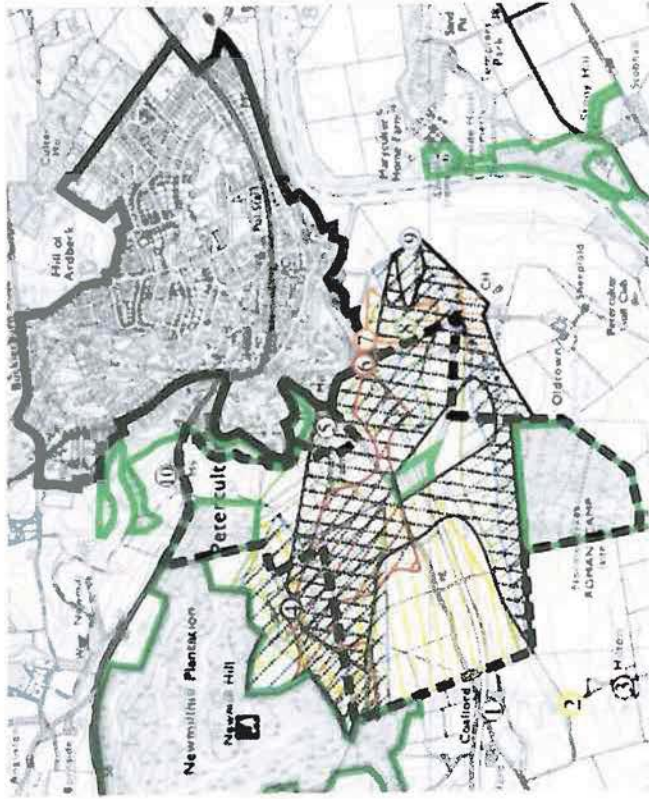
**KENNERTY FARM, PETERCULTER
LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY**

L4: Visual envelope

Scale: NTS

January 2009

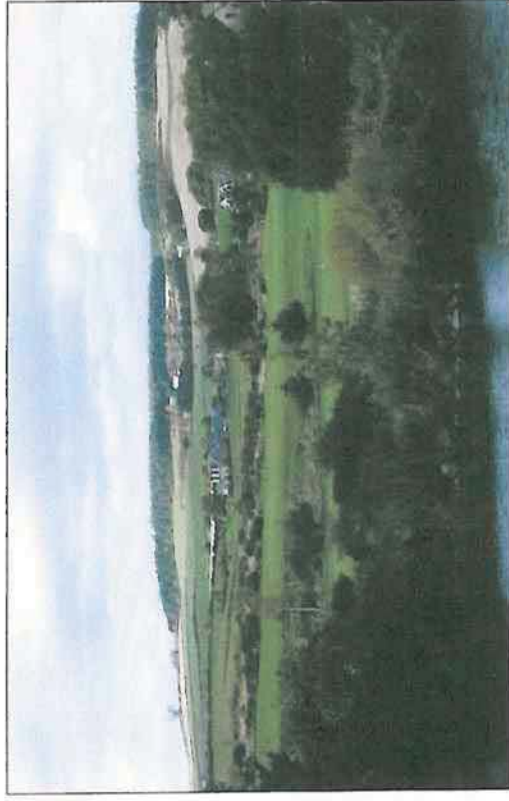
DAVID WILSON ASSOCIATES
landscape architects



8.25 **Peterculter Golf Course (11)** sits on a hillside exposed basically to the southeast. Some views are possible from fairway 3 at the north. A young plantation along the northeast part of the edge will gradually provide screening here. Further mitigation would be possible by additional planting.

8.26 Despite its location on the other side of the Dee, **Maryculter House Hotel (12)** still belongs to low range receptors. There is a fine view to the opposite golf course and the potential expansion area. However, as the golf course plantation grows, this will be almost completely screened, except the arable land at higher grounds (to the right on the picture opposite).

8.27 As a distinct visual unit, the northern section of the potential expansion area is discussed separately. Main receptors here include the westernmost settlement area and the highest one on the Hill of Ardbreck. The section of the **A93 road (16)** along the



northern boundary (see Layout 4) would be a major receptor with significant traffic. The site is directly exposed to the views of those arriving from the west. Possibilities for mitigation are limited, since this would also screen the view of the World War I Memorial (picture below). Owing to its surrounding vegetation, there would be little impact on the farm across the A93 to the north (10).



8.28 Although the layout of visual envelope (L4) shows several potential distant receptors to the south, southeast, east and the northwest, most of these are screened by additional woodlands that have not been taken into consideration in the model process. Exceptions are farm settlements of **Millbank** (13) and **Parkhead** (14) and the **caravan site** (15) at the Inch of Culter to the southeast. Some additional receptors (Cockley and Thornlea) to the south have visual connections only to the higher northern grounds of the area.

Conclusions

8.29 In the first step of the assessment the buffer zone of the Temple Burn and the inner safety zone of the underground gas pipe were excluded.

8.30 Limiting features cover extensive parts, appearing multiple to the south. The function of Green Space Network areas should be maintained, though some territorial changes seem to be possible. Regarding distance from the settlement centre, the eastern parts sit at a reasonable range, while the areas to the west would be farther from the centre than the most distant parts of the existing settlement.

8.31 Since visual impacts are of major concern, these have been assessed thoroughly. Results show that most of the area is exposed to various visual receptors. The least receptors are affected by the views around Kennerty Farm and along the valley floor to the southwest. The northern section of the area is also visually sensitive, with limited possibilities for screening.

9. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- 9.1 The results of the assessment have shown that a major urban expansion towards the southwest across the valley would not be acceptable. Only a limited development is possible here, that could help to avoid further growth of the settlement towards the north, and place the historical centre of the settlement into a more focal position again relative to the overall settlement shape. (See Layouts 5 and 6.)
- 9.2 The proposed development is structured around Kennedy Farm, including locations that would be appropriate to avoid major visual impacts. The landform plays an important role, visually screening most of the sites, and also sheltering them from the winds.
- 9.3 The eastern verge of the proposed development area is well contained by the landform; therefore visual impacts would be insignificant. However, in order to get closer to the targeted 20 ha development, this area had to be extended to include some areas that could have a low visual impact on the main receptors. This should be mitigated by avenues proposed along the main access roads.
- 9.4 The residential areas sit both sides of the existing country road, and also include some limited development near Coblestock. This would result in 19.3 hectares of new residential areas that would increase the existing settlement with an additional 14%; a ratio that would seem to be appropriate.
- 9.5 The land south of the proposed residential areas is designated as open space (6.3 ha). This is an area very much exposed to the visual receptors of the settlement, and therefore not suitable for housing. As open space however, it could be an important site for recreation, and could also include a public playground / leisure ground.

Traffic routes

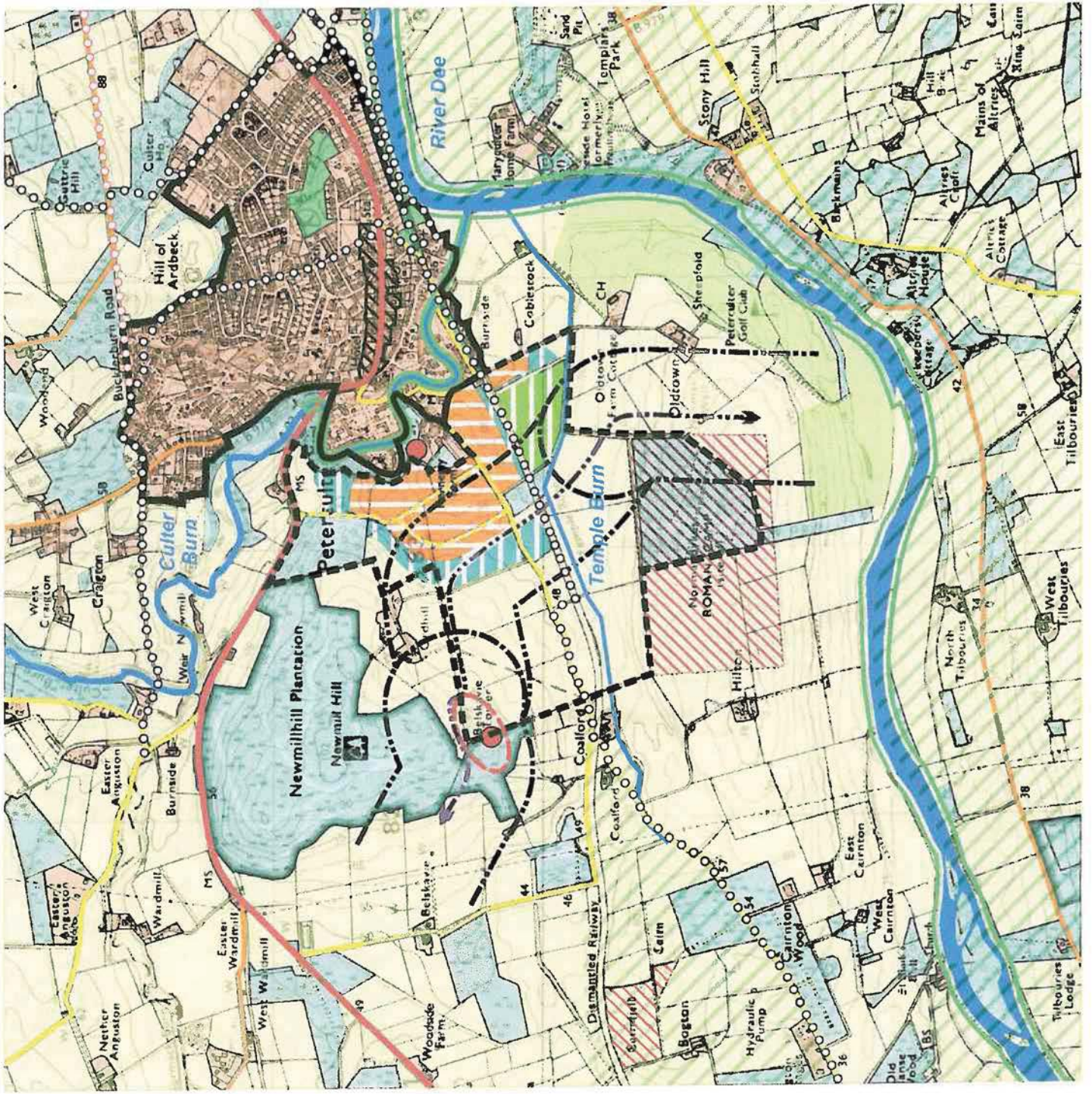
- 9.6 The existing road network would be the subject of a separate traffic assessment. It could be possible to provide a new access from the A93 through the ridge along the woodland edge from the north.
- 9.7 The importance of the Proposed Core Path on the former railway track would increase with the development. Some woodland belt is necessary along its edge with the residential areas in order to give privacy. With the proper layout and choice of trees this would screen only the houses, but allow some views towards the surrounding landscape.

Proposed woodlands

- 9.8 A couple of woodland patches and belts are proposed in order to screen the proposed residential areas, or to provide a proper backdrop to them. The woodlands were plotted so that their edges follow contour lines or existing boundaries in order to sit naturally and avoid major change of the landscape pattern.

Green Space Network

- 9.9 Although some areas designated as parts of the Green Space Network have been used for the proposed development, their function still seems to be possible to maintain. The one along the Culter Burn is replaced by the woodland belt a bit further to the west around the proposed development that connects to the existing woodland section at the Temple Burn. The east-west corridor could also be maintained through the allotments and the pastures at the southern bank of the burn.



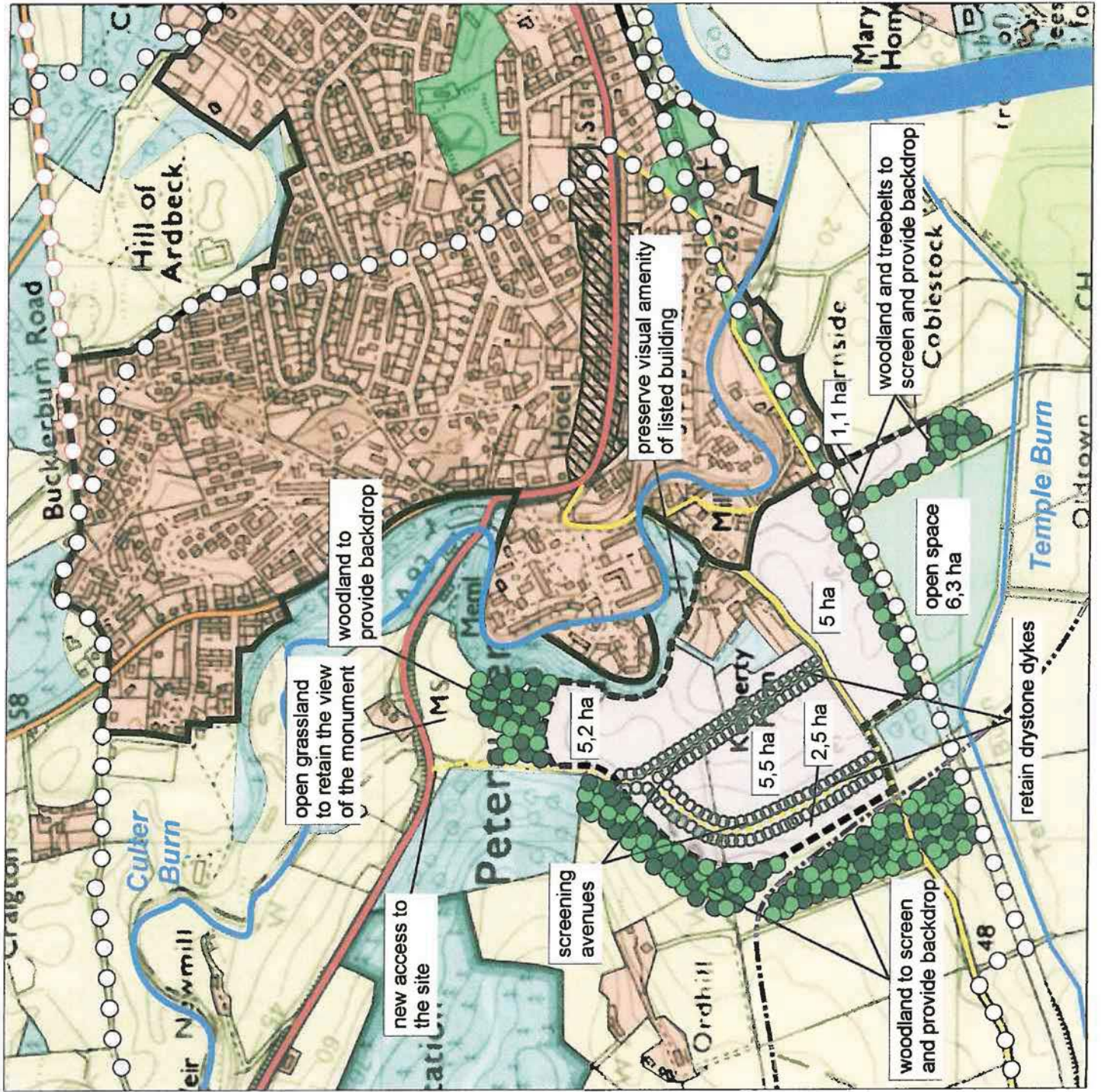
- Agricultural Area
- Woodland
- Golf Course
- Settlement
- Urban Green Space
- District Centre
- Settlement Boundary
- Potential Expansion Area
- River Dee SAC
- Areas of Landscape Significance
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Listed Building
- Proposed Core Path
- Aspirational Path
- Underground Pipeline with
- Existing Outer Safety Zone
- Projected Outer Safety Zone
- Proposed Residential Area
- Proposed Woodland
- Proposed Open Space
- Proposed Visual Buffer Zone

KENNERTY FARM, PETERCULTER
LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY
 L5: Proposed development 1

Scale: NTS January 2009

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- Agricultural Area
- Woodland
- Golf Course
- Settlement
- Urban Green Space
- District Centre
- Existing Settlement Boundary
- Proposed Settlement Boundary
- Proposed Core Path
- Aspirational Path
- Underground Pipeline
- Proposed Woodland



KENNERTY FARM, PETERCULTER
LANDSCAPE CAPACITY STUDY
 L6: Proposed development 2

Scale: 1: 10,000 January 2009

DAVID WILSON ASSOCIATES
 landscape architects

Cultural heritage

- 9.10 As a unique feature, Belskavie Tower needs special attention from the Forestry Commission and the Council in order to preserve the view of and from the tower. This requires that a designated zone around the tower (see on Layout 5) should be kept deforested.
- 9.11 Similarly, the view of the World War I memorial, for those arriving at the A93 road, should be preserved. The area adjacent the road is therefore proposed to be maintained as open grassland.
- 9.12 The development around Kennerty Farm should be plotted and designed so that it does not have an impact on the listed Kennerty House.
- 9.13 The drystone dykes marking the field boundaries within the development area should be retained as much as possible as features along the proposed access roads or as fences of the housing lots.

Conclusions

- 9.14 As a result of the proposals a southwest expansion of the settlement would be possible, with the mitigation of most of the potential impacts:
- Since the expansion is contained within the topography and the proposed woodland belts, the settlement would preserve its basic exposed hillside character.
 - For similar reasons, the rural character of the landscape would not significantly change (provided that the architecture would also be sympathetic to the location).
 - Views from the potential receptors are mostly preserved, or have only minor impacts.
 - The function of the Green Space Network is possible to retain with some territorial change. While the role of the Core Path is strengthened as a recreational corridor, the ecological links could be relocated along the same directions.



View of the potential expansion area from Hilton-North with Peterculter to the right



View of the potential expansion area from Belskavie Tower with Peterculter in the background



View of the potential expansion area from the northeast (ridge of Newmill Hill) with the distant view of Deeside

PICTURE SHEET 1



View of the northern section of the potential expansion area from the east (from the World War I memorial)



View of the potential expansion area from the south (ridge of Newmill Hill) with the westernmost houses of Peterculter in the background

PICTURE SHEET 2

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PRACTICE INFORMATION

David Wilson Associates

1. The landscape architectural practice of David Wilson Associates was established in 1992 and now works from a busy design studio in Hamilton town centre. The staff consist of five qualified Landscape Architects including David Wilson, who has now over twenty five years professional experience. This is reinforced by a qualified and experienced garden designer and horticulturalist and administrative back up.
2. The company use computer-based design and communication systems to provide a professional landscape design and planning service to public agencies, commercial clients and private individuals throughout Scotland, Northern Ireland and the North of England.
3. The workload includes commercial housing layout design, industrial, residential developments, road corridor improvement projects, community parks, play areas, private garden design and ecological and woodland habitat and the full range of landscape initiatives.
4. In addition, the practice has provided a specialist service in preparation of landscape and visual impact studies and, over recent years, has undertaken them for many developers including Bancon, Gladedale, Dawn, Manor Kingdom, Miller, Persimmon, Scotia, Stewart Milne and Wimpey Homes. This has often been followed by David Wilson acting as a professional expert witness at a subsequent public inquiry.







ARRANGEMENT:

Creates a strong 'sense of place'.
 The radial 'fan' organisation and the inclusion of a central square brings a level of legibility to the development.
 The masterplan maximises sunlight penetration for the residential and public spaces.
 Works within existing landscape, topography and ecology.
 Takes full advantage of setting.
 Creates desirable place in which to live.
 Site organised to provide an arrangement of public / semi public courtyards.

ORDER:

The Masterplan strategy encourages strong pedestrian movement through the site.
 High degree of pedestrian and cycling accessibility and no through roads on the site.
 The proposal also creates a high quality public realm, including a central public open space.
 The masterplan is organised around a series of radiating boulevards. At the originating point of the radiating boulevards, a park will become the focus of the commercial centre.

CONTEXT:

Utilisation of mixed use development of business and commercial to the lower levels and residential above.
 Establishes linear edge of the site.
 Formation of business courtyards to the work / live units.

SCALE and MIX:

Development provides a mix of uses that ensures a diversity of ownership. Living and working environment will make the area buzz and come to life.
 Different users - commercial, residential, work/live, affordable housing - of the neighbourhood support different activities at all times of the day and night ensuring occupation at all times, maintaining a strong neighbourhood environment.

LANDSCAPE:

Tree planting and woodland belts help screen the development.
 Green park and ecological linkage runs through the heart of the scheme.
 Sustainability is key to the masterplan - at the heart of the scheme is a linear park.
 Landscaping serves to reinforce the radial pattern of the scheme by establishing avenues of trees.

SCHEDULE of AREAS:

Business Campus:		
BC-01	1.37 acres	0.5546 ha
Landscaping:		
L1	3.93 acres	1.5929 ha
L2	1.34 acres	0.5439 ha
L3	9.64 acres	3.9002 ha
Linear Park:		
LP-01	2.11 acres	0.8554 ha
Low Density Residential:		
LDR-02	1.12 acres	0.4539 ha
LDR-03 (incl. public open space)	4.00 acres	1.6216 ha
Low / Medium Density Residential:		
LDR-01 / MDR-01	5.88 acres	2.3835 ha
Mixed Use - Commercial / High Density Residential:		
COMM-01 / HDR-01	2.66 acres	1.0768 ha

Peterculter West

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2016 – Developer Bids

Site Name

Peterculter West

Site Location

The proposed development site is located to the west of Peterculter, immediately adjacent to the A93. Peterculter has grown organically over the years, but has little other than housing has been built, and it acts mainly as a commuter town for Aberdeen City. This bid offers an opportunity to establish some business and commercial land, thereby improving the sustainability of the town.

The A93 bounds the north of the site, and will provide direct access (via a new roundabout). The land is enclosed by woodland to the east and west.

Around half of the site is located within Aberdeen City, and this will be promoted as a separate bid to the City LDP in due course. This bid relates solely to the area within Aberdeenshire.



Fig 1. Site Location.

Studies Carried Out

- Transport Appraisal

Access Arrangements and Designing Streets

The site will be accessed directly from the A93 via a new roundabout. This will serve the business land directly, and also provide vehicular access to the rear of commercial and residential properties. However, these will face onto a pedestrian hub, which in turn leads into public open space. The approach is in line with Designing Streets principles.

Current Site Use

The site is currently in woodland and agricultural use.

Proposed Development

The proposed development includes 0.5 hectares of business land, arranged as small ‘start-up’ type units, ideal for local businesses, and 1 hectare of mixed commercial and high density residential development arranged around a pedestrian hub and 4 hectares of open space and parkland. The development would include 15-20 houses.

Proposed Delivery Schedule

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Housing units		10	10								

Proposed Land Uses

Business, commercial and residential.

Proposed Development Detail

Relationship to Existing Settlement – The proposed development sits to the west of Peterculter. It is well contained in the surrounding landscape. Developed in conjunction with the adjacent site (within Aberdeen City), the site will be visually linked with the existing town. The proposed use, particularly the small business units, are suited to an edge of settlement location with good vehicular access. In this respect the site is absolutely ideal. The provision of a roundabout onto the A93 will provide a distinct arrival point for Peterculter, and slow traffic down prior to entering the bends that pass the existing Italian restaurant (immediately east of the site) and the bridge over the Culter Burn.

Connectivity to Existing Settlement – The site offers vehicular connectivity to the town via the A93, and pedestrian and cycle access alongside the A93, as well as alternative routes to the east to the War Memorial and to the existing residential area of Culter Den, where existing footpaths will be joined by crossing the Culter Burn.

Landscape Fit of Proposals - The site is well contained by trees to the west, and rising ground to the south. The balance of the site will be laid out with tree planting and the formation of public open space, providing significant screening for the proposed business units.

Character of Proposed Development – The development will be of modern design, prioritising pedestrian and cycle movements, but with a direct access to and from the business land. It is expected that the site will offer opportunities for local businesses who have little options in the local area at present. They also face high rents on the closest large employment sites (for example

Kingswells and Westhill). Consultation with the local Community Council over the last few years has highlighted their desire to see such opportunities provided locally.

Cumulative Impact on Roads, Facilities and Services –

Roads – The scale of the development is limited, and the impact on the road network is not considered to be significant. An appraisal of the transport network is appended for information. The most significant issues in Peterculter are traffic congestion caused by the number of HGVs that use the Netherley Road to avoid travelling through Aberdeen, and the geometry of the Malcolm Road/A93 junction. These are addressed in the appended appraisal and drawings.

The delivery of the AWPR will provide a direct route around Aberdeen, and assessment work suggests a dramatic reduction in the number of HGV trips through Peterculter and negotiating the Malcolm Road/A93 junction.

Schools – Culter Primary School has considerable capacity to accommodate pupils from the development. Cults Academy has some capacity, as does Banchory Academy. Either secondary school could cater for the development.

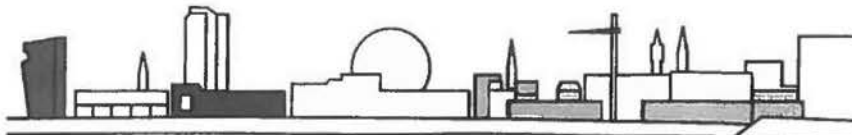
Setting for Solar Gain and Shelter

The site is north facing, but extremely well contained by woodland and topography. The proposed peripheral tree planting will further protect the site from the elements.

Community Benefits

The development will provide premises for local businesses to invest, without having to relocate to the large business parks at Westhill and Kingswells. Peterculter offers very little in the way of business land at present. Feedback from consultation with the local community suggests that this impacts negatively on local businesses and tradespeople.

The provision of a mixed use development will provide the opportunity to live and work in one location, which again may be attractive to local businesses and tradespeople.



Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2015 Representation Form

Please use this form to make comments on the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan, ensuring that your comments relate to a specific issue, site or policy in either the Proposed Plan, Proposed Supplementary Guidance, Proposed Action Programme or Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report. Please include the relevant paragraph(s) and use a separate form for each issue you wish to raise.

The consultation period runs between Friday 20th March and Monday 1st June 2015. Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.

Name	Mr <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mrs <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms <input type="radio"/> Ben Freeman
Organisation	Bancon Developments Ltd
On behalf of (if relevant)	
Address	Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode	AB31 5ZU
Telephone	01330 824900
E-mail	ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

Please tick if you would like to receive all future correspondence by e-mail

What document are you commenting on?	Proposed Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Proposed Supplementary Guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Proposed Action Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Policy/Site/Issue	OMISSION OF SITE B0938 KENNEDY FARM, PETERCULTER.	Paragraph(s)	

What would you like to say about the issue?

Please see attached paper

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1991. 01. 26. 10:00 AM

What change would you like to see made?

Please see attached paper.

Please return the completed form by:

- post to the Local Development Plan Team, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB; or
- email to ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk

The representation form can be filled in, saved, e-mailed and/or printed. You must "save as" to ensure the completed form is saved with the changes you have made. If you need more space, please fill out another representation form or send a word document attachment via e-mail with your completed representation form. **Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.**

Thank you. For more information, please visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/aldp2016 or to contact the Local Development Plan Team call 01224 523470.

Data Protection Statement

The comments you make on the Proposed Plan will be used to inform the Local Development Plan process and the Examination into the Local Development Plan by the Scottish Ministers' Reporter. You must provide your name and address for your representation to be considered valid, and this information will be made publicly available. Other personal contact details such as telephone and e-mail will not be made public, although we will share these with the Reporter, who may use them to contact you about the comments you have made. For more information about how Aberdeen City Council maintains the security of your information, and your rights to access information we hold about you, please contact Andrew Brownrigg (Local Development Plan Team Leader) on 01224 523317.

Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Proposed Local Development Plan May 2015

Objection to the omission of site B0938 – Kennerty Farm, Peterculter

Bancon object to the Proposed Local Development Plan, which allocated additional greenfield sites for only 98 houses against the substantially higher requirement identified in the Strategic Development Plan.

Specifically, Bancon object to the failure to allocate greenfield land for development at Kennerty Farm, Peterculter (site reference B0938).

Strategy

In separate objection papers, Bancon set out a detailed case explaining how the 2012 LDP has failed, and is continuing to fail, to deliver the housing requirement set out in the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). SPP was adopted in 2014, and requires LDPs in City Regions to *“allocate a range of sites which are effective or expected to become effective in the plan period to meet the housing land requirement of the Strategic Development Plan up to year 10 from the expected year of adoption.”* The SDP identifies the housing requirement for each plan period – up to 2016, 2017-2026 and 2027-2035. This LDP must therefore allocate sites capable of delivering the requirements in the SDP 2017-26 period.

Bancon submit that the Proposed LDP fails to do this, as only a few large sites are allocated for development, and almost all of them require the delivery of housing undelivered in the previous SDP plan period before the new allocations can commence. The best example of this is the large Grandhome site, where the allocation up to 2016 is not expected (in the 2015 Housing Land Audit figures) to be delivered until after the 2017-26 plan period has passed. Therefore there is no expectation of the 2017-26 allocations on that site becoming effective during that plan period, and therefore their allocation to deliver the SDP requirement in the LDP is contradictory to SPP.

In a separate objection in regard to Land Supply, Bancon consider the issue on an Aberdeen City wide basis, as well as broken down into individual areas as required in the plan’s spatial strategy. The Deeside area is the area in which the allocation of additional greenfield land at Kennerty Farm, Peterculter would help to address the shortfall in the Proposed LDP. Table 8 in the Proposed LDP details the allocations made.

Table 8: Development at Deeside

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2026	Phase 1 : 2017 – 2026	Phase 2 : 2027 – 2035
OP45 Peterculter East	25 homes	-	-
OP46 Culter House Road	5 homes	-	-
OP47 Edgehill Road	5 homes	-	-
OP48 Oldfold	400 homes	150 homes	-
	5 ha employment		-
Craigton Road / Airyhall Road* (Complete)	20 homes	-	-
North Garthdee Farm* (Complete)	80 homes	-	-
OP51 Peterculter Burn	19 homes		
OP52 Malcolm Road Peterculter		71 homes	-
OP108 Mid Anguston		8 homes	-
OP109 Woodend Peterculter		19 homes	
Housing Total	554 homes	248 homes	0 homes
Employment Land Total	5 ha		-

Table 8A below shows the expected delivery of housing on the allocated sites in Table 8, based on the 2015 Housing Land Audit figures.

Table 8A : Development at Deeside – Delivery as Expected in HLA

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2016	Phase 1: 2017-2026	Phase 2: 2027-2035
OP45 Peterculter East	25		
OP46 Culter House Road	5		
OP47 Edgehill Road	5		
OP48 Oldfold	25	330	195
Craigton Road/ Airyhall Road*(Complete)	20 (complete 2015)		
North Garthdee Farm* (Complete)	80 (complete 2015)		
Op51 Peterculter Burn	Constrained	Constrained	Constrained
OP52 Malcolm Road Peterculter		71 (Not in HLA)	
OP108 Mid Anguston		8 (Not in HLA)	
OP109 Woodend Peterculter		19 (Not in HLA)	-
Housing Total	160	330	195

Allocated 2017-26 : 248

Expected Delivery : 98

Shortfall : 150

Allocated to 2026 : 802

Expected Delivery : 607

Shortfall : 195

Allocated to 2035 : 802

Expected Delivery : 802

Bancon therefore submit that the allocated sites have and will continue to fail to deliver the housing requirement in this area of the City. These can therefore not be considered ‘effective or expected to become effective in the plan period’ – a requirement of SPP paragraph 119.

The majority of housing expected to be delivered in the 2017-26 period is on sites allocated in the period up to 2016, housing therefore coming from the effective supply rather than the new allocations. Whilst these contribute towards an effective housing land supply (SPP requires a 5 year effective housing land supply be maintained at all times), they cannot be considered to contribute towards the LDP land allocations, which (in accordance with the SDP and SPP) specifically sets out to meet the housing requirement for the period from 2017-26. Failure to deliver in the period up until 2016 is not an excuse to abandon compliance with the SDP and SPP.

Bancon submit that there is a need to allocate an additional 150 houses in the Proposed LDP to meet the SDP requirements from 2017-26.

However, in addition to this analysis of the needs of the Deeside area of Aberdeen City, Bancon consider that the Deeside corridor has considerable greater capacity to accommodate housing development than identified in the Proposed LDP. In our objection to Housing Land Supply, we identify substantial delivery issues in other areas of the City. This is most notable at Grandhome , where during the 2017-26 plan period, there is a shortfall in allocated land for 2,100 houses identified. Table 3 in the Proposed LDP provides the allocations.

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2026	Phase 1 : 2017 – 2026	Phase 2 : 2027 – 2035
OP1 Murcar	-	-	27 ha employment
OP8 East Woodcroft North	60 homes	-	-
OP9 Grandhome	2,600 homes	2,100 homes	2,300 homes
	5ha employment		-
OP10 Dubford	550 homes	-	-
Housing Total	3,210 homes	2,100 homes	2,300 homes
Employment Land Total	5ha		27ha

Table 3A below shows the expected delivery on these sites based on the 2015 Housing Land Audit.

Table 3A : Development at Bridge of Don and Grandhome – Delivery as Expected in HLA

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2016	Phase 1: 2017-2026	Phase 2: 2027-2035
OP8 East Woodcroft North	30	30	
OP9 Grandhome	150	2,000	1,800*
OP10 Dubford	310	240	
Housing Total	490	2,270	1,800

*Housing will continue beyond 2035

Allocated 2017-26 : 2,100	Expected Delivery : 0	Shortfall : 2,100
Allocated to 2026 : 5,310	Expected Delivery : 2,760	Shortfall : 2,550
Allocated to 2035 : 7,610	Expected Delivery : 4,560	Shortfall : 3,050

It is submitted that Deeside should be identified for additional development during the 2017-26 plan period, and beyond, in order to ensure the delivery of the SDP, in accordance with SPP. It is therefore proposed that land for up to 1,000 extra houses could be identified for development in the Deeside corridor during the 2017-26 plan period – i.e. in this LDP.

Suitability of Proposed Development

We refer to our development bid for site B0938.

The Kennerty Farm site is considered undesirable by Aberdeen City Council because it falls within the Green Belt and Green Space Network. Bancon submit that this justification is not tenable in light of the unmet housing requirement, and that the location does not provide a positive contribution towards either, instead forming a logical extension to the settlement. The release of additional greenfield land will result in the rezoning of Green Belt land, as it currently covers all unzoned development land within the City.

The most effective way to address the immediate housing requirement is to identify a range of smaller sites capable of being delivered quickly and efficiently, and the proposed 22 house site at Kennerty Farm is a prime example of such a site.

It is noted that the Deeside Old Railway Line LNCS is adjacent to the site, and that the River Dee and Culter Burn SACs are located to the east. However, being in close proximity to protected areas does not automatically mean there will be a negative impact upon it. Bancon submit that effective drainage and appropriate landscaping will provide local benefits from the development, and improved access will enhance the Deeside Way as a recreational resource.

Conclusion

Bancon therefore submit that the Proposed LDP fails to allocate sufficient greenfield land in the Deeside corridor to meet the requirements of the Strategic Development Plan (as required by SPP) – i.e. sites that are effective or expected to become effective in the plan period (2017-26). The shortfall is 150 houses. However, more significant failures to deliver the housing requirement in other parts of the city (such as Grandhome) justify the increased allocation of housing land in the Deeside corridor in this LDP, perhaps in the region of 1,000 houses.

Bancon therefore submit that the proposed 22 house development at Kennerty Farm should be included in the Proposed LDP to help address the shortfall in housing land allocations.

- 1 Name of proposer: Bancon Developments Ltd.
Date: 14/06/13
Address: Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode: AB31 5ZU
Telephone: 01330 824900
Email: ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk
- 2 Name of landowner: Kennerty Farms c/o Bancon Developments Ltd.
Address: As above.

The site and your proposal

- 3 Site Name: Peterculter Kennerty Farm
- 4 Site Location map: The site is located to the west of Peterculter, with access from Kennerty Road. To the north lies Kennerty Farm, and to the south the Deeside Way. An existing residential area is adjacent to the site on the east.



Fig 1 – Proposed development site and route of proposed AWPR.

- 5 National Grid reference of the site: NJ 834002
- 6 Current Use of Site/Previous Development: Agricultural/grazing land.
- 7 Proposed Use of the Site: Residential
- 8 Details of Housing Proposals: The development proposed consists of 22 dwellinghouses and associated open space, with an adjacent field offering the potential for tennis courts. The proposed layout utilises and improves the existing road network in the area, and provides pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the Deeside Way.
- 9 Provision of Affordable Housing: on site – 25%

- 10 Business Land Proposals: N/A
- 11 Other Proposed Land Uses: The bid includes a play area and kickabout area in the centre of the housing, and an adjacent field offers potential for much needed tennis courts, adjacent to the Deeside Way.
- 12 Phasing: The site would be developed in one phase.
- 13 Community Engagement: None to date.

Sustainable Development and Design

- 14 Sustainability Checklist:
- A) Exposure – The site has good shelter to northerly winds
 - B) Aspect – The site is on low lying ground with higher ground to the north and south offering protection, but the site is gently south facing, therefore benefitting from natural sunlight.
 - C) Slope – The site is relatively flat.
 - D) Flooding – A flood risk assessment has been carried out and shows that the site is not at risk from a 1:200 year flood event.
 - E) Drainage – The site is adjacent to the lower Deeside trunk sewer, while surface water is capable of being drained effectively using SUDS.
 - F) Built and Cultural Heritage – The development will not lead to the loss or impact upon any listed building or historic landscape.
 - G) Natural conservation – The development of the site would not impact negatively upon any nature conservation interests, and the extensive landscape planting would improve the biodiversity of the site from its current grazing use.
 - H) Landscape features – The site does not contain any landscape features of note, other than peripheral mature trees which would be retained as part of the development.
 - I) Landscape fit – The proposed development will be contained successfully in the surrounding landscape. The Deeside Way is raised around 4-5m above the level of the site, and therefore screens the site from the south. To the north lies Kennerty Farm steadings and surrounding woodland, which screens the site from the north. Figs 2 and 3 below are taken from Google Streetview, showing the context of the site.



Fig 2 – site viewed from southeast corner looking towards Kennerty Farm.



Fig 3 – view from the northwest corner of the site looking south towards the Deeside Way.

- J) Relationship to existing settlements – The proposed development will fit successfully into the existing settlement, with existing residential areas immediately adjacent to the east. Fig 4 below demonstrates how the development will successfully round off the southwest corner of the settlement.



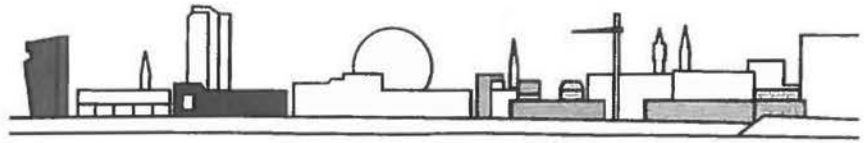
Fig 4 – integration into the surrounding area.

- K) Land use mix – The proposed development will provide a suitable balance of public open space and recreation facilities along with the 22 houses.

- L) Accessibility – The proposed development site is within 400m of the A93 with a regular bus service. Vehicular access is available via Kennerty Road, which leads directly to the A93. Pedestrian and cycle access can also be taken up Kennerty Road, or alternatively along the Deeside Way.
- M) Proximity to services and facilities –
- Community facilities – 400-800m from the site
 - Local shops – 400 from the site
 - Sports facilities – Potentially on site, golf course within 400m
 - Public transport networks – Within 400m of the site
 - Primary school – Approximately 800m from the site.
- N) Footpath and cycle connections – The Deeside Way, the primary pedestrian and cycle route along the river Dee valley, runs along the southern edge of the site. This provides recreational walks to the west towards Banchory, but also direct pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre and beyond to Cults and Aberdeen to the east.
- O) Proximity to employment opportunities – Apart from local service employment, Peterculter offers limited employment opportunities at present. The town is excellently placed to provide access to Westhill and Kingswells, which both offer extensive employment opportunities and the nearby AWPR access will further enhance the connection with these towns. Bancon have also submitted two separate bids for sites within Peterculter that would provide suitable local employment opportunities.
- P) Contamination – No constraints.
- Q) Land use conflict – No conflict.
- R) Physical Infrastructure –
- Electricity – available
 - Gas – available
 - Water and Sewage – capacity available
 - Secondary School Capacity – current forecasts indicate capacity at Cults Academy
 - Primary Capacity – Significant capacity is available at Culter Primary School.
- 15** Supporting Surveys: A transport study of Peterculter, and the potential improvement to the current situation that the AWPR will bring, along with a Landscape Capacity Study for the wider Kennerty Farm area are appended.
- 16** Community Benefits of the Proposed Development: The development of the site will provide local housing, including 25% affordable housing, which will contribute to the falling primary school roll. It is noted that almost all development in the 2012 LDP is located within

the route of the AWPR. However, development is essential to maintain the vibrancy of towns, and the viability of services and facilities.

- 17** Masterplan/Framework: An indicative layout plan is appended to this bid report.



Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2015 Representation Form

Please use this form to make comments on the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan, ensuring that your comments relate to a specific issue, site or policy in either the Proposed Plan, Proposed Supplementary Guidance, Proposed Action Programme or Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report. Please include the relevant paragraph(s) and use a separate form for each issue you wish to raise.

The consultation period runs between Friday 20th March and Monday 1st June 2015. Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.

Name	Mr <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mrs <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms <input type="radio"/> Ben Freeman
Organisation	Bancon Developments Ltd
On behalf of (if relevant)	
Address	Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode	AB31 5ZU
Telephone	01330 824900
E-mail	ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

Please tick if you would like to receive all future correspondence by e-mail

What document are you commenting on?	Proposed Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Proposed Supplementary Guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Proposed Action Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Policy/Site/Issue	OMISSION OF SITE B0940 MILLTIMBER SOUTH	Paragraph(s)	

What would you like to say about the issue?

Please see attached paper

Handwritten text at the bottom of the page, possibly a signature or date, which is mostly illegible due to blurring.

What change would you like to see made?

Please see attached paper.

Please return the completed form by:

- post to the Local Development Plan Team, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB; or
- email to ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk

The representation form can be filled in, saved, e-mailed and/or printed. You must "save as" to ensure the completed form is saved with the changes you have made. If you need more space, please fill out another representation form or send a word document attachment via e-mail with your completed representation form. **Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.**

Thank you. For more information, please visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/aldp2016 or to contact the Local Development Plan Team call 01224 523470.

Data Protection Statement

The comments you make on the Proposed Plan will be used to inform the Local Development Plan process and the Examination into the Local Development Plan by the Scottish Ministers' Reporter. You must provide your name and address for your representation to be considered valid, and this information will be made publicly available. Other personal contact details such as telephone and e-mail will not be made public, although we will share these with the Reporter, who may use them to contact you about the comments you have made. For more information about how Aberdeen City Council maintains the security of your information, and your rights to access information we hold about you, please contact Andrew Brownrigg (Local Development Plan Team Leader) on 01224 523317.

Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Proposed Local Development Plan May 2015

Objection to the omission of site B0940 – Milltimber South

Bancon object to the Proposed Local Development Plan, which allocated additional greenfield sites for only 98 houses against the substantially higher requirement identified in the Strategic Development Plan.

Specifically, Bancon object to the failure to allocate greenfield land for development at Milltimber South (site reference B0940).

Strategy

In separate objection papers, Bancon set out a detailed case explaining how the 2012 LDP has failed, and is continuing to fail, to deliver the housing requirement set out in the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). SPP was adopted in 2014, and requires LDPs in City Regions to *“allocate a range of sites which are effective or expected to become effective in the plan period to meet the housing land requirement of the Strategic Development Plan up to year 10 from the expected year of adoption.”* The SDP identifies the housing requirement for each plan period – up to 2016, 2017-2026 and 2027-2035. This LDP must therefore allocate sites capable of delivering the requirements in the SDP 2017-26 period.

Bancon submit that the Proposed LDP fails to do this, as only a few large sites are allocated for development, and almost all of them require the delivery of housing undelivered in the previous SDP plan period before the new allocations can commence. The best example of this is the large Grandhome site, where the allocation up to 2016 is not expected (in the 2015 Housing Land Audit figures) to be delivered until after the 2017-26 plan period has passed. Therefore there is no expectation of the 2017-26 allocations on that site becoming effective during that plan period, and therefore their allocation to deliver the SDP requirement in the LDP is contradictory to SPP.

In a separate objection in regard to Land Supply, Bancon consider the issue on an Aberdeen City wide basis, as well as broken down into individual areas as required in the plan’s spatial strategy. The Deeside area is the area in which the allocation of additional greenfield land at Milltimber South would help to address the shortfall in the Proposed LDP. Table 8 in the Proposed LDP details the allocations made.

Table 8: Development at Deeside

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2026	Phase 1 : 2017 – 2026	Phase 2 : 2027 – 2035
OP45 Peterculter East	25 homes	-	-
OP46 Culter House Road	5 homes	-	-
OP47 Edgehill Road	5 homes	-	-
OP48 Oldfold	400 homes	150 homes	-
	5 ha employment		-
Craigton Road / Airyhall Road* (Complete)	20 homes	-	-
North Garthdee Farm* (Complete)	80 homes	-	-
OP51 Peterculter Burn	19 homes		
OP52 Malcolm Road Peterculter		71 homes	-
OP108 Mid Anguston		8 homes	-
OP109 Woodend Peterculter		19 homes	
Housing Total	554 homes	248 homes	0 homes
Employment Land Total	5 ha		-

Table 8A below shows the expected delivery of housing on the allocated sites in Table 8, based on the 2015 Housing Land Audit figures.

Table 8A : Development at Deeside – Delivery as Expected in HLA

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2016	Phase 1: 2017-2026	Phase 2: 2027-2035
OP45 Peterculter East	25		
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OP48 Oldfold	25	330	195
Craigton Road/ Airyhall Road*(Complete)	20 (complete 2015)		
North Garthdee Farm* (Complete)	80 (complete 2015)		
Op51 Peterculter Burn	Constrained	Constrained	Constrained
OP52 Malcolm Road Peterculter		71 (Not in HLA)	
OP108 Mid Anguston		8 (Not in HLA)	
OP109 Woodend Peterculter		19 (Not in HLA)	-
Housing Total	160	330	195

Allocated 2017-26 : 248

Expected Delivery : 98

Shortfall : 150

Allocated to 2026 : 802

Expected Delivery : 607

Shortfall : 195

Allocated to 2035 : 802

Expected Delivery : 802

Bancon therefore submit that the allocated sites have and will continue to fail to deliver the housing requirement in this area of the City. These can therefore not be considered ‘effective or expected to become effective in the plan period’ – a requirement of SPP paragraph 119.

The majority of housing expected to be delivered in the 2017-26 period is on sites allocated in the period up to 2016, housing therefore coming from the effective supply rather than the new allocations. Whilst these contribute towards an effective housing land supply (SPP requires a 5 year effective housing land supply be maintained at all times), they cannot be considered to contribute towards the LDP land allocations, which (in accordance with the SDP and SPP) specifically sets out to meet the housing requirement for the period from 2017-26. Failure to deliver in the period up until 2016 is not an excuse to abandon compliance with the SDP and SPP.

Bancon submit that there is a need to allocate an additional 150 houses in the Proposed LDP to meet the SDP requirements from 2017-26.

However, in addition to this analysis of the needs of the Deeside area of Aberdeen City, Bancon consider that the Deeside corridor has considerable greater capacity to accommodate housing development than identified in the Proposed LDP. In our objection to Housing Land Supply, we identify substantial delivery issues in other areas of the City. This is most notable at Grandhome , where during the 2017-26 plan period, there is a shortfall in allocated land for 2,100 houses identified. Table 3 in the Proposed LDP provides the allocations.

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2026	Phase 1 : 2017 – 2026	Phase 2 : 2027 – 2035
OP1 Murcar	-	-	27 ha employment
OP8 East Woodcroft North	60 homes	-	-
OP9 Grandhome	2,600 homes	2,100 homes	2,300 homes
	5ha employment		-
OP10 Dubford	550 homes	-	-
Housing Total	3,210 homes	2,100 homes	2,300 homes
Employment Land Total	5ha		27ha

Table 3A below shows the expected delivery on these sites based on the 2015 Housing Land Audit.

Table 3A : Development at Bridge of Don and Grandhome – Delivery as Expected in HLA

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2016	Phase 1: 2017-2026	Phase 2: 2027-2035
OP8 East Woodcroft North	30	30	
OP9 Grandhome	150	2,000	1,800*
OP10 Dubford	310	240	
Housing Total	490	2,270	1,800

*Housing will continue beyond 2035

Allocated 2017-26 : 2,100 Expected Delivery : 0 Shortfall : 2,100

Allocated to 2026 : 5,310 Expected Delivery : 2,760 Shortfall : 2,550

Allocated to 2035 : 7,610 Expected Delivery : 4,560 Shortfall : 3,050

It is submitted that Deeside should be identified for additional development during the 2017-26 plan period, and beyond, in order to ensure the delivery of the SDP, in accordance with SPP. It is therefore proposed that land for up to 1,000 extra houses could be identified for development in the Deeside corridor during the 2017-26 plan period – i.e. in this LDP.

Suitability of Proposed Development

We refer to our development bids for site B0940.

The Gaol Achievement Matrix assessment of the site has resulted in excellent scores for the proposed development on the site. However, the proposal was considered undesirable in the MIR, with landscape fit noted as the principle constraint to development.

The bid was supported by carefully thought out design work and substantial landscaping proposals to minimise any visual impact from the development. Development would be located below the level of the A93, and views across the site to the Dee Valley would be retained.

It is also notable that such expansive current views will shortly be replaced with a view of the AWPR, routed 25-30m above the current ground level, and interrupting the views up the river valley. The delivery of the AWPR will provide convenient access for the site, via a grade separated interchange to the west.

Bancon therefore submit that the proposed development is entirely compatible with it in terms of landscape fit, and would contribute towards meeting the immediate requirement for development land in the City.

Conclusion

Bancon therefore submit that the Proposed LDP fails to allocate sufficient greenfield land in the Deeside corridor to meet the requirements of the Strategic Development Plan (as required by SPP) – i.e. sites that are effective or expected to become effective in the plan period (2017-26). The shortfall is 150 houses. However, more significant failures to deliver the housing requirement in other parts of the city (such as Grandhome) justify the increased allocation of housing land in the Deeside corridor in this LDP, perhaps in the region of 1,000 houses.

Bancon therefore submit that the site should be identified in the Local Development plan for the development of around 60 houses and associated commercial uses.

- 1 Name of proposer: Bancon Developments Ltd.
Date: 14/06/13
Address: Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode: AB31 5ZU
Telephone: 01330 824900
Email: ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

- 2 Name of landowner: Milltimber Farms Ltd. c/o Bancon Developments Ltd.
Address: As above.

The site and your proposal

- 3 Site Name: Milltimber South

- 4 Site Location map: The site is considered to be a 'gap site', located to the south of the A93 in Milltimber. Housing sits to the east, west and north of the site, and the Deeside Way runs along the southern boundary. Beyond the Deeside Way, a recently completed livery has been developed.



Fig 1 – Proposed development site and route of proposed AWPR.

- 5 National Grid reference of the site: NJ 862015

- 6 Current Use of Site/Previous Development: Agricultural/grazing land.

- 7** Proposed Use of the Site: Residential and commercial
- 8** Details of Housing Proposals: It will be seen from the attached indicative plan that strategic landscaping belts are proposed all around the site. To the west, and east, the belt will be 20 metres wide to provide a strong screen for the established housing areas as well as footpath and wildlife corridors. On the northern side of the site, the landscape belt will be 30 metres deep so that development cannot start until well down the slope. This will ensure that the view over the site for those walking or driving along the North Deeside Road will not be obscured. As a further 'factor of safety' in this, the first row of houses and shops is proposed to be single storey. To the south of the site there will be a 10 metre wide landscape strip to accommodate both a buffer to the Deeside Way and to contain necessary SUDS measures.
- Apart from the generous landscaping, the masterplan demonstrates the site developed with 60 houses set in generous plots, along with a group of commercial buildings, providing space (of 1225 sq.m.) for a variety of retail or office users. The gross residential density would be 5.2 dwellings / Ha (2.1 / acre) which is highly compatible with surrounding development in the area.
- The indicative layout has been designed utilising the principles of 'Designing Streets' with all the properties being very well connected. Most are related to a formal square, or an area of green open space. The majority have rear service access, so that a continuous street frontage can be designed – when looking at the individual house and plot layouts at the detailed design stage. It would be a very attractive layout, highly desirable to the market, and would provide further locational choice in an area which currently has few development options.
- 9** Provision of Affordable Housing: Affordable housing will be provided on site, at a rate of 25%.
- 10** Business Land Proposals: The indicative plan shows the potential for commercial uses (retail or office use), with space of 1225sq.m.
- 11** Other Proposed Land Uses: N/A
- 12** Phasing: The development would be built in two phases.
- 13** Community Engagement: The site was promoted for residential development through the 2012 LDP review. This involved presentation to public meetings, and several constructive meetings with the local Community Council. Our Local Development Plan bid and objections to the Main Issues Report and Proposed Plan were placed on our website for public inspection, and this bid will also be made publically available in the same way. All public feedback received is recorded and addressed through the design process.

Sustainable Development and Design

14 Sustainability Checklist:

- A) Exposure – The site has good shelter to northerly winds
- B) Aspect – The site is south facing, therefore benefitting from passive solar gain. The site sits at a lower level than the A93, ensuring continued views from the road and houses to the north, and no interruption to their residential amenity or sunlight. Views to the south over the River Dee valley are very attractive.
- C) Slope – The site is gently sloping, although the initial drop in level from the A93 is steeper. The housing is set back some 30m from the A93, to provide appropriate landscaping, but this also ensures there is ample room to grade the access appropriately. Fig 2 below shows a typical section from the A93 to the housing on the site.

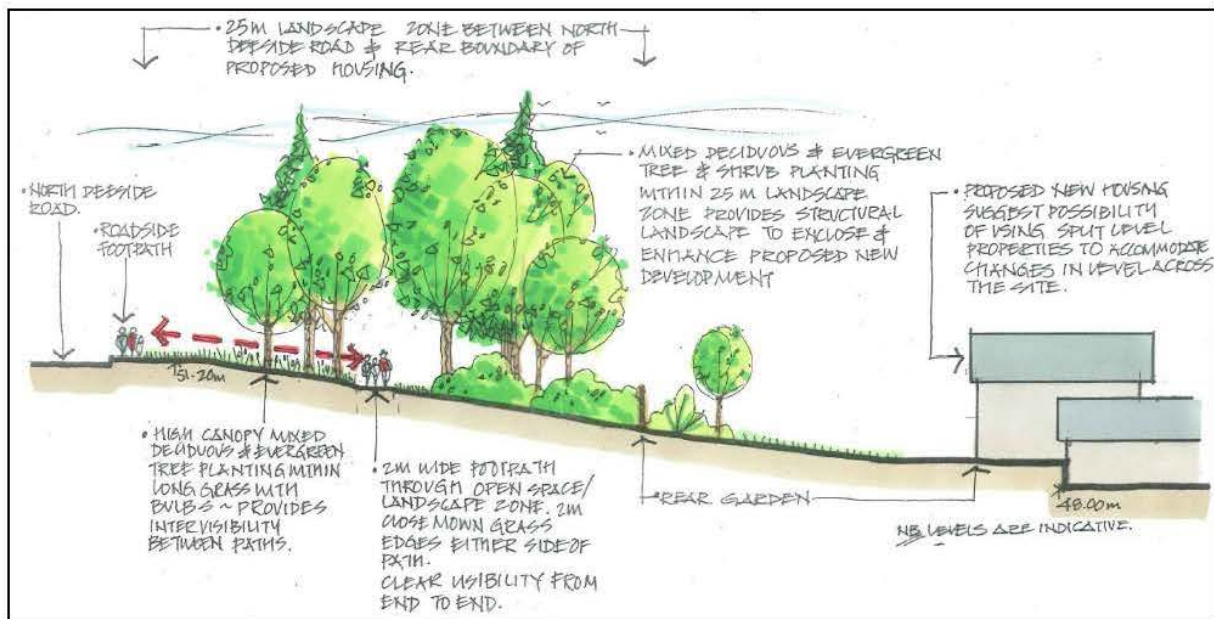


Fig 2 – typical section from the A93 to the housing

- D) Flooding – A flood risk assessment has been carried out and shows that the site is not at risk from a 1:200 year flood event.
- E) Drainage – The site is capable of being drained effectively. The lower Deeside trunk sewer runs to the south of the site while surface water can be disposed of using SUDS.
- F) Built and Cultural Heritage – The development will not lead to the loss or impact upon any listed building or historic landscape.
- G) Natural conservation – The development of the site would not impact negatively upon any nature conservation interests, and the proposed landscaping will contribute to the biodiversity of the area.

- H) Landscape features – The site has no notable landscape features, as it is agricultural grazing land. However, adjacent sites contain mature trees, and deciduous trees line the Deeside Way to the south of the site. These can be seen in Fig 3 below, taken from the A93 close to the centre of the site looking southeast.



Fig 3 – eastern half of the site looking southeast from the A93.

- I) Landscape fit – A landscape and visual impact assessment has been prepared for the site, and is appended to this bid. The proposed development will be landscaped to ensure a successful integration into the landscape.
- J) Relationship to existing settlements – The proposed development will fit successfully into the existing settlement, with development existing on all sides of the site. The aerial photograph with the masterplan area imposed in Fig 4 demonstrates how well suited the site is for development.



Fig 4 – integration into the surrounding area.

- K) Land use mix – The proposed residential development will be compatible with the surrounding area, and the provision of retail and office space will provide valuable local employment opportunities, and potentially provide local shopping facilities which are currently lacking in Milltimber.
- L) Accessibility – The whole of the proposed development site is within 400m of a bus stop on the A93. Vehicular access is directly to the A93. The AWPR is planned to pass the site around 500m to the west, with a new grade separated interchange to the north of the A93, providing excellent accessibility to all parts of the city and the wider area.
- M) Proximity to services and facilities –
- Community facilities – within 400 of the site
 - Local shops – potentially on site.
 - Sports facilities – 400-800m from the site
 - Public transport networks – Within 400m of the site
 - Primary school – within 400m of the site.
- N) Footpath and cycle connections – The site offers excellent connections to surrounding footpaths and cycle paths, and to the wider countryside in general. The excerpt from the Council’s Core Paths Plan at Fig 5 demonstrates the range of formal routes that surround the site. The Deeside Way offers an excellent means to access the services and facilities in Cults or Culter without conflicting with public roads, and the path along the northern bank of the River Dee offers excellent recreational walks.

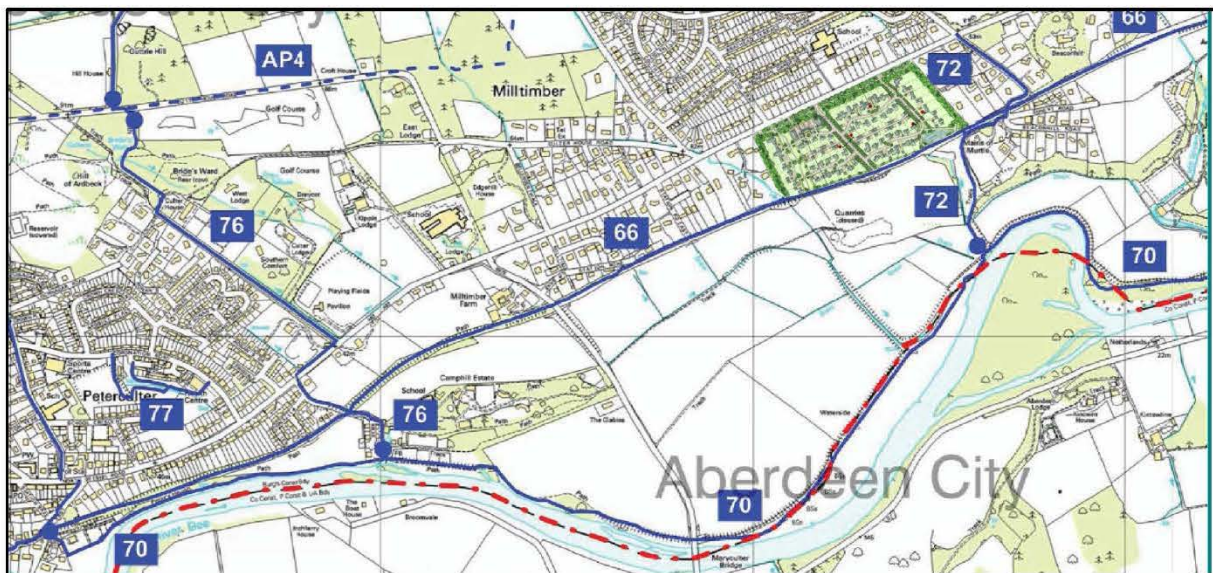


Fig 5 – site in context with the core paths plan.

- O) Proximity to employment opportunities – Milltimber offers limited employment opportunities at present. The town is, however, excellently placed to provide access to Westhill and Kingswells, which both offer extensive employment opportunities. The nearby AWPR access will further enhance the connection with these towns. The provision of office

and retail opportunities within the development site will create local employment opportunities.

P) Contamination – No constraints.

Q) Land use conflict – No conflict.

R) Physical Infrastructure –

Electricity – available

Gas – available

Water and Sewage – capacity available

Secondary School Capacity – current forecasts indicate capacity at Cults Academy

Primary Capacity – Significant capacity is available at Culter Primary School.

15 Supporting Surveys: This bid is supported by a landscape and visual impact assessment and also an ecological assessment of the site.

16 Community Benefits of the Proposed Development: The development of the site will provide local housing, including 25% affordable housing. The provision of local office and retail opportunities will improve local employment opportunities and improve the sustainability of Milltimber, which is predominantly a residential commuter town serving Aberdeen.

17 Masterplan/Framework: An indicative plan is appended to the report.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum Report Milltimber South For Bancon Homes



Job no. 0555
10th December 2010

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Brindley Associates Ltd, Landscape Architects and Environmental Planners, were commissioned by Bancon Homes Ltd to carry out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment of two adjoining proposed development sites located on the southern boundary of the settlement of Milltimber, approximately six miles west of Aberdeen city centre. The completed LVIA was issued in December 2009. Subsequently, Bancon Homes Ltd has concentrated on promoting only one of the sites originally assessed. This report, which should be read with the original LVIA, is an addendum which revisits the original assessment in the light of the reduction in the area being proposed for development to update the predicted landscape and visual impacts.

1.1 The Proposed Development Site

The proposed development site is located on the southern edge of Milltimber, north of the River Dee and lies between North Deeside Road and the Old Deeside Line Walk. (See Figure 01)

The site is 8.94 hectares (Ha) and is bounded on three sides by existing residential suburban areas; to the north by North Deeside Road, to the east by Beaconhill and to the west by Milltimber Brae. The south of the site lies adjacent to the Old Deeside Line Walk. The southern boundary of the site is formed by a dry stone wall at the top of an old railway embankment, currently the Old Deeside Line Walk. The site slopes relatively steeply from North Deeside Road down to the Old Deeside Line Walk. It falls by approximately 15 metres and has open views south across the River Dee Valley. The site is agricultural and is currently put to pasture.

1.2 The Broader Study Area

The defined study area for this development has been taken to be the land lying within an approximately 2km radius of the site. The 2km study area encompasses three Scheduled Ancient Monuments. There are no designated historic gardens, landscapes or conservation areas within the study area, Murtle Estate and Camphill Estate lie within the study area and contain elements of designed estate landscape but these areas are not designated. Numerous core paths pass through the study area including Core Path no.66 Deeside Way and Core Path no. 70, which run near the site.

In the north of the study area lie the settlement of Milltimber, East Peterculter, Murtle Estate and Milton of Murtle. South of Milltimber and Peterculter is the River Dee. In the south of the study area, across the River Dee is the small settlement of Kirkton of Maryculter.

Milltimber together with the nearby settlement of Peterculter represent the western periphery of Aberdeen conurbation and comprises primarily suburban residential development. There is an abrupt transition between the suburban landscape of Milltimber and the adjacent countryside of wooded farmland. The larger settlements and developments are well contained within the River Dee valley, with little or no settlement on the plateaus. The linear pattern of development and the roads follow the valley with one crossing point, Maryculter Bridge, south of Milltimber. Open swathes of countryside on the valley slopes and plateaus contain a matrix of well maintained forestry, woodland and pasture.

1.3 The Proposed Development

The proposed developments have not been designed in detail and are subject to revision depending upon the potential effects identified by this and other assessments.

The current proposals for the site include a mix of approximately sixty single storey dwellings and a community / commercial core. The proposed development also includes open space and large areas of strategic planting including tree planting on the North Deeside Road corridor. Road access to the development can be achieved from the North Deeside Road.

2.0 LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

This section remains the same as the 2009 report and is not replicated here.

3.0 LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Methodology

This landscape assessment has been prepared with reference to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management Assessment (2002). The full methodology utilised is described in Appendix 1.

3.1 Existing Landscape Context

3.1.1 Overview

The proposed development sites are located on the southern and western fringes of the existing settlement of Milltimber, which, with the nearby settlement of Peterculter, forms the western fringes of the Aberdeen conurbation. The site lies to the east of the corridor of the proposed Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and will be seen in the context of the new road corridor, its associated earthworks and landscape. The site is contained on three sides by adjacent existing urban areas of mainly suburban residential development within Milltimber. Much of the existing development is set in extensive and heavily wooded grounds which substantially screen and contain the sites when seen from large parts of the north of the study area. The site lies on the lower valley slopes of the Dee Valley and, as a relatively low lying area it is visually contained by rising topography to the north and south, by extensive areas of rural woodland and forestry, and by the heavily wooded suburban landscapes on the periphery of Milltimber and Peterculter.

The broader study area consists of three key elements – the flood plain landscape associated with the Dee Valley which runs west to east through the study area, the extensive suburban development that exists on the south facing slopes of the Dee Valley and the more rural farmland and forestry landscapes of the upper valley slopes and adjacent plateaus in the north and the south of the study area.

Although containing substantial amounts of residential development, the study area maintains a strongly rural and rural fringe character. This is in part due to some open views across the River Dee towards open countryside and in part due to the presence of extensive woodland and tree planting associated with the public realm, and from housing and institutions set in often extensive grounds containing large numbers of mature trees.

The presence of extensive areas of forestry and woodland in the more rural zones and associated with the river reinforces the strongly wooded nature of the study area and extensively modifies and limits visibility. This woodland pattern, combined with the enclosure of much of the study area provided by the valley sides, creates an attractive and well maintained landscape of woodland, water and rolling topography.

3.1.2 Potential Changes to Baseline Landscape Context

The proposed AWPR would run north to south through the study area and will, if constructed, have a major effect upon the landscape context of the proposed development site. A major road corridor up to approximately 150m wide in places with associated movement, earthworks, large scale engineering works, and substantial areas of structural landscape planting will be introduced into a largely rural and urban fringe landscape that does not currently contain large scale infrastructure of any kind. The AWPR would, if constructed, have a significant effect upon the baseline landscape character of the study area.

3.2 Predicted Impacts

3.2.1 Introduction

Consideration of the impact on landscape character has involved:

- an understanding of the landscape changes that will occur in the study area as a result of the construction of the proposed AWPR;
- an overview of implications for designated landscapes and other sites of local value;
- the evaluation of both direct and indirect impacts on local landscape character in terms of loss or modification to existing landscape elements (typically tree removal, changes to ground cover, land use or existing landform) and the implications for the balance of components that frame local character;
- an evaluation of the implications for the identified local landscape areas; and
- an evaluation of the effects of the proposed landscape and visual mitigation strategy.

The extent to which the proposed residential and commercial development has the potential to appear intrusive and hence, detrimental to the landscape character is somewhat limited by their low lying and enclosed nature. Topography and vegetation limit the influence of the developments to the immediate locale, and structural landscape throughout the sites and on the southern boundary of Site 2 will integrate the development with its surrounding landscape. As such significant effects are expected to be restricted to the immediate vicinity of the site boundaries.

3.3 SNH Landscape Character Areas (Figure 03)

The Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen (No.80) identifies one landscape character type (LCA) within the 2 km study area – Wooded Farmland, the adjacent Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeenshire(No.102) identified a further LCA within the study area- Central Wooded Estates. The urban areas and river valley components of the area are considered in section 3.6.

3.4 Wooded Farmland

The Wooded Farmland LCA lies to the north of the River Dee Valley. The key characteristics of the LCA are summarised below:

- Varied topography of plateaus, rounded hills and upper valley slopes;
- Large areas of woodland framing and enclosing pastures and small settlements;
- Well maintained farmland with drystone dykes and fences as boundaries;
- Framed views to distant hills and localised views across the Dee Valley; and
- Abrupt transition to the adjacent Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements LCA

3.4.1 Sensitivity

The Wooded Farmland LCA is a predominantly pastoral landscape interspersed with large areas of woodland and forestry and smaller woodlands, copses and incidental trees to create a strongly rural character, with little intrusion from the adjacent urban areas. The LCA is separated from the proposed development sites by the existing settlement of Milltimber. This Character Area is considered to be of Low sensitivity to residential development outwith its boundaries as a result of the minimal effects that existing development on its boundaries has had upon its strongly rural character.

3.4.2 Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change for the Wooded Farmland LCA is considered to be Negligible as the proposed development will not affect directly or be visible from the LCA.

3.4.3 Significance of Effect

The effect of the proposed development on this landscape type is considered to be Negligible. This is not considered to represent a significant effect upon the landscape character of the Wooded Farmland LCA.

3.5 Central Wooded Estates

The Central Wooded Estates are broadly similar in character to the Wooded Farmland LCA. The Central Wooded Estates represent an extensive character area spreading from the River Dee south as far as the River Don valley. The key characteristics of the LCA are summarised below:

- Broad sweeping landscape of valleys and hills;
- Small and large scale fields interacting with strong structure of dense woodland as coniferous plantation and semi native shelterbelts;
- Combination of enclosed spaces and sudden open and long distance views; and
- Scattered areas of housing and settlement, clusters of farm buildings.

3.5.1 Sensitivity

The Central Wooded Estates LCA is a variable character area with a contrast between wooded enclosure and occasional open and long distance views across the low-lying Dee Valley towards Peterculter and Milltimber. This Character Area is considered to be of Low sensitivity to residential development outwith its boundaries as a result of the minimal effect that existing residential development at Peterculter and Milltimber has had upon its strongly rural character.

3.5.2 Magnitude of Change

The magnitude of change for the Wooded Farmland LCA is considered to be Negligible as the proposed development will not affect directly or be visible from the LCA.

3.5.3 Significance of Effect

The effect of the proposed development on this landscape type is considered to be Negligible. This is not considered to represent a significant effect upon the landscape character of the Central Wooded Estates LCA.

3.6 Local Landscape Character Areas (See Figure 04)

The definition of landscape types indicated in the SNH character assessment document provides a great deal of information relevant at a regional level. However due to the limited size of the study area and the requirement to accurately assess the effects of the proposed development at a local level, a further assessment has been undertaken to reflect the detailed character found within the study area. An analysis of existing landscape character and quality has been carried out by a combination of field and desk studies and a further two landscape character areas have been identified.

These local landscape character areas are:

- Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements; and
- River Dee Valley.

3.7 Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements

The Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements Character Area is predominately located in the north of the study area and mainly comprises the settlements of Milltimber and Peterculter which lie on the south facing northern slopes of the Dee Valley. Kirkton of Maryculter is the only component of this LCA found in the southern part of the study area. The key features of the LCA are as follows:

- Primarily residential landuse with a predominance of 1.5 - 2 storey dwellings, highly modified and man made character;
- Extensive gardens with large numbers of mature broadleaved and coniferous trees creating a contained and wooded framework;
- Visually diverse range of building materials and styles, reflecting the evolution of the settlements; and
- Further visual containment provided by the presence of buildings, garden trees, hedgerows, walls and other structures.

3.7.1 Sensitivity

The Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements LCA is a typical residential settlement landscape with a mix of building types and styles in a range of materials in close proximity, creating a small scale and variable housing landscape. Plot sizes tend to be large and as a result a large amount of mature trees are present in the LCA. This results in a mature, wooded and generally enclosed suburban character.

The LCA is highly modified and views tend to be short to medium, enclosed by adjacent built form, garden vegetation and local areas of woodland. This character area is considered to be of Low sensitivity to development of the type proposed.

3.7.2 Magnitude of Change

The proposed development areas will not be directly visible from the majority of the Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements LCA as the new development is generally well-contained by topography and vegetation. Areas of the LCA immediately adjacent to site will experience some change as pasture is converted into residential landscapes, however this is not considered to fundamentally affect the character of the existing urban areas.

The magnitude of change is therefore considered to be Negligible.

3.7.3 Significance of Effect

The effect of the proposed development on this landscape type is considered to be Negligible. This is not considered to represent a significant effect upon the landscape character of the Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements LCA.

3.8 River Dee Valley

The River Dee Valley LCA runs east to west through the centre of the study area and comprises the River Dee, its floodplain and the lower slopes of the Dee Valley. This LCA contains the proposed development sites and its key features are as follows:

- Meandering river on valley floor;
- Arable crops and pastures on the floodplain in large open fields defined by post and wire fences and embankments;
- Low lying linear LCA contained by adjacent and heavily wooded LCA;
- Views generally enclosed and orientated in the direction of the river; and
- Further visual containment provided by the presence of buildings, garden trees, hedgerows, walls and other structures.

3.8.1 Sensitivity

The River Dee Valley LCA is attractive and enclosed by woodland and existing suburban landscapes which are generally contained within a strong woodland framework. Views tend to be short to medium distance and tend to focus on the river or upon the opposite sides of the valley. This character area is considered to be of Medium sensitivity to development of the type proposed.

3.8.2 Magnitude of Change

As the LCA currently exists in close proximity to suburban landscapes it is not considered that the proposed development introduces a new or discordant element into the existing landscape framework and does not fundamentally affect the character of the majority of the existing River Dee Valley LCA. The LCA would not experience direct change however those areas of the LCA near the development sites would experience a locally low magnitude of change which would reduce to Negligible as structural landscape planting associated with the development matures and blends the new areas of development into the adjacent suburban landscapes.

3.8.3 Significance of Effect

The effect of the proposed development on this landscape type is considered to be locally minor to moderate adverse effect in the short term which is initially significant and adverse. As mitigating structural landscape planting matures this effect is predicted to fall to Negligible and not significant. This is not considered to represent a significant effect upon the landscape character of the River Dee Valley LCA.

3.9 Landscape Designations (See Figure 04)

There are no landscape designations within the study area; however three Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) have been identified.

3.10 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Three Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) have been identified within the Study Area. Maryculter House, Church and Burial ground to the south west, Corbie Linn Prehistoric Enclosure to the south and Binghill House, Stone Circle & Cairn.

3.10.1 Sensitivity

None of the three Scheduled Ancient Monuments are in close proximity of the proposed development sites. Maryculter House, Church and Burial Ground has fragmented visibility of the development sites due to the presence of intervening woodland; no visibility of the site due to woodland screening. Corbie Linn Prehistoric Enclosure has no visibility due to the presence of adjacent woodland and Binghill House, Stone Circle and Cairn are again screened from any visibility of the sites by existing woodland and also by close, existing suburban developments. The SAMs in this instance are considered to have High sensitivity to change of the nature proposed.

3.10.2 Magnitude of Change

All three SAMs will be unaffected by the proposed development due to the screening provided by woodland, forestry and existing housing. Therefore the magnitude of change is considered Negligible.

3.10.3 Significance of Effect

The effect of the proposed development on SAMs is considered to be Negligible and not considered to represent a significant effect to the type of development proposed.

3.11 Landscape Assessment Summary

Table 1 - Summary of Assessment of Impacts on Local Landscape Character Areas and Designated Landscapes

Landscape Character Area / Local Landscape Character Area	Significance of Effect of Development
Wooded Farmland LCA	Negligible
Central Wooded Estate LCA	Negligible
Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements	Negligible
River Dee Valley	Locally Moderate Adverse, Significant falling to Negligible with time Generally Negligible across most of the LLCA
Landscape Designations	Significance of effect
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	Negligible

4.0 VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Methodology

This visual impact assessment has been prepared with reference to the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (2002). The full methodology utilised is described in Appendix 1 of the original LVIA.

4.1 Introduction

This section presents the assessment of the impacts of the reduced residential and retail development at Milltimber South on the visual amenity of the study area. Visual amenity is defined as the pleasantness of the view or outlook of an identified receptor or group of receptors.

The assessment determines the degree of anticipated change to visual amenity, considering buildings, any areas of public open space, roads and transport corridors that would occur as a result of the proposed scheme. The buildings, open spaces, roads and transport corridors that may experience views of the proposed development are collectively referred to as 'receptors'. Residual effects have been identified for each receptor. The assessment has been undertaken to include the visual impacts on the basis that the AWPR is constructed and also on the basis that the AWPR is not constructed. If the AWPR is built the development site will be seen in the context of the AWPR new road corridor; the associated earthworks; landscape mitigation and the new high level bridge. The new high level bridge and embankments will span the River Dee immediately to the west of the Milltimber South Sites and the AWPR will also cross under the North Deeside Road resulting in significant disturbance and engineering works in this area.

4.2 Potential Effects

Development can change people's experience of landscape depending on existing context, the scale, form, colour and texture of the proposals, the nature of activity associated with the development and the distance from and the angle of view that the receptor has to the proposed development.

The proposals involve the conversion of an area of pasture adjacent to North Deeside Road into a residential landscape with a community / commercial core. The proposed development will include:

- Mainly 1 – 1.5 storey residential development although the proposed development is relatively flexible and open to review based upon the findings of this assessment;
- New infrastructure including access roads and lighting;
- New planting associated with the development including hedges, street trees, garden trees and shrub planting; and
- Structural landscape and areas of open space and tree planting.

In this context the key concern relating to visual impact is the extent to which the proposed development would intrude into existing views experienced by existing residents and day to day users of the area.

There are a number of ways in which the proposed development might impact on the existing landscape and visual amenity. Effects are likely to be either temporary (and relate specifically to the construction stage of works), or permanent (and incurred upon completion of the development), whilst other effects would be reduced over time as landscape mitigation measures mature and integrate the proposed development into the existing landscape. Listed below are some likely key factors:

- The scale and form of the proposals may prove intrusive in the context of the existing landscape elements and overall visual character;

- The construction and final form of the proposals may involve the loss or fragmentation of landscape elements (buildings, open space, woodland and trees);
- The extent to which the proposals may intrude into existing views experienced by residents and day to day users of the area; and
- The extent to which current users of the landscape such as local residents or visitors may be subject to new effects.

4.3 Statutory and Planning Context

Statutes and national planning policy make no direct provision for the protection or conservation of specific views. They are however, an implicit part of the values and qualities recognised in broader landscape designations that seek to protect areas of high scenic quality.

4.4 Viewpoints (see Figure 02)

Five viewpoints were selected as having the potential to show representative views to the proposed development site from analysis of mapping and the site visit. The viewpoints are:

Table 2 – Viewpoint Locations

No	Location	Grid Reference	Main Receptors
1	Near Millbank	NT 385416, 799685	Road users and residents
2	B979 & River Dee	NT 385846, 800389	Road users, Recreational Users
3	Contlaw Road, Hill of Milltimber	NT 385018, 802599	Road users and residents
4	North Deeside Road	NT 385268, 801216	Road users and residents
5	River Dee Footpath	NT 386618, 801206	Recreational Users

4.5 Visual Mitigation

Visual effects resulting from the introduction of development would arise from the areas of new buildings, creation of access roads, structural and amenity landscape areas, substantial areas of boundary planting, changes to the existing landform, street lighting and other ancillary structures. These effects can in some instances be mitigated by sensitive site design, use of appropriate materials and colours and provision of screening. The provision of screening will take the form of structural woodland and boundary planting as well as an internal landscape structure within the majority of the development. This landscape structure would include tree, shrub and hedgerow planting which will help the development to integrate into the existing landscape and views.

4.6 Visual Baseline Conditions

The baseline landscape and its broad visual context are described under Landscape Character (Section 4). With reference to the theoretical visibility of the development the viewpoints have been selected from locations within the study area with potential visibility of the proposed development. The baseline conditions change significantly if the proposed AWPR is consented and built; proposals are described in Section 2. Viewpoint locations are illustrated on Figure 02.

Groups of receptors within the 2km study area are largely limited and were identified during review of the visual envelope and site survey. They include:

- Residents within Milltimber;
- Travellers along the B979; and
- Walkers along the River Dee Core Path no. 70.

4.7 Predicted Visual Effects

Viewpoints have been selected from within the limited areas of the study area with theoretical visibility of the proposed development site and therefore reflect only effects from within this area. In some cases viewpoints were taken very close to the site boundary, due to the very enclosed nature of the visibility pattern and in other cases the viewpoints have been selected to represent theoretical distant views. It should be noted that the majority of the 2km study area is predicted to have no or negligible visibility of the proposed development site due to woodlands associated with large estate landscapes, woodlands associated with the river valley, suburban tree planting, woodland planting associates with large private gardens and the topography of River Dee valley landform which encloses views from the north.

4.8 Viewpoint 1, Near Millbank (Figure 06)

4.8.1 Viewpoint Description:

This viewpoint is located approximately 1.5km from the south-west corner of the site on a road running parallel to the valley slope, near Millbank. This viewpoint was chosen to represent views from the south of the study area experienced by road users and residents. The minor road offers access to properties at Millbank and Storybook Glen Family Theme Park.

4.8.2 Existing View:

The existing view from left to right shows: good quality open pastoral farmland in the foreground and mid ground, in a matrix of mixed woodland running along the river valley in the mid ground, and up and beyond the valley ridgeline in the background. The settlements of Peterculter and Milltimber respectively are visually separated by the estate landscape of Camphill and they are also partially screened by mixed woodland on the northern valley slope. The settlements do not breach the skyline due to their lower position on the valley slope and the presence of continuous woodland on the ridgeline behind the settlements. Below Milltimber the valley woodland vegetation opens up and expanses of pastoral fields become visible in the mid ground. To the right of the farmland the cluster of buildings that form Millbank is well screened by existing vegetation and tree planting. To the far right the minor road that links Millbank with the B9077 and B979 is visible, with a mature hedgerow along its southern edge. Sensitivity to the type of development proposed here is considered to be Medium.

4.8.3 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change during Construction:

There will be middle to distant views to the construction of new residential areas and associated infrastructure of mainly 1 and 1.5 storey housing developments in a small component of the view. A small area of pasture seen in the context of existing residential development will be converted to housing set within a structural landscape of trees and hedges as well as construction machinery and its associated movement.

The magnitude of change during construction is considered to be Negligible.

4.8.4 Impact on Visual Amenity during Construction:

Given the context of the viewpoint on a minor road serving a few residential properties the receptors are considered to be of Medium sensitivity to the type of development proposed. The proposed development would remove an area of pasture from the centre of the view and replace it with residential development. The effect on visual amenity caused by the proposed development is predicted to be Negligible, which in the context of this assessment is not considered to be Significant.

4.8.5 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Winter of Completion:

An area of flat and valley pasture will be replaced by residential development and associated infrastructure. The development will be partially screened by the creation of landscape buffer planting; however the development on the slopes will remain visible at the winter of completion in this view.

The magnitude of change is considered to be Negligible.

4.8.6 Impact on Visual Amenity, Winter Completion:

For the receptors at this viewpoint the completion impact on visual amenity is predicted to be Negligible which, in the context of this assessment is not considered to be Significant.

4.8.7 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15:

By the summer of year 15 it is considered that the structural, landscape planting and internal landscape structure of the development will be well established and it will integrate the developed area into adjacent residential landscapes.

The magnitude is considered to be Negligible.

4.8.8 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15:

For the receptors at this viewpoint it is predicted that the visual amenity impact will be Negligible as a result of the well established the structural, landscape planting and internal landscape structure of the development.

4.8.9 Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The magnitude of change within this view would be Negligible as a result of the AWPR and its associated engineering, embankments, bridge and landscape mitigation screening the proposed development from view.

4.8.10 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The impact on visual amenity at this viewpoint of the building of the AWPR and its associated embankments, high level bridge and landscape structure would reduce the impact of the proposed development at Milltimber to Negligible.

4.9 Viewpoint 2, B979 & River Dee (Figure 06)

4.9.1 Viewpoint Description:

The viewpoint is located on Maryculter Bridge. The bridge connects Milltimber and Peterculter in the north to Maryculter in the south via the B979 road. The viewpoint provides an indication of visual impacts on road users of the bridge travelling north. The viewpoint, located approximately 1km from the south west corner of the site representative of views from the south of the proposed development.

4.9.2 Existing View:

The existing view from left to right shows: in the foreground the bridge and the River Dee with scrub vegetation. The middle ground of the view shows low lying agricultural floodplain fields and the background is comprised of a wooded valley slope with significant residential development seen in the context of a well wooded landscape.

4.9.3 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change during Construction:

A small area of sloping land currently surrounded on three sides by existing residential development will be replaced by middle distance views of the construction of a new mainly 1 to 1.5 storey residential development together with the associated road infrastructure and structural planting.

The magnitude of change during construction is considered to be Low.

4.9.4 Impact on Visual Amenity during Construction:

Given the context of the viewpoint on a road corridor with the majority of receptors being road users experiencing short duration views towards the proposed development, sensitivity to the type of development proposed is considered to be medium.

For these receptors at this viewpoint, the initial impact on visual amenity caused by construction of the proposed development would be Minor to Moderate which, in the context of this assessment is Significant.

4.9.5 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Winter of Completion:

An area of pastureland, on the slope will be replaced by residential development and associated infrastructure in the middle ground of the existing view. The development will be partially screened by planting associated with the structural, landscape; however this will not be fully established in the winter of completion and will not provide significant cover in the winter.

The magnitude of change at completion is considered to be Low.

4.9.6 Impact on Visual Amenity, Winter Completion:

For the receptors at this viewpoint, the impact on visual amenity caused at the completion of the proposed development would be Minor to Moderate which, in the context of the assessment would be Significant.

4.9.7 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15:

Assuming appropriate species of woodland are planted and maintained in the structural, landscape planting and internal landscapes of the development by the summer of year 15 it is considered that the landscape mitigation measures and internal landscape structure of the development would screen and integrate the majority of the proposed development at this viewpoint.

The magnitude of change is considered to be Negligible.

4.9.8 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15:

For the receptors at this viewpoint travelling on the Maryculter Bridge corridor, the post mitigation impact on visual amenity caused by the proposed development would fall to Negligible, which, in the context of this assessment would not be significant.

4.9.9 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The building of the AWPR would significantly change the existing baseline adding a significant amount of earthworks, engineering, and landscape structure to this view. With the new high level bridge and associated AWPR landform in place the proposed development would not be visible in the view.

The magnitude of change of proposed development with the building of the AWPR would be Negligible.

4.9.10 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The AWPR, if consented and built would screen views to the proposed development altogether at this viewpoint due to the engineering work associated with the AWPR and the high level bridge. The impact on visual amenity of the proposed development with the AWPR built would be Negligible.

4.10 Viewpoint 3, Contlaw Road, Hill of Milltimber (Figure 07)

4.10.1 Viewpoint Description:

This viewpoint is located to the north of the proposed development, approximately 1.4km from the northern boundary of the site, on a rural road near to a cluster of farmsteadings and the Hill of Milltimber. The viewpoint is representative of elevated distant views from the north of the study area towards the proposed development typically available to residents and road users.

4.10.2 Existing View:

The existing view from left to right shows: in the foreground and middle-ground, a minor rural road, open pasture fields with mixed woodland in the background and glimpsed views through to wooded hilltops in the distance.

4.10.3 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change during Construction:

The existing view will experience negligible change as a result of the proposed development due to the screening provided by the landform of the river valley, the estate woodlands and coniferous plantations, and the location of the proposed development on the lower valley slopes.

The magnitude of change during construction is considered to be Negligible.

4.10.4 Impact on Visual Amenity during Construction:

Given the context of the view on a minor road servicing relatively few properties, the receptors would be assumed to be of medium sensitivity to change associated with the proposed development, as the majority will be agricultural workers or drivers experiencing short duration views towards the proposed development.

However, the proposed development is not visible from this viewpoint; therefore the initial impact caused by construction of the proposed development would be Negligible/ None.

4.10.5 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Winter of Completion:

At winter of completion the proposed development will not be visible from this view due to the screening of the river valley landform and the estate woodlands and coniferous plantations.

The magnitude of change is considered to be Negligible.

4.10.6 Impact on Visual Amenity, Winter Completion:

The impact on visual amenity at this viewpoint in the winter of completion will be Negligible.

4.10.7 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15:

The proposed view will not experience change due to the proposed development by the summer of year 15, due to the existing river valley landform and woodland plantations. The magnitude of change is Negligible.

4.10.8 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15:

The impact on visual amenity in the summer of year 15 of the proposed development will be Negligible.

4.10.9 Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The proposed development will not change the existing view with the addition of the AWPR. The magnitude of change due to the proposed development with the AWPR remains Negligible.

4.10.10 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The impact of the proposed development on visual amenity from this viewpoint with the AWPR in summer year 15 remains Negligible due to the river valley landform, woodland and plantations and location of the proposed development in the base of the valley.

4.11 Viewpoint 4, North Deeside Road (Figure 07)

4.11.1 Viewpoint Description:

The viewpoint is located on the western boundary of Milltimber, approximately 400m to the north-west of the proposed development site. It has been chosen to represent close views from the north both residential views from Milltimber Brae as well as road users on the main route east through Milltimber on the A93, and to road users joining the B797.

4.11.2 Existing View:

The existing view from left to right shows: in the foreground the A93, a busy road corridor into Aberdeen, suburban development in the middle ground with long distance views across the river valley to wooded slopes where Kingcausie House and Lower Deeside Holiday Park are

discernable. The sensitivity of the receptors at this viewpoint, road users, to the type of development proposed is considered to be Medium.

4.11.3 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change during Construction:

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint due to the screening provided by intervening existing built development and mature vegetation.

The magnitude of change during construction is therefore considered to be Negligible.

4.11.4 Impact on Visual Amenity during Construction:

The proposed view will not experience change due to the proposed development during construction. For receptors at this viewpoint there is considered to be Negligible impact on visual amenity.

In the context of this assessment this is not considered to be Significant.

4.11.3 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Winter of Completion:

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint due to the screening provided by intervening existing built development and mature vegetation.

The magnitude of change at the winter of completion is therefore considered to be Negligible.

4.11.4 Impact on Visual Amenity, Winter Completion:

The proposed view will not experience change due to the proposed development by the winter of completion. The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint.

In the context of this assessment this is not considered to be Significant.

4.11.5 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15:

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint due to the screening provided by intervening existing built development and mature vegetation.

The magnitude of change by the summer year 15 is therefore considered to be Negligible.

4.11.6 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15:

The proposed view will not experience change due to the proposed development by the summer of year 15.

In the context of this assessment this is not considered to be Significant.

4.11.7 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The proposed development will not be visible from this viewpoint due to the screening provided by intervening existing built development and mature vegetation.

The magnitude of change by the summer year 15 with the AWPR is therefore considered to be Negligible.

4.11.8 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The proposed view will not experience change due to the proposed development by the summer of year 15 with the AWPR.

In the context of this assessment this is not considered to be Significant.

4.12 Viewpoint 5, River Dee Footpath (Figure 08)

4.12.1 Viewpoint Description:

Located on the River Dee footpath to the south-east of the development site, this viewpoint has been chosen to represent typical close views for recreational users of the River Dee footpath, at the junction of core path numbers 70 and 72. It should be recognized that visibility of the

proposed development from the River Dee footpath is restricted by the adjacent flood prevention embankment. This viewpoint is taken from the top of the embankment.

4.12.2 Existing View:

From left to right the existing view shows: from foreground to middle ground the flood embankment and low lying pastoral fields; in the background mixed woodland on the valley slopes with the vegetated edge of Milltimber on the skyline. Sensitivity to the type of development proposed here is considered to be High due to the recreational users of the River Dee footpath.

4.12.3 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change during Construction:

A limited view of an area of pasture which is currently seen in the context of existing residential development will be replaced by views of the construction of a new development with associated road infrastructure and structural landscape planting. The proposed development will be partially screened by existing vegetation and land form however it will be visible as an area of new land use with construction activity across the Old Deeside Line walk.

The magnitude of change during construction is considered to be Low.

4.12.4 Impact on Visual Amenity during Construction:

Given the context of the view adjacent to the River Dee footpath, although elevated, the receptors, as recreational users would be considered to be of high sensitivity to change associated with the proposed development.

The proposed development has the potential to be visible as an area of building activity from this viewpoint during construction. For receptors at this viewpoint, the initial impact on visual amenity caused by construction of the proposed development would therefore be Moderate which, in the context of this assessment would be Significant.

4.12.5 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Winter of Completion:

A new area of housing will be visible in the context of existing housing, although it will not bring residential development any closer to the receptor.

The magnitude of change at completion is considered to be Low.

4.12.6 Impact on Visual Amenity, Winter of Completion:

For the recreational receptors at this viewpoint, the winter of completion impact on visual amenity caused by construction of the proposed development would be Moderate which, in the context of this assessment would be Significant.

4.12.7 Proposed View and Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15:

By year 15 it is considered that the landscape structure planting will be established. This will integrate the development with middle distance views to the existing residential edge of Milltimber. Any housing visible will be seen in the context of the new woodland framework which will connect to existing areas of woodland with existing residential development. In this situation, the magnitude of change is considered to be Negligible.

4.12.8 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15:

The change in view in this instance is not considered to be of negative impact, the landscape structure planting will benefit the new development by integrating it with the adjacent urban edge. The impact of the new landscape and development is considered to be Negligible assuming that structural landscape planting associated with the access road has been established.

4.12.9 Magnitude of Change, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

From this viewpoint the building of the AWPR will have limited impact on the visual amenity due to its distance from this viewpoint. It is considered that the implementation, establishment and

maintenance of landscape structure planting will screen and integrate the majority of the development from this viewpoint. Any residential development that is visible will be seen in the context of an established woodland framework in an area of existing residential development within woodland. It is therefore considered that the magnitude of change will be Negligible.

4.12.10 Impact on Visual Amenity, Summer Year 15 with AWPR:

The impact on visual amenity with the AWPR at this viewpoint is considered to be Negligible, and not significant. This predicted visual impact is based upon the assumption that appropriate species of woodland are planted and maintained in the structural landscape areas together with appropriate structural planting along the access road.

4.13 Summary of effects on Visual Amenity

TABLE 3 - Summary of Assessment of Impacts on Viewpoints

Viewpoint	During Construction	Winter, Completion	Summer, Year 15	Summer, Year 15 With AWPR
Near Millbank	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant
B979 & River Dee	Minor to Moderate Significant	Minor to Moderate Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant
Contlaw Road, Hill of Milltimber	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant
North Deeside Road	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant
River Dee Footpath	Moderate Significant	Moderate Significant	Negligible, not Significant	Negligible, not Significant

5.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The proposed reduced development site at Milltimber South is located on an infill site surrounded by the existing developed suburban edge. Visibility of the reduced development site within the study area is restricted both by the valley topography and by the presence of woodland and heavily wooded suburban landscapes. The generally wooded character of the study area limits visibility of the site from many areas and also contains it within a woodland context when it is visible, particularly in more distant views from the south.

Fieldwork has shown that the visibility of the development site from within the study area is largely limited to the immediate boundary of the site itself and from occasional longer distance views available from the south. Topography and extensive areas of woodland provide screening and containment. Viewpoints have been identified that have a degree of visibility of the site but it should be noted that they have been selected from the limited component of the study area with visibility, and as such the viewpoints tend to lie within very close proximity of the site boundary. The viewpoints will also be affected by the possible construction of the AWPR which, if built will introduce often close views of significant transport infrastructure into the viewshed, and modify the baseline views available.

With restricted visibility throughout the study area, the potential effects caused by developing the Milltimber site will be largely restricted to the immediate vicinity of the development. The effects upon visual amenity are considered to be greater during construction due to the disturbance caused by the construction process and the absence of a mature landscape structure within the development site. Localised effects upon visual amenity are considered to be initially significant and adverse at two of the five representative viewpoints during construction.

As a result of mitigation in terms of site planting and structural landscape planting it is considered that by the summer of year 15 post completion, all of the five viewpoints will experience Negligible and not significant effects upon visual amenity.

Landscape character was assessed in terms of sensitivity, magnitude of change and significance of effect. Two Landscape Character Areas as determined by Scottish Natural Heritage were assessed – Wooded Farmland and Central Wooded Estate - and a further two Local Landscape Character Areas were identified and included as part of the assessment. These were recognised as Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements, and River Dee Valley. Again, development of the AWPR would have the potential to significantly affect the existing landscape character of the study area and render it less sensitive to development of the type proposed at Milltimber South.

Both of the SNH Landscape Character Areas are predicted to experience a Negligible impact due to the limited extent of the proposed development site and the screening that will be provided by structural planting associated with it. The proposed development will also be seen as a residential area within a strong woodland landscape structure. This will allow it to integrate with the adjacent existing areas of residential development which are set in a well wooded context. As a result the proposed development is not considered to introduce a new landuse into the study area.

Of the Local Character Areas assessed, the River Dee Valley to experience localised significant but indirect effects. It is considered that these effects are localised and that the majority of the River Dee Valley character area will not be significantly affected.

The Urban, Suburban and Rural Settlements are predicted to experience negligible effects.

Within the study area there are no specific landscape designations. However three Scheduled Ancient Monuments are present and are considered to be sensitive to changes in their landscape and visual environment. It is predicted that, due to screening by vegetation and topography the three Scheduled Ancient Monuments will experience Negligible and not significant effects.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is considered that landscape and visual effects of the proposed reduced development will be largely contained within the immediate vicinity of the site due to the topography of the Dee Valley and the large areas of woodland that are present within the study area.

Throughout the rest of the study area impacts on landscape and visual amenity are considered to be generally Negligible. Potential significant impacts which have been identified are generally temporary in nature and will be substantially reduced over time provided that structural landscape planting associated with the proposed developments is maintained. This planting should also be designed to relate to the existing woodland and parkland species currently found within the study area. This mitigation will allow the reduced development site to integrate, both visually and in terms of landscape character, with the adjacent existing suburban and wooded landscape of the settlement of Milltimber.

The proposed development is considered to be appropriate for the development site and its context. The development proposals are in keeping with surrounding land use patterns and local scale of development. There is predicted to be minimal long term impact upon the landscape and visual amenity of the study area.

The majority of the study area is not predicted to experience permanent significant landscape and visual effects as a result of the proposed development at Milltimber South. Mitigation, in terms of landscape structure is expected to minimise the majority of effects to Negligible by 15 years after completion.

The AWPR will, if constructed, substantially modify both the visual characteristics and the landscape character of the study area and in the context of the AWPR the study area would be considered to be less sensitive to the proposed development at Milltimber. It is considered that the landscape and visual effects of the proposed developments will be reduced if seen in the context of a study area containing the AWPR, its earthworks, SUDs and structural landscape.

The reduced development now being promoted by Bancon Homes will result in the already low residual landscape effects being further reduced with the proposed development not considered to give rise to any long term significant effects upon landscape receptors.

Although the original assessment of the development areas 1 and 2 identified significant effects on three viewpoints during construction and at winter of completion, the reduced development proposal is considered to result in significant effects over the same period at only two of the viewpoints.

The reduced scheme is not predicted to result in any long term significant effects upon visual receptors.

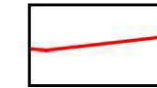
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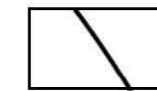
8.0 FIGURES



KEY



SITE BOUNDARY

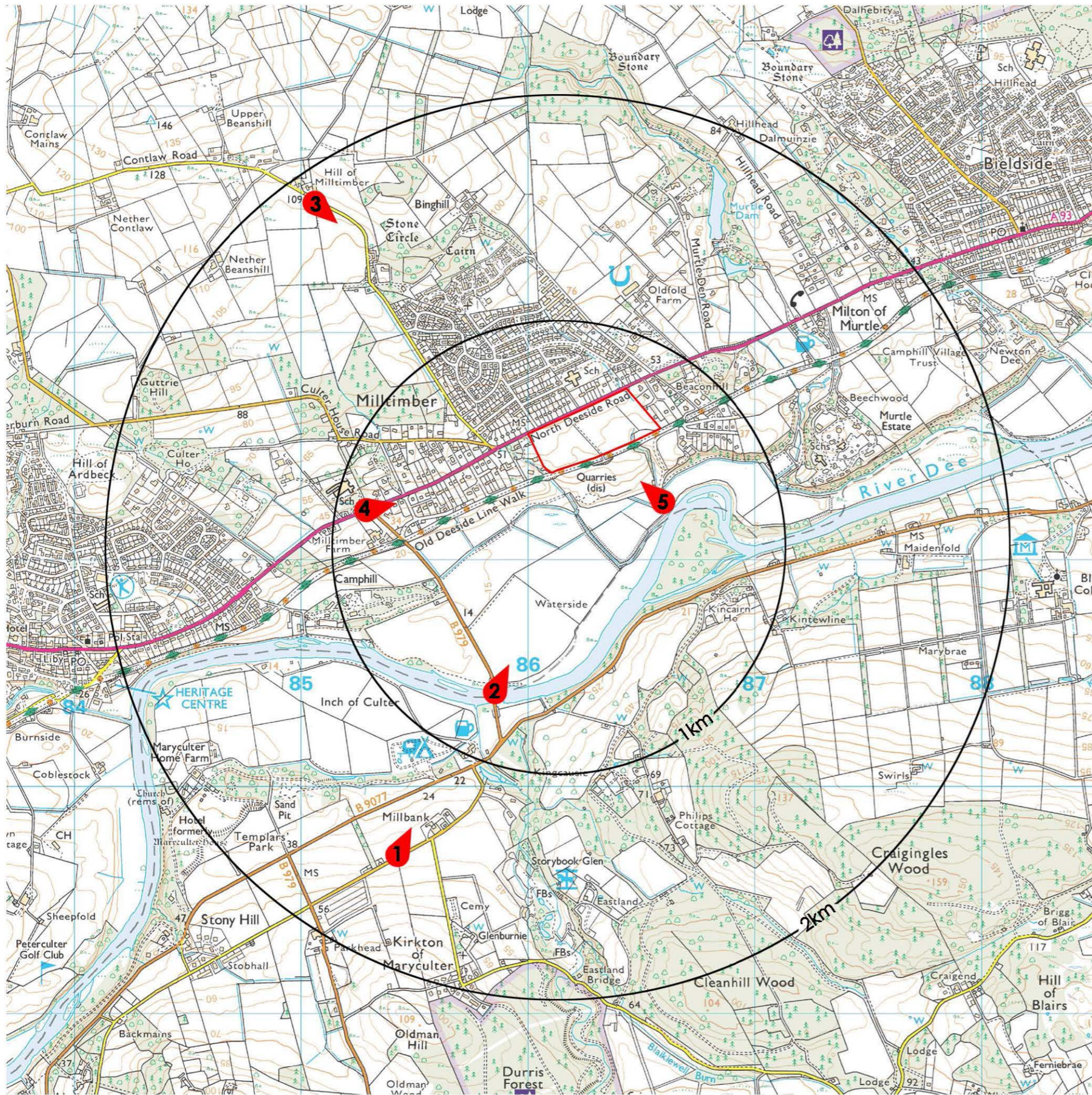


STUDY AREA BOUNDARY (2KM)


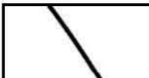



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drawing title: LOCATION PLAN / STUDY AREA	
scale: NTS	date: 01 / 12 / 10
figure number: 01	
drawn by: J Johnston	checked by: R Wilkie
axwel house east mains industrial estate broxburn west lothian EH52 5AU t: 01506 858 757 f: 01506 855 635 www.brindleyassociates.co.uk	 landscape architects & environmental planners design assessment ecology




KEY

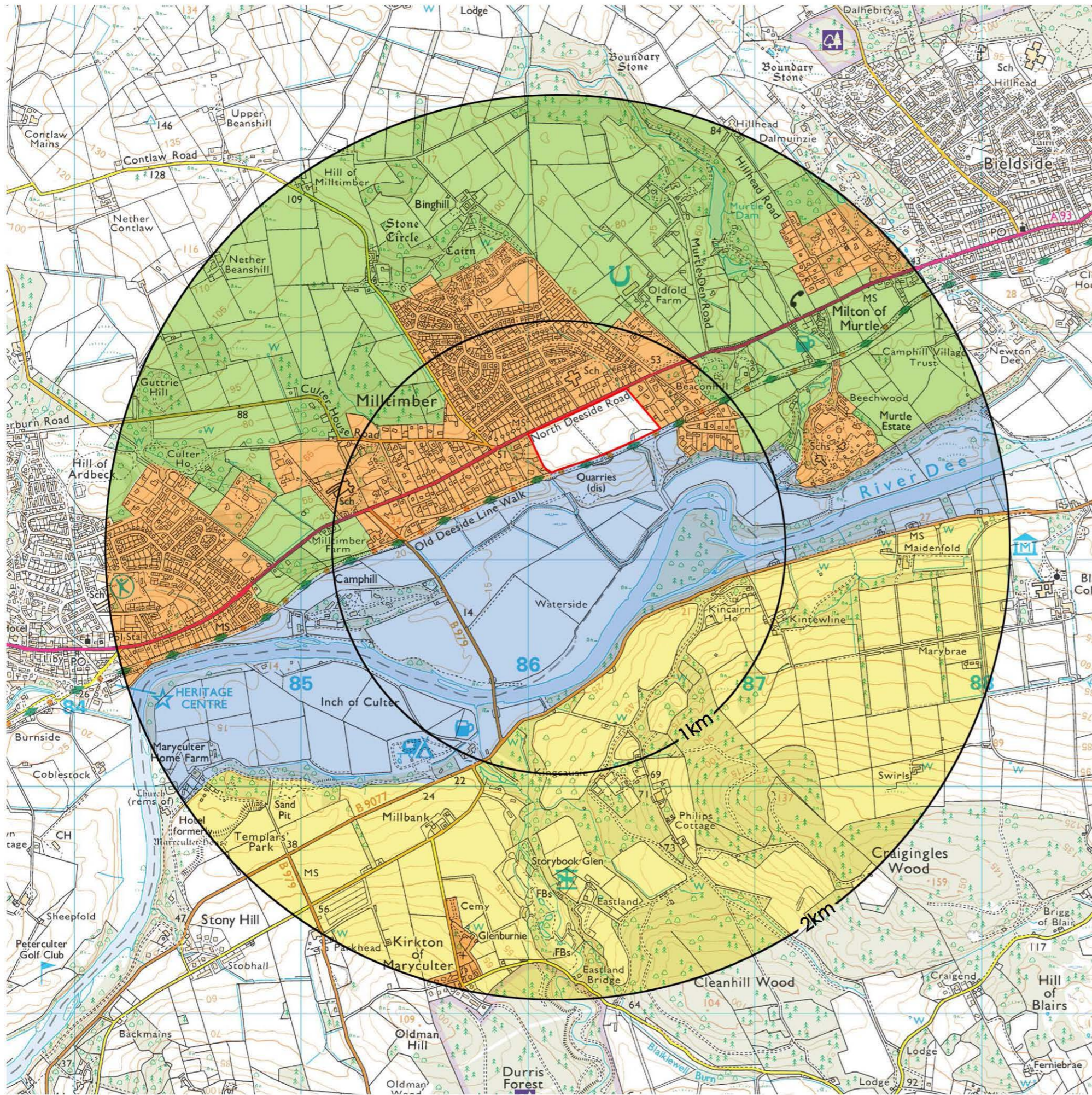
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-  STUDY AREA BOUNDARY (2KM)
-  VIEWPOINT LOCATION

VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS

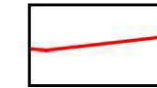
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2. B979 & RIVER DEE
(GRID REF. 385846, 800389)
3. CONTLAW ROAD, HILL OF MILLTIMBER
(GRID REF. 385018, 802599)
4. NORTH DEESIDE ROAD
(GRID REF. 385268, 801216)
5. RIVER DEE FOOTPATH
(GRID REF. 386618, 801206)



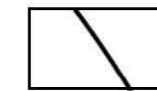
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figure number: 02	
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KEY



SITE BOUNDARY



STUDY AREA BOUNDARY (2KM)

SNH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS



WOODED FARMLAND



CENTRAL WOODED ESTATE

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS



URBAN, SUBURBAN & RURAL SETTLEMENTS



RIVER DEE VALLEY

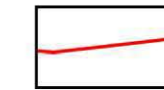


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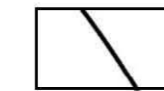
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KEY



SITE BOUNDARY



STUDY AREA BOUNDARY (2KM)



SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT
 1. MARYCULTER HOUSE, CHURCH & BURIAL GROUND
 2. CORBIE LINN PREHISTORIC ENCLOSURE
 3. BINGHILL HOUSE, STONE CIRCLE & CAIRN



site: MILLTIMBER SOUTH	client: BANCON HOMES
drawing title: LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS	
scale: NTS	date: 01 / 12 / 10
figure number: 04	
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0 250 500 750 1000 METRES



SNH WOODED FARMLAND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



SNH WOODED FARMLAND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



SNH CENTRAL WOODED ESTATE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



SNH CENTRAL WOODED ESTATE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



SUBURBAN LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



SUBURBAN LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



RIVER DEE VALLEY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



RIVER DEE VALLEY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER


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figure number: 05	
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VIEWPOINT 01: NEAR MILLBANK, LOOKING NORTH EAST TOWARDS THE SITE (GRID REF. 385416, 799685)
 ARROW INDICATES APPROXIMATE SITE CENTRE



VIEWPOINT 02: B979 & RIVER DEE, LOOKING NORTH EAST TOWARDS THE SITE (GRID REF. 385846, 800389)
 ARROW INDICATES APPROXIMATE SITE CENTRE


site: MILLTIMBER SOUTH	client: BANCON HOMES
drawing title: VIEWPOINT 1 & 2	
scale: NTS	date: 01 / 12 / 10
figure number: 06	
drawn by: J Johnston	checked by: R Wilkie
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VIEWPOINT 03: CONTLAW ROAD, HILL OF MILLTIMBER, LOOKING SOUTH EAST TOWARDS THE SITE LOCATION (GRID REF.385018, 802599)
 THE ARROW INDICATES THE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE, HOWEVER DUE TO LANDFORM THE SITE IS NOT VISIBLE FROM THIS VIEWPOINT




VIEWPOINT 04: NORTH DEESIDE ROAD, LOOKING SOUTH EAST TOWARDS THE SITE (GRID REF. 385268, 801216)
 BRACKETED AREA SHOWS APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF THE SITE, HOWEVER DUE TO SCREENING BY VEGETATION THE SITE IS NOT VISIBLE FROM THIS VIEWPOINT

site: MILLTIMBER SOUTH	client: BANCON HOMES
drawing title: VIEWPOINT 3 & 4	
scale: NTS	date: 01 / 12 / 10
figure number: 07	
drawn by: J Johnston	checked by: R Wilkie
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VIEWPOINT 05: RIVER DEE FOOTPATH, LOOKING NORTH WEST TOWARDS THE SITE (GRID REF.386618, 801206)
 ARROW INDICATES APPROXIMATE SITE CENTRE

site: MILLTIMBER SOUTH	client: BANCON HOMES
drawing title: VIEWPOINT 5	
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Ecological Assessment Addendum Report, Milltimber South For Bancon Homes Ltd



Job no. 0555
10th December 2010

CONTENTS

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- 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**
- 3.0 DESK TOP ANALYSIS**
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Brindley Associates Ltd. was commissioned by Bancon Homes Ltd to undertake ecological assessments of two potential development sites in Milltimber, Aberdeenshire. The intention was to promote these areas as housing/retail development sites within the emerging Aberdeen Local Plan. An Ecological Assessment of the sites was issued in December 2009. Subsequent to the issue of the 2009 report, Bancon Homes Ltd has concentrated on promoting one of the two sites. This addendum report is a revision of the original ecological assessment to reflect the changes in identified ecological effects that may occur as a result. The assessment has been based on a site walkover to identify any features of particular ecological interest that may require more detailed survey work. In addition the walkover takes account of any habitats likely to support European Protected Species (EPS) or other specially protected species.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site lies to the south of the settlement of Milltimber and is located between North Deeside Road and the Old Deeside Line footpath. (See Figure 1). The site is presently in agricultural use with the primary agricultural activity being silage production and cattle grazing. Notwithstanding the edge of town location, the overall appearance is of well managed and maintained fields without the run down feel that often accompanies urban fringe agricultural land. (See Photo 1)



Photo 1 – Silage Production on the Urban Fringe

3.0 DESKTOP ANALYSIS

The site itself is not the subject of any nature conservation designations. The nearby River Dee is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) which is a European Protected Site within the Natura 2000 suite of designated sites. The River Dee qualifies as an SAC by virtue of its populations of Freshwater pearl mussel (*Margaritifera margaritifera*), Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), and Otter (*Lutra lutra*). All three are EC Habitats Directive Annex II species. Otters are known to be well distributed throughout the River Dee and its tributaries and environs and are protected by the

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Schedule 5) as amended by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. Otters are also a European Protected Species (EPS) protected by Annex IV of the EC Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive) as an animal species of Community interest in need of strict protection.

The only other EPS that may be present on site are bats (*Vespertilionidae*). Bats are protected under Annex IIa and IVa of the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EC) and applied in Scotland under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994, as amended by the Conservation (Natural Habitats Etc.) Amendment Regulations of 2004 and 2007. As European Protected Species the key protection, other than a prohibition on killing or taking them relates to the protection of their breeding or resting sites (even when not in occupation) and protection from disturbance, particularly in relation to activities that impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, or rear or otherwise care for their young. In addition it is an offence to disturb such an animal in a manner that is, or in circumstances which are, likely to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species to which it belongs.

4.0 SITE ANALYSIS

Site walkovers were undertaken on 16th June 2009. Weather conditions were ideal being warm, dry and sunny allowing unrestricted opportunity for site survey. It was noted during the visit that land surveying works in association with the proposed river bridge crossing as part of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route were ongoing.

5.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises three grass fields, two of which had recently been cut for silage at the time of survey. The two larger fields are separated by a north-south farm track accessing onto North Deeside Road. The intensive cropping regime dictates that these fields have minimal ecological value with the only area of interest being a small stream issuing from a culvert in the south-east corner and flowing under the Deeside Line Railway Walk. The streamside is riddled with rabbit burrows and the floral diversity has been compromised by continual rabbit grazing, although there is a line of mature ash trees enclosing a small portion of field that appears not to be cropped. These trees may provide potential roosting habitat for bats and should the site be consented for development a more detailed bat survey should be undertaken at that point to establish their presence or absence. An area of rosebay willowherb in the small field appeared to have been recently sprayed with herbicide. (See Figure 2)

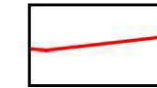
The sites lie, at the closest point, approximately 700 metres from the River Dee and are physically separated from it and the SAC designation by agricultural fields and the Old Deeside Line Walk. This margin effectively mitigates any potential negative impacts on the integrity of the SAC, both in terms of direct disturbance, as well as limiting the possibility for accidental pollution of the river by suspended solids or toxic liquids that may arise from the development of the site.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The reduced site area is in itself is of little nature conservation interest and there is no doubt that mitigation in the form of sensitive planting and management of the limited existing resource could result in a net benefit to local biodiversity. The significant distance between the site and the northern boundary of the River Dee SAC make it extremely unlikely that development of this site will have a significant effect upon the integrity of the SAC or upon its qualifying interest.



KEY

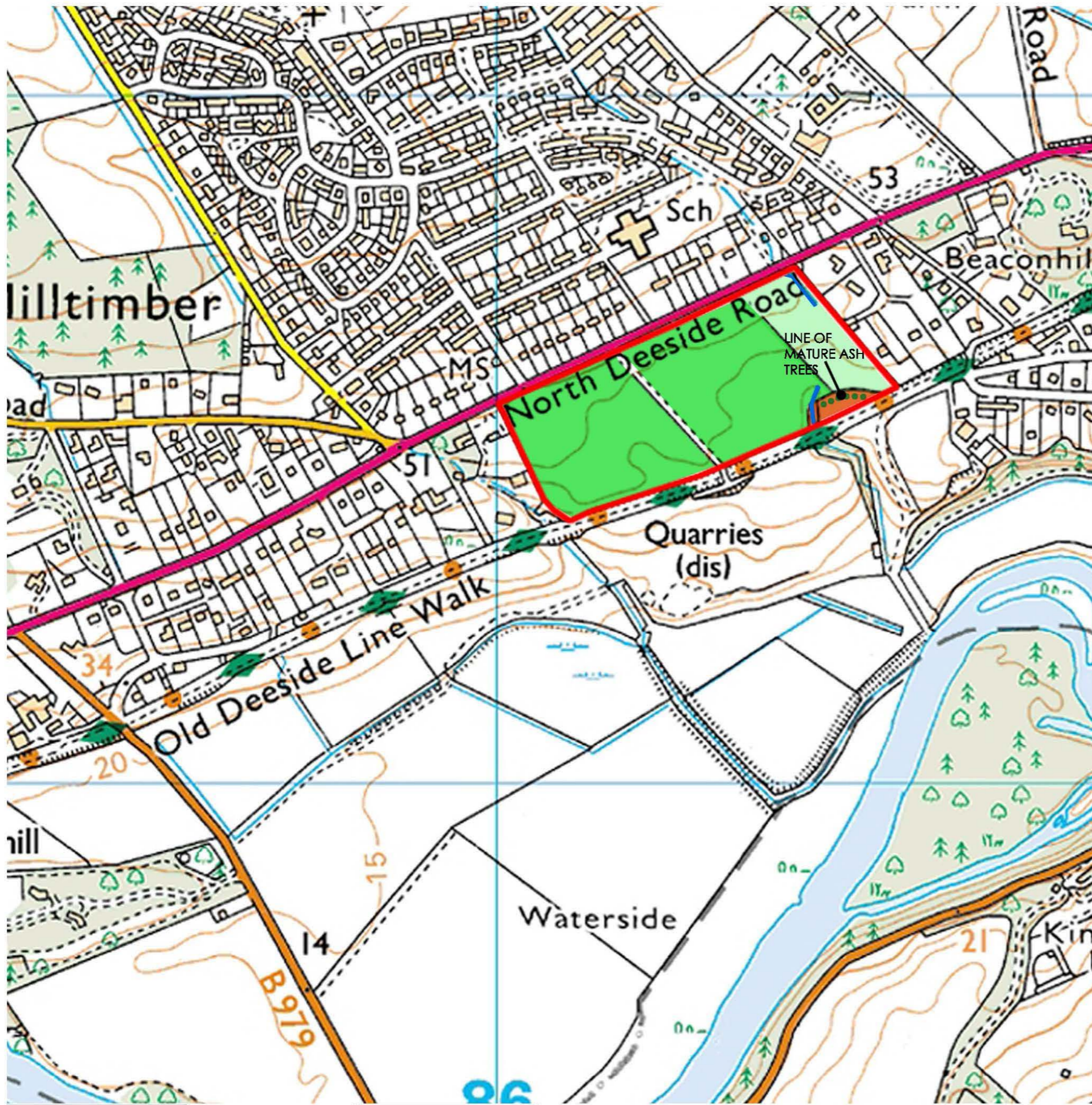


SITE BOUNDARY





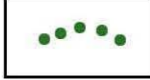



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site: MILLTIMBER SOUTH	client: BANCON HOMES
drawing title: LOCATION PLAN	
scale: NTS	date: 01 / 12 / 10
figure number: 01	
drawn by: L Wilkinson	checked by: R Wilkie
axwel house east mains industrial estate broxburn west lothian EH52 5AU t: 01506 858 757 f: 01506 855 635 www.brindleyassociates.co.uk	 brindley associates landscape architects & environmental planners design assessment ecology



KEY

-  SITE BOUNDARY
-  IMPROVED GRASSLAND
-  SILAGE
-  GRASS
-  LINE OF MATURE ASH TREES
-  RUNNING WATER IN CURRENTLY OPEN DITCH



site: MILLTIMBER SOUTH	client: BANCON HOMES
drawing title: HABITAT SURVEY PLAN	
scale: NTS	date: 01 / 12 / 10
figure number: 02	
drawn by: J Johnston	checked by: R Wilkie
axwel house east mains industrial estate broxburn west lothian EH52 5AU t: 01506 858 757 f: 01506 855 635 www.brindleyassociates.co.uk	 landscape architects & environmental planners design assessment ecology

0 250 500 1000 METRES



INDICATIVE PLANTING SCHEDULE

BOULEVARD TREE PLANTING
 ACER PLATANOIDES EMERALD QUEEN
 TILIA CORDATA GREENSPIRE
 PRUNUS SUNSET BOULEVARD

OPEN SPACE TREE PLANTING
 AESCULUS HIPPOCASTANUM
 CEDRUS ATLANTICA GLAUCA
 FAGUS SYLVATICA
 QUERCUS RUBRA
 PINUS SYLVESTRIS

FRONT GARDEN / ROAD FRONTAGE TREE PLANTING
 BETULA JACQUEMONTII
 SORBUS AUCUPARIA
 SORBUS ARIA 'MAJESTICA'
 MALUS JOHN DOWNIE

SPECIMEN SHRUB PLANTING
 AMELANCHIER CANADENSIS
 CORYLUS AVELLANA CONTORTA
 PINUS MUGO MUGHUS
 RHODODENDRON HYBRIDS IN VARIETY

STRUCTURE PLANTING TREE PLANTING
 ALNUS GLUTINOSA
 BETULA PENDULA
 FAGUS SYLVATICA
 FRAXINUS EXCELSIOR
 LARIX X EUROLEPSIS
 PINUS SYLVESTRIS
 PRUNUS AVIUM
 QUERCUS ROBUR

SHRUB PLANTING
 ACER CAMPESTRE
 CORYLUS AVELLANA
 CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA
 ILEX AQUIFOLIUM
 PRUNUS SPINOSA
 VIBURNUM OPULUS

LARGE HEIGHT SHRUB PLANTING
 BUDDLEJA DAVIDII WHITE PROFUSION
 COTINUS COGGYGRIA ROYAL PURPLE
 ELAEAGNUS PUNGENS MACULATA
 PIERIS FOREST FLAME
 PYRACANTHA ROGERSIANA FLAVA
 RHODODENDRON HYBRIDS IN VARIETY
 VIBURNUM TINUS EVE PRICE
 SPIRAEA X ARGUTA
 WEIGELA FLORIDA VARIEGATA
 PRUNUS LAUROCERASUS CAUCASICA

GROUND COVER SHRUB PLANTING
 COTONEASTER CORAL BEAUTY
 EUONYMUS FORTUNEI EMERALD GAITY
 GERANIUM JOHNSONS BLUE
 HEBE PINGUIFOLIA PAGEI
 HELLEBORUS ORIENTALIS
 JUNIPERUS SQUAMATA BLUE CARPET
 LONICERA MAY GREEN
 PACHYSANDRA TERMINALIS
 POTENTILLA RED ACE
 STACHYS LANATA
 VINCA MINOR

MEDIUM HEIGHT SHRUB PLANTING
 BERBERIS OTTAWENSIS SUPERBA
 CHOISYA TERNATA
 HEBE RED EDGE
 POTENTILLA ABBOTSWOOD
 BRACHYGLOTTIS SUNSHINE
 ROSMARINUS MISS JESSOP'S UPRIGHT
 SKIMMIA JAPONICA RUBELLA
 VIBURNUM DAVIDII
 HYPERICUM HIDCOTE
 CYTISUS X PRAECOX ALLGOLD

BULB PLANTING
 COLCHICUM SPECIOSUM
 HYACINTHOIDES NON SCRIPTA
 NARCISSUS FEBRUARY GOLD
 NARCISSUS ICE FOLLIES

Legend

- Proposed structural tree and shrub planting
- Proposed tree planting to open spaces, road frontages and within front gardens
- Proposed shrub planting
- Proposed close mown grass
- Existing trees off-site

GENERAL NOTES

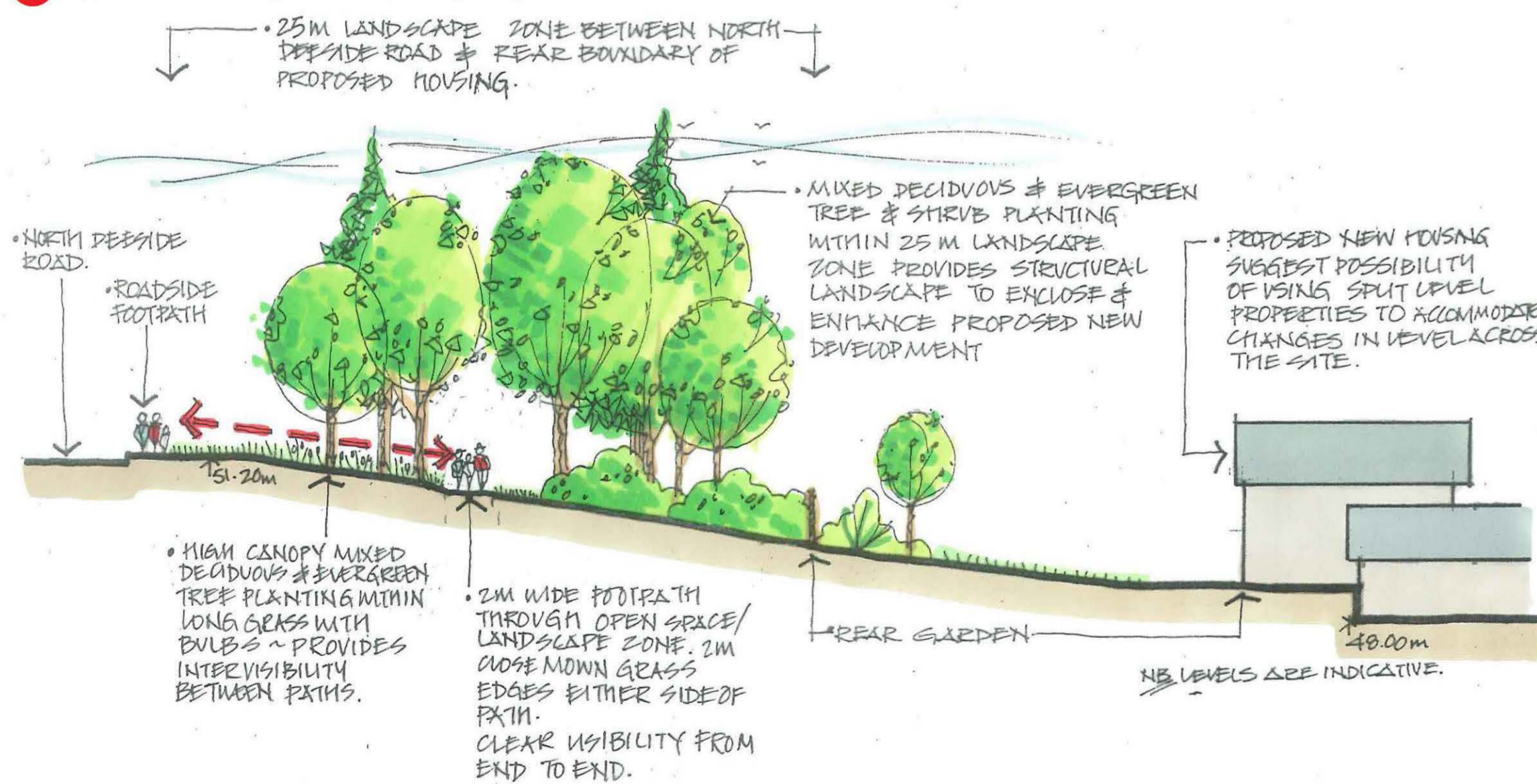
1. Prior to commencement of any work on site protective fencing must be erected around existing trees to be retained in accordance with BS 5837:2005.
2. Prior to any deep cultivation or excavation of planting pits the landscape contractor must check with the site engineer for exact locations of any underground services.
3. For information on levels & drainage refer to engineers drawings.
4. No information with regard to levels & drainage was available at time of preparation of drawing.

Revision A – changes to landscape masterplan to reflect changes to housing layout (16.12.2010)

NOT FOR SITE ISSUE

site: 149-261 North Deeside Road	client: Bancon Homes
drawing title: Landscape Masterplan	
scale: Various @ A1	date: 28/ 05 / 10
drawing number: 0555A / 1A	
drawn by: J Brindley	checked by: R Wilkie
axwell house east mains industrial estate broxburn west lothian EH52 5AU t: 01506 858 757 f: 01506 855 635 www.brindleyassociates.co.uk © Brindley Associates Ltd.	

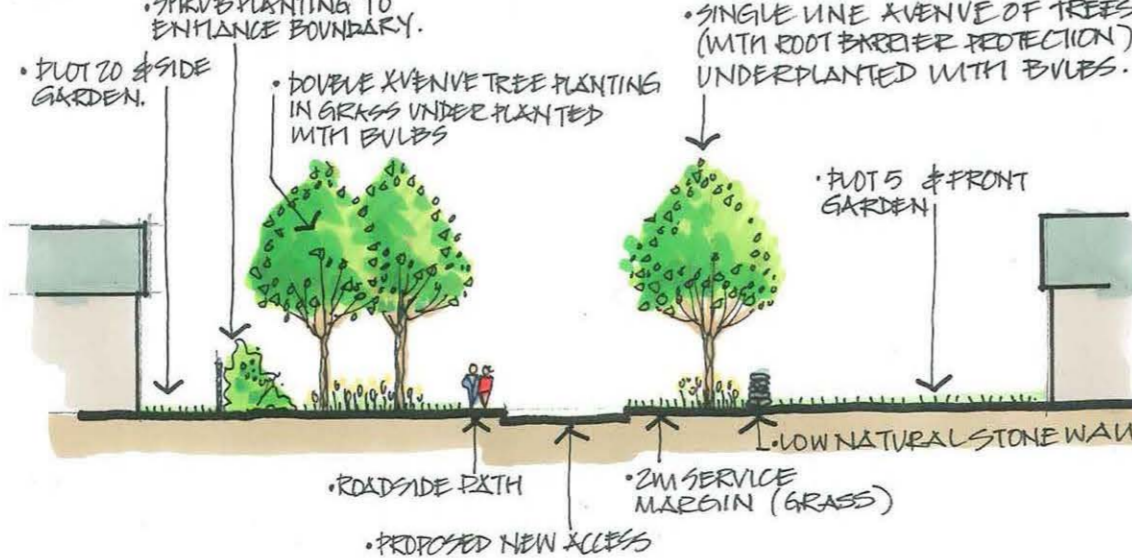
1 Typical section through structure planting along North Deeside Road - 1: 250 scale



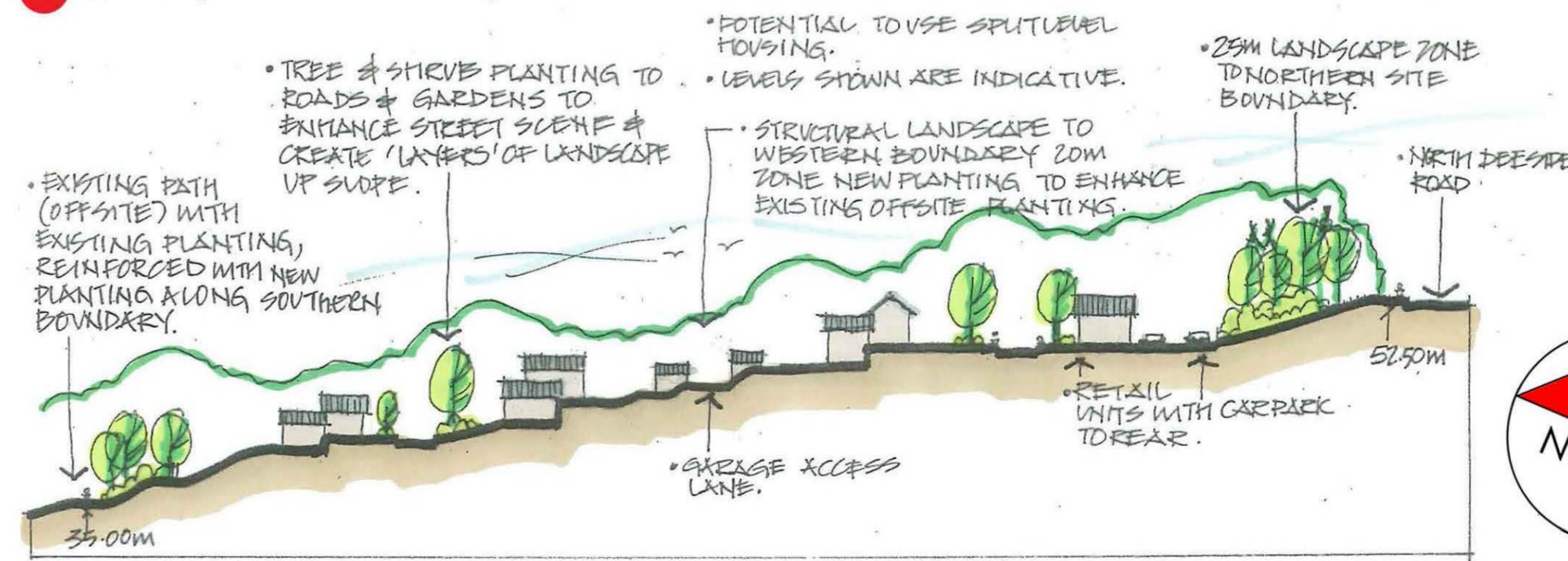
2 Typical section through western access road & boulevard tree planting - Not To Scale

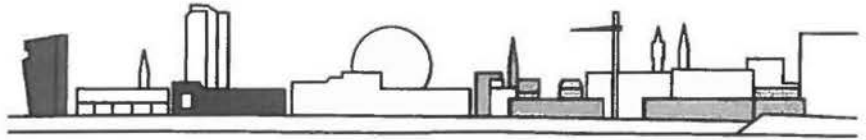


3 Typical section through eastern access road & boulevard tree planting - Not To Scale



4 Typical long section north-south through site - 1:1000 scale





Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2015 Representation Form

Please use this form to make comments on the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan, ensuring that your comments relate to a specific issue, site or policy in either the Proposed Plan, Proposed Supplementary Guidance, Proposed Action Programme or Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report. Please include the relevant paragraph(s) and use a separate form for each issue you wish to raise.

The consultation period runs between Friday 20th March and Monday 1st June 2015. Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.

Name	Mr <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mrs <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms <input type="radio"/> Ben Freeman
Organisation	Bancon Developments Ltd
On behalf of (if relevant)	
Address	Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode	AB31 5ZU
Telephone	01330 824900
E-mail	ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

Please tick if you would like to receive all future correspondence by e-mail

What document are you commenting on?	Proposed Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Proposed Supplementary Guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Proposed Action Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Policy/Site/Issue	OMISSION OF SITE B0311 MAIDENCRAIG	Paragraph(s)	

What would you like to say about the issue?

Please see attached paper

10/15/2015
10/15/2015

What change would you like to see made?

Please see attached paper.

Please return the completed form by:

- post to the Local Development Plan Team, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB; or
- email to ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk

The representation form can be filled in, saved, e-mailed and/or printed. You must "save as" to ensure the completed form is saved with the changes you have made. If you need more space, please fill out another representation form or send a word document attachment via e-mail with your completed representation form. **Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.**

Thank you. For more information, please visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/aldp2016 or to contact the Local Development Plan Team call 01224 523470.

Data Protection Statement

The comments you make on the Proposed Plan will be used to inform the Local Development Plan process and the Examination into the Local Development Plan by the Scottish Ministers' Reporter. You must provide your name and address for your representation to be considered valid, and this information will be made publicly available. Other personal contact details such as telephone and e-mail will not be made public, although we will share these with the Reporter, who may use them to contact you about the comments you have made. For more information about how Aberdeen City Council maintains the security of your information, and your rights to access information we hold about you, please contact Andrew Brownrigg (Local Development Plan Team Leader) on 01224 523317.

Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Main Issues Report, March 2014

Objection to the omission of site B0311 – Maidencraig.

Bancon object to the Proposed Local Development Plan, which allocated additional greenfield sites for only 98 houses against the substantially higher requirement identified in the Strategic Development Plan.

Specifically, Bancon object to the failure to allocate greenfield land for development at Maidencraig (site reference B0311).

Strategy

In separate objection papers, Bancon set out a detailed case explaining how the 2012 LDP has failed, and is continuing to fail, to deliver the housing requirement set out in the Strategic Development Plan (SDP). SPP was adopted in 2014, and requires LDPs in City Regions to *“allocate a range of sites which are effective or expected to become effective in the plan period to meet the housing land requirement of the Strategic Development Plan up to year 10 from the expected year of adoption.”* The SDP identifies the housing requirement for each plan period – up to 2016, 2017-2026 and 2027-2035. This LDP must therefore allocate sites capable of delivering the requirements in the SDP 2017-26 period.

Bancon submit that the Proposed LDP fails to do this, as only a few large sites are allocated for development, and almost all of them require the delivery of housing undelivered in the previous SDP plan period before the new allocations can commence. The best example of this is the large Grandhome site, where the allocation up to 2016 is not expected (in the 2015 Housing Land Audit figures) to be delivered until after the 2017-26 plan period has passed. Therefore there is no expectation of the 2017-26 allocations on that site becoming effective during that plan period, and therefore their allocation to deliver the SDP requirement in the LDP is contradictory to SPP.

In a separate objection in regard to Land Supply, Bancon consider the issue on an Aberdeen City wide basis, as well as broken down into individual areas as required in the plan’s spatial strategy. Kingswells and Greenfersns area is the area in which allocation of additional greenfield land at Maidencraig would help to address the shortfall in the Proposed LDP. Table 5 in the Proposed LDP details the allocations made.

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2026	Phase 1 : 2017 – 2026	Phase 2 : 2027 – 2035
OP29 Prime Four Business Park Kingswells	50 ha employment		-
OP63 Prime Four Extension	13 ha employment		-
Kingswells C* (Complete)	50 homes	-	-
OP30 Kingswells D and West Huxterstone	120 homes	-	-
OP31 Maidencraig South East	450 homes	-	-
OP32 Maidencraig North East	300 homes	-	-
OP33 Greenferns	600 homes	350 homes	400 homes
	10 ha employment		
OP34 East Arnhall	1 ha employment		
Housing Total	1,520 homes	350 homes	400 homes
Employment Land Total	74 ha		-

Table 5A below shows the expected delivery of housing on the allocated sites in Table 5, based on the 2015 Housing Land Audit figures.

Table 5A : Development at Kingswells and Greenferns – Delivery as Expected in HLA

Sites	Local Development Plan Period		
	Existing to 2016	Phase 1: 2017-2026	Phase 2: 2027-2035
Kingswells C* (Complete)	50		
OP30 Kingswells D and West Huxterstone	99	21	
OP31 Maidencraig South East	60	390	
OP32 Maidencraig North East		300	
OP33 Greenferns	Constrained	Constrained	Constrained
Housing Total	209	711	0

Allocated 2017-26 : 350	Expected Delivery : 0	Shortfall : 350
Allocated to 2026 : 1,870	Expected Delivery : 920	Shortfall : 950
Allocated to 2035 : 2,270	Expected Delivery : 920	Shortfall : 1,350

Bancon therefore submit that the allocated sites have and will continue to fail to deliver the housing requirement in this area of the City. The constrained Greenferns site cannot be considered ‘effective or expected to become effective in the plan period’ – a requirement of SPP paragraph 119.

Perhaps more alarmingly, all of the 711 houses expected to be delivered during the 2017-26 period are on sites that were allocated for development up to 2016. Whilst these contribute towards an effective housing land supply (SPP requires a 5 year effective housing land supply be maintained at all times), they cannot be considered to contribute towards the LDP land allocations, which (in accordance with the SDP and SPP) specifically sets out to meet the housing requirement for the period from 2017-26 (in this case 350 houses). Failure to deliver in the period up until 2016 is not an excuse to abandon compliance with the SDP and SPP.

Bancon submit that there is a need to allocate an additional 350 houses in the Proposed LDP to meet the SDP requirements from 2017-26.

In addition to the housing requirement, considerable amounts of the employment land allocations within the City are incorporated into or associated with the large residential allocations, and the same failure to deliver effective sites has occurred. More specifically, 10ha of employment land is identified in the Greenferns allocation – a site which is identified within this area of the City but is constrained according to the Housing Land Audit. It cannot, therefore, be considered ‘effective or expected to become effective in the plan period’, as required by SPP. The limited availability and the immediate uptake of new build office accommodation within the City is a clear indicator that there is a current demand that is not being met fast enough from the release of greenfield land. It is therefore submitted that additional employment opportunities are required now, on unconstrained sites, to address the requirement in the short term, until the larger sites begin to achieve their potential.

Suitability of Proposed Development

We refer to our bids for the proposed expansion of the Maidencraig masterplan with alternative options for either residential or employment development – site B0311.

Bancon submit that either of the alternatives proposed are logical and deliverable alternatives to the housing land allocations on very large sites within Aberdeen City that are failing to deliver development to meet the immediate demand and requirement. It is submitted that these large sites are not appropriate or sufficient, and a realistic approach to site delivery must be taken, based upon the Housing Land Audit returns provided by the development industry.

Maidencraig offers the perfect location for further residential or business development, with good access to services and facilities, along with a clear coherence with adjacent and nearby developments at Maidencraig, Kingswells and Westhill.

Whilst the allocation of an addition 200 houses on the site would not facilitate immediate delivery, it would nevertheless be deliverable within the 2017-2026 plan period, and form a logical expansion of the approved masterplan area. Development has commenced on site.

Turning to the Goal Achievement Matrix scoring for the site, it is noted that the proposals score extremely high, and are yet both dismissed as undesirable options. A detailed analysis of the GAM scoring reveals that the proposals are scored unreasonably low, as the adjacent zoned masterplanned development has not been considered.

In terms of landscape fit, the visual impact of the site is noted as the reason for a score of 1. The development bid was supported by a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, which concluded that development could be accommodated within the landscape up to the 145m contour line, or thereabouts, without risk of significant visual impact or risk of coalescence with Kingswells. This was specifically supported by the Reporter assessing Green Spaces New Places, who stated that the 145m contour line should mark the boundary of the zoning. The GAM score of 1 is therefore disputed, and a score of 2 suggested. The proposals would deliver substantial peripheral planting that would create a much more clearly defined western boundary than the current garden centre.

The GAM also states that the development proposal is more than 800m from facilities, shopping, health and recreation. The analysis acknowledges the adjacent site, but effectively disregards it. The adopted masterplan clearly shows a commercial centre within 400m of the proposed site, and

indeed the proposed development wraps around the Dobbies Garden Centre which offers a range of shopping, not just garden products. A score of 3 instead of 1 is appropriate for this criteria, therefore, as the proposal would be phased after the extant Maidencraig masterplan area.

Should the option for business development be supported, there is no justification to mark it down to 2 points on the basis of education capacity, and therefore an additional point would be merited. Conversely, a score of 1 for land use mix is inappropriate should the residential option be favoured, as it would form an extension to a masterplanned mixed use area.

Bancon therefore conclude that the GAM scores for the site should be: -

Proposal 1 – Residential Development - 56/60

Proposal 2 – Business Development - 58/60

It is therefore unclear as to why these options are not considered as reasonable additions to either the housing or employment land supply. With progress on the extant Maidencraig site now accelerating, with a start on site anticipated in the next few weeks, either of these options for additional allocations could deliver much needed housing or business land within a more efficient timescale than several of the very large allocations that are proving slow to deliver.

Conclusion

Bancon therefore submit that the Proposed LDP fails to allocate sufficient greenfield land in the Kingswells and Greenferns area to meet the requirements of the Strategic Development Plan (as required by SPP) – i.e. sites that are effective or expected to become effective in the plan period (2017-26). The shortfall is 350 houses, and an appropriate proportion of the 10ha of employment land identified on the Greenferns site up until 2026 (the site is identified as constrained in the Housing Land Audit).

Either a residential, business or mixed use development on the proposed site at Maidencraig (B0311) is therefore proposed as suitable for addressing the shortfall identified in the delivery of sites allocated in the 2012 LDP. Such an allocation would be deliverable within the 2017-26 plan period and help to address the shortfall in allocations in the Proposed LDP.

- 1 Name of proposer: Bancon Developments Ltd.
Date: 14/06/13
Address: Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode: AB31 5ZU
Telephone: 01330 824900
Email: ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

- 2 Name of landowner: Newpark Farm Ltd, c/o Bancon Developments Ltd.
Address: As above.

The site and your proposal

- 3 Site Name: Maidencraig

- 4 Site Location map: The proposed development is on land immediately west of the Maidencraig Masterplan area which was zoned for development in the 2012 Aberdeen Local Development Plan and the existing Dobbies Garden Centre.



Fig 1 – Existing land uses and zonings, with bid site marked in green.

- 5 National Grid reference of the site: NJ881068

- 6 Current Use of Site/Previous Development: Agriculture/horticulture.
- 7 Proposed Use of the Site: Based upon the agreed Masterplan development schedule, development of the housing at Maidencraig will be complete by around 2018-2020. Bancon believe the site is highly sustainable and will be popular with the market. Its further development should therefore be encouraged. Bancon are therefore keen to promote additional development land through this LDP review to ensure that the full potential of the site is realised without interruption. With the new LDP providing allocations from 2017-26 an allocation between 2017 and 2023 would be appropriate.
- 8 Details of Housing Proposals: The additional land promoted for development was supported by the Scottish Government Reporter in his report of the Local Plan inquiry in 2008. Aberdeen City Council, however, decided not to accept his recommendation on this occasion. Supported by a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Bancon submitted that development could be accommodated within the landscape up to the 145m contour line, or thereabouts, without risk of significant visual impact or risk of coalescence with Kingswells. This was specifically supported by the Reporter, who stated that the 145m contour line should mark the boundary of the zoning.
- Subsequently, the Dobbies Garden Centre has been built, but a significant area of land below the 145m contour, to the west and north of the garden centre, remains undeveloped. The land is suitable for around 200 dwellinghouses.
- 9 Provision of Affordable Housing: In accordance with the Maidencraig masterplan area, affordable housing will be provided at a rate of 25%.
- 10 Business Land Proposals: N/A
- 11 Other Proposed Land Uses: N/A
- 12 Phasing: The development is likely to be split into phases of up to 50 houses.
- 13 Community Engagement: Through the LDP review process, the additional land to the west and north of the garden centre was promoted, and has been subject to public scrutiny. Extensive community consultation was carried out as part of the Maidecraig masterplan, which has now been adopted as Supplementary Guidance to the 2012 LDP. A further public consultation exercise would be carried out with regard to the proposed addition.

Sustainable Development and Design

- 14 Sustainability Checklist:
- A) Exposure – the site is south facing, and protected by higher ground to the North.
- B) Aspect – The site is entirely south facing.

- C) Slope – No part of the site has a gradient of more than 1:20.
- D) Flooding – there is no risk of flooding on the site.
- E) Drainage – The site can be drained via mains sewer connections for foul water and using SUDS for surface water.
- F) Built and Cultural Heritage – development of the site would have no impact on buildings or sites of built and cultural heritage value. A detailed archaeological study has been carried out on the masterplan site, with no significant findings. It is reasonable to assume that the same would apply to the bid site (subject to further survey work as part of the planning process).
- G) Nature conservation – an ecological survey was carried out in 2005, demonstrating limited ecological interest. This was updated in 2013 for the masterplan area to the east and south of the bid site, with a similar outcome. The bid site is agricultural land, and it is unlikely that anything of note has changed since the 2005 report.
- H) Landscape features – The development would not lead to the loss of any valuable landscape features, and the provision of a well landscaped development would be a positive addition to the area.
- I) Landscape fit – A landscape and visual impact assessment was prepared in support of the submissions to the 2008 Local Plan review. It was this report that led to the recommendation from the Scottish Government Reporter that the site be included in the plan for development up to the 145m contour. A copy of this assessment is appended to this bid.
- J) Relationship to existing settlements – The site forms a logical extension to the Maidencraig masterplan area, and with the support of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will produce a defensible western boundary, and define a suitable belt of open land between Aberdeen and Kingswells. The site is located directly on the main bus route between Aberdeen and Kingswells, and will be within a short walk of commercial services and facilities that will be delivered as part of the Maidencraig masterplan.
- K) Land use mix – The additional housing will increase the marketability and the viability of services that we are seeking to incorporate into the Maidencraig masterplan area. The intention is that the development would therefore be residential.
- L) Accessibility – The site will be within 400m of a regular bus service on the A944, where the 40/41 service from Kingswells to Aberdeen runs, along with the close proximity of the proposed extension of the local 23 service (12 minute service) that the Maidencraig masterplan development will deliver. Vehicular access to the site will be via the junctions

proposed for the adjacent Maidencraig masterplan area, with an additional link where the existing bus gate is located. The bus gate will be incorporated into the design to ensure it remains in operation without detriment.

- M) Proximity to services and facilities –
 - Community facilities – Potentially 400-800m from the site within the Maidencraig masterplan area, as well as the adjacent Dobbies Garden Centre.
 - Local shops – 400-800m from the site within the Maidencraig masterplan area.
 - Sports facilities – c. 800m from the site.
 - Public transport networks – Within 400m of the site
 - Primary schools – Within 2km of the site

- N) Footpath and cycle connections – The site offers excellent connections to surrounding footpaths and cycle paths, and to the wider countryside in general. The excerpt from the Council’s Core Paths Plan below demonstrates the range of formal routes that surround the site. Fig 2 below shows the extensive network of core paths and their close proximity to the site.

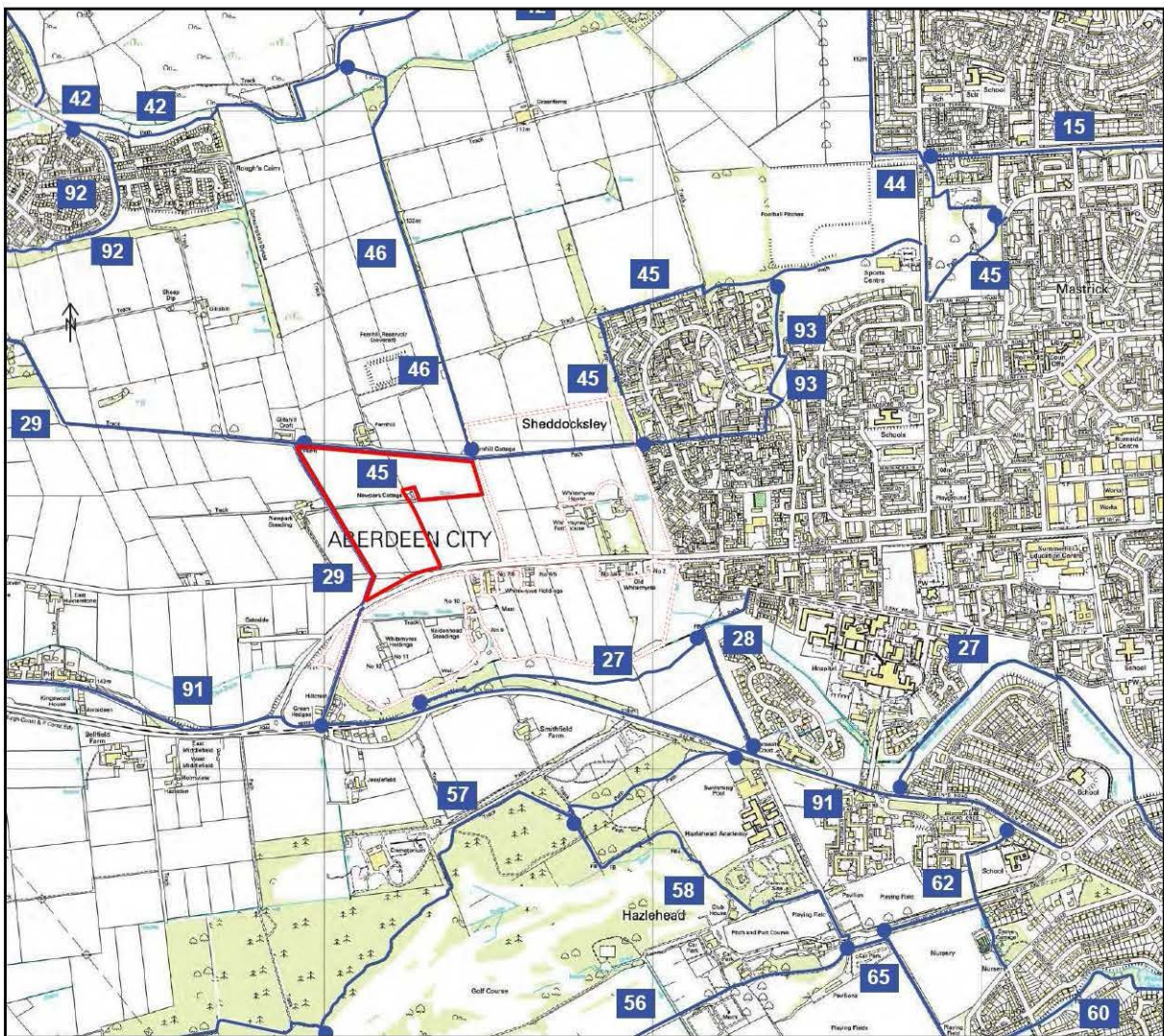


Fig 2 – Site location and core path network.

O) Proximity to employment opportunities –There will be employment opportunities created through the development of the Maidencraig masterplan area, as well as nearby employment hubs, primarily at Kingswells.

P) Contamination – No constraints to development.

Q) Land use conflict – constraints to development.

R) Physical Infrastructure –

Electricity – available

Gas – available

Water and Sewage – capacity available

Secondary School Capacity – current forecasts indicate capacity at Hazlehead Academy

Primary Capacity – Capacity is available at Kingsford Primary School.

15 Supporting Surveys: This bid is supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Much of the work done in support of the masterplan for Maidencraig is relevant to this site too, and has also been appended to the bid.

16 Community Benefits of the Proposed Development: The proposed development will offer a greater number of houses at Maidencraig, including affordable homes. The increased numbers will help to attract investment in the commercial areas of the Maidencraig masterplan, and increase the viability of delivering additional services to the site.

17 Masterplan/Framework: A detailed masterplan has been prepared and adopted for the adjacent Maidencraig site. The proposed development site is a logical addition to that plan, as shown overleaf. It should be noted that the proposed development area requires to be drawn up in more detail to accord with the design of the masterplan area. The indicative plan is useful to demonstrate the potential of the site, however.

- 1 Name of proposer: Bancon Developments Ltd.
Date: 14/06/13
Address: Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode: AB31 5ZU
Telephone: 01330 824900
Email: ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

- 2 Name of landowner: Newpark Farms Ltd, c/o Bancon Developments Ltd.
Address: As above.

The site and your proposal

- 3 Site Name: Maidencraig Business Park

- 4 Site Location map: The proposed development is on land immediately west of the Maidencraig Masterplan, zoned for development in the 2012 Aberdeen Local Development Plan and the existing Dobbies Garden Centre.



Fig 1 – Existing land uses and zonings, with bid site marked in green.

- 5 National Grid reference of the site: NJ881068

- 6 Current Use of Site/Previous Development: Agriculture.
- 7 Proposed Use of the Site: During the detailed planning stage for the Maidencraig masterplan, Bancon have been approached by several businesses interested in sites for commercial and business development that cannot be comfortably be accommodated within the defined masterplan boundary. However, the land to the west and north of the Dobbies Garden Centre offers for further commercial opportunities.
- 8 Details of Housing Proposals: N/A
- 9 Provision of Affordable Housing: N/A
- 10 Business Land Proposals: The additional land promoted for development was supported by the Scottish Government Reporter in his report of the Local Plan inquiry in 2008. Aberdeen City Council, however, decided not to accept his recommendation on this occasion. Supported by a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Bancon submitted that development could be accommodated within the landscape up to the 145m contour line, or thereabouts, without risk of significant visual impact or risk of coalescence with Kingswells. This was specifically supported by the Reporter, who stated that the 145m contour line should mark the boundary of the zoning.
- Subsequently, the Dobbies Garden Centre has been built, but a significant area of land below the 145m contour, to the west and north of the garden centre, remains undeveloped. The land could provide up to 13 hectares of business land, including a substantial area around the periphery of the site which would be planted with trees to define the boundary of Aberdeen appropriately.
- 11 Other Proposed Land Uses: The land would be suitable for business and light industrial uses (class 4), and potentially for storage and distribution (class 6). Class 5 uses would be suitable only if they were compatible with the neighbouring garden centre and residential uses. Alternatives may include a car showroom, which does not fall into any specific use class.
- 12 Phasing: The development would be marketed on the basis of variable plot sizes, to maximise the potential for a variety of business developments.
- 13 Community Engagement: No specific community engagement has taken place with regard to employment use on this area of land.

Sustainable Development and Design

- 14 Sustainability Checklist:
- F) Exposure – the site is south facing, and protected by higher ground to the North.
- G) Aspect – The site is entirely south facing.

- H) Slope – No part of the site has a gradient of more than 1:20.
- I) Flooding – there is no risk of flooding on the site.
- J) Drainage – The site can be drained via mains sewer connections for foul water and using SUDS for surface water.
- F) Built and Cultural Heritage – development of the site would have no impact on buildings or sites of built and cultural heritage value.
- G) Nature conservation – an ecological survey was carried out in 2005, demonstrating limited ecological interest. This was updated in 2013 for the masterplan area to the east and south of the bid site, with a similar outcome. The bid site is agricultural land, and it is unlikely that anything of note has changed since the 2005 report.
- H) Landscape features – The development would not lead to the loss of any valuable landscape features, and the provision of a well landscaped development would be a positive addition to the area.
- I) Landscape fit – A landscape and visual impact assessment was prepared in support of the submissions to the 2008 Local Plan review. It was this report that led to the recommendation from the Scottish Government Reporter that the site be included in the plan for development up to the 145m contour. A copy of this assessment is appended to this bid.
- J) Relationship to existing settlements – The site forms a logical extension to the Maidencraig masterplan area, and with the support of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will produce a defensible western boundary, and define a suitable belt of open land between Aberdeen and Kingswells. The site is located directly on the main bus route between Aberdeen and Kingswells, and will be within a short walk of commercial services and facilities that will be delivered as part of the Maidencraig masterplan. The population generated within the Maidencraig masterplan and the Mastrick, Sheddocksley and Summerhill areas beyond will be within a reasonable walking distance of new employment opportunities on the site.
- K) Land use mix – The proposed business or industrial development will provide employment opportunities within a short walking distance of a large residential population, and increase the overall sustainability of the area.
- L) Accessibility – The site will be within 400m of a regular bus service on the A944, where the 40/41 service from Kingswells to Aberdeen runs, along with the close proximity of the proposed extension of the local 23 service (12 minute service) that the Maidencraig masterplan development will deliver. Vehicular access to the site will be via the junctions

proposed for the adjacent Maidencraig masterplan area, with an additional link where the existing bus gate is located. The bus gate will be incorporated into the design to ensure it remains in operation without detriment.

- M) Proximity to services and facilities –
 - Community facilities – Potentially 400-800m from the site within the Maidencraig masterplan area.
 - Local shops – 400-800m from the site within the Maidencraig masterplan area (plus the adjacent Dobbies Garden Centre).
 - Sports facilities – c. 800m from the site.
 - Public transport networks – Within 400m of the site
 - Primary schools – Within 2km of the site

- N) Footpath and cycle connections – The site offers excellent connections to surrounding footpaths and cycle paths, and to the wider countryside in general. The excerpt from the Council’s Core Paths Plan below demonstrates the range of formal routes that surround the site. Fig 2 below shows the extensive network of core paths and their close proximity to the site.

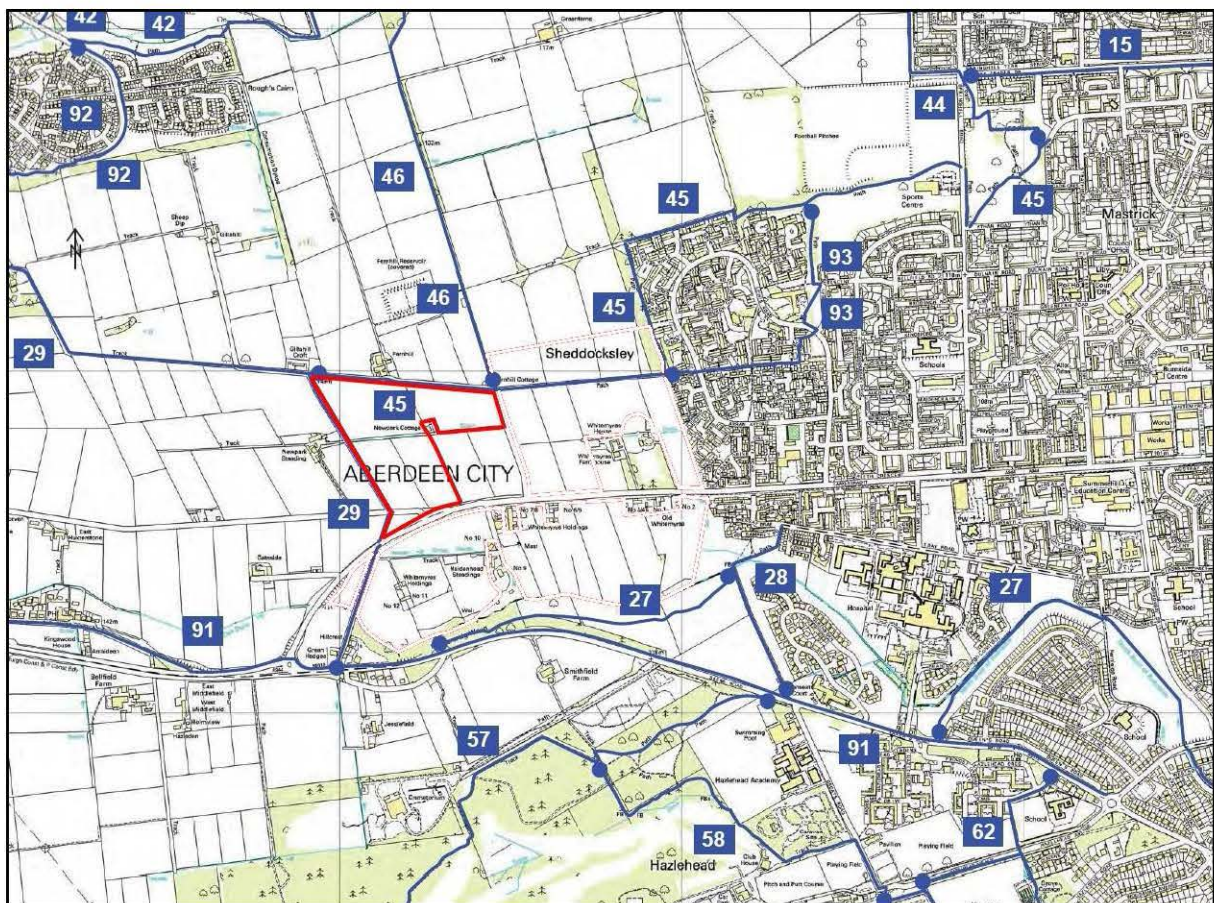


Fig 2 – Site location and core path network.

O) Proximity to employment opportunities –The development will deliver employment opportunities to both existing population in Mastrick, Sheddocksley and Summerhill, and also a new population base generated from the Maidencraig masterplan development.

P) Contamination – No constraints to development.

Q) Land use conflict – none anticipated, so no constraint to development.

R) Physical Infrastructure –

Electricity – available

Gas – available

Water and Sewage – capacity available

Secondary School Capacity – N/A

Primary Capacity – N/A

15 Supporting Surveys: This bid is supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Much of the work done in support of the masterplan for Maidencraig is relevant to this site too, and has also been appended to the bid.

16 Community Benefits of the Proposed Development: The development will deliver employment opportunities to both existing population in Mastrick, Sheddocksley and Summerhill, and also a new population base generated from the Maidencraig masterplan development.

17 Masterplan/Framework: No detailed plans have been developed for the site at this point in time.

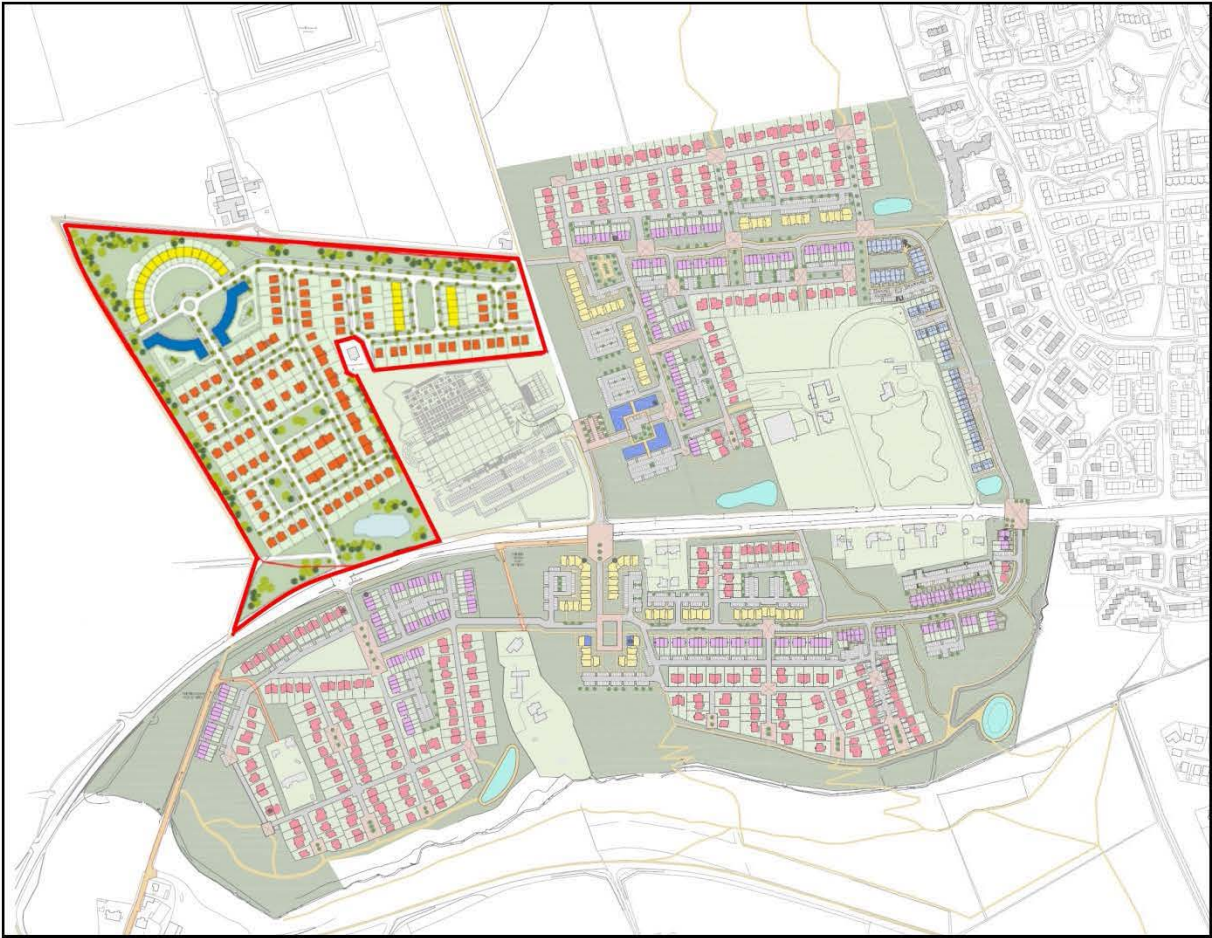


Fig 3 – indicative plan and interface with the adopted Maiden Craig masterplan area.



MAIDENCRAIG EAST, ABERDEEN

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

On behalf of BANCON DEVELOPMENTS.
Oct 2007

DAVID WILSON ASSOCIATES landscape architects

Landscape Design Landscape Planning Environmental Analysis Project Management



Tel: 01698 200035 Fax: 01698 200036
Aros House 121 Cadzow Street Hamilton ML3 6JA
e-mail: design@dwandscape.co.uk



MAIDENCRAIG EAST, ABERDEEN

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
UNDERTAKEN ON BEHALF OF
BANCON DEVELOPMENTS**

October 2007

**DAVID WILSON ASSOCIATES
landscape architects**

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Bancon Developments wish to develop the site at Maidencraig East, on the western boundary of Aberdeen, for housing. Prior to the Public Inquiry into the Aberdeen Local Plan, the site was assessed as an alternative to the sites allocated in the Aberdeen Local Plan, and reviewed at the Local Plan Public Inquiry. During this process a study was carried out as a comparative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment between the sites at Greenferns, Kingswell North and The Maidencraig East and West sites. This comparison was then used as a method of demonstrating the relative suitability of each site for housing and the level of impact that each would have.
- 1.2 After the Local Plan Inquiry the reporter recommended that the site at Kingswell North be deleted from the Local Plan and the allocation of housing at Greenferns be reduced in number. He also recommended that the potential development area at Maidencraig East be extended. As a result it is deemed prudent to now look in more detail at the housing options for the area.
- 1.3 The following document, Prepared by David Wilson Associates, is a further study where the expanded Maidencraig East site will be looked at to assess the specific impacts upon the landscape and surrounding area that development of the site would have.
- 1.4 The assessment will look at how an indicative framework can be developed so that the impact of building on the site can be minimised. This will be presented as a Recommendations drawing.

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This study will assess the impact of implementing a mixed use residential development on the Maidencraig East site. It will begin by considering the current location and context of the site and its relationship with the wider landscape of Aberdeenshire and the City of Aberdeen with particular attention to the landscape character of the area and the visual impact upon it.
- 2.2 The study will begin with a review of the planning issues related to the site and the findings of the Reporter on the Local Plan Inquiry. The consequences of these findings will then be considered in the scoping of the remainder of the study.
- 2.3 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will commence by considering the wider context of Aberdeenshire and how the site relates to the fabric of the City and adjoining countryside. Elements such as transport links, landscape designations, Tree Preservation Orders, archaeological features are examined in this section and relevant conclusions drawn.
- 2.4 The Landscape Character of the site and surroundings are then examined in relation to Scottish Natural Heritage Review no 80, Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen, 1996. This document sets out the officially accepted description of the character of the site. It contains guidelines for development, within this landscape character type, and these are taken into consideration.
- 2.5 Scottish Planning Policy document SPP3: "Planning for Housing" sets out the general principles for locating good quality residential developments in the best locations. It refers in particular to Planning Advice Notes 44, "Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape" and 52, "Planning and Small Towns". The specific recommendations in these documents have served to guide the methodology used in the preparation of this report. The same document also refers to a number of other Planning Advice Notes and National Planning Policy Guidance documents. The range, within that document, has been considered and the relevant ones discussed.
- 2.6 Following this, the physical conditions of the site itself are addressed through study of the topography, vegetation and built forms. This is followed up with a photographic study of the site, illustrating the conditions and features that exist.
- 2.7 The visual impact of any development of the site is then looked at in more detail by the determination of the visual envelopes of the site. That is to say the envelopes of land from which any development on it will be seen. This will be carried out using Key Terra Firma ground modelling software to anticipate the visual range of the development. An assessment of the more sensitive visual receptors within the area is then undertaken and any issues highlighted.
- 2.8 From the conclusions drawn from analysis of the site, a set of constraints to development and any necessary mitigation is compiled. From these, recommendations are made for the development of the site so as to secure the least degree of impact and any appropriate mitigation.
- 2.9 Over the course of the study, cognisance will be taken of the North East Scotland Together Structure Plan (2001-2016) produced by Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City and the Finalised Aberdeen Local Plan (2004) by Aberdeen City Council, along with any associated guidance provided within these documents.
- 2.10 In applying the above methodology, careful regard has been made to National Planning Policy on development on previously unbuilt land, the assimilation of development into the landscape, and the expansion of small towns. Particular regard has been made to the principles of Planning Advice Note 44, "Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape".
- 2.11 The overall methodology has been undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" published by the Landscape Institute in conjunction with the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

3. PLANNING CONTEXT

Structure Plan

- 3.1 The Structure Plan, referred to as NEST (North East Scotland Together), which covers this area, sets out a range of core strategies. In reference to the location of new housing, core strategic Objective 7 aims;

"To secure a choice of location for a viable supply and adequate variety of land for housing (including affordable housing), employment, services and open space, which:

- relates development to each settlement's ability to accommodate it without loss of amenity or identity;*
- ensures that the particular use or uses proposed for each site will maximise the overall sustainability of the community;*
- gives preference to the use and re-use of sites within existing settlements;*
- avoids development in areas liable to flood, or near other major hazards;*
- relates the density of development, when considered with adjoining land uses, to its proximity to services and the transport network;*
- will help to regenerate poorer communities and areas."*

- 3.2 In relation to the environment as a whole the Structure Plan states the core strategic objectives as;

"Objective 9 -To confirm the function and role of Aberdeen's Green Belt.

Objective 10 -To protect the countryside from development other than what is needed for the rural economy and settlement strategy.

Objective 11- To give special protection to international, national and locally designated sites of environmental importance, but also to foster the natural and built environment as a whole."

- 3.3 The Structure Plan then addresses the issues relating to housing land allocation more specifically. It states;

..... housing is to be located within settlements which are accessible to services and facilities and support economic development. National planning

guidelines for housing highlight two important matters that give encouragement to the reuse of brownfield land and give greater heed to the relationship between land use and transport.

- 3.4 This states two key aims, firstly to use Brownfield sites where possible – this does not apply to any of the study site but it is recognized that the amount of Brownfield sites will not meet demand. The second point refers to issues of sustainability namely the location of new residential development in areas serviced by sufficient transport corridors so that the areas can be serviced using existing infrastructure and reduce the necessity of using cars and creation of large amounts of services.

Emerging Local Plan

- 3.5 These strategies are developed further, and in respect to specific sites, in the Finalised Aberdeen Local Plan-Green Spaces New Places. In regard to the green space network within Aberdeen it states:

"The green structure is based on some of Aberdeen's prime assets (e.g. the river valleys, wildlife sites and woodlands) whilst the development corridors are based on sustainable transportation routes into the city. The green fingers are also connected by a series of orbital 'greenways' around Aberdeen thereby creating the Green Space Network."

"Benefits generated from adjacent developments will be directed to these areas to make landscape improvements, plant woodland, create wildlife corridors and implement the core path network - thereby increasing access opportunities for all. They are afforded protection from development so that nothing should harm their recreational or wildlife integrity."

- 3.6 It further sets out a number of Policies for the development of the landscape of Aberdeen. The following policies are ones which are relevant to the development of the study area. It also describes specific criteria for the development of the sites.

The Western Peripheral Route

- 3.7 In Policy 73 it discusses the Western Peripheral Route and its role in encouraging development. The opportunity to use part of the development to contribute financially to the cost of the route is not missed:



"The WPR is an integral component of the LTS. The route should free up road capacity in the urban area, providing the opportunity to reallocate more road space to buses and other priority modes of transport. Traffic will also be encouraged to transfer onto the more appropriate distributor roads, allowing traffic management and traffic calming to be introduced into residential and other sensitive areas. Residential areas will become more acceptable environments for walking and cycling. Road capacity should also become

available for greater pedestrian priority in the City Centre. The WPR will link several park and ride sites around the edge of the city. This will enable people to drive to the most appropriate site to then be able to use public transport to their final destination. The problems associated with the Air Quality Management Area (Nitrogen Dioxide) Order 2001 could also, potentially, be reduced by removing much of the through traffic from the area affected by the order. The WPR is also seen as a key part of the Green Spaces-New Places Strategy as set out at the beginning of this plan. The WPR is seen as a potential means of releasing land that will be vital for appropriate, sustainable development. Appropriately located development might be required to make a financial contribution to the road in order to mitigate access or other related problems."

3.8 Policy 73: The Western Peripheral Route

"The City Council will work with the Scottish Executive to confirm and safeguard the road alignment. The final design of the road should reflect the best practicable option not entailing excessive cost"

Conclusion

- 3.9 The site responds well when viewed against the ideals set out in the Local Plan. The site is not a Brownfield one but it has been recognised that there are not enough of these to meet current demand. It is a reasonably sustainable site as it is on a major transport corridor and has links to existing footpath and cycle networks, leisure facilities and community resources. The Western Peripheral Route would benefit the site as it is close by but is far enough removed not to be affected directly by it.
- 3.10 Many of the planning issues were discussed at the Local Plan Inquiry and whilst the site does not meet with all of the aims of the plan it compares favourably with other sites in the area including those originally proposed within the local plan. The findings of the local plan are discussed in detail in the next section.

4. Local Plan Inquiry – Reporter’s Findings

- 4.1 As stated previously the site in question has been the subject of a Local Plan Inquiry during which it was described as Issue 59. Although the report contained much information the key conclusions on the suitability of the site are stated below;

Conclusions

“With regard to landscape setting and coalescence one part of the issue 59 area stands out least. This is the part that is bounded to the west by Fairley Road, to the south by the Den Burn, to the north by the old Lang Stracht, and to the north-east and east by the cluster of buildings at East Huxterstone and a length of track leading from it to the burn. It would appear to have a capacity of the order of 80 family houses. This area can be regarded as having rather good access to public transport. There is the possibility that it has a historic or archaeological interest.

The larger part of the FNC (Future New Communities) does not respect the landform or the value of this stretch of pleasant open landscape to the setting and identity of Kingswells and to the wider landscape setting of the city as a whole. Much of the FNC has a very poor landscape fit indeed.

It seems very doubtful that the level of development being put forward would justify a new school or local shops.

East of the embanked crossing of the A944 over the Den Burn landscape considerations are very different. The approach to the city gives an impression of urban dominance.

The area which appears to lend itself for possible development is broadly definable as: to the south and east of the A944 (including Maidencraig and the Whitemyres Holdings) and limited to the south by the steeper slopes of the Den of Maidencraig; and a much larger area north of the A944 and a short stretch of the old Lang Stracht, bounded by the existing built-up area to the east, to the north extending roughly to the 145m contour as far west as Fernhill farm steading, and with a western edge running south to the old Lang Stracht one field to the west of the junction with the A944, where there is an existing track. The area north of A944 is not defined by strong existing landscape features. Consideration would

also have to be given to ensuring continued viability of farm holdings. The relevant green belt purposes under policy 27 in the structure plan, in not letting development extend further than the foregoing limits, would be prevention of coalescence, protection of the landscape setting and identity of urban areas, and protection of prime landscape and recreational assets. The area would be large enough to accommodate a primary school if required. For cycling the area has exceptional potential.

The suggested development for ‘Maidencraig East’ in the ‘Master Plan Proposed Zonings’ (document BAN2) would not make full use of the foregoing potential development area.”

Recommendations

- 4.2 The reporter therefore concludes that not only is the site at Maidencraig East the best location for new housing in the area but it is in fact limited in its original scope. The reporter feels that there is opportunity to develop a larger area of land around the Maidencraig East site by extending its boundaries westwards into the envelope created by the A944 as it curves round to the roundabout. This would present opportunities to create a community with its own facilities rather than just a simpler housing development.
- 4.3 The reporter recorded his formal recommendations in the section of the report entitled Chapter 11 – Assessment of Greenfield Housing Sites;
- (a) *The Old Skene Road site (site A under issue 61) should be safeguarded for housing in terms of structure plan policy 9, with a capacity for 25 dwellings.*
 - (b) *Two parts of Kingswells South should be identified as strategic housing land reserve, with a capacity for 100 units:*
 - (i) *the part that is bounded to the west by Fairley Road, to the south by the Den Burn, to the north by the old Lang Stracht, and to the north-east and east by the cluster of buildings at East Huxterstone and a length of track leading from it to the burn; and*

- (ii) *the area that lies to the west of Fairley Road.*
- (c) *All other parts of Kingswells South Future New Community should be deleted from the local plan and the proposals map and should be designated green belt and Green Space Network.*
- d) *Land at Maidencraig immediately west of south Sheddocksley and lying between the A944 and the Den Burn valley should be identified as strategic housing land reserve with a nominal capacity for 200 dwellings.*
- (e) *No other change to the finalised local plan should be made in response to this group of objections.*

4.4 The detailed study in the remainder of this report will therefore look at the landscape and Visual Impacts of developing this extended area.

5. LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 5.1 In this section the general location of the study area is considered and the various natural and built features which give it its distinct character. The site sits on the western boundary of the City of Aberdeen, which is in the North East of Scotland at the estuaries of the Dee and Don Rivers. Aberdeen has traditionally been a maritime city but its character and prosperity was transformed in the 20th century through the discovery and production of North Sea Oil. This has made it a thriving City with a high demand for housing and new residences. This is understandably concentrated at the western boundary of the city as the eastern side is coastal. There is also pressure for development to the north and south, however the landform and river boundary make this more difficult to the south and the north is more industrial in nature.
- 5.2 Aberdeen is known as the Granite City owing to the extensive use of the stone in the construction of the buildings, particularly in the older parts of the centre. This theme is generally continued throughout the rest of the city to some degree and gives it a distinctive character which is fairly unique. Whilst Aberdeen is a sizable city its close proximity to the open countryside and generally minimal urban sprawl give it a rural feel at much of the outlying fringes with many open spaces, river valley and woodland cover.
- 5.3 This is particularly true of the western side of Aberdeen as the cityscape becomes more fragmented by topography and landuse. Here it dissipates into smaller pockets of communities which are more like joined up villages and has resulted in an uneven boundary line of settlements and small villages which exist around this perimeter.

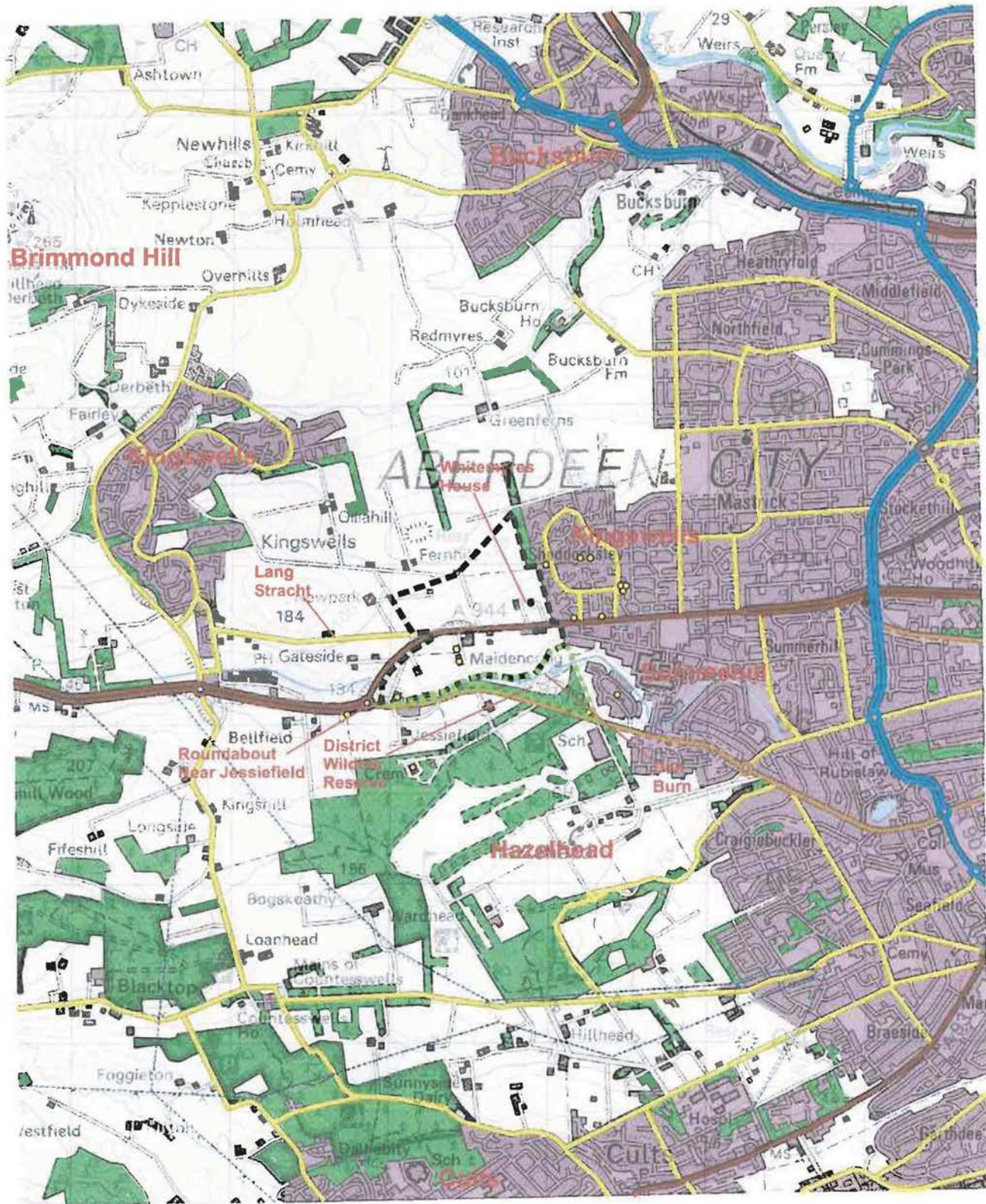
Topography

- 5.4 The landscape of Aberdeen is fairly undulating and gradually falls eastward towards the sea. The land rises and falls to varying degrees but with relatively few extremes. An exception to this is Brimmond Hill to the north of Kingswells which has commanding views across the landscape of the city and makes it a popular viewing point.

- 5.5 The smaller rises and falls within the area form small valleys and wider plateaus into which the built forms tend to nestle. These create long views in some directions and hidden areas in others.
- 5.6 The topography of the area is illustrated in drawing number L3. (contour analysis)
- 5.7 The site itself sits on a plateau to the north of the Den Burn valley which slopes away to the south of the site. Part of the valley forms the Maidencraig Local District Wildlife Reserve. Beyond this on the other side of the burn, the land rises again. To the north the land continues to rise over the site up towards Fernhill Reservoir which sits on a ridge between the valleys of the Denburn and Bucksburn. This gives it a degree of enclosure.
- 5.8 The land to the east and west varies slightly but there are no extremes in elevation which create views very far in these directions.

Human Influences and Archaeology

- 5.9 The landscape of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire has been populated since Mesolithic times and this presence has shaped and influenced the history and culture of the area in profound ways. The presence of humans as hunter gatherers, early farmers clearing the land, modern large scale agriculturalists and larger scale city forming industrialists have left their mark upon the landscape. This is reflected in the significant number of archaeological sites that exist throughout the area. See Map 1 LI (Context)
- 5.10 These are recorded by Historic Scotland and commonly fall into four categories; Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, National Monuments and Historic Landscapes and Gardens. Within each of these categories there will be varying degrees of importance and value but all such recorded features are considered.
- 5.11 There are a few listed buildings within the study area and these have been considered first, in relation to each potential development area and then those beyond the area but within 100m of the boundary of that area



- Settlements
- Woodland
- Water body
- Minor Road
- Major Road
- Primary Route
- Power Line
- Railway Line
- Listed Building
- National Monument
- District Wildlife Reserve
- Site Boundary

**MAIDENCRAIG EAST,
ABERDEEN**

L1 LOCATION AND CONTEXT

Date Oct 2007 Scale NTS

DAVID WILSON ASSOCIATES
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5.12 The following Listed Buildings are included in the site:

- **OLD WHITEMYRES, FARMHOUSE** - Dated WI MG 1704 at skew, probably recast shortly after 1751. 2-window and modern centre porch, later outshot to back; harled with chamfered margins, small windows N. frontage. (Category: C(S))
- **WHITEMYRES HOUSE** - Late 18th century. 2-storey and dormerless attic 3-window harled with margins, with plain doorpiece in W. gable; circular keyblocked opening in E. gable; coped chimneys; T-plan single-storey back wing. Semi-derelict. (Now restored) (Category: B)
- **OLD WHITEMYRES, N. PART OF STEADING** - Probably shortly after 1751. Rubble-built rectangular block with ball finials at apices of gables. (Category: C(S))

5.13 The following features are on or within 100m of the site and appear on the National Monuments of Scotland Record:

- Maidencraig, meal mill - Meal-mill
- Whitemyres House – House
- Old Whitemyres – Farmstead
- Old Whitemyres – Part of steading
- Maidencraig – Farm
- Newton Cottage – Cottage
- Home Farm Sheddocksley - Smithy

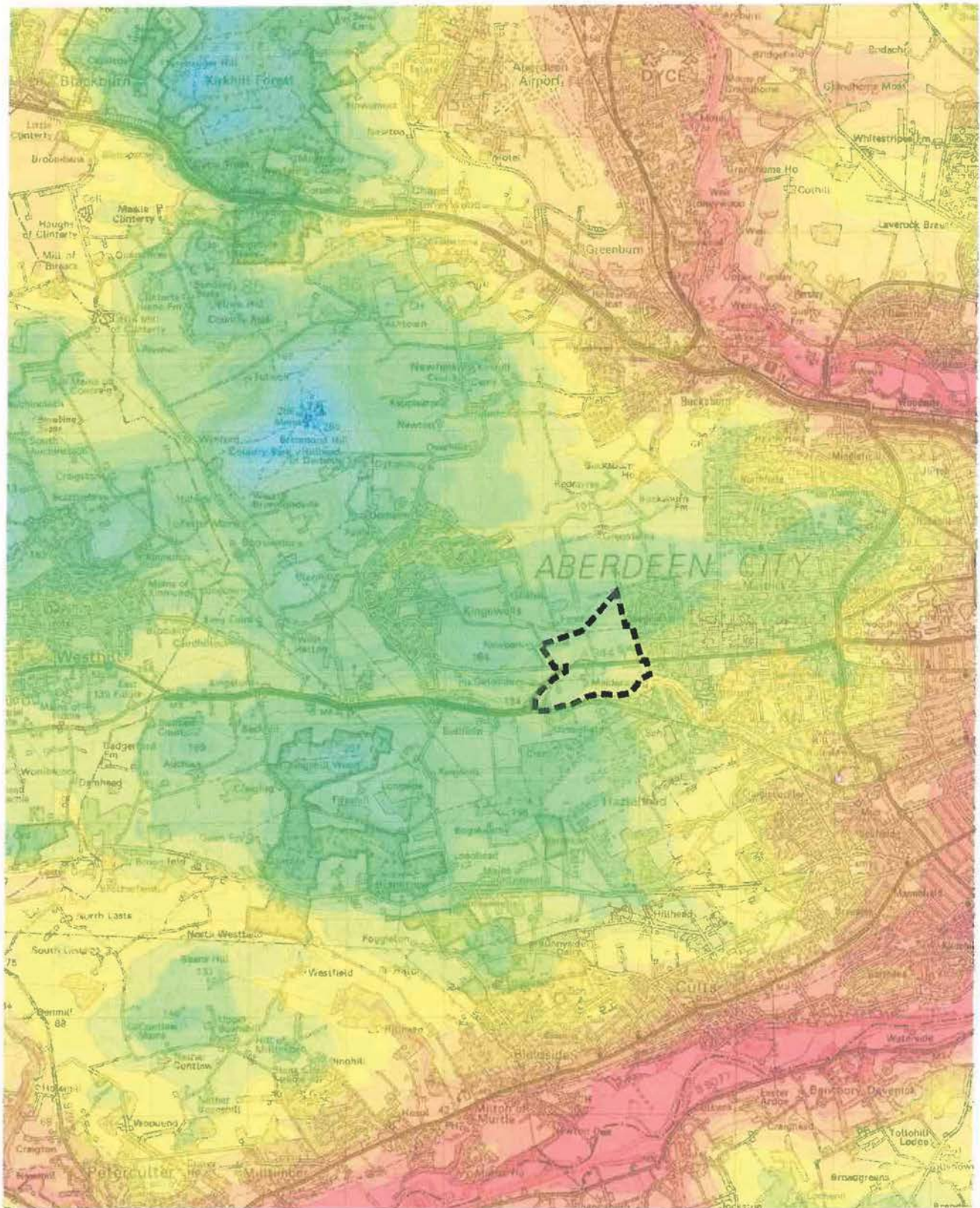
5.14 There are no Ancient Monuments or Historic Gardens or Landscapes within 100m of the site.

Transport

5.15 The site is bisected by the A944 Lang Stracht, which is one of the main routes west of Aberdeen. To the west of Maidencraig East the route splits into the A944 and B9119 at the roundabout near Jessiefield. This alleviates some of the traffic but the section through the site is still a busy thoroughfare. There is an advantage in terms of sustainable development as residents would be close to main public transport links into the city and would have less need for commuting by car. Both the Structure Plan and Local Plan Policies encourage new development to follow these main transport routes rather than branch out into more rural and sensitive areas.

Conclusions

- 5.16 There are no constraints upon the site from the topography of the site other than from any visual issues that it might produce. This will be looked at in more detail in the relevant chapter in the report. The gradient of the site will impose no constraints.
- 5.17 There are a few listed buildings upon the site associated with the farm building and row of dwellings along the A944. These are not high category buildings however and should be accommodated within the site without any great detrimental effect provided their setting is treated with consideration.
- 5.18 The impacts upon the A944 road must be studied separately.
- 5.19 There are benefits for sustainability and fewer conservation issues related to development along existing transport corridors when compared with other rural sites.



**MAIDENCRAIG EAST,
ABERDEEN**
L2 CONTOUR ANALYSIS

Date Oct 2007 Scale NTS

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6. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 6.1 Scottish Natural Heritage has commissioned a range of Landscape Character Assessments which cover Scotland. These studies cover a wide area and much of the information, by its nature, has to be generalised. It is not only possible, but necessary to consider these generalisations and establish how the site being assessed, relates to the points raised.
- 6.2 The site is included within "Scottish Natural Heritage Review no 80: Landscape Character Assessment of Aberdeen", Ian Nicol, Anne Johnston and Laura Campbell: 1996.

Geology

- 6.3 The geology of the area is uniquely linked with the character of the City of Aberdeen. Large deposits of igneous rock beneath the west of the City have produced the abundance of granite from which the City famously constructed its earliest Victorian buildings, earning it the title 'The Granite City'. This has continued in modern times but due to rising costs it is now mainly restricted to facings and decorative work. Deposits of sandstone and other sedimentary rocks underlie the landscape to the north and centre areas of the City, which have produced the sandy coastline and beaches. These contrast markedly with the dalradian rocks that have formed the cliff lined shore that extends south from the City along the coast.
- 6.4 This underlying solid geology has been covered over time through processes of erosion and deposition mainly through glaciation over the past 2 million to 10,000 years. This process affects the weaker areas of substrate by deepening river valleys and fault lines. The courses of both the Dee and the Don follow meltwater channels formed by this process. This process of erosion and deposition has resulted in the undulating nature of the city's landscape between the low-lying channels of the two main rivers.

Topography

- 6.5 The eastern coastal position of the City means that it has less rainfall than the West of Scotland but it is susceptible to the ingress of sea haar, particularly in

the springtime. The topography in relation to the colder more northern climate has influenced the development of the City in the past, with the more exposed areas and higher ground being left undeveloped. Pressures for expansion have increasingly negated this effect in recent times.

- 6.6 Soils in the area mainly comprise of glacial tills formed from granitic rocks. Other soil types can be found in the river valleys due to the deposition of various parent materials. The area on which the site sits is classified as;

"Till: widespread mantle of glacially deposited rock debris, consisting of unsorted, generally unstratified, clay, sandy clay or sand, usually containing many pebbles and boulders, but locally almost stoneless."

- 6.7 The general vegetation and landcover of Aberdeen is described in the report as;

"The present landcover primarily consists of extensive areas of agricultural land, both pastoral and arable. Moorland occurs on a few areas of hilltop..... ; elsewhere forestry plantation is the dominant hill-top vegetation. Deciduous woodland is notable in the areas of old policy planting.....and in established suburban areas, particularly along Deeside."

Landscape Character

- 6.8 The Landscape Character Assessment divides the various landscape character types into various categories. The assessment document describes the area in which Maidencraig East sits as the following.
- 6.9 **Open Farmland**

"Both types of farmland broadly correspond to the "Rolling Agricultural Landscape" identified in the Aberdeenshire (Central) assessment. The open farmland is an extensive character type that forms much of the immediate hinterland of the city outwith the river valleys. To the west it forms the eastern flanks of the enclosing hills. Although it occurs at varying heights, from near sea level up to approximately 150 metres, the relatively even topography and open

character with few trees are distinguishing characteristics. Generally the landform is gently rolling, with low-lying peat-filled basins at a few locations, but only at Loirston Loch and Corby Loch are there significant water bodies."

"Agriculture is the predominant landuse, with the fields often being bordered by drystone dykes formed from boulders removed from the glacial till-derived soils. Post-and-wire fences are also used, but hedgerows are rare. Woodland occurs, but not in significant amounts. The traditional settlement pattern in this character type consists of scattered farmsteads that are often associated with small clumps of trees. In the present day there is considerable pressure from the expanding city to increase the amount of development into these areas adjacent to Aberdeen."

"The views that are possible from within the area vary according to altitude and topography, but can be fairly wide due to the lack of visually enclosing woodland. The visibility of the character type depends on its location: those areas that are close to main approach routes to the city are highly visible. Other areas, even adjacent areas, can be almost hidden from the city and its transport routes by intervening topography. The sensitivity to development of any of these areas can be quite high because of their open character, but there will be variations due to factors such as visibility that are not uniform across the whole character type."

Maidencraig East

- 6.10 The Maidencraig East site is classified as Open Farmland and falls within the Maidencraig Character Area. This area is described as follows:

"This area comprises the shallow valley of the Denburn. It extends from Hazlehead Park in the south to a ridgeline between Kingswells and Sheddocksley in the north. The landform encloses the area, allowing restricted views of the city edge around Sheddocksley to the east and Kingswells to the west. From the higher slopes views to the hills further west can be gained."

"The primary landuse is agriculture. However, there is also a Local Nature Reserve at Den of Maidencraig, within which large areas have recently been planted with trees. There is a recreational footpath at the eastern end of the reserve. The main route east out of Aberdeen follows the line of the valley. Walled field boundaries form a distinctive feature of the area. In some places they have been formed into consumption dykes of considerable size, and are

designated as ancient monuments. There is some native hazel woodland at Maidencraig, but little other woodland (except the new planting mentioned above). Along the valley floor there is some scrub, but apart from this trees tend to be isolated, or located in clumps often associated with buildings. Nonetheless, the character of the area is fairly open. The mature (to over-mature) beech trees lining the main road as it enters the built-up area form a notable feature."

"Part of the extended settlement of Kingswells is situated at the western end of the area. Farm steadings and cottages are dotted throughout the area, mainly on the rising slopes although the derelict Mill of Maidencraig is located in the valley bottom. Kingswells House and Whytemyres House are situated on either end of the elongated area have architectural merit and are set in wooded policies, but it is the clock tower of Woodend Hospital within the urban area immediately to the east which forms the most notable man-made feature. The area also contains a main road route, as outlined above."

The urban edge of the city in this area generally follows the landform well, and it therefore avoids an overly-abrupt or harsh junction with the adjacent rural area. However, there is little "definition" to the urban edge - there are few trees located here, and the car park for the District Wildlife Reserve is, consequently, rather prominent.

- 6.11 The distinctive landscape features are set out as follows:

- The small-scale valley landform;
- The beech trees that line the main road into the city;
- Stone dykes, occasionally consumption dykes;
- Frequent, scattered buildings, generally traditional in style;
- Views to architectural landmarks.

- 6.12 As with the other two Character Areas this landscape is considered sensitive to change and specific issues are raised:

"Visibility - This area is located on the western edge of the city, and is highly visible from the busy A944 Alford road, which is well-used by commuters, as is the "Lang Stracht" road on the opposite side of the valley."

"Built Development - The western edge of Aberdeen is visible from the area. There is a lack of both flat land and tree cover, and the high visibility of the area makes it sensitive to development. The existing settlement is primarily traditional in style and small scale. Buildings are often clustered into small groups, and are

frequently associated with small clumps of deciduous trees. However, there is little existing woodland or tree cover to provide screening or provide a feature for integrating development."

"Transportation - Upgrading of the existing road corridor, which runs east-west along the line of the valley, would be likely to have limited impact - depending upon the detailed design. Any new roads or structures which ran across the east-west "grain" of the landscape would be more obtrusive."

"Agriculture / Forestry - Areas of forestry occur in adjacent landscape character areas, and can be seen from this zone. Additional woodland and tree planting could be accommodated in this area, particularly if it echoed the current pattern, for example forming small clumps adjacent to buildings. Key views to nearby city landmarks should be left clear of obstructions. The existing pattern of stone dyke field boundaries is distinctive, and should be retained where feasible, possibly with grant aiding to facilitate this."

"Recreation - The existing informal recreational use could be extended with little impact on the area. The current wildlife project at Maidencraig proposes to extend its links eastwards along a wildlife corridor at Woodend and Pernilea and into the urban edge. Similar links to Hazlehead to the paths are possible. However, tree planting to ensure integration with existing elements should be considered."

6.13 Finally the report sets out development guidelines.

Conserve / Manage

- *Manage the beech trees that line main road into city to ensure continuance of this feature;*
- *Reinstate / conserve stone dykes, particularly near roads.*

Enhance

- *Consider planting more trees on urban edge to "soften" it;*
- *Consider encouraging more tree planting around buildings within the rural fringe area;*

Conclusion

- 6.14 Relevant issues highlighted by the character assessment which affect this area are:
- *The busy A944 and Lang Stracht are busy bus routes and development would have a visual impact on these roads.*
 - *High visibility of the area due to landform makes it sensitive to development.*
 - *Little existing woodland cover to provide screening.*
 - *East – west road development would not be too intrusive whereas north – south ones would be due to 'grain' of landform.*
 - *Additional woodland could be accommodated if it followed the same format as exists.*
 - *There is scope for increase in informal recreational activity.*
- 6.15 The report recommends that the tree cover and stone dykes along city approach roads are conserved and that additional planting along city edge and buildings should be encouraged. These elements could all be integrated into a proposed development. The high visual impact of development within the area will be examined further in the relevant later chapter.

7. SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDY

- 7.1 *The photographs on the following pages were taken using a Fuji Finepix S5600 digital camera with a picture quality of 5.1 megapixels and a Fujinon Zoom Lens 6.3 to 63mm and 1:3.2-3.5.*
- 7.2 This section provides a general description of the expanded site as described in the Local Plan Inquiry Report and considers any particular factors of note which exist. These are then illustrated and expanded upon through the photographic study.

Description

- 7.3 The site is approximately 78.5ha although this is reduced in developable area by the A944 running through and existing dwellings on the site. The future viability and ownership boundaries of these will need to be established. If these are removed from the overall area the remaining land covers around 70ha.
- 7.4 As has been mentioned previously the A944 bisects the site and splits it into two distinct areas to the north and south. The area to the north lies over field compartments which surround Whitemyre House and Farmstead and Fernhill Farm. To the east lies Sheddocksley on the other side of a broken tree belt approximately 6m wide. This tree belt becomes far more substantial to the north of the site but for the majority, it is little more than a hedgerow in places. The northern boundary is set in the report to run along the line of the 145m contour line. There is new woodland planting directly to the north and combined with the topography it is fairly successful in blocking views from this direction. To the west the boundary is set by a farm access road which heads north from the just within the older section of the Lang Stracht road off of the A944.
- 7.5 The southern area now occupies the entire section of land enclosed by the A944 road to the north and west round to the roundabout close to Jessiefield, the Den Burn to the south and the area of residential area of Summerhill to the east. This housing adjoins the site and the watercourse runs into it as the houses line either side of the valley that it has formed.

Topography

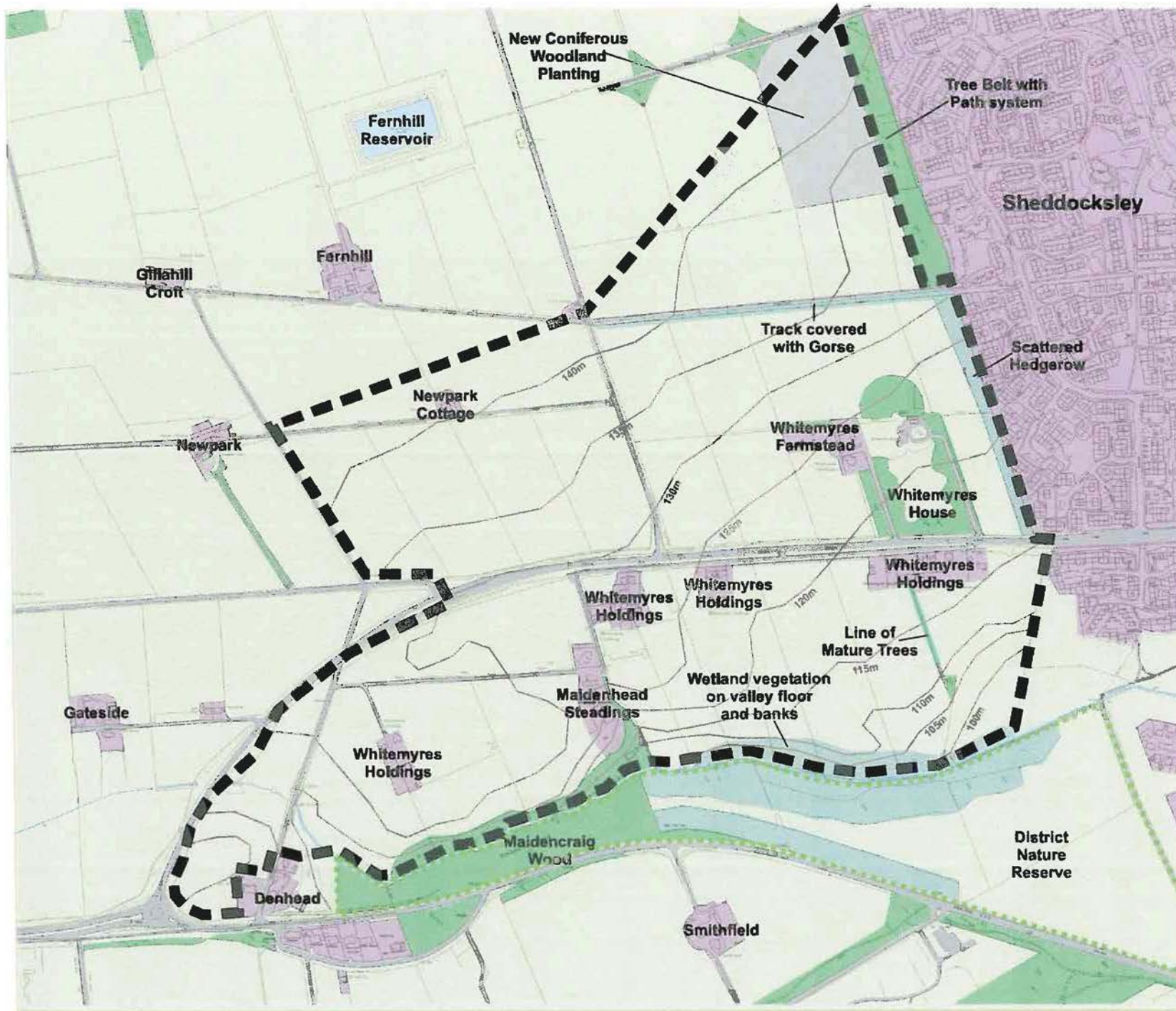
- 7.6 The site drops gradually from north to south from the 145m contour line at the northern boundary down to 120m at the edge of the burn. This is over a distance of around 1km which is an approximate average gradient of 1 in 40 although it is greater in the area north of the A944 at 1 in 25. The landform within the site is fairly uniform with no extremes of height. The land slopes down to the A944 a little more steeply where the channel of the road was dug out in the past but this is not an extreme change and indeed the entrance to Whitemyres House comes through here. Higher area could be overcome through earth works. To the west the land is fairly flat close to the roundabout but raised above the road height.

Vegetation

- 7.7 As the site has previously been used on rotation both for rose growing and as pasture land and set out into fields, the majority of the area is clear of significant vegetation or trees. These are restricted to hedgerows, field boundaries and the grounds of the existing houses. Significant examples of these will be highlighted in the photographic study.

Built Forms

- 7.8 As have been mentioned previously there are some buildings existing in the study area. These are mainly associated with the A944 with the row of houses along the southern edge. In addition to these the building complex of Whitemyres House, Farmstead and grounds occupy a large space on the northern section of the site. These are set back from the A944 in wooded grounds. Other settlements are scattered throughout the southern section of the site most notably at Denhead and at Maidenhead Steadings.
- 7.9 A common theme in the northern section of the site and along the A944 corridor is the use of stone walling. This is a characteristic of the landscape in the wider area and have been conserved and in the case of the road way reintroduced. This is potentially a means of integrating the new elements into the older landscape character. These are an attractive asset.



- Settlements
- Woodland
- Hedgerow/Vegetation
- Path / Track
- Road
- District Wildlife Reserve
- Water Course
- Site Contours
- Site Boundary

**MAIDENCRAIG EAST,
ABERDEEN**

L3 SITE DESCRIPTION

Date Oct 2007 Scale NTS

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District Wildlife Reserve

- 7.10 The area of the Den Burn to the south east of the Study Area (restricted to south of the burn) is designated as a District Wildlife Reserve. This is a popular recreational area and will be sensitive to impact. It should not be directly impacted by development of the site. Development has already taken place on either side of the burn in the areas immediately to the west. There will likely be some visual impact however. This will be examined in the following chapter.

Photographic Study

- 7.11 **Photograph One** – Shows a view across the north western section of the site from the access road to Fernhill. The site can be seen to slope down to the south (right) but in a gentle, even gradient. The woodland around Whitemyres House can be seen and at the back, the tree belt to the north west of the site.
- 7.12 **Photograph Two** – looking westwards along the A944 from the houses along the southern edge of the road. The height difference of the road is almost unnoticeable here. Again the stone wall is used to mark the boundary.
- 7.13 **Photograph Three** – A view from further east along the A944. The mature woodland around Whitemyres House can be seen as can the scattered hedgerow strip along the eastern boundary. It goes some way towards screening the houses in Sheddocksley but has large gaps and low cover in places. The belt to the north can be seen in the background and is far more developed in comparison.
- 7.14 **Photograph Four** – Shows a view south from the northern section of the site. This part of the site has been planted with an area of coniferous woodland.
- 7.15 **Photograph Five** – Shows a view looking west from the lower parts of the Den Burn valley within Summerhill. The District Wildlife Reserve can be seen on the left of the image and the route of the watercourse in the centre. The foreground appears boggy but the site on the right on the higher ground is separated out by the embankment of the valley and can be seen to be agricultural land.
- 7.16 **Photograph Six** – This effect can again be seen in this image looking south west from the A944. The dip into the valley separates the landscape type from the undisturbed grassland of the District Wildlife Reserve. There is a small group of

mature trees which run in a hedgerow south of the houses on the A944 which are among the few which are present on the site itself.

- 7.17 **Photograph Seven** – A view of the site from the District Wildlife Reserve to the south. The majority of the southern part of the site can be seen. To the right are the houses at Summerhill. The line of mature trees can be seen again.
- 7.18 **Photograph Eight** – A view south from the A944 close to the houses on the roadside. The land is mainly flat, only sloping away to the south close to the valley. The compound at Whitemyre Holdings can be seen to the right and the line of mature trees are on the left. The land cover is various types of pasture separated by mainly post and wire fences and here a broken down stone wall.
- 7.19 **Photograph Nine** – This image shows the view north east from close to the roundabout. The site is higher than the road level due to the way the channel has been excavated into the topography. The site is mainly clear with some trees associated with some of the settlement gardens.

Conclusions

- 7.20 There are a few restrictions on the development of the site caused by the physical elements that currently exist on it. Vegetation should be retained where possible if it is of sufficient quality, helps to screen the development or has an ecological value.
- 7.21 The existing buildings should be protected if they are of a sufficient conservation value and have been recognised with listed building status.
- 7.22 Maintaining the integrity of the District Wildlife Reserve is of the utmost importance but this should not be physically impacted provided that development is kept back to a sufficient distance away from it.



-  Photo Points
-  Panoramic View

**MAIDENCRAIG EAST,
ABERDEEN**
L4 PHOTOGRAPH POINTS
Date Oct 2007 Scale NTS
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8. VISUAL IMPACT

- 8.1 For the purposes of this visual impact assessment six points have been chosen across the site at regular intervals to give a reasonably accurate representation of the entire site. The Visual Envelope illustrated in figures L6 is the areas from which it is predicted the site can be seen.

Visual Envelope

- 8.2 This has been established through ground model analysis using KTF 6.7 software produced by Key TERRA-FIRMA Ltd and topographical Land-Form PROFILE data supplied by Ordnance Survey. The 'Zones of Visual Influence' output data show the areas from which the site can be seen based on the topography of the landscape with the larger areas of woodland superimposed as visual barriers at a generic height of 8m. The supposed height of development is taken to be 8m from ground level (the finished building height will be 10m high but it is supposed that the apex of the roof lines will not have a great impact without some of the lower roof being exposed also). It takes no account of physical visual barriers such as individual houses, smaller settlements, farm buildings and smaller tree cover. These can be added to the analysis but are too numerous and varied to be included accurately. Within this envelope, there are areas, which will have a higher degree of visual sensitivity than others. Elements from which the site can be seen from are referred to in "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment" as visual receptors. These visual receptors have been looked at further as firstly a desktop study and then with a physical on-site analysis. At this point the impact of various physical barriers can be assessed.
- 8.3 The visual envelope drawing which this produces is fairly well contained by the landform of the Den Burn Valley and the built form of the city to the east. The woodland associated with Hazelhead Park restricts views from the south. It is predicted that the site will be visible from Brimmond Hill also which is a popular local viewing point which sits high above the landscape to the north.

Visual Receptors

- 8.4 The following is a more detailed assessment of the impacts on the more sensitive visual receptors, which are shown within the visual envelope.

- 8.5 Sheddocksley – The site is adjacent to Sheddocksley and the houses on Eriskay Drive, Uist Road and Benbecula Road back on to the boundary of the site. The broken treebelt and gap which it provides does much to screen the views. These houses and the treebelt screen almost all views of the site from any further east.
- 8.6 Kingswells – The village sits around a mile to the west on the north side of the A944. The visual envelope predicts that the site will be visible from a very small section of the village on its eastern edge. These views would be over some distance, be broken by the landform and be seen against the backdrop of the developed area behind. Given these factors and the very small amount of the settlement affected, the impact can be considered very low indeed.
- 8.7 Brimmond Hill – this hill top is a local viewing point and has spectacular views across the western part of the city. It is possible that the area of the site north of the A944 will be seen from here but this will be over some distance and will blend in with the existing houses adjacent. The orientation of the site is also such that it is sloping away from the hill in a southerly direction which will further diminish any impact.
- 8.8 The A944 – This busy road runs through the site and will therefore be impacted by any development of it. It is however from a point where the road emerges from a very urban character area into a rural one. The transition point between these areas would be moved to the east and therefore impact would not be as great as if it were only a rural area. Views will however extend out westward for eastbound traffic for a short distance towards, but not as far as, Kingswells. This is an impact which will affect mainly road users but is still fairly contained and not considered of great consequence in the Local Plan Inquiry Report.
- 8.9 B9119 - runs along the southern side of the District Wildlife Reserve after splitting away from the A944 at the roundabout to the west. The site is mostly screened by the tree coverage along the road and in the District Wildlife Reserve but some brief views may be possible.
- 8.10 Hazelhead – this area of the city sits to the south of the site over the Den Burn Valley. Areas to the northern edge of the district may get some views of the east of the site but these will be broken by the trees in the District Wildlife Reserve

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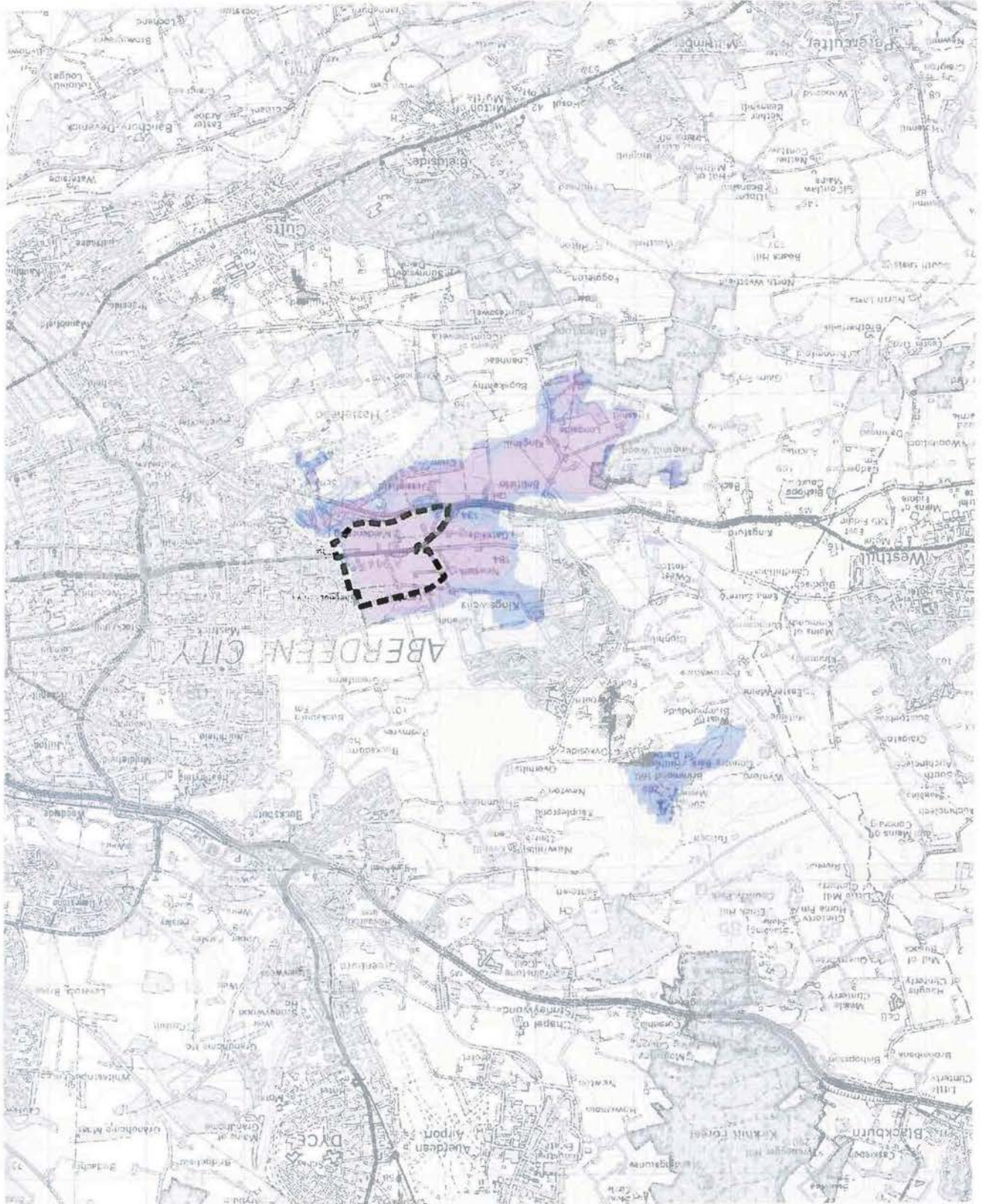
Date Oct 2007
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L6 VISUAL ENVELOPE

ABERDEEN
MAIDENCRAIG EAST,

Visual Envelope

Site Boundary



and along the B9119. Within the area these views will disappear.

- 8.11 Kingshill – This is one of several small settlements dotted within the visual envelope. These usually consist of no more than a few dwellings but should be assessed none-the-less. Kingshill sits on higher ground to the south of Kingswell over the valley. The landform and other obstacles will make views of the site difficult but some might be possible of the top section of the north part of the site from this area.
- 8.12 Derbeth – The visual envelope predicts that views may be possible from Derbeth to the north west of Kingswells of higher ground as it rises up towards Brimmond hill. In reality the only area that could be seen would be the north western section and this would be over a large distance. It would also be seen against the backdrop of the city and so could be considered to be a very low impact which could be further reduced through screen planting.
- 8.13 New Park – this is a farmstead which is to the west. It will have views of the site with its extended area westwards.
- 8.14 Gateside – similarly to New Park the views from Gateside will be greater with the extended site area. These farmsteads will be impacted to some extent but there are only a few such settlements within the very contained visual envelope.

Photographic Study

- 8.15 The following describes a short photographic study of some of the visual receptors predicted by the visual envelope drawing and analyses the extent of the visual impact that will be caused.
- 8.16 **Photograph Ten** – The view from the viewing point at Brimmond Hill. On the right is Kingswells and Aberdeen on the left and background. The landscape in the centre forms a flat bowl shape and to the south it is undulating in level around the Den Burn. The site is mainly hidden behind the raised landform although a small section of the western part may be visible albeit at a great distance.
- 8.17 **Photograph Eleven** – The view from Kingshill. The lower parts of the site are hidden behind the landform of the Den Burn valley but the higher parts of the north western area are visible.

8.18 **Photograph Twelve** - This photograph is taken from the path running through the District Wildlife Reserve on the southern side of the Deb Burn Valley. The site is on the immediate north side of the valley and is therefore highly visible from here.

8.19 **Photograph Thirteen** – The view looking north east from the B9119 to the south of the District Wildlife Reserve. The tree cover along the road help to screen the site from it but the higher parts of the site are visible where cover is sparse. Further east and west along the road the tree cover is thicker and views are more contained.

Conclusion

- 8.20 The visual envelope produced by the topographical information is fairly well contained by the landform of the Den Burn Valley. Upon further study on site these impacts have been assessed and the actual visual envelope can be seen to be even smaller.
- 8.21 The parts which will have the greatest impact will be the A944 road and the District Wildlife Reserve. The A944 can be considered a less sensitive visual receptor and will be less impacted than the District Wildlife Reserve although it is likely to have a greater number of viewers. The highest points of the reserve will be impacted most by development particularly on the path directly across the valley from the site. The lower parts of the valley will not be as strongly impacted.
- 8.22 These impacts can be reduced through the introduction of screen planting but some visual impact will inevitably remain.

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9. CONSTRAINTS

Planning Constraints

- 9.1 The site has been reviewed through the Local Plan Inquiry process and has been found to be not only a preferred site but was recommended for expansion by the Reporter. This indicates that any planning constraints which would have been upon the site are deemed to be reasonably acceptable in comparison to the resulting benefits. Consideration should be given to any requirements for future community infrastructure such as schools, shops etc.

Topographical Constraints

- 9.2 There are no topographical constraints in terms of gradient on the site and indeed the landform of the Den Burn Valley is an advantage in containing views around the site.

Built Form Constraints

- 9.3 There are a few listed buildings within the study area. Consideration of the setting of these buildings must be made so they are not adversely affected. This should mean adequate spacing of new build and screen planting where appropriate.
- 9.4 The stone walls in the area should be retained wherever possible.

Vegetation Constraints

- 9.5 The vegetation on the site is mainly around the periphery and the existing buildings. Development should not adversely affect these areas. The line of mature trees at the south of the development should be protected if they are found to be in good health. Other sections of planting should be protected as far as possible particularly if they aid in screening any part of the development.

District Wildlife Reserve Constraints

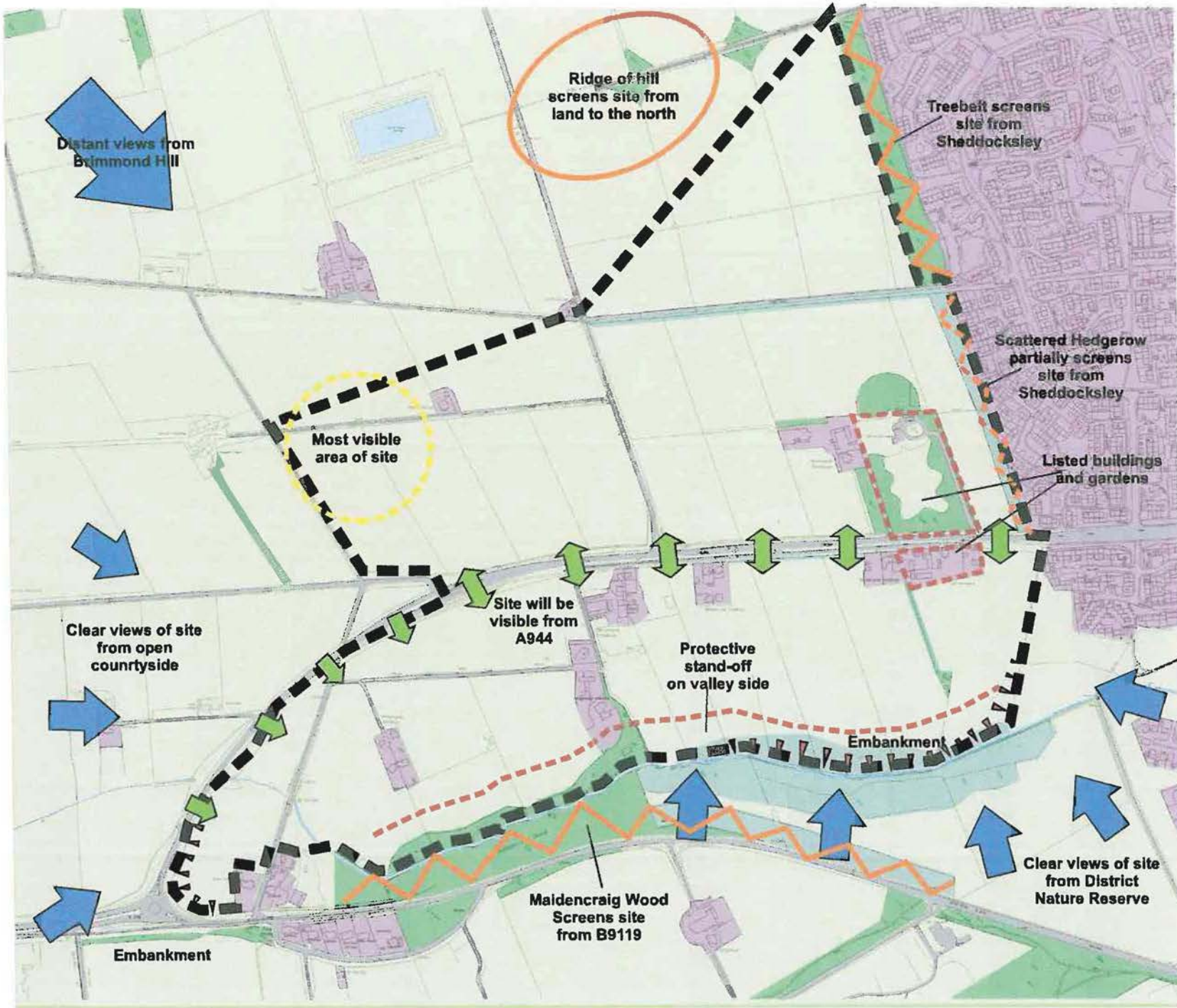
- 9.6 Development should be kept well back from the edge of the Wildlife reserve to avoid any impacts upon it.

Landscape Character Constraints

- 9.7 The landscape character assessment was mainly concerned with issues of Visual Impact and mainly along the A944. The visual impact is dealt with elsewhere but there were also issues raised over lack of woodland cover. The development would require that sufficient boundary planting should be carried out to redress this shortage. This should be planted early and at a good mix of sizes to give an initial effect.
- 9.8 The East to West road layouts should be utilised wherever possible and should be addressed at a detailed design stage.

Visual Impact Constraints

- 9.9 The greatest visual impacts will be from the A944, the north-west section and the District Wildlife Reserve. Efforts must be made to use screen planting along the A944 and Northern and western boundaries to reduce this impact.
- 9.10 The southern boundary will require substantial screening to reduce the impact of the development from the District Wildlife Reserve. This will not hide it from view completely but will make its appearance more in keeping with the District Wildlife Reserve within an urban environment.



**MAIDENCRAIG EAST,
ABERDEEN**

L6 CONSTRAINTS

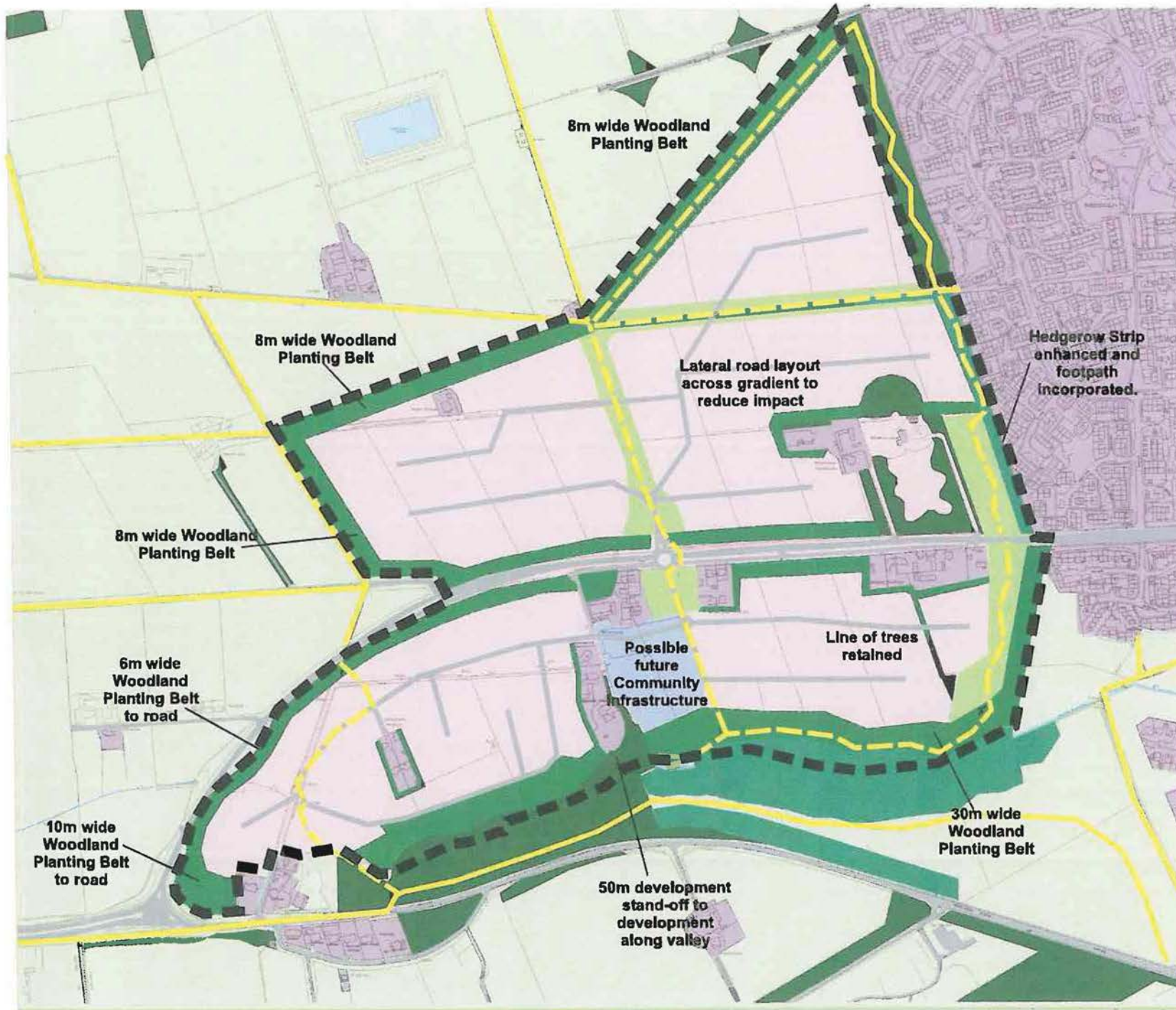
Date Oct 2007 Scale NTS

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10 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 If the site is to be developed, a strong boundary treatment of woodland should be incorporated to restrict the visual impact to a minimum and preserve the landscape character of the area. This should include a varied size mix of planting of a similar style to existing woodland in the area.
- 10.2 The settings of the existing buildings should be preserved by having suitable stand-off distances and screen planting where necessary. This is particularly true of the rears of the houses on the southern side of the A944 and in the south western section.
- 10.3 The A944 frontage should have a high degree of landscape planting to soften any visual impacts that result. This should be at least 6m back from the road side and be extended to 10m at the roundabout.
- 10.4 The broken tree belt between the site and Sheddocksley should be enhanced and could incorporate a pedestrian route which links with the footpath through the woodland belt to the north.
- 10.5 Development should be kept back from the edge of the wildlife reserve to at least 30m.
- 10.6 The southern boundary should have a thick woodland belt along the side of the Den Bum Valley to soften visual impact. This should be 20m wide from the rear fences of the development and again incorporate a variation in size of trees to give an initial coverage. It should also feature species which are in keeping with the District Wildlife Reserve and local area.
- 10.7 The stone walling in the area should be retained and used as a feature of the development to help integrate it into the character of the area.

These recommendations are illustrated graphically on Map L7 overleaf



- Settlements
- Woodland
- Hedgerow/Vegetation
- Existing Path
- Potential Path link
- Possible Road Layout
- Potential Development Area
- Potential Future Community Area
- Water Course
- Site Boundary

**MAIDENCRAIG EAST,
ABERDEEN**

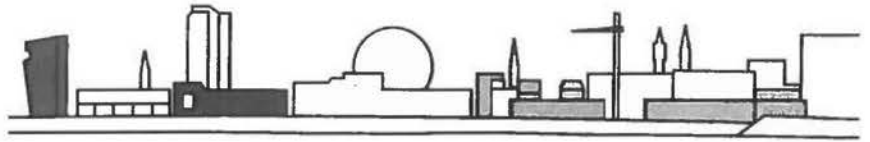
L7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Date Oct 2007 Scale NTS

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Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2015 Representation Form

Please use this form to make comments on the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan, ensuring that your comments relate to a specific issue, site or policy in either the Proposed Plan, Proposed Supplementary Guidance, Proposed Action Programme or Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report. Please include the relevant paragraph(s) and use a separate form for each issue you wish to raise.

The consultation period runs between Friday 20th March and Monday 1st June 2015. Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.

Name	Mr <input checked="" type="radio"/> Mrs <input type="radio"/> Miss <input type="radio"/> Ms <input type="radio"/> Ben Freeman
Organisation	Bancon Developments Ltd
On behalf of (if relevant)	
Address	Banchory Business Centre, Burn O'Bennie Road, Banchory
Postcode	AB31 5ZU
Telephone	01330 824900
E-mail	ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

Please tick if you would like to receive all future correspondence by e-mail

What document are you commenting on?	Proposed Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Proposed Supplementary Guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Proposed Action Programme	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy/Site/Issue	OP52 MALCOLM ROAD PETERCULTER OP108 MID ANGLUSTON OP109 WOODEND PETERCULTER.	Paragraph(s)

What would you like to say about the issue?

Please see attached paper

10/10/10
10/10/10
10/10/10

What change would you like to see made?

Please see attached paper.

Please return the completed form by:

- post to the Local Development Plan Team, Aberdeen City Council, Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB; or
- email to ldp@aberdeencity.gov.uk

The representation form can be filled in, saved, e-mailed and/or printed. You must "save as" to ensure the completed form is saved with the changes you have made. If you need more space, please fill out another representation form or send a word document attachment via e-mail with your completed representation form. **Please ensure all representations are with us by 5pm on Monday 1st June.**

Thank you. For more information, please visit www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/aldp2016 or to contact the Local Development Plan Team call 01224 523470.

Data Protection Statement

The comments you make on the Proposed Plan will be used to inform the Local Development Plan process and the Examination into the Local Development Plan by the Scottish Ministers' Reporter. You must provide your name and address for your representation to be considered valid, and this information will be made publicly available. Other personal contact details such as telephone and e-mail will not be made public, although we will share these with the Reporter, who may use them to contact you about the comments you have made. For more information about how Aberdeen City Council maintains the security of your information, and your rights to access information we hold about you, please contact Andrew Brownrigg (Local Development Plan Team Leader) on 01224 523317.

Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Proposed Local Development Plan May 2015

Objection Regarding Proposed Sites in Peterculter

We refer to the Proposed Aberdeen LDP, March 2015, and write **to object** to the Preferred Development Options for Peterculter, as set out in Table 8.

Both the Malcolm Road and Mid Anguston sites were included (we recall at the last minute) in the last Proposed Plan. We, among others, objected to their inclusion, and the sites were considered at the last LDP Inquiry. Our previous objections are attached herewith. They remain equally apt.

When it came to the Inquiry, these sites were roundly rejected by the Reporter. We also attach the Reporters findings.

It will be clear from these that the Reporter found the Malcolm Road site to be remote, with difficult access (the A93 / Malcolm Road junction) and 'an isolated and obtrusive urban projection into the countryside'.

While the Mid Anguston Site was seen by the Reporter as: highly intrusive, remote from services, likely to encourage car use, and accordingly unsustainable.

The Reporter found that both sites contributed to the Green Belt, and recommended that they should continue to be allocated for that use.

We would suggest that nothing has changed in the interim. Indeed the advice from Scottish Government is that proposals which have been recently rejected at LPI should not be considered anew, unless there has been a radical change in circumstances. Para 21 of SPP 2010 noted that the MIR should focus on 'what has to change, rather than invite the re-opening of settled issues'.

Turning to the sites at Woodend, both are detached from the existing village envelope, somewhat remote from services, and project into established Green Belt land.

Access is a particular issue with both these sites, as there are no footpaths beyond Bucklerburn Drive. While even vehicular access is constrained by the acute angle of the junction between Bucklerburn Road, and the farm access road.

Drainage is a further unresolved issue, with the proposal being to install a private treatment plant rather than connect to mains drainage.

We object to all four sites being included in the Proposed new LDP.

We particularly object since there are other better placed sites which have been the subject of 'bids'. The identified desire to support local services, and to supplement the Culter Primary School roll, need not therefore be undermined by the removal of these four unsustainable sites, as long as the more suitable alternatives are included.

We will write separately to draw out the distinguishing features of our alternative bid sites which make them eminently preferable to these four potential allocations.

Aberdeen City Proposed Local Development Plan 2012

Objection 10 – Site OP133 (Mid Anguston) to be removed from strategic allocations

Bancon objects to the inclusion of site OP133 for the erection of 8 dwelling houses, on the grounds that the site is remote, unsustainable, potentially highly intrusive in the landscape, and detached from services and public transport.

The proposals indicate the erection of 8 houses on the site, and the indicative masterplan suggests large houses on very large plots. Part of the argument for the development is that the housing would replace disused poultry sheds in a residential area. However, the housing shown is totally out of character with the modest housing and plot sizes in the existing group of houses. The arguments that the development would improve the appearance of the site and reduce potential rodent infestation are not persuasive. It is well established that the responsibility for the site being maintained in a safe and acceptably tidy condition rests with the landowner.

The site is detached from Peterculter, and the associated services, public transport and employment. The development would necessitate the use of private cars to access essential services.

The development of the site may also impact on a District Wildlife Site.

In assessing the site as part of the main Issues Report, the following assessment was drawn by Council Planners: -

“This small scale residential development would be located on a currently zoned Green Belt site of approximately 2.5 ha. This site is considered to be undesirable for development. Development on this site would have the potential to effect nature conservation and biodiversity as the south-west corner of the site covers the ‘Mid-Anguston Quarry’ District Wildlife site. It is considered that development on this site (without mitigation measures) would intrude significantly on the surrounding landscape. Any development on this site would be unrelated to any existing settlement and would have major accessibility issues. Access to the public transport network is over 2km away from this site and accessibility to existing employment opportunities and local facilities is very poor. The eastern section of this site was discussed in the Report of Public Inquiry into the Finalised Aberdeen Local Plan – the recommendation was for the site to remain as Green Belt/Green Space Network due to the site being an unsustainable location in terms of accessibility.”

Bancon submit that this assessment of the site remains accurate, and that the Goal Achievement Matrix score of just 39 points speaks for itself. Development

of the site for 8 houses would be visually intrusive, inappropriate and unsustainable.

Conclusion – proposed amendment to Local Development Plan

Bancon therefore submits that site OP133 is inappropriate for inclusion in the Local Development Plan to contribute towards the requirements of the Structure Plan for new greenfield sites, due to its unacceptable visual impact, remoteness, and unsustainability.

The site should accordingly be classed as Green Belt / GSN, because of the continuing contribution it makes to the landscape setting of this approach to the City.

Bancon further consider that more suitable alternative sites exist in the vicinity. These are promoted in separate objections : 6 (Peterculter East), 7 (Peterculter West) and 9 (Hill of Ardbeck), which can all provide a mix of housing much closer to services, on less intrusive sites.

Issue 49	ALLOCATED SITE: MID ANGUSTON, PETERCULTER OP133	
Development plan reference:	OP133, Table 9 and Appendix 2	Reporter: Ron Jackson
Body or person(s) submitting a representation raising the issue (reference no.):		
Alison Olsen (30) Hugh J Mackay (130) George McClive (234) Henry Duncan (447) Culter Community Council (518) Ian Cocker (548)	Churchill Homes (775) National Grid (891) Nicola Hutcheon (1205) Ruth Ahmed (1289) Bancon Developments Ltd (1561)	
Provision of the development plan to which the issue relates:	Housing allocation for 9 homes	
Planning authority's summary of the representation(s):		
<p>Supports Local Community & Services In Peterculter 518, 548, 775: Support the allocation as site is deliverable at an early stage, extra families will support schools and services in Peterculter and the development of the site will remove hazardous chicken sheds.</p> <p>Sustainability 30, 130, 447, 1205, 1289, 1561: Object to development due to the unsustainable location and the lack of public transport opportunities.</p> <p>Impact On Amenity Of Existing Homes 234: Concern that the indicative layout would impact the amenity of existing homes</p> <p>Proximity Of A Pipeline 891: The proximity of a pipeline should be noted.</p> <p>Landscape Issues And Impact On District Wildlife Site 1561: Object to development due to landscape concerns and impact on a District Wildlife Site.</p>		
Modifications sought by those submitting representations:		
<p>Sustainability 30, 130, 447, 1205, 1289, 1561: Site should not be considered for development and rezoned as Green Belt. 130: Move housing numbers from Mid Anguston to West Craigton Farm.</p> <p>1205: Move housing numbers from Mid Anguston to a more sustainable site allocation within Deeside including land at South Cults.</p> <p>Impact on amenity of existing homes 234: The exit from Plot 4 should be made to the west onto a communal exit from Plots 5, 6, 7 and 8. This would solve the problem without major changes to the overall site plan.</p> <p>Proximity of a pipeline 891: Should development happen the developers should be made aware of the pipelines located nearby.</p>		

Landscape issues and impact on district wildlife site

1561: Move housing numbers to a more suitable site such as Peterculter East, Peterculter West and Hill of Ardbeck.

Summary of responses (including reasons) by planning authority:

Supports local community & services in Peterculter

Peterculter is a well established settlement to the west of Deeside and is a recognised district centre in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. The Planning Authority considers that the continued viability and prosperity of Peterculter is an important goal for maintaining Deeside as a whole. The Planning Authority has recognised that in order to promote and protect local facilities, shops and infrastructure present within Peterculter it is desirable and necessary to identify additional sites which are deemed acceptable for residential development and have the potential to enhance the viability of Peterculter both as a population centre and as a district centre. The Planning Authority has recognised that there is a substantial excess capacity with regards to places at the local Primary School with a capacity for 144 extra pupils in 2012. There is also a perceived extra capacity at the local Secondary School with a capacity for 134 extra pupils in 2012. It is deemed desirable to identify sites for residential development within the catchment area of these schools.

This site is considered to offer a specific opportunity for the provision of a limited number of large residential units while providing the opportunity to be considered as living within a countryside environment. The provision of a limited number of executive type homes at this site is considered by the Planning Authority to contribute towards a variety and range of housing types which can be brought forward as potential residential development in the Deeside area and in particular within the locale of Peterculter.

Accordingly the Planning Authority maintains that the allocation of this site for the residential development of 8 houses as part of Phase 1 is appropriate and should be maintained.

Proposals within the representations make reference to alternative sites at Peterculter East, Peterculter West, the Hill of Ardbeck and West Craigton Farm. The issue of alternative sites in and around Peterculter are dealt with as Issue No 52 and the Reporter will be referred to this issue for comparison purposes. Removing this housing allocation to alternative sites out with the Peterculter area would not be considered desirable as it would not address the Planning Authority's identified desire to support and promote the existing settlement and district centre at Peterculter.

Sustainability

It is conceded that the location of this opportunity site is out with the settlement of Peterculter and that it has poor accessibility to the major road network or to public transport facilities. As such residents can be expected to primarily make use of private motor vehicles for entry to the site. It is considered, however, that given the restricted number of units proposed for the site that the impact on sustainability is acceptable. It should be noted that as there is an existing settlement at Mid Anguston, Peterculter, the location is already well serviced, the roads are adopted, street lighting is already provided and refuse collections are made to the existing dwellings. With regards to access and travel to and from the local Primary School the school bus already calls at Mid Anguston and accordingly additional school traffic would be expected to be limited.

The access road to the site is deemed adequate for the level of additional traffic which will be generated by the number of residential units proposed and is therefore not considered sufficient to preclude development on this site. If, however, improvements to the access road were deemed necessary these could be dealt with at the stage of planning permission.

Impact on amenity of existing homes

Concerns raised regarding the indicative layout any potential impact on the amenity of existing homes could be dealt with at the planning stage and are not deemed to be significant.

Proximity of a pipeline

The proximity of a pipeline to the proposed site is well known. Again it is felt not to preclude residential development on this site.

Landscape issues and impact on district wildlife site

Concerns raised regarding a potential impact on the district wildlife site located at the extreme west of the proposed site have been made. The district wildlife site in question is a pond and the settlement boundary does not impinge upon the district wildlife site. It is not considered that the proposal would have any significant adverse impact on the district wildlife site and any concerns in this regard could be dealt with as part of the planning application procedure for any future development on the site.

The current condition of the site is considered undesirable and the removal of chicken sheds which are deemed hazardous would be seen as a positive outcome from the designation of this site for residential development.

Reporter's conclusions:

1. As explained in Issue 45, the Development Options Assessment Report contains a sustainability checklist which the council has used to assess development proposals. This is intended to result in a more transparent process and allow for early and informed community engagement. The council accepts that assessments such as this are, by their nature subjective, and on their own do not say whether a site is suitable for development or not. They do, however, provide a wealth of information that enables a view to be reached on each site. They can also help to highlight possible mitigation that could be carried out on particular sites that could make an otherwise unsuitable development acceptable. The council has stressed that the Development Options Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and consultation on the Main Issues Report were used to assess sites. They were used to identify the most suitable locations to deliver the required growth in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy which requires green belts to direct growth to the most appropriate locations.
2. The Development Options Assessment states that following completion of the assessment process, 19 housing and mixed use sites emerged as being 'desirable'. These are the sites which emerged as the most sustainable locations for development through the assessments. A further 4 sites were considered to be 'promising'. These are sites which could also be sustainable but which may require further mitigation. These sites formed the basis of the preferred and alternative settlement strategies contained in Section 3 of the Main Issues Report. The capacity of these sites is sufficient for the council to meet the structure plan housing allowances. As previously stated, I am satisfied that the council has openly and transparently assessed the relative merits of the various development options which were available. This site has not been identified as a result of that rigorous process. The Development Options Assessment identifies the site as "Undesirable". The site was allocated as an opportunity site due to a councillor amendment to the proposed local development plan at the council meeting on 18 August 2010.
3. The Development Options Assessment Report on this site states that the proposed residential development (8 detached houses) would (without mitigation measures) intrude significantly on the surrounding landscape. Any development on the site would be unrelated to the existing settlement and would have major accessibility issues. Access to the public transport network is over 2 kilometres away and accessibility to existing employment opportunities and local facilities is very poor.
4. Based on my observations on my site visit, I agree with that assessment. The stretch of minor road leading to the site from Peterculter is lengthy and has no provision for pedestrians. The nearest shops and other neighbourhood facilities are some 3 kilometres away in Peterculter. PAN 75: Planning for Transport makes clear that in assessing sites for development proposals, the starting point should be Scottish Planning Policy. Sites which do not conform to Scottish Planning Policy are unlikely to be sustainable transport accessible sites. Paragraph 167 of the SPP makes

clear that development should be supported in locations that are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, making best use of or adding to existing networks and creating new networks. Significant travel-generating uses should be in locations which are well served by public transport. Paragraph 168 states that planning permission should not be granted for significant travel generating uses in locations which would encourage reliance on the private car and where access to public transport networks would involve walking more than 400 metres. The proposed development would therefore be inconsistent with Scottish Planning Policy.

5. The council's current supplementary guidance on Transport and Accessibility states that public transport should be available within 400 metres of the origins and destinations of trips within the development. That is not the case here and I note that the council concedes that this site has poor accessibility to the major road network and to public transport facilities. As a result, any development is likely to be heavily car dependent.

6. As stated in my conclusions in relation to Issue 45, I accept that increasing population growth may help to support provision of local services and ensure the continued viability of Peterculter as a population centre and as a district centre. I also note the support of Culter Community Council for this proposed development. The Main Issues Report makes clear (page 20) that the capacity of Deeside to accommodate more development is limited to around 500 to 600 houses. The housing sites at Friarsfield and Oldfold alone will allow the development of 830 houses. The development of other allocated housing sites identified in the Main Issues Report and carried forward into the local development plan will add a further 135 houses. It follows that there is no numerical justification for allocating this site in order to meet the allowances set in the structure plan.

7. The removal of the wooden chicken sheds on the western part of the site could, in isolation, be considered to constitute an improvement to the site and its surroundings. However, their replacement with housing and the extension of that housing over the rest of the site would, in my opinion, be highly obtrusive in the agricultural landscape. In view of this, having regard to the findings in the Development Options Assessment, and for the reasons set out above, I am satisfied that this site should not be allocated for housing development.

Reporter's recommendations:

Modify the plan by deleting Opportunity Site OP133 Mid Anguston, Peterculter and designating it as greenbelt.

Aberdeen City Proposed Local Development Plan 2012

Objection 8 – Sites OP54 and OP134 to be removed from the Local Development Plan

Bancon objects to the inclusion of sites OP54 (Malcolm Road) and OP134 (Peterculter Burn). Both of these sites are inappropriate for development, and their development will bring little benefit to the town. Both these sites must be accessed from Malcolm Road, which is narrow, has a poor alignment and an awkward junction with the A93.

Site OP54

Bancon note that this site is split into 2 separate bids. The main bid, for 55 houses, from Churchill Homes, offers little in the way of benefit to the community, but seeks inclusion only on the basis that it will provide much needed children for the falling school roll, and support local shops and services. The smaller site is promoted by the landowner, for up to 20 highly sustainable houses.

It is argued in the bids that the land is unsightly commercial woodland. Bancon note that the area of woodland is well established, and felling it and developing the land would significantly alter the character of the settlement, and change the approach from Westhill on the B 979. It is notable that the traffic using the B 979 is projected to reduce following the delivery of the AWPR, thereby further ruralising the character of this area of Peterculter. Bancon therefore submit that the area is a valuable green buffer on the north of the town, which contributes significantly to the rural character of the area and is accordingly a valuable element of the GB in protecting the landscape setting of the City.

In the Main Issues report, the two bids were assessed and given scores of 45 and 46, both being subsequently considered undesirable. The following points were highlighted: -

“The site was discussed in the Report of Public Inquiry into the Finalised Aberdeen Local Plan. The recommendation was for the site to be designated as Green Belt/Green Space Network due to Malcolm Road being substandard and the woodland on the site helping to define clearly the northern extent of the built up area and with development on the site not contributing to a compact urban form.”

Bancon consider that nothing has changed to make this assessment any less valid at this point in time, and therefore submit that the site should be retained as a defining edge to the Green Belt around the north of the town.

Site OP134

This site did not appear amongst the developer bids, and as such has not been the subject of public scrutiny in the way others have been. Bancon consider it inappropriate for a site to be included in this manner without any proposals for the public to comment upon.

An assessment of the site has now been published by Aberdeen City Council, with a Goal Achievement Matrix score of 45 identified. The major issues identified that make the site undesirable for development are potential flood risk, tree preservation orders, contamination (the area of the site outwith the identified flood plain is made up ground from pulp from the former paper mill), ground instability and landscape fit. The site is also within a District Wildlife Site, and, as the Goal Achievement Matrix identifies, offers no contribution towards employment or public facilities, which are identified as lacking in the town.

A separate Proposal of Application Notice was submitted earlier this year for 19 houses on the site, and gives an indication of the proposal, but no detail. It is unclear how a suitable access is to be achieved, or whether flood risk will compromise the development potential of the site. Parts of the site are also heavily wooded and covered by tree preservation orders. The site boundary does not indicate how the site can be accessed by a suitable route.

Proposed Local Development Plan Strategy

Bancon have addressed, in objection 1, the shortcomings of the selected development strategy, particularly in the first phase of the plan. 12,000 greenfield sites require to be identified between 2007 and 2016, and relying on large sites will necessitate the delivery of build rates up to three times the highest seen in Aberdeenshire at the very peak of the economic boom. Bancon believe that if the SP targets are to be achieved, then there is a need to allocate more smaller sites, where infrastructure is already in place to facilitate their early delivery. Notwithstanding that, Bancon also note that a number of the smaller sites, selected in the LDP including site OP134 in Peterculter, require considerable planning work, infrastructure provision and remediation of contamination and poor ground conditions before development can commence. Even for 19 dwellinghouses, Bancon submit that this site will be unlikely to be developed prior to 2016.

Bancon submit that the key to success for the Local Development Plan is the provision of sites that can be developed with limited initial requirements for infrastructure provision, i.e. where schools and roads have capacity. In addition to this, it is submitted that sites should be selected where they can contribute to the sustainability of the area in which they are set, by providing a mix of housing, employment opportunities and services. Neither of these sites provide such a mixed use plan, and contribute only negatively; due to their significant landscape impact.

Further, Bancon submit that these sites were not considered by the Planning Service to form part of the Spatial Strategy, as they were included, contrary to the results of the Goal Achievement Matrix and Officer recommendation, by Local Councillors when deciding upon the plan. It is submitted that they are not included in the proposed plan on Planning merits in any way. It is noted that the sites were carried forward on a vote, despite strong opposition from other Councillors.

Bancon submit that it is inappropriate to include land for residential development that would guarantee additional traffic movements on Malcolm Road, with the associated impact on the awkward junction with the A93. Instead, with the promise of the AWPR reducing impacts on this junction, the concentration should be on ensuring a continued free flow of traffic along the A93. The distance of the sites from the town centre, and the gradient increase to reach it, would suggest that almost all trips to the town centre services would be done by car.

Conclusions – proposed amendment to Local Development Plan

Bancon therefore submit that both these sites have numerous clear reasons for not being included in the Local Development Plan, and that several more suitable alternative sites are available in the locality, including additional land at Peterculter East (separate objection 6), Peterculter West (objection 7), and Hill of Ardbreck (objection 9). Sites OP54 and OP134 should therefore be omitted from the Local Development Plan, Further, it is submitted that the more deliverable and sustainable alternatives noted above, should be substituted as opportunity sites, and their areas should continue to be designated as GB/GSN.

Issue 45	ALLOCATED SITE: MALCOLM ROAD OP54	
Development plan reference:	OP54, Table 9 and Appendix 2	Reporter: Ron Jackson
Body or person(s) submitting a representation raising the issue (reference no.):		
<p>Margaret Ludgate (4) Professor Graham Devereux (6) Douglas Stewart (17) Norma Burnett (18) Allan Jack (21) Jelte Van Der Veen (26) Erik Stien (160) Steven Smith (252) James Cook (309) Kenneth Flavill (343) Albert Middler (371) Ms J Nairn (439) Henry Duncan (447) Betty Porter (509) Culter Community Council (518) Alan Kennedy (558) Anne Kennedy (560) David S Mitchell (577)</p>	<p>Alistair Lewis (581) Rebecca Duncan (653) Stuart Duncan (655) Stuart Duncan (717) Churchill Homes (775) Alison Urquhart (805) Brigitte Matthews (815) Eleanor Kennedy (830) Nicola Hutcheon (1205) Allan Chalmers (1209) Clare Webber (1286) Philip Harris (1409) Peter Thain & other residents (1430) Alistair Porter (1439) William Moir (1444) Vicky Thain (1559) Bancon Developments Ltd (1561)</p>	
Provision of the development plan to which the issue relates:	Housing allocation for 71 homes	
Planning authority's summary of the representation(s):		
<p>Supports local community & services in Peterculter 518, 775: Support the development of this site because: - It can be developed in the first phase - Extra families in suitable homes should reverse the fall in the population of our local primary school. - It should encourage retailers and small local businesses into our District Centre. - It will help to sustain the viability and amenity of our community -The developer, in discussions with CCC, have outlined how they will comply with the vision e.g. by *providing affordable housing *include leisure and play areas *ensure there will be no vehicle access from OP 54 on to Bucklerburn Road, *provide a paved path through the trees (mature Scots pine) in lieu of a pavement on Malcolm Road (OP 54).</p> <p>Sustainability 1205: Development of this site is contrary to the plan.</p> <p>6, 18, 160, 252, 447, 509, 560, 577, 653, 655, 717, 815, 1209, 1286: Object to the allocation due to access, distance from facilities, school capacity and that the site is designated as Ancient Woodland.</p> <p>21, 509, 653, 655: Expansion of the village is piecemeal and lacks strategy.</p> <p>160, 447, 653, 655, 717: The site steep gradients making it unsuitable for sustainable housing development.</p> <p>252: The housing will be to the west of the WPR which is the logical boundary for expansion.</p>		

371, 509, 1286, 1439: A development of 71 houses would need public transport provision. The present bus routes are nowhere near this area.

439: Object to size of development. Original bid was for 55 houses, and site OP54 should not be allocated for housing in excess of this for the following reasons: Landscape impact, loss of woodland, accessibility. Physical constraints make it unfeasible to develop this site for as many as 71 houses over the next 5 years. There is a need to spread new development to a number of smaller sites around Peterculter in order to provide a choice of location for people to live. Reducing the number of houses on site OP54 to around 55 houses and redistributing the surplus 16 houses to alternative site(s) in Peterculter will also help to minimise the landscape impact of new development and lessen the impact on the road network at Malcolm Road. The land to the north of Peterculter at Culter House Road/Woodend, which was promoted as part of development option 9/26, would be suitable for a small-scale residential development to accommodate around 14-16 houses along with land to be gifted to the local community for sports/recreation use which would be a huge asset to residents of Culter.

447, 717: This site has numerous clear reasons for not being included in the Local Development Plan, with a more suitable alternative site being available in the locality at Peterculter West for the following reasons. Peterculter West provides the opportunity to significantly improve the housing stock of Peterculter through the construction of homes in a genuinely pleasant location with fine views, a southerly aspect and immediate access to healthy amenity - in stark contrast to the Malcolm Road sites. From a sustainability perspective, Peterculter West has short pedestrian access to the village centre and healthy opportunities for pedestrian/cycle access (via the Deeside Way and Riverside Walks).

558: I believe that 71 homes could be accommodated in the Culter area with less detrimental effect on the character and amenity of the area. This could be achieved by smaller developments particularly using brownfield sites.

Road Network Insufficient

4, 17, 18, 21, 26, 160, 371, 447, 509, 558, 560, 581, 653, 655, 717, 815, 1286, 1430, 1559, 1561: Object to development. Roads are substandard and not suitable for increased traffic.

309, 805: Support the development of the 71 homes in OP54. However, the additional traffic and access on to a narrow and congested Malcolm Road gives me great concern. I would expect the access to be via a roundabout on Malcolm Road which would also act as a method of slowing down traffic using said road.

Environmental Impact

17, 18, 160, 252, 371, 447, 509, 558, 653, 655, 717, 830, 1209, 1286, 1409, 1430, 1439, 1444, 1559: There should be no development on this site. The site has a great environmental value for the area. Development would remove a well used footpath. Woodland should be protected and is a haven for wildlife. Development here would encourage more commuting trips and more cars on an already busy Malcolm Road.

17: About quarter of the plot, the land at Nostra Casa, has recently been cleared and excavated, leaving an ugly scar, in violation of the greenbelt.

21, 26, 160, 1286, 1430: Residential development is unsuitable on this site for the following reasons. The site is woodland and important green belt land. Development would breach the green belt and open up more land for future development.

160: Woodland should be protected for biodiversity and carbon capture reasons.

1286: The visibility of the development from the North Deeside Road, on approach from the west is of concern.

Lack Of Educational Need

17, 18, 160, 252, 509, 581, 815: It is suggested that extra housing would help to maintain the roll of Culter School, yet there can be no serious risk of its closure in a community of this size.

815, 1286: Cults Academy is full.

Sewerage/Drainage

371, 509, 1286, 1559: Question where the sewage capacity is going to come from. It has long been thought the sewer in Malcolm Road is at, or above capacity, especially after the Buckleburn development in the early 1990's. I may add the soak away from my septic tank is in the development area.

1286: There are significant drainage issues in the area. The land at the site is boggy, considerable amounts of surface water drain away down Buckleburn Road.

Archaeological Importance

17: When the plantation was felled about 20 years ago, it was suspected that there might have been a prehistoric settlement at the small stream near its northern edge. A hand axe was found. It was identified by a geologist at Aberdeen University as being a type of rock from near Huntly that was used for tool making. Please advise your archaeologist about this.

Alternative Uses

343: Why has this status changed to brownfield when there is a site further up Malcolm Road at the caravan park. Construction will last for 10 years. Site was previously approved for a market garden.

1409: Thought the site had been earmarked for a market garden which never came about.

Modifications sought by those submitting representations:

Sustainability, Insufficient Road Network, Environmental Impact

4, 6, 17, 18, 21, 26, 252, 447, 577, 581, 653, 655, 717, 1286, 1430, 1559: This site should not be designated for development it should be rezoned as green belt and green space network.

Sustainability

160: Reduce the number of new houses proposed for Peterculter. If necessary to review the Scottish government targets for new homes, do so by joint discussion with Aberdeenshire Council as other more appropriate sites may be found within equivalent commuting distance to the City, but in the Shire. Alternatively, other areas closer the city should be preferred.

371, 558, 560, 830: If any development takes place at OP54, it should be reduced to 55 houses at most, as the original plan stated. I would suggest using land north of Peterculter which has been promoted for a small scale development of less than 20 houses at Woodend Farm on Culter House Road. I understand land could be available along with this proposal for a sport and recreation area. This would be a great benefit to the local community. I would suggest using part of the Ardbeck Hill site next to Culter House Road (away from the communications mast sited there) for a small scale development, 20-30 houses. Both of these proposals would need access to Culter House Road which would have to be upgraded to have access to the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route.

439: Request that the number of houses allocated to site OP54 be reduced to around 55 houses with the surplus 16 houses being allocated elsewhere in Peterculter.

815: Would like to see no new housing development in the Malcolm Road area until the bypass has been built. When the bypass is build new housing can be developed along the bypass or the gap on North Deeside Road between Milltimber and Culter can be filled in.

1205: Delete site and replace with more sustainable site allocations within the Deeside Direction for Growth including land at South Cults.

1209: Housing development would have been better suited to the Hill of Ardbeck. This is nearer to the school and local shops.

Road Network Insufficient

309: Add a roundabout at the access point to the 71 homes.

1561: Several more suitable alternative sites are available in the locality, including additional land at Peterculter East, Peterculter West, and Hill of Ardbeck. Site OP54 should therefore be omitted from the Local Development Plan. Further, it is submitted that the more deliverable and sustainable alternatives noted above, should be substituted as opportunity sites, and their areas should continue to be designated as Green Belt and Green Space Network.

Alternative Uses

343: Stick to the plans for a market garden.

Summary of responses (including reasons) by planning authority:

Supports Local Community & Services In Peterculter

Peterculter is a well established settlement to the west of Deeside and is a recognised district centre in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. The Planning Authority consider that the continued viability and prosperity of Peterculter is an important goal for maintaining Deeside as a whole. The Planning Authority has recognised that in order to promote and protect local facilities, shops and infrastructure present within Peterculter it is desirable and necessary to identify additional sites which are deemed acceptable for residential development and have the potential to enhance the viability of Peterculter both as a population centre and as a district centre.

The Planning Authority consider that this site is a natural extension to the existing community of Peterculter and that accordingly development on the site is appropriate and in accordance with this aim to promote and encourage the existing settlement and district centre at Peterculter.

Sustainability

For the avoidance of doubt it would appear that in the submission of responses in relation to this site there has been some confusion as to the number of residential units proposed. This appears to be as a result of the combination of two development options (9/42 Malcolm Road East - 16 units and the other option 9/43 Malcolm Road, Peterculter - 55 units). This site has therefore been identified as a residential opportunity site for a total of 71 units and this is reflected in the proposed plan.

Representations made reference to the distance to local facilities from the site. It is recognised that this site lies out with 800 metres from the district centre of Peterculter. It is, however, considered that a residential development here would provide additional support to the community of Peterculter and to the district centre. It is reasonable to expect that residents of this site would make use of Peterculter and its facilities and contribute towards its sustainability.

Submissions also suggested that this development should not proceed as it would lie to the west of the proposed Western Peripheral Route. This is a matter of fact but Peterculter is unique in that it is the only established settlement on Deeside which would lie out with the Western Peripheral Route. The Planning Authority is committed to maintaining and promoting Peterculter as a viable community and accordingly the identification of an opportunity site out with the Western Peripheral Route but considered a natural extension to Peterculter is deemed appropriate in the circumstances.

The Planning Authority does not consider that the gradient on the site is an insurmountable obstacle or that it should preclude allocation of this site for residential use. The developers have indicated that technical solutions to development on the existing gradients are available and could be dealt with at the planning application stage.

Proposals within the representations make reference to alternative sites at Peterculter East, Peterculter West, the Hill of Ardbeck and West Craigton Farm. The issue of alternative sites in and around Peterculter are dealt with as Issue No 52 and the Reporter will be referred to this issue for comparison purposes. Removing this housing allocation to alternative sites outwit the Peterculter

area would not be considered desirable as it would not address the Planning Authority's identified desire to support and promote the existing settlement and district centre at Peterculter.

Road Network Insufficient

The Planning Authority note the level of objection to this site based on the assertion that Malcolm Road is sub-standard and not suitable for the increased traffic that any development would facilitate. The Planning Authority is satisfied that the developers have identified an access proposal which would allow access on to Malcolm Road. Further discussions between any developer and the Local Authority Roads Department would be required to address this issue but it is not considered that there are any technical issues which prevent access being taken from Malcolm Road to the proposed site. Perceived deficiencies in Malcolm Road itself for the level of traffic to be generated can also be addressed at the planning application stage are not deemed to preclude designation for residential use.

Environmental Impact

The site is designated as Ancient Woodland. Any development would be required to mitigate for any loss to established Woodland and comply with policy NE5 of the Proposed Plan. These issues do not preclude designation as an opportunity site and can be dealt at the planning permission stage.

Lack Of Educational Need

The Planning Authority has recognised that there is a substantial excess capacity with regards to places at the local Primary School with a capacity for 144 extra pupils in 2012. There is also a perceived extra capacity at the local Secondary School with a capacity for 134 extra pupils in 2012. It is deemed desirable to identify sites for residential development within the catchment area of these schools. Pupils attending school would not need to cross Malcolm Road.

Sewerage/Drainage

There is a recognised concern regarding the main sewer at this location, however, again this is not felt to preclude allocation of this site for residential use. It is a matter which can and would be dealt with at the application stage.

Reference is made to potential drainage problems on the site, however, the Main Issues Report for the site indicated there are no apparent areas of poor drainage or water logging. Drainage, therefore, is not considered a reason to preclude residential development on the site.

Reporter's conclusions:

1. The Development Options Assessment Report contains a sustainability checklist which the council has used to assess development proposals. This is intended to result in a more transparent process and allow for early and informed community engagement. The council accepts that assessments such as this are, by their nature subjective, and on their own do not say whether a site is suitable for development or not. They do, however, provide a wealth of information that enables a view to be reached on each site. They can also help to highlight possible mitigation that could be carried out on particular sites that could make an otherwise unsuitable development acceptable. The council has stressed that the Development Options Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and consultation on the Main Issues Report were used to assess sites. They were used to identify the most suitable locations to deliver the required growth in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy which requires green belts to direct growth to the most appropriate locations.

2. The Development Options Assessment states that following completion of the assessment process, 19 housing and mixed use sites emerged as being 'desirable'. These are the sites which emerged as the most sustainable locations for development through the assessments. A further 4 sites were considered to be 'promising'. These are sites which could also be sustainable but which may require further mitigation. These sites formed the basis of the preferred and alternative settlement strategies contained in Section 3 of the Main Issues Report. The capacity of these sites is sufficient for the council to meet the structure plan housing allowances. As previously stated, I am satisfied that the council has openly and transparently assessed the relative merits of the various

development options which were available. This site has not been identified as a result of that rigorous process. The Development Options Assessment identifies the site as "Undesirable". The site was allocated as an opportunity site due to a councillor amendment to the proposed local development plan at the council meeting on 18 August 2010.

3. The site is the result of a combination of two development options, 9/42 Malcolm Road East – 16 units and 9/43 Malcolm Road – 55 units. In relation to site 9/43, the Development Options Assessment Report states that the proposed residential development would be located on what is currently a green belt site. The site has issues relating to steep slopes and Scottish Natural Heritage Ancient Woodlands which would require mitigation. In relation to site 9/42 the Report states that the proposer of the development would counterbalance any minor loss of trees by the introduction of new trees.

4. Policy NE5, as amended, makes clear that there is a presumption against all activities and development that will result in the loss of or damage to established trees and woodlands that contribute significantly to nature conservation, landscape character or local amenity, including ancient and semi-natural woodland which is irreplaceable. The proposed development would therefore offend this policy.

5. The Development Options Assessment states in relation to the site that there is a lack of existing significant employment opportunities and a lack of facilities in close proximity to this site, however, there are good public transport facilities (bus stop with a frequency of 6 buses an hour) within a 400 – 800 metre walk of the site.

6. PAN 75: Planning for Transport makes clear that in assessing sites for development proposals, the starting point should be Scottish Planning Policy. Sites which do not conform to Scottish Planning Policy are unlikely to be sustainable transport accessible sites. Paragraph 167 of the SPP makes clear that development should be supported in locations that are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, making best use of or adding to existing networks and creating new networks. Significant travel-generating uses should be in locations which are well served by public transport. Paragraph 168 states that planning permission should not be granted for significant travel generating uses in locations which would encourage reliance on the private car and where access to public transport networks would involve walking more than 400 metres. The proposed development would therefore be inconsistent with Scottish Planning Policy.

7. The council's current supplementary guidance on Transport and Accessibility states that public transport should be available within 400 metres of the origins and destinations of trips within the development. That is clearly not the case here. The site is approximately one kilometre from local amenities and the steep gradient and traffic use of Malcolm Road would be likely to discourage trips by cycle. The council has also stated that development on site 9/46 – Malcolm Road West, part of which lies on the other side of Malcolm Road opposite OP54, would be undesirable. That is because of its isolation and poor accessibility (in terms of both distance and gradient) to employment opportunities, local facilities and public transport. In view of this it appears to me to be somewhat inconsistent to allocate site OP54 for housing development.

8. Vehicle access to site OP54 would have to be by means of a new access direct from Malcolm Road. The council accepts that Malcolm Road is substandard (comments on Denmill, site 9/30). From my observations on my site visit it is apparent that there is a high volume of heavy goods traffic using the road and the narrow footway on the west side of the road provides only limited protection for pedestrians. I accept, however, that construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route is likely to reduce significantly traffic flows on Malcolm Road. I have, however, no confirmation of when that road will be constructed.

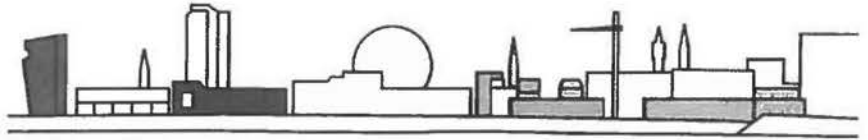
9. From my site visit I note that there is a well-established belt of pine trees along much of the Malcolm Road frontage of the objection site. The main part of the site has obviously had trees removed at some time although there has been some natural regeneration. The existing green belt boundary on the north side of Peterculter is well defined by the line of Bucklerburn Road. Although there are one or two houses on the north side of the road, the road effectively separates the

northern part of the built-up area of Peterculter from the countryside beyond. In my opinion, development on this site would result in an isolated and obtrusive urban projection north into the countryside from the main built-up area of Peterculter.

10. I readily accept that increasing population growth may help to support provision of local services and ensure the continued viability of Peterculter as a population centre and as a district centre. I also note the support of Culter Community Council for this proposed development. The Main Issues Report makes clear (page 20) that the capacity of Deeside to accommodate more development is limited to around 500 to 600 houses. The housing sites at Friarsfield and Oldfold alone will allow the development of 830 houses. The development of other allocated housing sites identified in the Main Issues Report and carried forward into the local development plan will add a further 135 houses. It follows that there is no numerical justification for allocating this site in order to meet the allowances set in the structure plan. In view of this, having regard to the findings in the Development Options Assessments, and for the reasons set out above, I am satisfied that this site should not be allocated for housing development.

Reporter's recommendations:

Modify the plan by deleting Opportunity Site OP54 Malcolm Road and designating it as green belt and part of the green space network as in the adopted local plan.



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On behalf of (if relevant)	
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Postcode	AB31 5ZU
Telephone	01330 824900
E-mail	ben.freeman@bancon.co.uk

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	Strategic Environmental Assessment Environmental Report	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Policy/Site/Issue	<i>POLICY HA - HOUSING MIX</i>	Paragraph(s)	

What would you like to say about the issue?

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Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Proposed Local Development Plan May 2015

Objection to Policy H4 Housing Mix

Paragraph 3.78 reflects SPP in discussing the need for mixed and inclusive communities, an aspect of which is a range and choice of house types and sizes. Bancon would agree with this at the level of whole cities/towns, or distinct areas/neighbourhoods within towns. “Communities” is an over-used term which defies any clear definition either spatially or functionally.

However, the policy itself then applies the requirement for mix and diversity to any major housing development (i.e. of 50 houses or more) in line with a masterplan. This is far too small a scale at which to consider mix and diversity, or necessitate the production of a masterplan. A development of 50 houses is more likely to be aimed at a particular market segment, not a number of different segments. However, in combination with other nearby developments aimed at different parts of the market, it will contribute to diversity. A larger definition of “community” or “neighbourhood” is needed within which to seek diversity.

It is not appropriate for a planning authority to try to direct or predict demand for different property sizes in the market. Customers will determine how many bedrooms they are seeking and house builders will respond to the market demand.

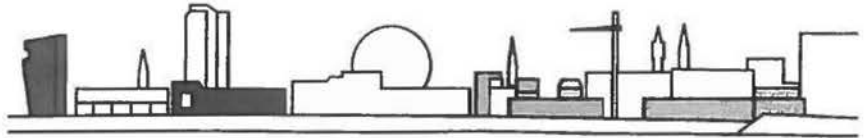
It is suggested that the policy is amended as follows:

Line 2 – replace “achieve” with “contribute to”

Line 3 – remove “in line with a masterplan”

Line 3 after “sizes” add “within the wider community or neighbourhood”

Line 8 replace “smaller 1 and 2 bedroom units” with “a range of house sizes”



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Policy/Site/Issue	POLICY II - INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY AND PLANNING OBLIGATIONS	Paragraph(s)	

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Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Proposed Local Development Plan May 2015

Objection to Policy I1 Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations, including related sections of Appendices 3, 4, and 5, along with Para 3.91 of Community Facilities.

Community Facilities

Policy I1 – Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations sets out the requirement to make appropriate contributions to address infrastructure requirements created by the development in question. Bancon submit that the wording from Circular 3/2012 be quoted in the policy for the avoidance of doubt. The Circular states that contributions “must always be related and proportionate in scale and kind to the development in question”

Paras 3.32-35 is headed Delivering Infrastructure, but in reality, it sets the scene for the levy of Planning Obligations. Bancon object to several aspects of this text and Policy.

In particular, it is not felt that Para 3.34 should include the indication that “there may be circumstances where dev imposes additional pressures and requires more extensive contributions to those identified in the LDP and Action Programme”. This statement undermines the worth of Appendix 3 as well as the Action Programme. It is also contrary to the advice in SPP which focuses on the need for certainty in development proposals, and indeed other areas of text relative to this policy, relating to the need for clarity on viability issues.

Similarly, it is not felt reasonable to highlight, as Para 3.35 does, that all D.O. negotiations should be concluded “before a decision notice on a planning app can be issued”. It would be perfectly proper for a decision notice to be issued granting consent, subject to a condition that the work shall not commence until a S.75 Agreement is signed. As developers require the certainty which a consent doc provides, the wording in Para 3.35 is often used by LPAs to obtain unreasonable concessions.

Turning to the terms of the Policy, it is requested that the words “or exacerbate deficiencies in existing provision” be omitted from the Policy. It is not the function of D.O. payments to improve existing shortfalls in the provision of facilities.

Bancon also object to the reference in the Policy to the need to agree contributions “with ...other statutory agencies”. This is surely a matter wholly for the LPA. It is not right that other agencies could determine the fate of a planning proposal.

Turning to Appendix 3 we would have the following objections :

Cumulative Transport Infrastructure – It is not clear from the text what this is, but on the basis that it is a ref to the SG on STF, it should be noted that the ‘schemes’ which STF

supposedly fund, are not listed in the SG. This requires to be clarified so that there is clearly no overlap with the requirements listed under “Roads”, or “Public Transport”, and accordingly no ‘double counting’ of contributions.

Education – Various educational requirements are highlighted for the Maidencraig masterplan zone, but these have all been overtaken by events. The S.75 associated with the planning app for the site sets out the final requirements.

Health – Along with all colleagues in Homes for Scotland, Bancon object to the inclusion of Health facilities in Appendix 3.

Paragraph 3.91 of the Proposed LDP is unreasonable and potentially beyond the powers and abilities of a planning authority to implement. The situation with healthcare is not analogous to other sorts of infrastructure.

Healthcare is a statutory requirement, funded through UK general taxation. Services are not typically delivered by Councils. Healthcare is not governed by requirements around the location of services, and the tendency in healthcare has been centralisation and specialisation. There is no immediate and automatic relationship between new development and the provision of new local facilities. The decisions on if and where to provide new facilities are taken by Health Boards and local bodies such as Primary Healthcare Trusts, or even by GP/dentist surgeries themselves.

Therefore it is unclear what evidence the Council can produce of service deficiencies, pressures placed on services by new development, or programmes of new provision.

Without that evidence, a planning authority could not make any developer obligation meet the 5 tests of Circular 1/2013. It would be unable to demonstrate need or detriment, and would be unable to say what planning purpose was being met by an obligation. In any event, even if such detriment could be shown, making a proposal acceptable in land-use planning terms would involve ensuring that land was identified for any necessary facility.

A planning appeal decision in England addressed these issues of healthcare very well, and the principles established in that case are relevant here too (Planning Inspectorate Ref. 2157515: Moat House Farm, Elmdon Road).

Firstly, the planning authority argued that existing GP services were under stress and could not cope with new development. The Inspector rightly concluded that no developer can be expected to fund improvements needed as a result of exiting developments and pressures.

She then noted crucially:

“Beyond facilitating the provision of a site, the planning system cannot be held responsible for the expansion of the existing healthcare infrastructure; that is a matter for the GPs and the Primary Healthcare Trust. But the planning system can and should be held responsible for providing sufficient quantities of housing. The PCT, in turn, has a statutory duty to provide the population with access to healthcare.” (Paragraph 55)

The second key principle was the purpose to which any developer contribution would be put. At the time of the appeal, the GP surgery was arguing that it needed to expand, but it could not say where that expansion might take place, when it might happen and whether funding from the Trust was available. The Inspector concluded, therefore, that a developer contribution would be inappropriate “since the use to which such a financial contribution would be put is currently unknown”. (Paragraph 56)

In the Aberdeen case, the Proposed LDP gives no clear indication of where and when health service infrastructure might be needed. The proposed supplementary guidance would have to contain clear and firm proposals from the NHS as to what it intended to provide, where and when. Since that is clearly an operational matter for the NHS rather than the Council it is not clear that the Council will be able to produce SG which would meet the tests of Circular 1/2013.

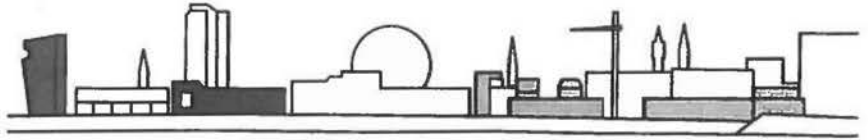
Developer contributions to infrastructure are typically provided through planning conditions or agreements. They are paid to the Council and held in clearly-differentiated accounts with the provision for repayment if unused within their anticipated timescales. No such arrangements are in place with the NHS, notwithstanding both Bancon, and Homes for Scotland’s view that it is inappropriate for developers to be replacing/supplementing UK taxation expenditure. Accountability and control of funds would be a significant issue.

Both Bancon and Homes for Scotland are clear that the Inspector at Moat Farm identified the key issues around healthcare – that provision is a matter for the healthcare authorities, funded through general taxation, and that planning’s role is to ensure that land is available as and when new facilities are brought forward.

Changes sought

Remove all references in the Community Facilities section and Appendix 3 to developers making financial contributions to healthcare facilities.

Clarity in policy I1 to ensure that all developer obligations are “must always be related and proportionate in scale and kind to the development in question”



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Policy/Site/Issue	<i>POLICY HS- AFFORDABLE HOUSING.</i>	Paragraph(s)	

What would you like to say about the issue?

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10/10/10
10/10/10

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Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Proposed Local Development Plan May 2015

Objection to Policy H5 Affordable Housing

This Policy does not conform to Scottish Planning Policy 2014 (which supersedes PAN 2/2010). There is now no reference in SPP to a “benchmark” (paragraph 3.82). Nor is there any encouragement in SPP to exceed an affordable housing requirement of 25% on any site. SPP states that “the level of affordable housing required as a contribution within a market site should generally be no more than 25% of the total number of houses”.

Paragraph 3.82 rightly notes that the “provision of affordable housing should not jeopardise the delivery of housing, as this would be counter-productive, would increase affordability constraints and have other knock-on effects on the local economy.”

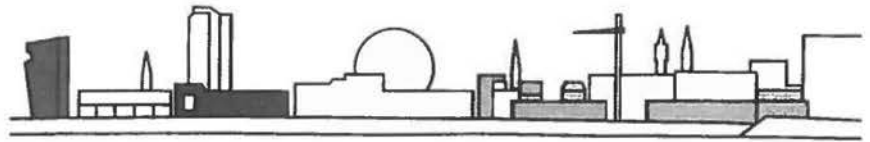
Paragraph 3.83 notes that the delivery of affordable housing is significantly reliant on funding from Scottish Government and privately sourced by RSLs, and that such funding is becoming more difficult to obtain. Aberdeen Council has a target for affordable housing provision, principally social-rented housing, which in reality is unlikely to be delivered with the available resources. Negotiations on existing planning applications are proving difficult in terms of resolving a realistic and deliverable level of affordable housing now; there is no reason to suppose this will become any easier. A policy which seeks “no less than 25%” affordable housing flies in the face of SPP, of the reality of available resources, and of the Plan’s own statements in paragraphs 2.82 – 2.83.

It is proposed that the first sentence of Policy H5 be re-written as follows:

“On housing developments of five units or more, the total number of affordable housing units should generally be no more than 25% of the total number of houses.”

The Policy notes that Supplementary Guidance sets out further detail on the provision of affordable housing. The Council has recently revised this Guidance and, against all advice from the housing industry (including RSLs) is seeking levels of commuted sum payments which are unviable and which will, in the terms of paragraph 3.82 of the Plan, “jeopardise the delivery of housing”.

The Council should revert to the previous approach on commuted sums of a commuted sum based on transaction evidence in the market. A figure of £25,000 is currently used, and this represents the value which both developers and RSLs find practical and viable.



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Policy/Site/Issue	<i>POLICY R7 - LOW 4 ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS.</i>	Paragraph(s)

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Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2016

Proposed Local Development Plan May 2015

Objection to Policy Policy R7 Low and Zero Carbon Buildings

The supporting text to this policy at paragraphs 3.136 – 3.140 sets out a fair summary of the Climate Change Act provisions and their relationship to planning and Building Regulations. However, the policy wording itself is ambiguous and potentially at odds with the text. The Scottish Government has recently published its Fifth Annual Report on the Operation of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, and this helpfully clarifies many aspects of the relationship between legislation, national policy, development plan policy and Building Standards (<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00474640.pdf>).

Government emissions reductions targets are tied to the levels achieved under the 1990 Building Standards. However, it is clear that the successive reduction targets are tied to the Sullivan Report routemap towards low/zero carbon emissions, which in turn is tied to the planned successive changes to Building Standards. The required levels of reduction are enshrined in the Building Standards. Conformity with the current standards in force at the time of application is therefore all that is needed.

The Policy is justified in seeking a rising proportion of reductions from low and zero-carbon technologies under the terms of the Climate Change Act. Bancon agree with the Plan's interpretation at paragraph 3.136 that these reductions comprise "a specified and rising proportion of the projected greenhouse gas emissions arising from their use." The emissions reductions required are specified in the Building Standards. We also believe that the Climate Change Act and planning policy allow scope for applicants to demonstrate that it is possible to achieve the reductions through energy efficiency measures. Most builders can in fact achieve the 2013 Building Standards without using micro-technologies and it is important that planning authorities recognise that this is often a more cost-effective solution. It is accepted that future editions of the Building Standards are likely to require more use of micro-technologies to meet higher reduction targets, but their use should not be prescriptive, a point also made in paragraph 5.12 of the Fifth Report.

Many Councils are confused about whether the specified proportion of emissions reductions sought is a part of, or in addition to, the standards prevailing at any given time in the Building Standards. The Fifth Report paragraph 5.12 makes it quite clear:

"Further review of building standards in Scotland will consider both the potential of a 'net zero carbon standard' for new buildings and must deliver requirements for 'nearly zero energy' new buildings. In this context, the need for the current planning system requirement for greenhouse gas emissions beyond current mandatory targets and prescription on how abatement should be achieved **is neither needed nor beneficial for the delivery of sustainable, low carbon development.**"

Paragraphs 8.13 and 8.14 also clarify this matter:

“In previous annual reports on the operation of Section 72 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, the Scottish Government had identified the two theoretical types of policy response that planning authorities **could** make to Section 3F. The first would be an approach that requires the proposed building to meet Scottish building standards target emissions rate in part through the use of low and zero-carbon generating technologies. The second would be a requirement for low and zero-carbon generating technologies to be used to reduce emissions beyond the Scottish building standards target emissions rate.

Section 3F does not require that emissions savings are additional to the target emissions rate set by Scottish building standards.”

In that context, the first sentence of the policy is ambiguous, as it reads as requiring emissions reductions additional to targets specified by Building Standards. This sentence should be modified to reflect the provisions of the Act and Section 3F.

The Policy would also benefit from a statement clarifying that the process of verifying the energy performance of buildings will be carried out through the Building Warrant process. The Fifth Report clarifies that it is through the Building Warrant application process that a developer will produce the detailed technical designs and specifications which determine if the building meets energy-efficiency requirements. It is accepted that it may not be reasonable or possible to produce this information as part of a planning application.

Changes sought

Policy R7 should be amended to read: -

All new buildings must meet the Building Standards energy requirement. In complying with the Building Standards, they must meet a proportion of the carbon dioxide emissions Target by installing Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technologies.

The proportion of the reduction which is met by Low and Zero Carbon Generating Technologies will be determined on a site by site basis by the Building Standards and will change over time as the Building Standards are updated in 2015 and 2019

Planning conditions may be used to deliver this policy while the detailed design and technical matters are being considered through the Building Standards process.