

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)	Balgownie Area 3
5.2	Site Address	land to the east of Gordon Brae Bridge of Don Aberdeen
5.3	Postcode	
5.4	Have you any information for the site on the internet? If so please provide the web address:	Yes / No Details:
5.5	Is the site currently being marketed?	Yes / No Details:
5.6	Site Location Map (Please include an OS Map with the Boundary of the site clearly marked)	Details: see attached map
5.7	Please provide the National Grid reference of the site.	NJ923101
5.8	What is the current use of the site?	University playing fields
5.9	Has there been any previous development on the site? If yes please provide details	Yes / No Details: Sports pitches

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	
6.2	Is the site under option to a developer?	Yes / No	Details:
6.3	Is the proposed site included in the ALDP2017?	Yes / No	Details:
6.4	Is the proposed site included in the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan?	Yes / No	Details:
6.5	Has the site been subject of previous discussions with the Council or any agent there of?	Yes / No	Details: see below
6.6	Has the site been subject of previous Planning Applications? (Please provide a planning reference)	Yes / No	Details: Ref: 150926 - PoAN for Aberdeen Football Club training facilities (June 2015). No application was progressed.
6.7	Has the site been subject of a previous Bid to a previous LDP? (Please provide the bid reference number)	Yes / No	Details: 2008 - Ref: 2-13 2013 - Ref: B0203
6.8	Are there any legal restrictions on the title deeds such as rights of way, way leaves etc.	Yes / 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.)	Yes / No	Details:

<b>7.</b>	<b>Your Proposal</b> (Please provide as much detail as possible on your site proposal)		
7.1	Proposed Use	Housing	✓
		Employment	
		Mixed Use	
		Retail	
		Other (Please Specify)	
7.2	Do you have a specific occupier in mind for the site?	Yes / No Details:	
7.3	Site Area (hectares)	ha 3.9 ha	
	Housing		
7.4	Approx. no of units.	up to 117 houses (@ 30 dph)	
7.5	Proposed Mix and Number (Number of Flats / Terraced / Semi-detached / detached etc.)	a mix of types and sizes will be provided, the details of which to be determined through a planning application.	
7.6	Affordable Housing Percentage	% This would be provided in line with Council policy at the time of development	
7.7	Affordable Housing Partner (Details of any partner organisation, Registered Social Landlord etc.)	Yes / No Details: to be determined	
7.8	Tenure (Details of tenure type, Private Rental Sector / private sale / Housing for the elderly etc.)	to be determined	
	Employment		
7.9	Business and Office	m <sup>2</sup>	
7.10	General Industrial	m <sup>2</sup>	
7.11	Storage and distribution	m <sup>2</sup>	
7.12	Other Please specify	m <sup>2</sup>	
	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 <sup>2</sup>	
7.15	Retail	m <sup>2</sup>	
	Retail		
7.16	Approx. floor area	m <sup>2</sup>	

	Other (Please Specify examples could include retailing, tourism, renewable energy, sports, leisure and recreation, institutions and education.)	
7.17	Details of proposal	
7.18	Approx. floor area	m <sup>2</sup>

<b>8.</b>	<b>Engagement and Delivery</b>	
8.1	Has the local community been given the opportunity to influence/partake in the development proposal?	<p>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.</p> <p>Yes / No Details: see paper apart</p>
8.2	Will the proposed development be phased?	<p>Yes / No Details: see paper apart</p>
8.3	Expected development <b>start</b> post adoption of the plan in 2022	Year, <input type="text" value="0-5"/> , 6-10, 10+
8.4	Expected development <b>completion</b>	Year, <input type="text" value="0-5"/> , 6-10, 10+
8.5	Is finance in place and if so what form? (Secured Loan, Grant Funding etc.)	<p><input type="text" value="Yes"/> / No Details: finance would be available from a developer if the site is identified and subsequently sold.</p>
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.)	<p>Yes / <input type="text" value="No"/> Details:</p>

<b>9.</b>	<b>Sustainable Development and Design</b>		
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 <a href="http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk">www.aberdeencity.gov.uk</a> . 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	✓
9.3	Aspect:- (is the site mainly)	North facing	
		East or west facing	
		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	
		If yes approx. what area (hectares or %)	
		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 <a href="http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm">http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm</a> )	Yes (If yes please use the SEPA flood maps to determine the risk)	
		Little or No Risk	
		Low to Medium Risk	
		Medium to High Risk	
		If yes approx. what area (hectares or %)	
		No	✓
9.6	Has a flooding strategy been developed for the site?	Yes / No Details:	
9.7	Have discussions been had with the Council's flooding team?	Yes / No Details:	
9.8	Have discussion been had with Scottish Water?	Yes / No Details:	
9.9	Is there <b>waste water</b> capacity for the proposed development? <a href="http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/Connections/Connecting-your-property/Asset-Capacity-Search">http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/Connections/Connecting-your-property/Asset-Capacity-Search</a> )?	Yes / No Details: see paper apart	
9.10	Is there <b>water</b> capacity for the proposed development?	Yes / No Details: see paper apart	

	<a href="http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/Connections/Connecting-your-property/Asset-Capacity-Search">http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/Connections/Connecting-your-property/Asset-Capacity-Search</a> )?		
	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	✓
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	see paper apart
		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	see paper apart
		No loss or disturbance	
9.14	Landscape fit (would the development be intrusive into the surrounding landscape?)	Significant intrusion	
		Slight intrusion	
		No intrusion	✓
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	✓
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	
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	✓

9.18	Will the site impact on any water courses?	Yes / No Details:			
9.19	Does the development site contain carbon-rich soils or peatland? <a href="http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/soils-and-development/cpp/">http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/soils-and-development/cpp/</a>	Yes / No Details:			
9.20	Is the development site within the airport safety exclusion zone?	Yes / No Details:			
9.21	Is the development site within the airport 57dB LAeq noise contours?	Yes / 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		✓	
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?	Yes / No Details:			
9.25	Is access required onto a Trunk road and if so has contact been made with Transport Scotland?	Yes / No Details: Access could be taken from the A90 to the north and access exists via the public house. No discussions have taken place with to date.			
9.26	Accessibility (is the site currently accessible to bus, rail, or major road network?)		Bus Route	Rail Station	Major Road
		More than 800m		✓	
		Between 400-800m			
		Within 400m	✓		✓
9.27	Proximity to services and facilities (How close are any of the following?)		400m	400-800m	>800m
		Community facilities		✓	
		Local shops		✓	
		Sports facilities	✓		
		Public transport networks	✓		
		Primary schools	✓	✓	
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 <a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/core-paths-plan">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/environment/core-paths-plan</a> )	Good range of connections	✓
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	✓
	Infrastructure		
9.30	Physical Infrastructure (does the site have connections to the following utilities?)	Electricity	connections are available on site or in the vicinity
		Gas	
9.31	Does the development have access to high speed broadband?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No Details:	
9.32	Does the development include a Heat Network/District Heating Scheme?	Yes / No Details: this will be determined through the application process	
9.33	How is the development proposing to satisfy the Councils Low and Zero Carbon Policy?	Details: this will be determined through the application process	
9.34	Are there any further physical or service infrastructure issues affecting the site?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> 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)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes / <input type="checkbox"/> No Details: see paper apart	
9.36	What impact will the development have on the Green Space Network?	Enhance the Network	
		No impact on the Network	
		Negatively impact the Network	
		Please justify your response:  see paper apart	



<b>10.</b>	<b>Education</b>	
10.1	Have discussions been had with the Council's Education Department?	Yes / No Details:
10.2	Is there currently education capacity for the proposed development? <a href="https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/education-and-childcare/schools-and-education/schools-pupil-roll-forecasts">https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/education-and-childcare/schools-and-education/schools-pupil-roll-forecasts</a>	Yes / No Details: see paper apart

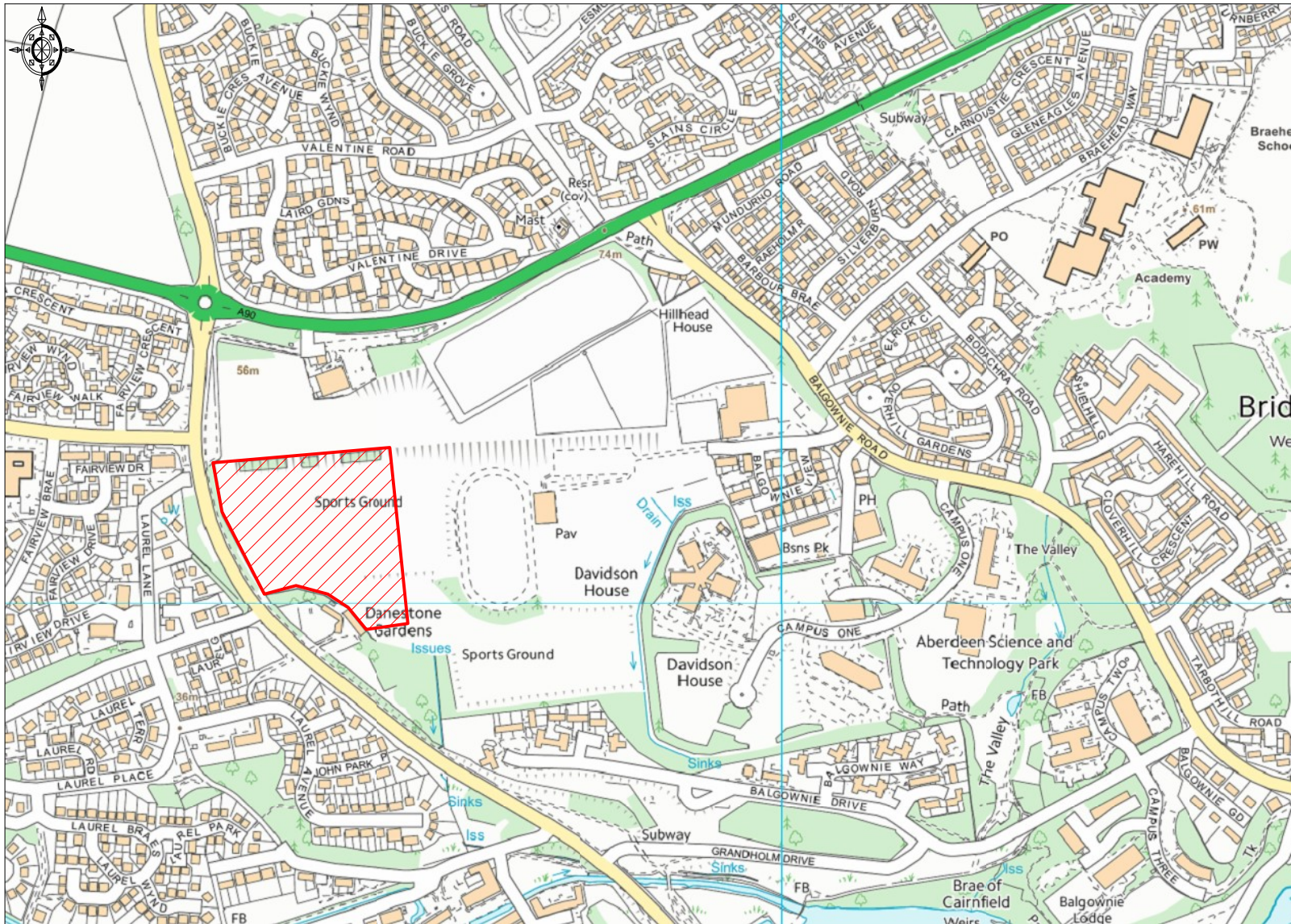
<b>11.</b>	<b>Community benefits</b>	
	Community benefits can include new community facilities (such as local shops, health, education, leisure and community facilities), affordable housing, green transport links and open spaces. Include elements which you anticipate may be required as developer contributions 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 / No Details: see paper apart

<b>12.</b>	<b>Masterplan Development Framework</b>	
12.1	If you have prepared a framework or masterplan showing a possible layout for the site, please include it with this form.	Yes / No Details:

<b>13.</b>	<b>Additional attachments</b>		
	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)		

<b>14.</b>	<b>Development Viability</b>		
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.	
		Please provide details of viability:  see paper apart	



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*This map was created with Promap*

**ABERDEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW  
PRE-MAIN ISSUES  
PROPOSAL FOR A SITE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MAIN ISSUES REPORT**

**FURTHER DETAILS IN RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE BID FORM**

**BALGOWNIE AREA 3, BRIDGE OF DON**

This proposal for a site to be included in the Aberdeen City Main Issues Report is submitted on behalf of The University of Aberdeen who own land at Balgownie Playing Fields, to the north of Aberdeen, at Bridge of Don.

The University of Aberdeen was founded in 1495 by William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen and Chancellor of Scotland. It is Scotland's third oldest and the UK's fifth oldest university. It opened with 36 staff and was established to train doctors, teachers and clergy for the communities of northern Scotland, and lawyers and administrators to serve the Scottish Crown. A second University was founded in 1593 and until Kings College and Marischal College were united to form the University of Aberdeen in 1860, the City had two Universities.

Throughout the 20th century Aberdeen has consistently increased student recruitment, which now stands at 14,000, studying 700 programmes across 85 subject areas. The University community represents 10% of the City's population.

The University has invested heavily in the campus, including medical research, where University staff have demonstrated their skills as world leaders in their field. The Institute of Medical Sciences, completed in 2002, was designed to provide state-of-the-art facilities for medical researchers and their students. This was followed in 2007 by the Health Sciences Building. The Foresterhill campus is now one of Europe's major biomedical research centres. The Suttie Centre for Teaching and Learning in Healthcare, a £20m healthcare training facility, opened in 2009.

2012 saw the opening of the £57 million Sir Duncan Rice Library in Old Aberdeen, a great modern building to match the splendour of the University's 500 year old campus. The fact that the University has become what it is owes much to the determination and vision of a handful of visionaries and pioneers, who have helped to shape the University into the world-class institution it is today.

One of the key development priorities of the University relates to physical infrastructure. This includes the need to work independently and in partnership to provide a suitable physical infrastructure within which cultural engagement can flourish. This includes developing infrastructure to enhance the University's support for cultural and community activity, in particular through major capital projects such as the new library and sports facilities.

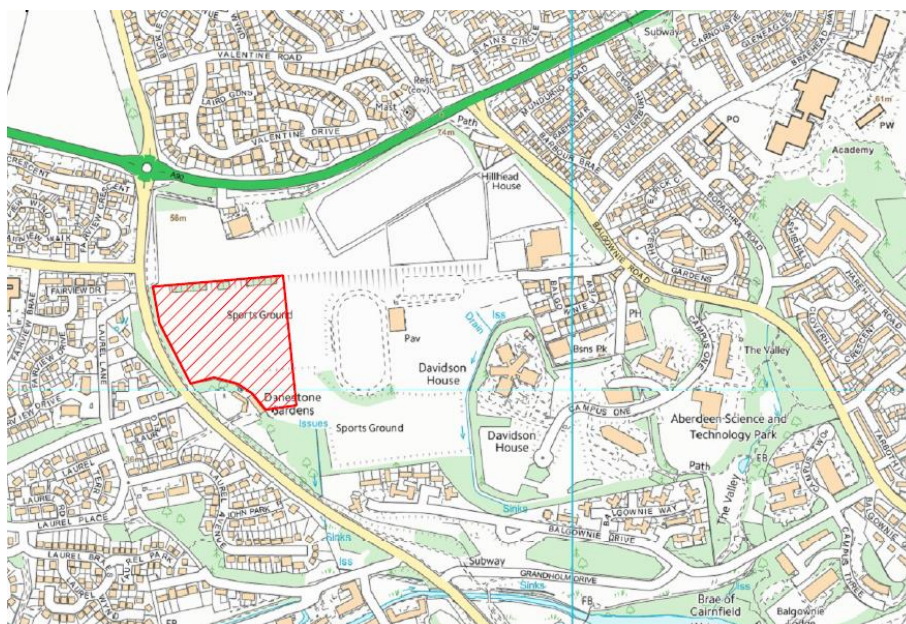
Over the years, the University has undertaken an ambitious capital investment programme to create appropriate physical infrastructure for staff and students. This has amounted to over £200 million over the last decade, generating considerable employment opportunities for local industries. This investment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

Aberdeen Sports Village was a joint development between the University, Aberdeen City Council and SportScotland who themselves invested £7 million in this development due to their desire for a regional sports facility in the City. This world-class facility provides a host of sporting amenities

previously unavailable in the area, resulting in top class sporting facilities for the whole of the City, not just the University. These include: a sports hall with space for 9 badminton courts, a third-generation indoor football pitch; a new athletics arena; an indoor athletics area; hockey pitches; squash courts; a gym; studio space; a fitness suite and performance clinic; and a café and crèche facilities. The facility also includes significantly improved disabled access. An aquatics centre with a 50m swimming pool opened in May 2014.

The bid site is located in the Bridge of Don which is a suburb located 4 miles north of Aberdeen City Centre. Within the last 30 years, it has become one of the largest suburbs in Europe with an estimated population of around 20,000. It is well served by a number of facilities, including shops; restaurants; hotels; library; swimming pool; two secondary schools; eight primary schools; a park and ride facility; and a number of industrial estates. It lies on the southern tip of the Energetica corridor, which itself lies within a Strategic Growth Area and aims to create a sustainable, low carbon investment location along the 30-mile strip of coastline to Peterhead.

The bid site at Balgownie Area 3 lies within a predominantly residential area and extends to approximately 3.9 hectares (9.6 acres). It is bounded to the north by part of the University playing fields and beyond this, the A90 (parkway) and Buckie Farm restaurant; to the east and south by further pitches associated with the University playing fields which are being promoted under a separate bid; and to the west by Gordon Brae and beyond this residential development. The site is identified in the plan below.



Promap

## **Q6. Legal and Planning History**

6.6 Planning Applications – There is some history surrounding the land at Balgownie Playing Fields. In 2015, a Proposal of Application Notice (150926) was submitted for the formation of 3 grass football pitches; 2 3G football pitches; car park; floodlighting; new pavilion and groundsman pavilion. It is understood that this was to be new training facilities for Aberdeen Football Club, however, a planning application was never progressed and they now have planning permission for a new stadium and training facilities at Westhill. This site is now no longer required by them.

6.7 Previous LDP Bids – The site has been promoted through the 2012 and 2017 Local Development Plan processes. A bid was submitted in 2008 and was given the reference 2-13. A further bid was submitted in 2013 and given the reference B0203.

It was argued that the use of the Balgownie pitches by the University were low and with the Aberdeen Sports Village (ASV) now providing a base for the sporting facilities in the City, land at Balgownie is surplus to requirements. Its redevelopment would contribute to the consolidation/improvement of the Universities' estate infrastructure across Aberdeen.

The Reporter concluded that the site has no important strategic landscape role and access to the site is possible. Development was considered to relate reasonably well to employment opportunities, public transport and other local facilities and is therefore capable of successful development. The main issue was the resultant loss of sports pitches and open space, however, the Reporter did not rule out that a case could be made for the development of some land at Balgownie, particularly if associated with clearer evidence of how remaining sports provision on the site could be improved.

### **Q7. Proposal**

Developing the site at a rate of 30dph (which was suggested through the adopted Strategic Development Plan) the site could accommodate a residential development of up to 117 houses, including affordable housing and associated open space and infrastructure. The University are flexible in the housing numbers appropriate for the site and this could be reduced to 100 if the Council considered this more appropriate.

Profit from the sale and redevelopment of this site would be reinvested by the University in its retained facilities in the City and would therefore have a wider benefit to the City. This includes investing in the adjacent sports facilities by modernising the pavilion, improving drainage and pitches surfaces. No further details are available at this stage, but the University would look to work with the local community and other stakeholders to improve these facilities. Further details would be prepared if the site is identified for development.

### **Q8. Engagement and Delivery**

**8.1** The local community have been involved in the previous bid processes including public consultation organised as part of the Local Development Plan process in 2009. No public consultation has taken place in respect of this specific bid, however, the local community and community council will be consulted if the site is identified for development. This would take the form of exhibitions as part of any major planning application or any consultation required by Aberdeen City Council through the LDP Review process.

**8.2** It is considered that the site could be developed in one phase. The University of Aberdeen is willing to work with Aberdeen City Council to create an appropriate phasing plan for the site if this was considered more appropriate.

**8.3** The landowner is committed to marketing the land or submitting a planning application as soon as practicable after the site is allocated in the Local Development Plan. Development would commence as soon as a planning and other technical consents are issued and this is expected in year 0-5 post adoption of the plan.

**8.4** There is flexibility in taking this forward with the potential for completion in each plan period after adoption if a phased development is considered appropriate.

## **Q9. Sustainable Development and Design**

**9.2 Exposure** - The site has good shelter from northerly winds in the form of existing development to the north and existing tree belts. There is also scope for landscaping to provide further shelter and screening.

**9.5 Flooding** - SEPA's Flood Risk maps show that there is no risk of flooding on the site from any river source, or surface water flooding.

**9.9/9.10 Water and Waste Water** - In terms of waste water and water, there are existing pavilion buildings on the wider site which would have a water and waste water connection. An extension to these would be required for any further development. It is unknown at this stage if there is capacity in the waste water and water network, however, capacity can be made available if the site is identified for development. This would be investigated and agreed at the appropriate time and is not considered to be an impediment to development.

**9.11 Built and Cultural Heritage** - A land information search has been carried out which highlighted that there are no designations on the site. Listed buildings comprising Danestone House, walled garden and summer house lie to the south of the site, however, development lies outwith the boundaries of these and would have no impact upon them. Development would therefore not result in any loss or disturbance to any archaeological sites or vernacular or listed buildings.

**9.12 Natural Conservation** - Given the open nature of the site, there is likely to be some wildlife habitat and species present on the site, however, this is likely to be contained in the trees around the site. There are no formal designations associated with the site and it is therefore considered that there will be no significant disturbance to any wildlife habitats.

Existing trees and areas of landscaping will be retained where possible if worthy of retention and a tree survey and habitat survey would be undertaken at the planning application stage to determine any impact. The size of the site ensures that new planting can be undertaken to encourage biodiversity, wildlife habitat and species on throughout the site.

**9.13 Landscape features** – The majority of the site is open given its use as playing fields. There are areas of tree belt around the site and these will be retained where possible. Some landscape features may be lost as a result of development, but further landscaping can be provided to mitigate this and ensure any development is contained within an attractive landscaped network.

**9.14 Landscape Fit** – The development of the site would not be significantly intrusive into the surrounding landscape, considering it is bound by existing development to the west. The site is well screened from all approaches. From the south, the flats on Balgownie Drive are the highest point and these are visible to the surrounding area. They also screen the site lying to the north, therefore the playing fields are not visible from this point. Further to this, Aberdeen City Council, in their previous assessment of the site confirmed that development of the adjacent site would not intrude into the immediate area. Any development on the bid site would be viewed similarly and would therefore be well screened or seen in the context of adjacent uses and would integrate well into the landscape.

**9.15 Relationship to existing settlements** – The site would be extremely well related to Bridge of Don due to the existing built development adjacent and the proximity of existing facilities and services. It therefore forms an appropriate location for further development.

**9.16 Land Use Mix** – Although the use of the site is for housing only, a range of house types in addition to affordable housing would be provided, thereby ensuring a range of housing in the area. The

development of this site for housing will ensure improvements to the adjacent sporting facilities can be carried out, thereby contributing to an improvement in land uses in the area.

**9.26 Accessibility** – The site could be accessed from the A90 to the north where the existing access to the public house could be utilised. Alternatively, the site could be accessed from Gordon Brae/Third Don Crossing to the west.

Public transport routes are available to the west of the site within 400m of the site. The A90 is located to the north, with the Third Don Crossing access road (Gordon Brae) bounds the site to the west. As such the site is considered to have good accessibility by bus and major road routes. There are no rail stations in Bridge of Don.

**9.27 Proximity to services** – Bridge of Don benefits from a wide range of facilities. Danestone Primary School is located around 200m to the west and there is also a Police Station, Community Centre, Nursery and Health Centre at Danestone, less than 500m to the west. There is a public house and restaurant located to the immediate north of the site. Aberdeen Science and Technology Park is located to the south east, with Bridge of Don Industrial Estate approximately 1.1km to the west. Land would be retained for sport and leisure uses within the wider site. Bus stops are located on Fairview Street, all within 400m of the site, providing good access to public transport services.

**9.28 Footpath and cycle connections** – Core path 26 runs to immediate north and west of the site, which links to a number of other core paths in the area. There are a network of existing footpaths surrounding the site and therefore, it is considered that the site is well served by footpath and cycle connections which would encourage access by means other than the private car.

**9.35 Open Space** – The layout of the site will contain open space in line with Local Development Plan policy. Adjacent to the site, a separate bid for the wider site anticipates the retention of a large area of open space for sport and leisure uses which would be available to the local community.

**9.36 Impact on Green Space Network** – the site is currently identified as Urban Green Space and Green Space Network, however large parts of the site adjacent would be retained as open space to ensure this designation can remain over the adjoining land.

There is considered to be strong justification for the removal of the Green Space Network and Urban Green Space designations over the bid site. In term of the Green Space Network, Policy NE1 it aims to protect, promote and enhance the wildlife, access, recreation, ecosystem services and landscape value of an area. However, the development of this site will have minimal impact on these. The site is used as playing fields for use by the University and are not available to the wider community.

There are no wildlife designations on the site and any existing trees and landscaping will be retained where possible. There are opportunities to protect, promote and enhance wildlife on the site and access and recreation will also be retained and enhanced through the provision of open space and recreational uses on land to the south. The Council previously accepted that the land adjacent has no landscape value and this site should be viewed similarly. As such, this designation can be retained on the adjacent site, with justification for the bid site to be developed.

Policy NE3: Urban Green Space of the extant Local Development Plan states that development will only be acceptable where “there is no significant loss to the landscape character and amenity of the site and adjoining area; public access is either maintained or enhanced; the site is of no significant wildlife or heritage value; there is no loss of established or mature trees”. Again it should be stated that both Aberdeen City Council and the Reporter to the LDP examination concluded that the adjacent site has no landscape value. If the site is identified in the Local Development Plan, public access would



be enhanced over the adjoining land, considering that it is currently for University use only. There would be no significant loss of trees as these are concentrated along the boundaries of the site and would be retained where possible.

Policy also requires that “replacement green space of similar or better quality is located in or immediately adjacent to the same community, providing similar or improved health benefits to the replaced area and is accessible to that community”. It is argued that the land is owned and used by the University of Aberdeen as sports pitches, but current use is low. The use of the pitches are under review in line with the University’s estate strategy and in the meantime, the pitches are appropriately maintained for University use and are not available for use by the general public. Therefore, they do not currently provide facilities for the general local community and their loss will not impact the capacity for wider community sport in Aberdeen.

In any case, the Aberdeen Sports Village at Linksfield, which was brought forward by the University in conjunction with the City Council and SportScotland, includes a full sized indoor sports pitch, 135m indoor running track, 9 court hall, 4 squash courts, performance gym, 2 exercise studios, sports science facilities, café and conference facilities. The indoor sports pitch was one of the first of its kind in Scotland, thereby highlighting the national importance of Aberdeen Sports Village. The Aquatics Centre provides a 50m, 10 lane training and competition pool, as well as a 25m pool and diving facilities, with spectator seating for 600. This centre provides an opportunity for Aberdeen to host national and international aquatics competition, being a base for local performance swimming.

The Sports Village therefore provides a modern facility which significantly improves both the range and quality of sports facilities in the City, with a wider variety of sporting opportunities available. It is in a convenient location, approximately 3.5 kilometres from the bid site, with good access by public transport available. It is also located to the north of the City, therefore users of the current pitches will not have significant distances to travel to access the new facilities. It enhances public access to high quality sporting facilities because it is available to the whole of the city rather than just University students as the facilities at Balgownie currently do.

Future development plans for the Aberdeen Sports Village include further expansion to accommodate growing demand and all future investment in sport and leisure facilities by the University, the City Council and SportScotland in the north of the city will be focused on this facility. The Balgownie pitches are therefore surplus to requirements and their long term use is under review by the University. They should not be relied upon to meet long term demand and should be identified for appropriate alternative uses in the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan.

Any funds realised by the University through the development of this site will be used towards other University infrastructure. This includes investing in modernising and upgrading the sports facilities at Balgownie adjacent. If the site is identified for development, this will enable the University to improve the pavilion, drainage and pitch surfaces. Although the amount of pitches would reduce on the site, a significant area of 7.1 ha would remain. They would be significantly enhanced, providing better quality facilities which would be available to the wider community. This is a significant improvement on the current position.

It is argued that the provision the Sports Village and the provision of improved facilities on the site which would be available for public use, more than meets the requirements of the Policy NE3 in relation to Urban Green Space and provides everything and more that the Balgownie pitches currently provide.

#### **Q10. Education**

Danestone Primary School is the closest Primary to the bid site and has a capacity of 330 pupils. The 2015 School Roll Forecasts indicate the school will be operating at 70% of capacity, which is due to fall to 60% of capacity by 2023. It is argued that the development of the site has the potential to support the falling school roll at Danestone Primary.

Bridge of Don Academy is currently operating at 73% of capacity, with is due to rise to 86% by 2023. This is still under capacity, however, developer contributions may be required as a result of development on the bid site.

#### **Q11. Community Benefits**

The development of the bid site will provide a range of house types on the site, including affordable housing. The identification and future sale of the site will allow for the upgrading of the wider sports pitches adjacent and provide opportunities for the general public to access improved facilities, which are currently not available on the site due to University use. Development will also support the local primary school which is under capacity.

#### **Q14. Development Viability**

Bridge of Don is a popular location for development, demonstrated by current construction ongoing in the area. The accessibility of the site has improved through the opening of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Don Crossing. It is considered that any development on the site will be marketable and deliverable given the accessibility and the location of the site within a Strategic Growth Area.

The landowner has invested in the site, demonstrated in its promotion the site through previous Local Development Plans. There is clear justification for the development of this infill site and the landowner is confident that there is residual value following development of the site and the provision of necessary infrastructure. The infrastructure constraints have been considered and they are confident that they can be addressed and do not impose an impediment to development.

The sale of this site will enable reinvestment by the University in retained facilities in the City, thereby improving the quality and viability of existing facilities going forward.