

5.	Site Details	
5.1	What name would you like the site to be known by? (Please note if the site is currently included within the ALDP2017 please use the OP site number)	Cordyce
5.2	Site Address	Cordyce School Riverview Drive Dyce Aberdeen
5.3	Postcode	AB21 7NF
5.4	Have you any information for the site on the internet? If so please provide the web address:	Yes Details: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/business-and-licensing/property-search/former-cordyce-school
5.5	Is the site currently being marketed?	Yes Details: https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018-05/Former%20Cordyce%20School.pdf
5.6	Site Location Map (Please include an OS Map with the Boundary of the site clearly marked)	Details: See uploaded map
5.7	Please provide the National Grid reference of the site.	NJ 89461 12772
5.8	What is the current use of the site?	Site is vacant, former school buildings, one of which is badly fire damaged.
5.9	Has there been any previous development on the site? If yes please provide details	Yes Details: Site includes vacant residential school buildings and associated facilities.

6.	Legal and Planning History		
6.1	Please indicate the relationship to the Proposer or Person / Organisation they are working on behalf of, has with the site.	Sole owner	
		Part owner	
		Option to purchase	
		No legal interest	X
6.2	Is the site under option to a developer?	No Details:	
6.3	Is the proposed site included in the ALDP2017?	No Details:	
6.4	Is the proposed site included in the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan?	No Details:	
6.5	Has the site been subject of previous discussions with the Council or any agent there of?	Yes Details: Formal pre-application advice given by Kristian Smith in letter ref 180327/Preapp	
6.6	Has the site been subject of previous Planning Applications? (Please provide a planning reference)	No Details:	
6.7	Has the site been subject of a previous Bid to a previous LDP? (Please provide the bid reference number)	No Details:	
6.8	Are there any legal restrictions on the title deeds such as rights of way, way leaves etc.	No Details:	
6.9	Are there any other legal factors that might prevent or restrict development? (e.g. ransom strips / issues with accessing the site etc.)	No Details:	

7.	Your Proposal (Please provide as much detail as possible on your site proposal)											
7.1	Proposed Use	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Housing</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Employment</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed Use</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Retail</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other (Please Specify)</td> <td>X</td> </tr> </table>	Housing		Employment		Mixed Use		Retail		Other (Please Specify)	X
Housing												
Employment												
Mixed Use												
Retail												
Other (Please Specify)	X											
		Assassin Health and Fitness Village - a proposed mixed use development inc. gym, cafe/restaurant, health facilities, educational/training facilities and ancillary associated residential accommodation. Associated car parking, landscaping, outdoor sports pitch and play areas										
7.2	Do you have a specific occupier in mind for the site?	Yes Details: Assassin Health and Fitness Village - as above description. Please also see paper apart.										
7.3	Site Area (hectares)	9.2 ha										
	Housing											
7.4	Approx. no of units.											
7.5	Proposed Mix and Number (Number of Flats / Terraced / Semi-detached / detached etc.)											
7.6	Affordable Housing Percentage	%										
7.7	Affordable Housing Partner (Details of any partner organisation, Registered Social Landlord etc.)	Yes / No Details:										
7.8	Tenure (Details of tenure type, Private Rental Sector / private sale / Housing for the elderly etc.)											
	Employment											
7.9	Business and Office	m ²										
7.10	General Industrial	m ²										
7.11	Storage and distribution	m ²										
7.12	Other Please specify	m ²										
	Mixed Use (Please provide as much detail as possible on each use class)											
7.13	Housing	No of units and type:-										
7.14	Employment	m ²										
7.15	Retail	m ²										
	Retail											
7.16	Approx. floor area	m ²										

	Other (Please Specify examples could include retailing, tourism, renewable energy, sports, leisure and recreation, institutions and education.)	
7.17	Details of proposal	Assassin Health and Fitness Village - the proposed gym, cafe/restaurant, health facilities would occupy the extended partly fire damaged building. Area approx. 2850m2. The ancillary associated residential accommodation would occupy one of the existing residential dorm buildings - area approx. 1600m2 Auto-training centre would extend to approx. 300m2 on site of former shed
7.18	Approx. floor area	4750 m ²

8.	Engagement and Delivery	
8.1	Has the local community been given the opportunity to influence/partake in the development proposal?	If there has been any community engagement please provide details of the way in which it was carried out and how it has influenced your proposals. If no consultation has yet taken place please detail how you will do so in the future. Yes Details: The proposals were presented to the local community council which was very supportive. More consultation will take place in due course.
8.2	Will the proposed development be phased?	No Details:
8.3	Expected development start post adoption of the plan in 2022	Year, 0-5, 6-10, 10+ 0-5
8.4	Expected development completion	Year, 0-5, 6-10, 10+ 0-5
8.5	Is finance in place and if so what form? (Secured Loan, Grant Funding etc.)	Yes Details: A business plan is in place and funding is secured from international investors which will be complimented by additional private capital, local fundraising, crowd funding and grant funding applications.
8.6	Are there any other issues with the delivery of the site that we should be made aware of? (These should include any issues which may prevent or impact on the deliverability of the site.)	Yes Details: The site is currently on the open market.

9.	Sustainable Development and Design		
9.1	Have you applied principles of sustainable siting and design to your site? The City Council has produced a Sustainability Checklist which provides guidance on the principles of sustainable siting and design and other issues which can be found on www.aberdeencity.gov.uk . Please provide the following information:		
	Orientation		
9.2	Exposure:- (does the site currently have)	Little shelter from northerly winds	
		Some shelter from northerly winds	
		Good shelter from northerly winds	X
9.3	Aspect:- (is the site mainly)	North facing	
		East or west facing	X
		South, south west or south east facing	
9.4	Slope:- (do any parts of the site have a gradient greater than 1 in 12?)	Yes	X
		If yes approx. what area (hectares or %)	C.20%, although none of the buildings are on that part of the site.
		No	
	Flooding & Drainage		
9.5	Flooding (is any part of the site at risk of flooding or has it previous flooded, if so provide detail You can view the SEPA flood maps at http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm)	Yes (If yes please use the SEPA flood maps to determine the risk)	X
		Little or No Risk	
		Low to Medium Risk	
		Medium to High Risk	X
		If yes approx. what area (hectares or %)	25%, but there is no existing or proposed development on that part of the site.
		No	
9.6	Has a flooding strategy been developed for the site?	Yes Details: No development on flood plain.	
9.7	Have discussions been had with the Council's flooding team?	No Details:	
9.8	Have discussion been had with Scottish Water?	No Details:	
9.9	Is there waste water capacity for the proposed development?	Yes Details: Presumed yes, given there is existing services to the site	

9.10	Is there water capacity for the proposed development?	Yes Details: Presumed yes, given there is existing services to the site.
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Land Use, Built and Cultural Heritage			
9.11	Built and Cultural Heritage (would the development of the site lead to the loss or disturbance of archaeological sites or vernacular or listed buildings?)	Significant loss or disturbance	
		Some potential loss or disturbance	
		No loss or disturbance	X
9.12	Natural conservation (would the development of the site lead to the loss or disturbance of wildlife habitats or species?)	Significant loss or disturbance	
		Some potential loss or disturbance	X
		No loss or disturbance	
9.13	Landscape features (would the development of the site lead to the loss or disturbance of linear and group features of woods, tree belts, hedges and stone walls?)	Significant loss or disturbance	
		Some potential loss or disturbance	
		No loss or disturbance	X
9.14	Landscape fit (would the development be intrusive into the surrounding landscape?)	Significant intrusion	
		Slight intrusion	
		No intrusion	X
9.15	Relationship to existing settlements (how well related will the development be to existing settlements?)	Unrelated (essentially a new settlement)	
		Partially related	
		Well related to existing settlement	X
9.16	Land use mix (will the development contribute to a balance of land uses, or provide the impetus for attracting new facilities?)	No contribution	
		Some contribution	
		Significant contribution	X
9.17	Contamination (are there any contamination or waste tipping issues with the site?)	Significant contamination or tipping present	
		Some potential contamination or tipping present	
		No contamination or tipping present	X

9.18	Will the site impact on any water courses?	No Details:			
9.19	Does the development site contain carbon-rich soils or peatland? http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/soils-and-development/cpp/	No Details:			
9.20	Is the development site within the airport safety exclusion zone?	Yes Details: Perwinnes safeguarding zone although no impact expected, particularly given previous use of the site.			
9.21	Is the development site within the airport 57dB LAeq noise contours?	No Details:			
9.22	Land use conflict (would the development conflict with adjoining land uses or have any air quality or noise issues?)	Significant conflict			
		Some potential conflict			
		No conflict			X
9.23	If there are significant conflicts, what mitigation measures are proposed?	Details:			
Transport and Accessibility					
9.24	Has contact been made with the Council's transport team?	No Details:			
9.25	Is access required onto a Trunk road and if so has contact been made with Transport Scotland?	No Details:			
9.26	Accessibility (is the site currently accessible to bus, rail, or major road network?)		Bus Route	Rail Station	Major Road
		More than 800m		X	
		Between 400-800m			
		Within 400m	X		X
9.27	Proximity to services and facilities (How close are any of the following?)		400m	400-800m	>800m
		Community facilities		X	
		Local shops		X	
		Sports facilities			X
		Public transport networks	X		
		Primary schools		X	

9.28	Footpath and cycle connections (are there any existing direct footpath and cycle connections to	No available connections	
		Limited range of connections	
	community and recreation facilities or employment? Give the Core Path number if core path is present https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/core-paths-plan)	Good range of connections	X Core apth 6
9.29	Proximity to employment opportunities (are there any existing employment opportunities within 1.6km for people using or living in the development you propose?)	None	
		Limited	
		Significant	X
	Infrastructure		
9.30	Physical Infrastructure (does the site have connections to the following utilities?)	Electricity	X
		Gas	X
9.31	Does the development have access to high speed broadband?	Yes Details: Presumed	
9.32	Does the development include a Heat Network/District Heating Scheme?	No Details:	
9.33	How is the development proposing to satisfy the Councils Low and Zero Carbon Policy?	Details: High performance new / updgrade of existing building envelope, range of renewable technologies will be considered.	
9.34	Are there any further physical or service infrastructure issues affecting the site?	No Details:	
	Public open space		
9.35	Will the site provide the required level of open space as per the current LDP (Please provide details of your calculations)	Yes Details: The ALDP does not stipulate minimum standards for open space in non-residential developments, there is, however, an abundance of open space proposed within the site which is fundamental to the Village concept.	
9.36	What impact will the development have on the Green Space Network?	Enhance the Network	X
		No impact on the Network	
		Negatively impact the Network	
		Please justify your response: New or improved provision for public access, permeability	

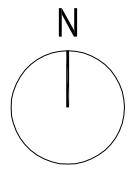
		and/or links to green space for recreation and active travel.
10.	Education	
10.1	Have discussions been had with the Council's Education Department?	No Details:
10.2	Is there currently education capacity for the proposed development? https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/education-and-childcare/schools-and-education/schools-pupil-roll-forecasts	Yes / No Details:

11.	Community benefits	
	Community benefits can include new community facilities (such as local shops, health, education, leisure and community facilities), affordable housing, green transport links and open spaces. Include elements which you anticipate may be required as developer contributions from the development. (Please note, specific contributions will have to be negotiated with the Council on the basis of the proposal.)	
11.1	Does the development proposal give any benefits to the community? If so what benefits does the development bring, and how would they likely be delivered?	Yes Details: The proposed Village will provide fully accessible facilities for all members of the community, including those who require wheelchair access; it being the only facility in the North East to do so. It will also contribute to achieving a number of Council and partnership objectives including those of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and The Strategy for an Active Aberdeen. See paper apart for further details.

12.	Masterplan Development Framework	
12.1	If you have prepared a framework or masterplan showing a possible layout for the site, please include it with this form.	Yes Details: L(0-)02 Site Layout Proposed.pdf was uploaded

13.	Additional attachments		
	No site is going to be perfect and the checklist above will inevitably raise some potential negative impacts from any development. Where negative impacts are identified, please provide details of their nature and extent and of any mitigation that may be undertaken. Listed below are examples of further information that may be included in your submission;		
		Included	Not Applicable
13.1	Contamination Report		
13.2	Flood Risk Assessment		
13.3	Drainage Impact Assessment		
13.4	Habitat/Biodiversity Assessment		
13.5	Landscape Assessment		
13.6	Transport Assessment		
13.7	Other as applicable (e.g. trees, noise, dust, smell, retail impact assessment etc. please state)	X	

14.	Development Viability		
14.1	Taking into account all the information provided above, and the requirements of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 and supporting Supplementary Guidance, please confirm that you have assessed the financial viability of your proposed development and found it to be viable for development in the timeframe set out above.	I confirm that I consider the site to be viable as per the details provided above.	YES
		Please provide details of viability: Full business plan and funding streams are in place. The Business Plan can be provided on request on the basis it is to be treated as confidential	



Assassin Health & Fitness Village LDP Bid

LOCATION PLAN

1:2500 @ A4

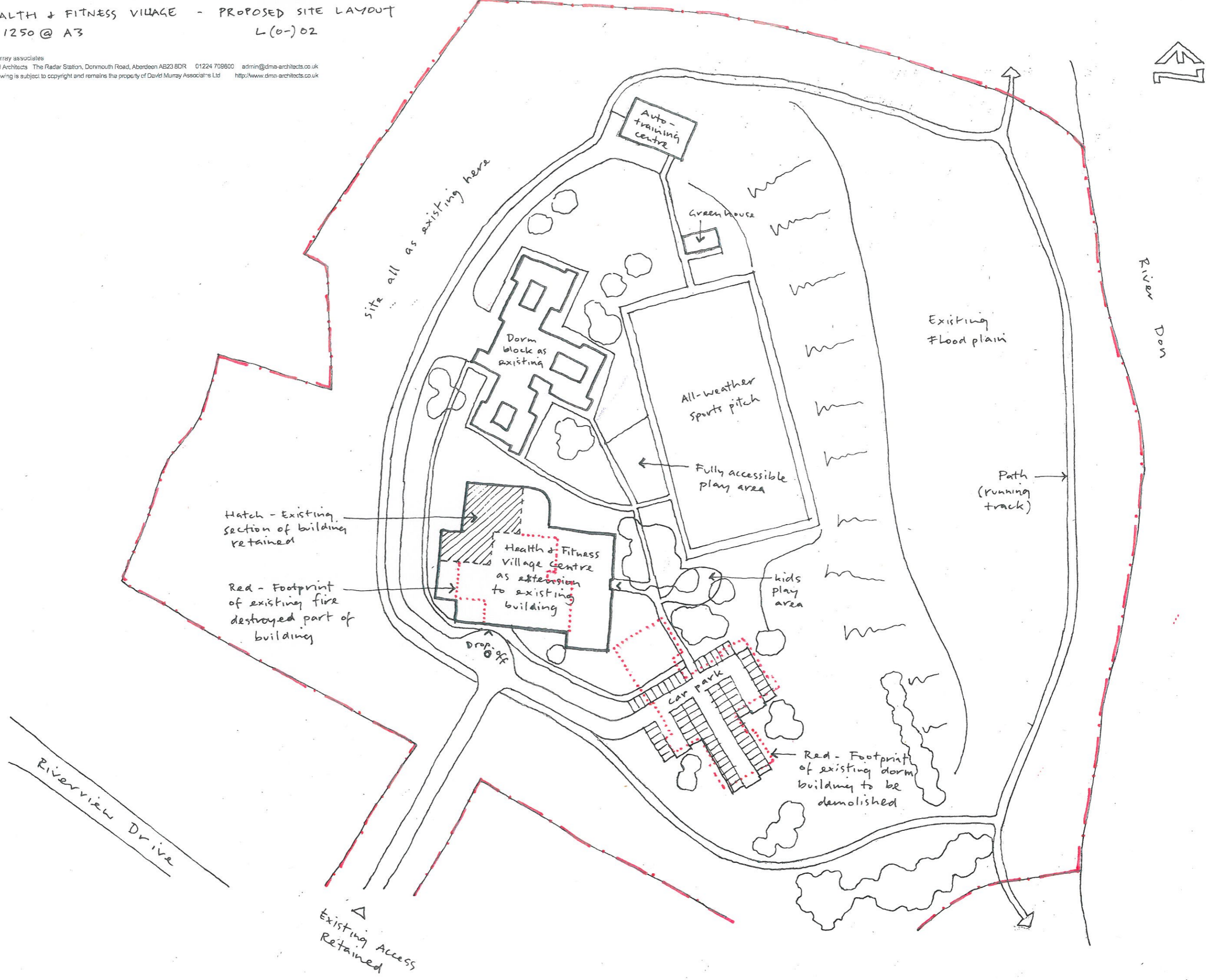
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dma

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Site all as existing here

Auto-training centre

Greenhouse

Dorm block as existing

All-weather Sports pitch

Fully accessible play area

Existing Flood plain

Path (running track)

Hatch - Existing section of building retained

Red - Footprint of existing fire destroyed part of building

Health & Fitness Village Centre as extension to existing building

kids play area

Drop-off

Car park

Red - Footprint of existing dorm building to be demolished

Riverview Drive

River Don

Existing Access Retained



Aberdeen Local Development Plan Review

Pre-Main Issues Report Bid Cordyce School Assassin Health and Fitness Village

Our client, Lee McAllister of Assassin Health and Fitness, submits that the site of the former Cordyce residential school in Dyce should be allocated in the emerging Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) as an opportunity site within the Green Belt for a specialist health and fitness village including a gym, cafe/restaurant, health facilities and ancillary residential accommodation, associated car parking, landscaping, outdoor sports pitch and play areas, to be known as the Assassin Health and Fitness Village. Details of the site and an outline of the proposed development are set out in the Pre-MIR Bid form and indicative plan submitted with this, while this paper provides further background and information in terms of the wider policy context that supports the allocation of the site.

The site is located within the Green Belt and Green Space Network on the edge of Aberdeen, although the existing school buildings on the site and the area immediately around them are excluded from the Green Space Network. To the east and north, the site is bounded by the River Don and the River Don Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS), with the A97 in close proximity to the west and Core Path 6 in close proximity to the south, with the residential zoning covering Dyce to the south just beyond this.

Within the site, there are the remains of the former Cordyce school buildings, including two residential dormitory buildings and the main school building, which has been badly damaged by fire (for further details of the site's history, please see below). There is also the Category B listed Skene Burial Enclosure, which is located in the south-eastern corner of the site; this would not however be affected by the proposed allocation, as shown on the indicative layout plan submitted with this bid. At the same time, the indicative layout plan also shows how high quality open space could be provided as an integral part of the development proposed in terms of this bid, improving on both its recreational and ecological value compared with what is on the site at the moment.

In terms of the proposed allocation, the Assassin Health and Fitness Village aims to provide a purpose-built health, fitness and life centre in which people from all walks of life will feel safe, involved and be helped on a journey to develop life and social skills, including people who are otherwise excluded from health and fitness centres in the North East due to a lack of any such facilities with disabled access and suitable equipment in the region.



As well as promoting the benefits of exercise, the aim of the Village is to help people to live healthier and happier lives through providing a wide range of complementary activities such as food growing, cooking, nutritional advice and specialist care and support, including for example counselling, education, training, and work experience.

To this end, tailored services would be provided to clients with a range of specific health and well-being needs, including those with alcohol or drug dependencies, mental and/or physical health issues, people affected by homelessness and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as members of the general public. The whole centre, including all fitness equipment, would be designed to be accessible by wheelchair users and to accommodate anyone with additional support needs, creating an inclusive environment like no other in the North East of Scotland.

As shown on the indicative layout plan, development of the site to achieve this would involve: restoration of one of the existing residential dormitory blocks to provide accommodation for users and staff of the centre; rebuilding and extending the main school building to provide the main village centre; creating an all-weather sports pitch and running track; and providing education facilities and greenhouses.

In recognition of the unique and invaluable proposition that the Assassin Health and Fitness Village presents, and the benefit that this would bring to a wide range of people with additional support needs across the North East of Scotland, as well as to their friends and relatives and to the wider public, the project has extensive support and backing from a number of major charities, including Clan Cancer UK, Befriend a Child, Charlie House and many others.

For the reasons given in this paper apart, it is submitted that the site should be allocated as an opportunity site within the Green Belt for the Assassin Health and Fitness Village as proposed in terms of this bid.

Background

Cordyce School was built in the late 1970s for pupils with additional support needs arising from social, emotional and behavioral difficulties. Following a review in 2013/2014 however, Aberdeen City Council has been working towards mainstreaming pupils with additional support needs, rather than separating them from their peers by attending specialist schools, with no pupils enrolled at Cordyce School from August 2017 onwards.



Meantime, the main school building was largely destroyed by fire in November 2017, whilst there have been a number of break ins and vandalism to the buildings both before and after the fire. Consequently, the Council took the decision to permanently close the school with effect from 1 April 2018 (see report to Education and Children’s Service Committee:

<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/g5849/Public%20reports%20pack%2025th-Jan-2018%2014.00%20Education%20and%20Childrens%20Services%20Committee.pdf?T=10>).

As at May 2018, the school is being advertised for sale as a development opportunity, subject to planning. Meanwhile the Council will continue to be responsible for ensuring that the remaining buildings are safe and secure, as well as having liability for rates.

In accepting the recommendations to close the school and declare the site surplus, the Committee noted that such a decision would “...allow for the asset to be progressed through the surplus site procedure, allowing for potential new uses of the site and/or development which could **help meet the needs of the local community**.” (emphasis added).

Our client has explored a number of potential sites for the Village but Cordyce School has been identified as the most appropriate location given: its previous use; the ability to reuse some of the existing buildings; the availability of existing facilities (such as the gym hall and swimming pool); the substantial area of open green space which helps to create the tranquil environment required, as well as providing opportunities for gardening for clients; and its accessibility, particularly in terms of the location of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR).

A formal pre-application enquiry was made to seek the planning authority’s views on the health and fitness village proposals (ref 180327/Preapp), to which the Council responded by letter dated 13 April 2018 and expressed support for the proposed use in principle, subject to detailed design considerations and consideration of improvements to the site’s quality as an open space. This bid looks to enshrine that support for the proposed use of the site in principle in the ALDP, while also protecting it from competing uses, to allow the proposals to be properly developed and ensure that that Aberdeen can secure the full benefits that the Assassin Health and Fitness Village would deliver.

As stated above, the proposed Village has considerable support from a number of health and wellbeing and children’s charities. Discussions have also been held with the local Community Council (Dyce and Stoneywood) at a meeting on 21st March 2018 where there was a positive response to providing such facilities within the local community. It was also highlighted at that meeting that this was by far a preferred use for the site over potential alternative uses such as residential.



Brownfield site

On considering the allocation of this site for the proposed Assassin Health and Fitness Village, it is important to note that this is a brownfield site and hence the principle of development here has been established. In addition, Scottish Planning Policy 2014 (SPP) requires development plans to consider the re-use or redevelopment of brownfield land before new development takes place on greenfield sites. That principle is re-emphasised in both the current Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP) - which states a clear preference for development to take place on brownfield sites and for that to be a priority - and in the Main Issues Report for the review of the SDP in which the Preferred Option is for both Councils to prioritise brownfield sites before making new allocations.

Impact on Green Belt

SPP sets out a number of reasons why a green belt may be designated, these being to:

- direct development to the most appropriate locations and support regeneration;
- protect and enhance the character, landscape setting and identity of the settlement;
and
- protect and provide access to open space.

These policy principles are reflected in the extant ALDP, which states that:

“The aim of the Green Belt is to maintain the distinct identity of Aberdeen and the communities within and around the city, by defining their physical boundaries clearly. Safeguarding the Green Belt helps to avoid coalescence of settlements and sprawling development on the edge of the city, maintaining Aberdeen’s landscape setting and providing access to open space.”

In this instance, it is submitted that the allocation of this site as an Opportunity Site within the Green Belt as proposed in terms of this bid would not detract from any of these objectives, but rather it would positively contribute to these. In particular, the level of development proposed would be no more intensive than that existing on the site but would ensure the redevelopment of what are currently burned out buildings in a way that makes a far more positive contribution to the landscape setting than the site does at present. Likewise, the proposed creation of outdoor sports facilities such as a football pitch and a running track, as well as access to Core Path 6, will greatly improve the recreational value of the site and access to open space in and through it.



And finally, designating the site as an Opportunity Site as proposed in terms of this bid while retaining its Green Belt status would allow for regeneration of the site in a way that would also contribute to wider regeneration objectives in Aberdeen, while continuing to protect it from alternative development proposals, which would not be appropriate in this location.

Impact on Green Space Network

In terms of valuing the natural environment, SPP is clear that the planning system should facilitate positive change, with new development providing biodiversity benefits where possible. Whilst seeking to protect and enhance green infrastructure, SPP also acknowledges that open space should be valued and functional, or capable of being brought into use to meet local needs. With this in mind, if the site is allocated as proposed by this bid (in terms of which it would not be removed from the Green Belt nor from the Green Space Network, but would be identified as an Opportunity Site within those designations), it is submitted that this would bring the site back into use to meet local needs (as agreed by the Education and Children’s Services Committee) by providing a valuable community facility, whilst also enhancing the value and functionality of the green space on the site.

The areas of Green Space Network which cover the site (identified as three separate areas on the Council’s Green Space Network map, from which the land immediately around the buildings are excluded as described above) are classified as core Green Spaces, with links to the River Don LNCS. The habitat is described as being improved grasslands, broadleaved woodlands, amenity grounds and gardens, with the main uses described as being open water, woodland and amenity uses. At the same time, it is indicated that the area supports various species and habitats, but specific species or habitats are not identified.

The vast majority of trees on the site will be retained with only a small number requiring to be removed to accommodate the proposed new layout. And in terms of improvement opportunities, the potential to extend and upgrade the existing informal riverside path has been identified. Such an improvement will benefit both visitors to and users of the Village as well as the wider community.

Against this background, the indicative layout plan shows that development of the Health and Fitness Village will result in an overall decrease in the footprint of buildings on the site over and above the existing school buildings (which are anyway excluded from the Green Space Network), with the only new development on the land within the Green Space Network itself being a new all-weather sports pitch. The provision of the new pitch would significantly increase the recreational and amenity value of the site, this being one of the express purposes of this particular area within the Green Space Network.



At the same time, the indicative layout plan also shows new planting around the built development on the site to improve and enhance the value of this in ecological and wildlife habitat terms. Hence any development here would not erode the function of the Green Space Network.

Here, some parallels can be drawn with the allocation of land for Charlie House in the current ALDP (and the subsequent development of that site), this also being on land which forms part of the Green Space Network; that zoning notwithstanding, the Council concluded that it was “desirable” to allocate the land for Charlie House since it was to provide a specialist care facility to serve the North East of Scotland. It is submitted that the same should be the case for the site to which this bid relates.

Compatibility with existing uses and accessibility of services and facilities

SPP requires the planning system to support development which optimises the use of existing infrastructure, reduces the need to travel, provides safe and convenient opportunities for walking and cycling for both active travel and recreation, and facilitates travel by public transport.

In this context, it is submitted that this site is well located for the proposed health and fitness centre, being a quiet location that is easily accessible by a range of sustainable modes of transport, and hence is consistent with SPP. Specifically, First Buses 17, 17A, 18, 18A all pass by the site, with a bus stop directly opposite the site entrance. National Cycle Network Route 1 also passes directly past the site entrance and there is a long-term aspiration to develop a Donside cycle way between the Bridge of Don and Dyce. These provide access to and from Dyce and Aberdeen City Centre as well other parts of the city and beyond, and hence minimise the need to access to the site by private car. At the same time however, recognising that many of the users of the centre will have disabilities that affect mobility and necessitate the use of a car for transport, its proximity to the AWPR and the space available on the site means that ample parking can be provided to ensure that everyone can access the site easily and conveniently.

Likewise, both for those accessing the site on foot and for users of the site looking to explore the surrounding area on foot, it should be recognised that both Core path 6 and the existing informal footpath along the River Don pass right by the site.

Finally in this regard, there are also a range of other facilities and shops within 800m of the site. On the other hand, as identified on the bid form, there are no other sports facilities within that distance – a shortfall in provision which the allocation and development of this site as proposed in terms of this bid would directly address.



Contribution to land use mix

Connected to the last point above regarding the shortfall in sport facilities in the immediate area of the site to which this bid relates, combined with a wider shortfall of facilities which are accessible by people with disabilities or wider support needs across the North East of Scotland, it is submitted that the proposed allocation makes a clear and positive contribution to the land use mix, both locally and regionally. That is particularly so, given that SPP highlights the need for planning policies and decisions to be guided by a number of principles which include:

“improving health and well-being by offering opportunities for social interaction and physical activity, including sport and recreation” and “using land within or adjacent to settlement for a mix of uses.”

The allocation of this site for the proposed health village would be consistent with both of these principles. Further information on how the proposed health and fitness village would contribute to wider Council and partnership objectives is set out below.

Creation of employment opportunities

Although access to employment opportunities is not relevant in terms of the proposed use of the site, it is important to note that the development itself would create new employment opportunities for personal trainers, fitness centre staff, and other health/fitness specialists, as well as roles for centre and personnel managers, a programme director and other administration and support staff. It is anticipated that this would create a total of 12 jobs in year one, rising to 20 by year 3.

Impact on historic environment

It is recognised that the burial ground to the east of the site is Category B listed and, as such, SPP requires that it be protected from any work that would adversely affect its setting. At the same time however, SPP supports positive change where this is informed by a clear understanding of the importance of heritage assets. In this instance, it is submitted that the sensitive redevelopment of this brownfield site (which is currently a far from attractive setting for the burial ground) as shown on the indicative layout plan would enhance both the site itself and the surrounding area and be a positive contribution to this element of the historic environment.



Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016 - 26

The Planning (Scotland) Bill includes a new requirement for local development plans to take into account the local outcome improvement plan for the plan area. Whilst recognising that this is not currently a statutory requirement, it would be best practice to work in the spirit of the emerging legislation, particularly given that the new regulations are likely to be in place before the new ALDP is adopted. That being the case, the provisions of the Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26 (ALOIP) are relevant to the consideration of this bid.

The vision of the ALOIP is for Aberdeen to be *“a place where all people can prosper”*, to achieve which the Community Planning Partnership is committed to tackling issues which prevent equal opportunity for all to lead a happy and fulfilling life. The ALOIP then sets out four priorities for partnership working, those being:

- Aberdeen prospers;
- Children are our future;
- People are resilient, included and supported when in need; and
- Empowered, resilient and sustainable communities.

Specifically, in terms of “Aberdeen prospers”, the ALOIP highlights the need to ensure that businesses have access to a variety of immediately available and affordable premises, and opportunities for new use of existing brownfield land. The use of a former, now derelict, school would help achieve that.

In terms of “children are our future”, the ALOIP aims to improve health, support and outcomes for families, children and young people. The proposed health village will provide a safe and secure facility to deliver this, including for children with disabilities and additional support needs, for whom there are currently no suitable facilities in the North East, and providing a holistic approach to health and nutrition to set families up for a healthier future and more positive outcomes. At the same time, training camps will help maximise opportunities for school leavers and others, in line with the ALOIP.

A key function of the proposed health village is to provide a facility for people with specialist health and care needs which is inclusive and safe and where they can be actively involved, which is entirely consistent with the driving factors of the ALOIP in terms of protecting people and communities from harm, supporting people to live as independently as possible, and enabling people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. The last of these in particular is reflected in the whole ethos behind the health village.



Amongst the target clientele of the proposed health village are people with addictions, a secondary driver in the ALOIP, which includes the need to raise awareness of factors that can improve personal resilience, health and wellbeing. Again, this is very much consistent with the aims of the health village. Importantly, the village will provide a facility for people with specialist needs to live in and be cared for and supported in their home town of Aberdeen, rather than only being able to access the care they need elsewhere in Scotland.

Finally, in respect of “empowered resilient and sustainable communities”, the ALOIP aims to ensure that everyone has access to opportunities to participate in a range of health and fitness activities. The proposed village will very much contribute to achieving that, particularly in terms of providing access to fitness facilities for people with disabilities which do not exist elsewhere in the city. At the same time, education in nutrition will help in developing food skills as proposed in the ALOIP.

In addition to helping to achieve the outcomes articulated in the ALOIP, the proposed Assassin Health and Fitness Village would contribute to meeting a number of other Council and partnership objectives, as set out in the following paragraphs.

The Strategy for an Active Aberdeen

The Strategy for an Active Aberdeen was developed through the partnership of more than 10 physical activity and sport organisations in the North East – known as the Active Aberdeen Partnership – with the ambitious plan of making Aberdeen the most active city in Scotland.

Amongst other aims, the Active Aberdeen Partnership is committed to increasing opportunities for participants in physical activity and sport, and to securing investment in infrastructure. This includes improving the quality and maintenance of facilities and places, maximising quality sports and physical activity opportunities across Aberdeen, and fully engaging communities in developing opportunities.

The allocation of the former Cordyce School for the proposed Assassin Health and Fitness Village would achieve exactly that and has significant community support, including, as stated previously, from a number of other charitable organisations and high-profile sports personalities. As such, the proposals very much reflect this aim of the Strategy. Further, the proposals directly seek to improve the quality of sports facilities in Aberdeen, and their accessibility for all members of the community, contributing to the implementation of the Strategy for an Active Aberdeen in this regard.



Aberdeen Sports Facilities Strategy

Aberdeen Sports Facilities Strategy, adopted by the Council in December 2016, is the first significant step in setting out the Active Aberdeen Partnership's vision of creating a network of high quality, accessible and sustainable sports facilities across Aberdeen, and supports the Strategy for an Active Aberdeen by identifying the sport and leisure facility requirements across the city.

The focus of the Strategy relates to the provision of community sport and leisure facilities, in particular the need to develop an infrastructure that is 'fit for the 21st century', and which enables Aberdeen's residents to be more physically active and healthy.

Key findings in the strategy include the following:

- In many instances the facilities are outdated, coming to the end of their usable life, have high maintenance costs and are operationally inefficient;
- There are too many small-scale facilities of insufficient capacity, quality and scale to attract large numbers of users;
- As a result of their limited size, scale and quality, many facilities require significant amounts of deficit funding to keep them operational, which is potentially unsustainable within the current financial climate.
- Much of the City's sports hall provision is located within schools and is predominantly used for football training, which limits the development of indoor sports hall sports.

The overall position is then summarised as follows:

"In summary, much of the present public sport and leisure facility infrastructure is no longer fit for purpose. This is based on the fact that there are too many venues, which are too small, do not have the requisite activity areas, nor offer the quality of experience to meet modern day user expectations. They have limitations on the income they can generate and are subsidy dependant. With increased pressure on public expenditure a significant part of the network will be financially unsustainable in the future. In addressing this challenge, there is a need for this Strategy to consider how Aberdeen reshapes its sport and leisure facility network by having fewer, larger, better quality facilities that are financially sustainable for the long term. Only by doing so can partners deliver increased opportunities for Aberdeen's residents to be more physically active and healthy."



The proposed health village will quite clearly contribute to addressing the shortfall of high quality, sustainable sports facilities.

It should be noted that, in terms of specific ways to address the current shortfall in sport and leisure facility infrastructure identified, the Strategy aspires to the creation of a network of community based and fully accessible 3G pitch facilities. The allocation proposed in terms of this bid would clearly contribute to this aspiration.

Alternative uses

It is anticipated that, as a brownfield site which is currently being marketed by the Council, there is likely to be significant interest for the site to be allocated for alternative uses, including housing. In that respect it should be noted that:

- it would be much more difficult for the site to remain in the Green Belt and the Green Space Network if allocated for housing, and indeed such an allocation would have a negative impact on these designations;
- likewise, new development on the site would be more likely to have an impact on the River Don LNCS to the North than redevelopment on the site as proposed in terms of this bid would do;
- it is unlikely that the existing buildings could be re-used as part of alternative development proposals;
- parts of the site are subject to flooding, limiting its suitability for residential use;
- the impact on the road network would be more significant if the site were to be allocated for residential development;
- residential development of the site would not contribute to a mix of land uses, whereas the use proposed in terms of this bid makes a significant contribution in this regard;
- there are significant housing allocations in the north and the west of the city on more appropriate sites, including at Grandhome, Craibstone and the Rowett.

Other issues

With regard to other criteria against which the site requires to be assessed in terms of the bid form, it should be noted that:



- The proposed layout is intrinsically south and east facing, providing good shelter from northerly winds.
- While it is noted that about 20% of the site is of a gradient greater than 1 in 12 and there is some risk of flooding on the site, neither affect the part of the site on which building works are proposed, with existing buildings demonstrating the site's capacity to accommodate built development without being negatively affected by either the gradient or flooding, and establishing the site's suitability for built development as a point of principle. It should also be noted that the current SDP allows for the allocation of brownfield sites which have appropriate flood prevention measures in place.
- Likewise, while it is accepted that the site is within the Perwinnes safeguarding zone, it should also be recognised that this is a previously development site, with that development already having established that this is an appropriate location for a residential educational establishment (which has a lot of parallels with the use proposed in terms of this bid). As such, the Perwinnes safeguarding zone should not be considered a constraint on the allocation as proposed in terms of this bid.
- There would be no loss of landscape features, contamination concerns, service capacity issues, impact on water courses, land use conflicts or other constraints that would restrict development of the site; and
- Importantly the site is deliverable within the timescale of the LDP.

Conclusion

For the reasons given in this paper apart, it is submitted that the allocation of this site would:

- Provide a much needed specialist facility for the North-East of Scotland, for which there is significant support from local people and relevant charities;
- Contribute to the achievement of Council and Partnership objectives, particularly relating to health and well-being;
- Make sustainable use of a brownfield site as promoted by national, regional and local policy;
- Retain Green Belt and Green Space Network designations, while providing enhancements to these; and



- Conversely, alternative uses such as housing would not deliver the above benefits, and would have a negative impact on the Green Belt and Green Space Network designations.

As such, it is submitted that the site should be allocated accordingly.

