

5. Site Details		
5.1	<p>What name would you like the site to be known by?</p> <p>(Please note if the site is currently included within the ALDP2017 please use the OP site number)</p>	Blaircara Village, West Craigton, Peterculter
5.2	Site Address	West Craigton, Peterculter
5.3	Postcode	AB14 0NL
5.4	Have you any information for the site on the internet? If so please provide the web address:	No
5.5	Is the site currently being marketed?	<p>No</p> <p>Site may be marketed if an allocation is forthcoming</p>
5.6	Site Location Map (Please include an OS Map with the Boundary of the site clearly marked)	The location map is enclosed
5.7	Please provide the National Grid reference of the site.	NJ827014
5.8	What is the current use of the site?	Grazing land
5.9	Has there been any previous development on the site? If yes please provide details	No

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?	Specific development proposal that would be delivered by site proposer.	
6.3	Is the proposed site included in the ALDP2017?	No	
6.4	Is the proposed site included in the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan?	No	
6.5	Has the site been subject of previous discussions with the Council or any agent there of?	No	
6.6	Has the site been subject of previous Planning Applications? (Please provide a planning reference)	No	
6.7	Has the site been subject of a previous Bid to a previous LDP? (Please provide the bid reference number)	No	
6.8	Are there any legal restrictions on the title deeds such as rights of way, way leaves etc.	No	
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	

<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?	Intergenerational persons requiring support – see attached statement
7.3	Site Area (hectares)	6.2ha
	Housing	
7.4	Approx. no of units.	Circa 70
7.5	Proposed Mix and Number (Number of Flats / Terraced / Semi-detached / detached etc.)	TBC, see Indicative Layout Plan.
7.6	Affordable Housing Percentage	100% affordable / assisted living.
7.7	Affordable Housing Partner (Details of any partner organisation, Registered Social Landlord etc.)	TBC in line with development concept – but RSL involvement likely to deliver affordable units.
7.8	Tenure (Details of tenure type, Private Rental Sector / private sale / Housing for the elderly etc.)	Housing for elderly and affordable for rent.
	Employment	
7.9	Business and Office	N/A
7.10	General Industrial	N/A
7.11	Storage and distribution	N/A
7.12	Other Please specify	N/A

	Mixed Use (Please provide as much detail as possible on each use class)	
7.13	Housing	No of units and type: circa 70 individual units
7.14	Employment	Community facilities
7.15	Retail	Small – scale retail to support village.
	Retail	
7.16	Approx. floor area	TBC – see indicative layout plan.

	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>No community engagement has been done yet, but can be undertaken as part of LDP process</p>
8.2	Will the proposed development be phased?	Yes Anticipated to be phased dependent upon take up
8.3	Expected development <b>start</b> post adoption of the plan in 2022	0-5
8.4	Expected development <b>completion</b>	0-5
8.5	Is finance in place and if so what form? (Secured Loan, Grant Funding etc.)	Details of financing TBC
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.)	No

<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	
		Some shelter from	
		Good shelter from northerly winds	The rising landform to the north shelters the site from northerly winds
9.3	Aspect:- (is the site mainly)	North facing	
		East or west	
		South, south west or south east facing	The site is south facing, enjoying views across the valley
9.4	Slope:- (do any parts of the site have a gradient greater than 1 in 12?)	Yes	
		If yes approx.	
		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	
		Little or No Risk	
		Low to Medium Risk	Culter Burn runs along the southern boundary of the site. A landscaped area is proposed along the site's boundary with the burn. Buildings would be sited in the higher, northern part of the site. Recent experience and extreme weather events (2016) have not resulted in the site flooding. The proposed riparian woodland along the southern boundary would also mitigate any flood risk.
		Medium to High Risk	
		If yes approx. what area (hectares or	
		No	
9.6	Has a flooding strategy been developed for the site?	See above	

9.7	Have discussions been had with the Council's flooding team?	No
9.8	Have discussion been had with Scottish Water?	No
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
9.10	Is there <b>water</b> capacity for the proposed development?	Yes

	<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	The site is not subject to any built / cultural heritage designations
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	
		No loss or disturbance	Local Nature Conservation site covers the Culter Burn along the southern site boundary. This will not be impacted on by the development, which will use this to its advantage in the southern landscaped area.
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	The site is largely open grazing land with few features.
9.14	Landscape fit (would the development be intrusive into the surrounding landscape?)	Significant intrusion	
		Slight intrusion	
		No intrusion	From the North Deeside Road and B979 the development will be seen as an extension to the existing settlement of Peterculter rather than a single developed area.
9.15	Relationship to existing settlements (how well related will the development be to existing settlements?)	Unrelated (essentially a new)	
		Partially related	
		Well related to existing settlement	The site is well related to the settlement of Peterculter which lies to the east of the site.
9.16	Land use mix (will the development contribute to a balance of land uses, or provide the impetus for attracting	No contribution	



	new facilities?)	Some contribution	
		Significant contribution	The development proposal brings an entirely new concept to Peterculter, one that will provide new services and opportunities to people with specific needs in the area.
9.17	Contamination (are there any contamination or waste tipping issues with the site?)	Significant contamination	
		Some potential contamination or	
		No contamination or tipping present	✓

9.18	Will the site impact on any water courses?	Although the site is adjacent to the Culter Burn, a buffer zone of riparian woodland is proposed to ensure no adverse impacts. Development will be restricted to the northern part of the site.			No
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>				No
9.20	Is the development site within the airport safety exclusion zone?				No
9.21	Is the development site within the airport 57dB LAeq noise contours?				No
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?				
Transport and Accessibility					
9.24	Has contact been made with the Council's transport team?	No			
9.25	Is access required onto a Trunk road and if so has contact been made with Transport Scotland?	No			
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	No available connections			

	(are there any existing direct footpath and cycle connections to	Limited range of connections	
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	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	The site has a good access to Core Path 52 which lies to the north.
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	The development concept proposed will create a new, significant employment opportunity in the Peterculter area.  In addition, the nearby centre of Peterculter includes a range of service sector employment opportunities.  The site is also easily accessible (by public transport) to a range of employment opportunities in Cults. The site is also accessible to major existing employment areas at Kingswells, a short distance north of the site.
	Infrastructure		
9.30	Physical Infrastructure (does the site have connections to the following utilities?)	Electricity	Yes
		Gas	Yes
9.31	Does the development have access to high speed broadband?	Yes	
9.32	Does the development include a Heat Network/District Heating Scheme?	TBC at more detailed stage	
9.33	How is the development proposing to satisfy the Councils Low and Zero Carbon Policy?	Through design layout	
9.34	Are there any further physical or service infrastructure issues affecting the site?	No	
	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 The site provides the required open space in excess of the Councils' open space strategy.	

9.36	What impact will the development have on the Green Space Network?	Enhance the Network	The site lies within an area of Green Space Network (GSN), however the provision of new footpaths and walkways through the development will enhance the GSN and opportunities to make use of it.
		No impact on the Network	
		Negatively impact the Network	
		Please justify your response:	

<b>10.</b>	<b>Education</b>	
10.1	Have discussions been had with the Council's Education Department?	No
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  Culter Primary School is forecast to be operating at 73% and Culter Academy to be operating at 96% in 2022.

<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.)		

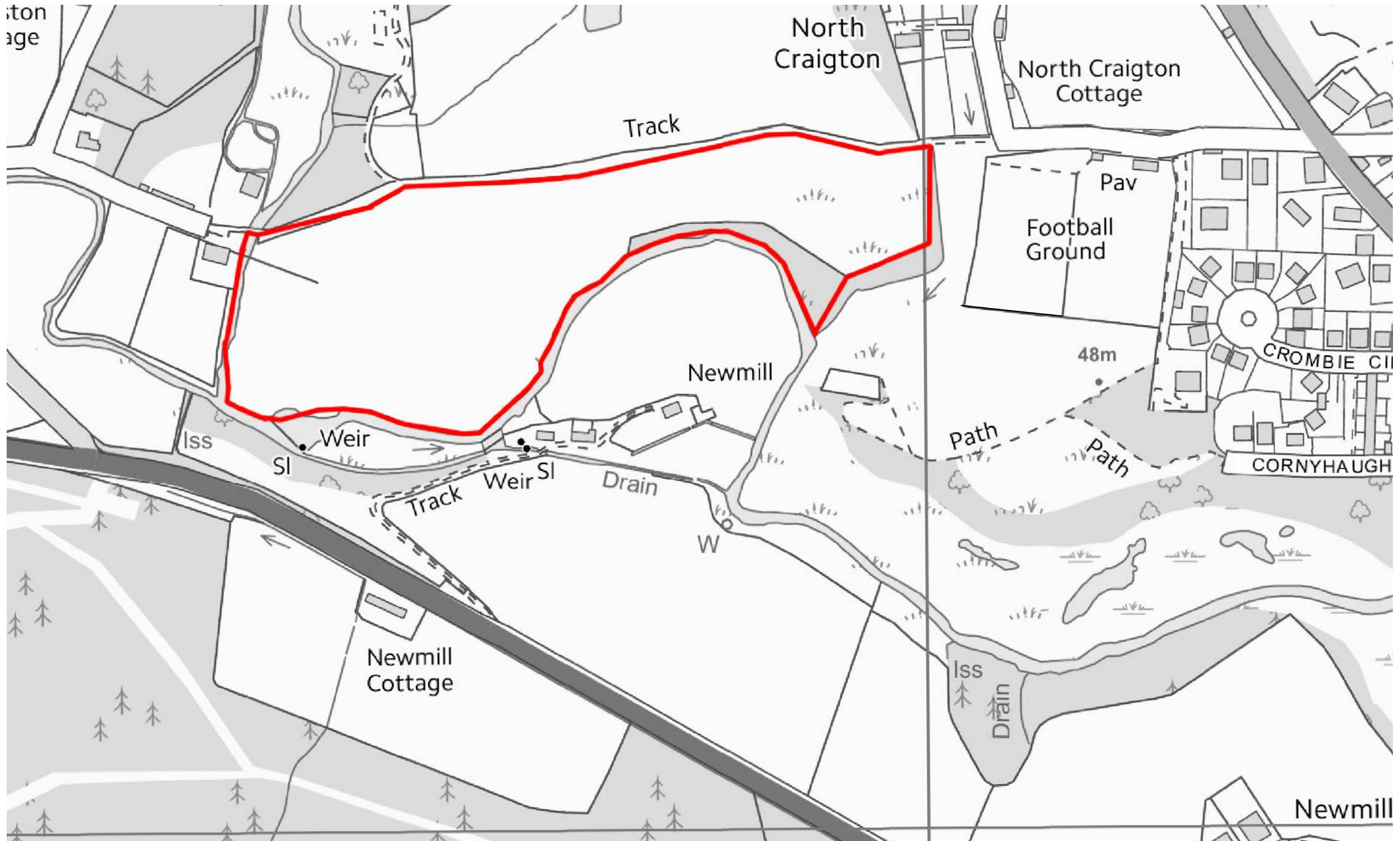
11.1	Does the development proposal give any benefits to the community? If so what benefits does the development bring, and how would they likely be delivered?	<p>Yes, the development of an assisted village enables the elderly community of Peterculter and elsewhere in Aberdeen a safe and secure environment which additionally contributes to diversifying the land use of the area.</p> <p>The assisted living village is a new and exciting concept for Aberdeen bringing a vast range of benefits.</p> <p>The development is based around the focal point of a community building that can be used for a wide range of activities, social gatherings and uses, health care and services.</p> <p>Facilities and amenities on site would include small scale retail, hairdresser, retail grocery/general shop/newsagent and café – reducing the need for residents to travel to access services.</p> <p>These facilities would also be available to the wider public along with the attractive natural environment to be created in the southern part of the site.</p> <p>The development concept (as explained in more detail in the supporting statement) offers huge scope and lots of opportunities to collaborate with existing local groups, charities and organisations, including dementia support groups and Forget Me Not, Age UK and local elderly charities, local churches and friendship groups, outreach programmes etc. The site's location and environs are ideal for this.</p>
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<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.	<p>Yes</p> <p>The indicative village site layout is enclosed.</p>

<b>13.</b>	<b>Additional attachments</b>	
	<p>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;</p>	

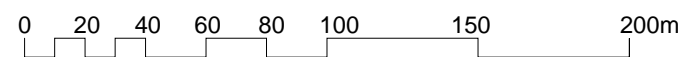
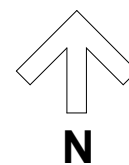
		Included	Not Applicable
13.1	Contamination Report		✓
13.2	Flood Risk Assessment		
13.3	Drainage Impact Assessment		
13.4	Habitat/Biodiversity Assessment		
13.5	Landscape Assessment		
13.6	Transport Assessment		
13.7	Other as applicable (e.g. trees, noise, dust, smell, retail impact assessment etc. please state)		Further more detailed studies to be provided as LDP process progresses.

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.	✓
		Please provide details of viability:  The site proposer has a clear and deliverable development concept that is viable and ideally suited to this site.	



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**HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO**  
 CHARTERED ARCHITECTS • PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
 ABERDEEN • BELFAST • DUNDEE • EDINBURGH • LEEDS • LONDON



**West Craighton Peterculter**  
 Aberdeen Local Development Plan

**LOCATION PLAN**

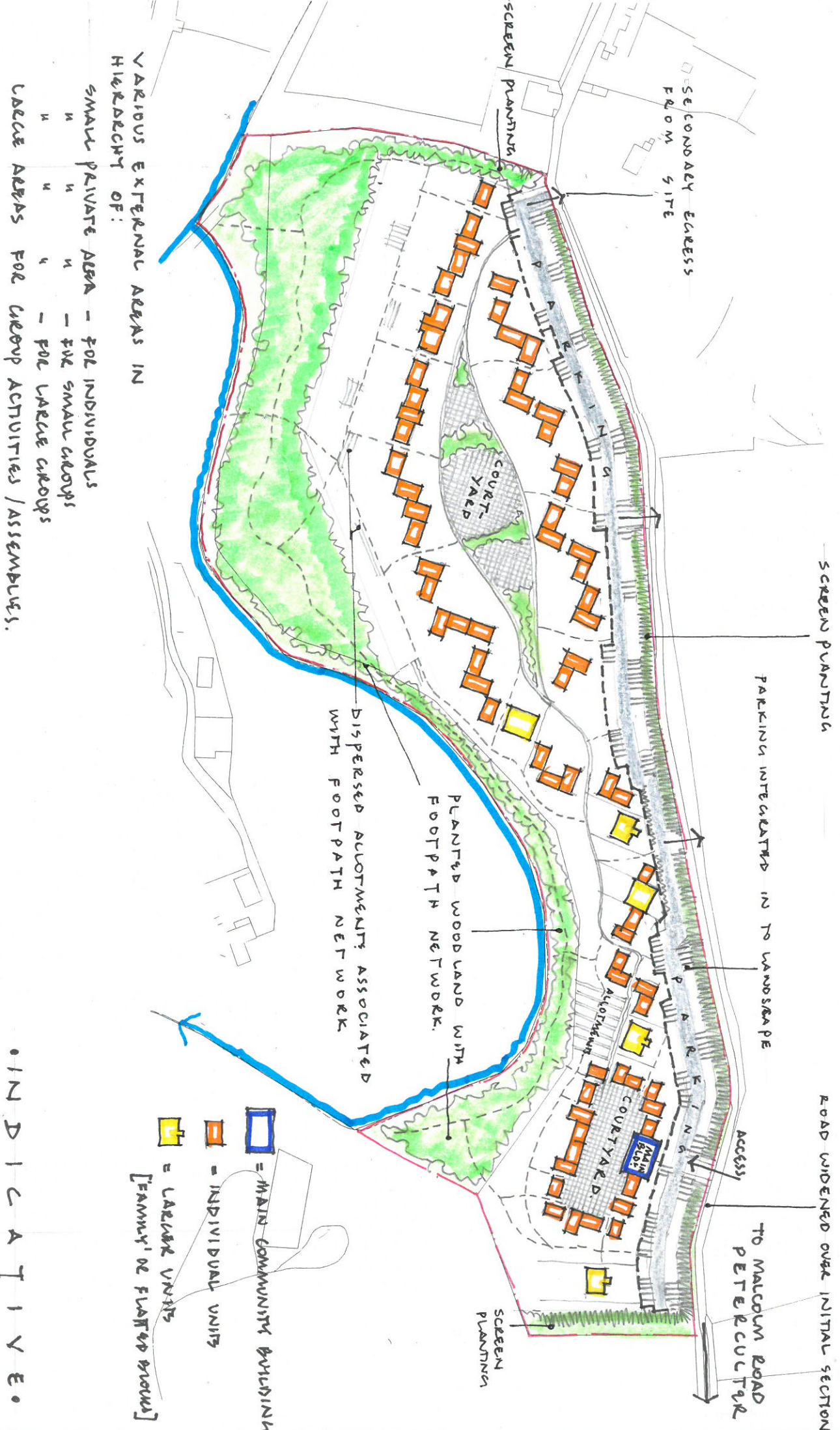
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 Date: MAY 2018  
 Dwg No: 11213

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# MODEL VILLAGE

FOR ELDERLY + PERSONS REQUIRING SUPPORT.



VARIOUS EXTERNAL AREAS IN HIERARCHY OF:  
 SMALL PRIVATE AREA - FOR INDIVIDUALS  
 " " " - FOR SMALL GROUPS  
 " " " - FOR LARGE GROUPS  
 LARGE AREAS FOR GROUP ACTIVITIES / ASSEMBLIES.

INDICATIVE

1:200 @ A4.

# BLAIRCARA GARDEN VILLAGE

Development Bid ALDP 2022

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# Introduction

This document provides supporting information in respect of a bid for inclusion in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2022 by John Adam and Son for the change of use of agricultural land to an assisted living village for elderly and people living with dementia, with specific social affordable housing mix, community facilities and enhancement of natural landscape and woodland areas. The information contained in this document is supplementary to that provided on the completed bid forms, and is to be regarded as forming part of the bid application.

There has been focus and debate within Aberdeen City and Shire regards provision of housing and services for a growing elderly population, many of whom will develop some form of dementia, but all will, over time, develop a physical or social need for more support within their daily lives and living arrangements. This need and area of concern has been acknowledged, as has concern over provision of affordable housing for those working in the healthcare sector, particularly for those on low incomes. There is also a local note that provision for those in special circumstances, such as fleeing domestic abuse may, or be under significant threat of being stretched.

Taking inspiration from world renowned models and facilities in Holland this proposal incorporate many of these internationally recognised and acclaimed features and applies them to a Scottish and North East Scotland context to create a self contained, bespoke provision which addresses all of these identified issues in a positive way. The dutch models have been held in such high esteem by local authorities, planners, medical professionals, health care organisations and the general public across the world that numerous

variations of them, adapted to suit local requirements and contexts are being rolled out in places as far afield as Canada, Australia, Spain, and Stafford and Brighton in the south of England.

This unique development bid allows people to live in a close, vibrant community, and through using the landscape and outdoors to maximum positive effect help them remain active, have their overall wellbeing intrinsically catered for, and to enjoy a full life experience for as long as possible in their own homes or in a very 'homely' setting. Younger people would also live here and create a supportive intergenerational community spirit, which research has shown to be beneficial to all parties. In addition, it can add quality to and enhance the local environment, provide sustainable employment in the Peterculter area and provide a fresh, ground breaking example for the support of people living with dementia and their families in Scotland.

Through the work of Aberdeen University, the city is recognised as a world leader into research in finding a cure for the illness. Through a unique project and development like this, it could also become a world recognised centre of excellence in the care and support of those living with it, whilst we wait for that cure to be found.

# Concept of the Indicative Proposed Development Bid

## The built environment and social ethos behind it

The village 'hub' consists of a very supported care facility built around a courtyard plaza specialising in living accommodation for people with dementia. This would take all the Hogeweyk concepts and apply them to a North East Scotland/Aberdeen context.

- Person centred care in an environment conducive to quality of life being maintained at a high level for as long as possible
- Small units where residents live in bungalows as couples or individuals in a 'family cluster', supported by key workers/professional carers as is the case at Hogeweyk.
- External features to recreate the look of a typical Aberdeen/Aberdeenshire village taking markers from our cultural rural and coastal heritage and incorporate all dementia friendly features, signage and surfaces to encourage mobility for as long as possible
- Interiors to incorporate all necessary features and adjustments to allow as much individual independence for as long as possible, and decorated in ways like the lifestyle themes of Hogeweyk to reflect what residents would be familiar with and what would resonate with them most
- Use of garden space, small scenic seating areas and raised beds and mini allotments to facilitate residents maximising the use of outdoor space, getting fresh air on a regular, daily basis and having the opportunity to take natural, self motivated exercise as well as any

planned activities which may happen outdoors. All in a safe environment

- A shop, visiting hairdresser/barber/beautician and café would be created within the courtyard and these facilities could be used by all the residents of the whole development, friends, visitors, local groups and any members of the local community.
- A community building is also incorporated into the courtyard which could facilitate visiting healthcare professionals and complementary therapists and facilitate regular appointments as well as a larger room for social gatherings such as sing-a-longs, musical afternoons led by local people, old time dancing, cinema screening old films, concerts, bingo, group craft activities and much more.

The whole atmosphere created within this physical environment would be less busy, confusing and potentially upsetting, and more old worldly with living at a slower pace which the elderly can identify with, and feel very much at home in. There would be scope within the plots/allotment idea for more structured horticultural therapy and opportunities for creating ways for reminiscing about times gone by which are comforting and familiar to them. They could wander about in safety, without getting lost.

The next set of houses, outwith the courtyard area are bungalows, built with ease of living for the elderly in mind,

- design detail and incorporating carefully thought out floor plans.
- It would be anticipated elderly couples and well as single people may move into these bungalows. One or other may have or develop dementia, but they may not. Most likely they may have minor ailments which may over time develop into something more serious. With the physical environment, atmosphere and facilities created it allows for a

flexible, person led approach and individual solutions and support to be put into place cost effectively, with ease and in a timely fashion with as little disruption or stress to the individual as possible. If one does develop dementia the familiarity is already there as well as world class provision, yet for the other person without dementia things are in place so that they are supported in a holistic way, without major upheaval and they can remain active and able to enjoy a full life experience without additional strain which ultimately would have a detrimental effect on their wellbeing too.

- When 2 become 1, the remaining partner is in a familiar and supportive environment where they can take part in the community, are surrounded by friends and neighbours, and can enjoy a good quality of life without feeling so lost or isolated when their life partner is no longer there.
- With the allotments and outdoor spaces – for individual use and other spaces for communal use.
- These are for people who need a lot less care provision, but have the reassurance of facilities etc close at hand and would be encouraged to use all the facilities and activities within the courtyard area.
- A shift from the typical blocks of flats currently on offer. Not all elderly people have lived in flats before, lots will have had their own house with or without a garden so that a huge shift and wrench for them as they become older and frail if they need to downsize to a studio style flat, 1 bedroom flat or a bedroom within a care home. What ideally the proposer believes people in those circumstances would like is something the same, just smaller and more manageable for them, with facilities and support nearby if they needed it. Small bungalows do that.

The third element of the scheme comes again from a different Dutch model. The idea of a sustainable village and a vibrant, healthy population who do not feel isolated lies also in the importance of creating a sense of community and age balance, one of mutual respect and caring in an intergenerational context- not a 'gated' type of community of old people only. The Dutch model is where students are given free or very very cheap accommodation or course fees paid in return for being good neighbours and 'buddies' to the elderly. These projects have shown the main social, emotional and personal benefits there are to both parties.

In this scheme the mix of housing out with the courtyard area would be classed as social but targeted - mixed with the elderly bungalows

- Housing where priority would be given to key healthcare workers on low salaries - this would provide nice quality accommodation for potential staff members, similar to model villages and the sense of community created by some philanthropic industrialists in olden days when factory workers stayed next to their place of work, only on a small scale.
- In addition Aberdeen has an identified issue with very limited accommodation for people escaping domestic abuse. There appears to be a general increase in need for short and mid- longer term solutions for people finding themselves in these circumstances. There is no provision for men in that situation (perhaps numbers are fairly low, and probably hidden, but the Aberdeen charity 'The Cyrenians' have highlighted this as a concern). With women there are 2 main routes to charitable and council supported assistance, but it is rather limited and, if trends continue, demand is likely to outstrip provision. Given the emotional



strain and trauma they are in aside from anything physical, housing concerns must be extremely stressful. So instead of students befriending and living alongside elderly residents a similar scheme could operate where a priority for other bungalows and units on the site could be set for people in these circumstances - with or without young families. Nice countryside surroundings, landscaped areas, opportunities for woodland walks etc would be beneficial for them and any young families from a healing perspective and similar to the student example in Holland could provide a huge benefit to all parties in terms of social interaction, friendship, supporting one another/sharing skills and rebuilding confidence. Old people as neighbours could provide a sense of stability and comfort (visiting grandparents is usually a happy and comforting experience and memory) and the old people have young company and keep young at heart, so both feel less isolated, have a gentle companionship and sense things are going to be alright. These houses rented or part ownership for instance could be operated and perhaps managed by a housing association or similar body which would allow time and space for individuals to gather their thoughts and make plans for their future, either moving elsewhere or staying within the development longer term. Visiting health care personnel help both sets of people, making visits time efficient and effective use of services as the clients are in the same place. We are not aware of any previous research in this particular area as we are not aware of this having been tried elsewhere, however, based on evidence from students and other groups in befriending and intergenerational living environments the evidence strongly suggests a happy and positive outcome for all those concerned.

## The Use of green space, landscaping, allotments and opportunities for horticultural therapy

The importance for attractive areas to sit and enjoy the fresh air, themed garden areas and places where people can grow their own vegetables and flowers, whilst others can take part a tailored horticultural therapy is highlighted throughout this scheme. Anyone who has spent time in a garden understands how therapeutic the experience can be. Gardens are peaceful, restorative places and being out in the fresh air while planting, pruning and tending plants is one of life's simplest and most rewarding pleasures and can be accessible to all as well as providing physical, social and emotional benefits. Horticulture is well known to make a positive contribution to physical health and is used frequently to assist in rehabilitation from serious injury, support with elderly and vulnerable individual and in the care of those with dementia.

Allotments will also be dispersed throughout the scheme and connected by internal walks and footpath networks.

Allotments will vary in size and location, from small ones for shared small group activity, elderly couple or individual use to manageable areas for elderly and amateur gardeners within the Peterculter area who may not have a garden or a vegetable growing area at their own home.

## Woodland planting and Encouraging wildlife and ecosystems

Currently there in a low lying part of the field which as the burn has altered course, can during extreme weather conditions, flood. This only happens in a

small area of low lying ground, which last happened in 2016 when significant flooding was experienced all along the River Dee corridor from Braemar and Ballater to Aberdeen. As a solution to any potential flooding in the future and to add to the balanced diversity of the ecosystems in the area the land owner proposes to plant a riparian woodland of native species throughout this area along the river bank to bolster the trees already there. This has many benefits and can be effectively incorporated into the whole design to create amenity value for all potential residents and for the wider community and people of Peterculter as a whole.

Riparian woodlands are those found next to with streams, rivers and lochs. They occupy a variable area along these bodies of water, depending on slope and the size of the water. They have a multi functional purpose in stabilising the bank, creating good wildlife habitat and being aesthetically pleasing. In this site some riparian woodland does already exist, however it is proposed to extend that significantly into the lower parts of the field, and on the gentler slopes down create a wild flower meadow.

Current situation where marginal vegetation already exists and includes plants and native trees growing along the base of the bank 'with their feet in the water'. Currently this provides valuable habitat for wildlife and some erosion protection for the bank.



What a riparian woodland area might look like once established



## Proposed Planting

- Planting a mixture of native broadleaf trees of local provenance, which are commonly found in the Peterculter area, or would have been at one time because they suit local soil types.

- Species proposed are – birch; alder; willow; oak; rowan; aspen; hawthorn; hazel; ash; yew; blackthorn; wild cherry and holly.
- It is known locally conifers are not a good choice as they provide little protection for river banks against erosion as was evidenced in 2016 during severe flooding the length of the River Dee and when planted close to the river, block out light and make it too dark for river ecosystems to develop and sustain themselves in a balanced way.
- Create distinctive landscape features by planting in clumps and clusters that natural group together well such as Holly and Oak; and tree with others plants which complement each other naturally Oak with blaeberrries and bluebells and Honeysuckle near holly
- Aspen trees would be particularly useful if beavers are reintroduced back into this part of Scotland, although this may be some time away and whether the natural environment in this area is conducive to a thriving beaver population is unknown at this stage.
- Keep planting distances and configurations simple, with a mixture of trees and shrubs to give maximum structural diversity two or three tree species and four or five shrub species, an ideal mix.
- Link planting to existing features to optimise their value for wildlife in the river corridor (eg extending existing areas of scrub or trees).
- Planting kept flexible to allow for planting around existing vegetation features and to leave open areas to create glades which will open out to the wild flower meadow.

Illustrative image of how a planted wild flower meadow could be established



Numerous resources are available to assisting the planting plan and management of Scottish riparian woodlands and there is a wealth of local projects and knowledge where advice and guidance, both statutory, charitable and voluntary, can be sought to ensure best practice

- SEPA
- Crampian Rivers Project ~ Dee and its Tributaries
- Dee Habitat Enhancement Project (at Cambus O'May) Scottish Rural Development Programme
- Restoring and Managing Riparian Woodlands, Scottish Native Woods, 2000
- Riparian Vegetation Management SEPA, June 2009
- The Management of Semi-natural Woodlands: 8. Wet Woodlands, Forestry Commission, 2003
- Scottish Rural Development Programme
- Creating New Native Woodlands, Forestry Commission Bulletin 112, 1994.
- The Selection of Tree Species, M.L. Anderson, 2002.
- Watercourses in the Community, SEPA, 2000.
- The New Rivers and Wildlife Handbook, RSPB/NRA/RSNC, 1995.
- Restoring and Managing Riparian Woodlands, Scottish Native Woods, 2000. Wet Woodlands, Forestry Commission, 2003
- SNH – Natural Heritage Trend – Riparian Woodland in Scotland 2006
- The Water Framework Directive
- Woodland Grant Scheme – Woodland riparian habitat
- Biodiversity Action Plans

# Concept Background

## **EXTREMELY ‘DEMENTIA FRIENDLY’**

The concept behind the development proposal is to create a community which is heavily dependent on supporting people with dementia, but within a community context.

A main part of the scheme takes its inspiration from the “De Hogeweyk” village in a suburb of Amsterdam. This forward thinking facility has a purpose of “changing the way dementia is approached to increase quality of life” through its vision of “living life as normal as possible” through achieving its goal of “minimising confusion and other symptoms of dementia” and offers palliative care in constantly changing circumstances

In this ‘village’ of 8 houses round a ‘town square’, with 23 units(houses) in total on a 4 acre site they have ‘de-institutionalised’ the surroundings and it is internationally recognised as best practice in dementia care. Nothing is clinical in appearance. The environment here resembles a normal world as a mini village with social spaces, a square and boulevard, pedestrian and cycle roads, community building, fully functioning shop, hairdresser and restaurant are incorporated.





Outdoor space with courtyard and plazas





The residents all need nursing home facilities and live in houses differentiated by lifestyle. People live in a 'normal' household, home is where there is a living room, kitchen, bathrooms and bedrooms, with up to 6 other people. Each person or couple would have their own space and bedroom with their own belongings. In addition, each house is styled in a specific lifestyle theme to recreate reality and the environment people were familiar with before they got dementia. This familiarity is for people from all different backgrounds and people are placed in a lifestyle home in line with their previous life, the one that will resonate with them the most and their life experience so far as well as what they would have been used to growing up. People with similar values, backgrounds, approaches to life, life experience and tastes will be placed in the same themed setting so there is common ground. They are sharing a house with people they would probably have been friends with during their lifetime had they know one another. Meals are cooked in a small kitchen, by staff or volunteers with residents assisting where appropriate, so it has a 'family feel' this in turn creates cooking smells and has been shown to increase appetite amongst residents. The placing of residents within a lifestyle theme is done through assessment by staff when a place is being offered, a viewing by the prospective resident before they come to live there and family advice. The themes there are:

- **Urban** ~ for people who have lived in large towns and cities and have had exposure to a cosmopolitan lifestyle will all the social facilities and services large towns have. The houses are themed slightly differently reflecting different aspects of dutch life, but several have an 'old Amsterdam' feel
- **Homely** ~ more typically rural regions of Holland and a having a small cosy, homely feel
- **Creative /Artisan** ~ where the public spaces within the home are decorated colourfully, with craftwork, paintings and interesting objects
- **Indonesian** ~ for those who have associations with Indonesia and the former Dutch West Indies. Décor throughout and within small adjacent garden areas reflect these multicultural influences and Dutch heritage
- **Affluent** ~ where there are furnishing of a more luxurious nature, well set tables with china and glassware at meal times, and where afternoon tea is often served.
- **Traditional** ~ traditional Dutch furnishing, typically traditional Dutch ways of doing things on a daily basis including Dutch foods and traditional dishes served at mealtimes
- **Christian** ~ where religious and spiritual factors have played an important part in the resident's life.

The residents manage their own households, together with a stable team of staff members.

The reason why all this is so significant is because research has shown when people are in institutions or care home facilities as we recognise them, no matter how kind and professional staff are, the environment and surroundings are clinical and people do not recognise this place as 'home', so they go searching for home, wander off and become more and more disoriented and confused. Real life and the modern world is disconcerting

and disturbing for people with dementia. This thoughtfully recreated truth or reality is a truth they can live with and recognise. They feel at home and are 'at home' and do not tend to wander other than to do to the street area and get fresh air.



As gentle exercise is very good, people can walk in safely constructed footpaths and pavements. People can go outside and roam around in a 'normal' pedestrian 'street' or boulevard and square whenever they want to. People can go to a shop like they used to or a café or a hairdresser open some days and decorated in a familiar Dutch style.



There are social activities to attend and being Holland a 'flower fayre' might be held in the square too. Activities such as singing, old time dancing, and screening of old films happen daily as well as craft based activities and music. They are in a protected environment but due to the design it does not feel enclosed, gated and doesn't have a high wall or fence surrounding it. There is choice, so very person lead in approach and care, with no set programme or regime. The village has streets, squares, gardens and a park where the residents move around independently, but in a safe environment. Just like any other village Hogeweyk offers a selection of facilities, like a restaurant, supermarket and a theatre. These facilities can be used by both Hogeweyk residents and people from the surrounding area.

There is an attractive way in and out of the village via a reception area.



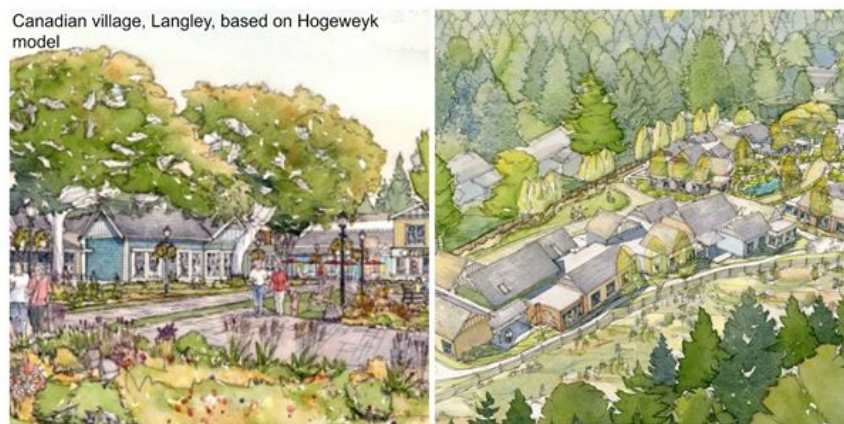
No codes or buzzers to press, and once in the 'village' residents are free to roam and sit outside or walk on the boulevard as they please.

Scientific research shows exercise, fresh air and daylight, views of nature, social contacts, familiar surroundings and living in small groups are critical and really do minimise symptoms of confusion, fear, agitation and even aggression.

This care facility is built very differently, was constructed privately and opened in 2009. In the Dutch system the government pay for residents to live there and there is no financial means testing. Getting a place here is based purely

on need and people from all over the Netherlands have the same chance, regardless of ability to self fund or otherwise. From information publicly available the running and ongoing costs of providing this care is the same as any nursing home across Holland.

Following on from the success at Hogeweyk a similar village is being created in Lanley, British Columbia, Canada



Limewood, in the town of Stafford has been independently audited by the University of Stirling and accredited with a gold award for its design. It is a specialist dementia care home with 59 bedrooms. It includes an innovative dementia hub; the High Street - a 1950s internal street scene with a pub, cinema based on the local Stafford Picture house, and a hairdressers and barbers. It was built by The Wrekin Housing Trust, in partnership with Staffordshire County Council and Galliford Try.

In Brighton a similar scheme is planned with a courtyard garden and like the dutch example it takes inspiration from the local area in its design and relates it to things residents would find familiar such as the seaside, sand, beach huts, landscape features and landmarks, and details like picket fences.

# DEMENTIA CARE, BRIGHTON



Research by Age UK Brighton and Hove with the University of Brighton has found that the design of homes, blocks of flats and sheltered housing is not always conducive to encouraging public interaction. And have started incorporating some of Hogeweyk's ideas into their designs for dementia provision as follows:

- **Familiar environment** ~ functions of places and buildings are obvious, any changes are small scale and incremental;
- **Legible environment** ~ a hierarchy of street types, which are short and fairly narrow. Clear signs at decision points;
- **Distinctive environment** ~ a variety of landmarks, with architectural features in a variety of styles and materials. There is a variety of practical features, e.g. trees and street furniture.

- **Accessible environment** ~ land uses are mixed with shops and services within a 5-10 minute walk from housing. Entrances to places are obvious and easy to use and conform to disabled access regulations.
- **Comfortable environment** ~ open space is well defined with toilets, seating, shelter and good lighting. Background and traffic noise should be minimised through planting and fencing. Street clutter is minimal to not impede walking or distract attention.
- **Safe environment** ~ footpaths are wide, flat and non-slip, development is orientated to avoid creating dark shadows or bright glare.

The creation of 'village' style developments are also being looked at to meet specific social needs occurring in other sectors such as a supported living village for homeless people near Edinburgh which is being developed and operated by the charity "Social Bite" to help homeless people get back on their feet.



## USING GARDENS, HORTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND GREEN SPACES OUTDOORS TO SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND CREATE A SENSE OF WELLBEING IN GENERAL



Another element incorporated into this design is the use of land for horticulture, allotment plots, gardens and landscaped areas.

This feature is to the overall well being of residents and locals of any age. However, these areas can also be used for Social and Therapeutic Horticulture, also known as Horticultural Therapy.

Two national organisations who promote gardening in this way are “Thrive” and the “Horticultural Therapy Trust”, as well as being widely used by many NHS Trusts for rehabilitation and treatment programmes.

Social and therapeutic horticulture is the process of using plants and gardens in a very flexible way to improve physical and mental health, as well as communication and thinking skills

It also uses the garden as a safe and secure place to develop someone's ability to mix socially, make friends and learn practical skills that will help them to be more independent and can form part of a rehabilitation programme after serious injury. Such programmes have also been found to be particularly helpful for people suffering from various stages of dementia as these examples illustrate:



Above Hogeweyk buildings and green spaces and squares. Below Hogeweyk garden areas and raised bed where residents can continue to garden even if in a wheelchair.



Using gardening tasks and the garden itself horticultural therapists build a set of activities for each gardener to improve their particular health needs, and to work on certain goals they want to achieve.

The benefits of a sustained and active interest in gardening include:

- Better physical health through exercise and learning how to use or strengthen muscles to improve mobility
- Maintaining and continuing an already active interest in gardening and horticulture. Eg. growing own veg.
- Improved mental health through a sense of purpose and achievement
- The opportunity to connect with others – reducing feelings of isolation or exclusion
- Acquiring new skills
- Just feeling better for being outside, in touch with nature and in the 'great outdoors'

Source : Thrive charity information booklet



## Therapy and rehabilitation

Social and therapeutic horticulture (STH) can benefit people in a number of ways:

- It can be part of a person's rehabilitation process, to help them recover and 'find their feet again' after an illness or a difficult time in their lives
- It can help people recover from a wide range of conditions
- It can help people to learn new skills
- Can help slow down the deterioration seen when someone has a degenerative illness.

Social and therapeutic horticulture also benefits people with many different disabilities, including those recovering from stroke and heart disease, blind and partially sighted people, those in the early stages of dementia, and people with physical and learning disabilities.

Garden projects are also found in the grounds of prisons or hospitals. Local examples in a healthcare setting can be found at Cornhill Hospital in Aberdeen and also the Robertson Family Roof Garden for anyone to enjoy – patients, staff and visitors at ARI.

Thrive charity says “The main thing we notice is a building confidence. Plants enable a gentle socialisation. Clients enjoy being out in the changing seasons and the joy of watching plants grow.” “Potting introduces other skills – counting, writing labels, measuring compost mixes, dressing – that help clients focus in a mindful way.”

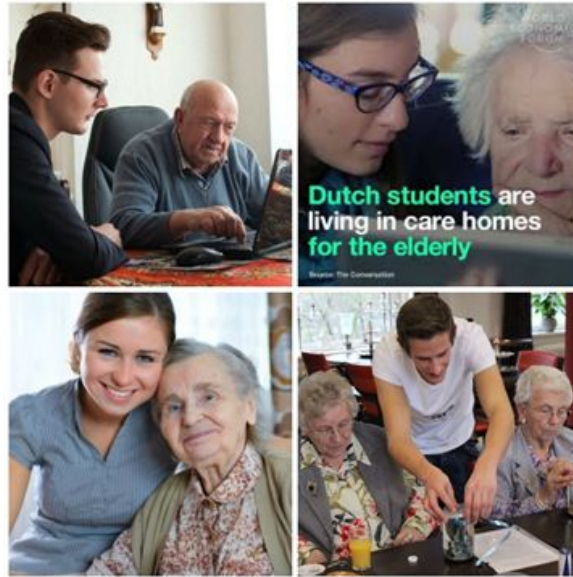
Angus Council is working in partnership with Historic Environment Scotland to fund a five year Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme to enhance the appearance of Kirriemuir Conservation Area. During this time, a conservation area appraisal and management plan was produced to analyse the area's special character and a programme of works was undertaken to improve the built fabric and public realm. The regeneration scheme sits alongside work being undertaken by the Dementia Friendly Kirriemuir Project, a three-year programme funded by the Life Changes Trust. The Council gave planning permission for a change of use and approved the lease of derelict land in Kirriemuir to develop a dementia friendly garden with a rent of £1.00 per year. The garden will be a safe, friendly, outdoor space that people living with dementia, their carers and family, as well as members of the local community can enjoy and help to maintain. These projects have also reduced clutter within the public realm and provide a sympathetic approach to meeting the needs of both the historic built environment and those living in the area, particularly people living with dementia.

The Place Standard 22 is a tool developed by the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland and Architecture and Design Scotland. It is designed to help people talk about how they feel about their place. It is being used by local

authorities as a framework for consultation on development, however it could easily be used by people with dementia and their carers to evaluate their local environment. For instance, access to good, safe outside space, with good views from inside the building as daily exposure to daylight improves health. These features of good design reflect the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation.

## **CREATING A PHYSICAL SPACE TO CREATE AND FOSTER COMMUNITY SPIRIT AND INTERGENERATIONAL FRIENDSHIPS**

Another Dutch project that formed part of the thinking behind this scheme was a elderly care project in Deventer in Holland where a care home provide rent free accommodation to university students in exchange for 30 hours a month of their time “acting as good neighbours” and ‘buddies’ for the elderly residents through getting more people young and old spending time together. Students in their early twenties share their lives with residents in their eighties and nineties. As part of their volunteer agreement the students also spend time teaching residents new skills such as how to email, use social media and skype. Behind this programme is research showing that reducing loneliness and social isolation improves wellbeing and extends life expectancy in older people and can help students living away from home in similar ways. Young people feel they had gained a better understanding and had grown in positive ways as people as a result of their involvement in befriending their elderly neighbours. Students bring the outside world in and there is lots of warmth in the contact. One 19 year old urban planning student said “I enjoyed cooking and sometimes just ‘hanging out’. Elderly people are very full of life. As a student you can learn a lot”.



According to the International Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, a similar programme, which began in Barcelona in 1996 has been repeated in more than 20 cities throughout Spain, with programmes being launched in France and Ohio, USA as well.

In England the University of Exeter ran a similar scheme and found young people gained a sense of connecting with older generations and enjoyed sharing conversations, literature and developing friendships with them. Their research showed reading poetry with dementia sufferers brought comfort and reassurance through hearing and reciting familiar verses they may have learned as children and young people. Residents regain a sense of themselves “as a whole person, past and present”

Another example for bringing young and old together was in England where a nursery school was incorporated into the care home building and children frequently share activities with the elderly residents. Inspired by Channel 4’s “Old People’s Home for 4 year olds”, which the Guardian newspaper

described as 'moving and uplifting' several care homes have regular visits by local nursery schools several days a week in Camborne, Bristol and Leicester.

## **REASONING BEHIND EXTENDING RIPARIAN WOODLAND AREA AND CREATING A WILD FLOWER MEADOW**

The benefits of riparian woodland – For the local environment and ecosystems:

- The roots of bankside trees and associated vegetation help to bind and strengthen stream banks, reducing the risk of bank collapse, erosion and siltation
- They can help prevent water lying further from the bank itself.
- Underwater roots provide shelter and homes for freshwater life.
- Reduces the risk of flooding. Rivers in high flow can be slowed down by riparian vegetation alleviating flood problems. Riparian vegetation can slow down surface runoff during heavy rain, further reducing flooding problems
- The woodland canopy casts shade over the water surface, which helps to reduce extremes of water temperature that can be damaging to freshwater life. Shading also helps to reduce excessive weed growth that can choke watercourses. The actual leaf litter falling into the water can form the foundation of the river's food chain. Most ecosystems have green plants as their primary producer. Many upland streams are too cold or nutrient-poor to allow plants to grow, and so leaf litter from riparian trees becomes the main source of energy.
- Falling twigs, leaves and insects provide an important source of food for freshwater life, while fallen logs and branches can form woody dams



and pools that help to enrich freshwater habitats and slow down flood flows.

- Protects water quality by enhancing freshwater biodiversity by reducing erosion and pollution and contributing to the regulation of water flow.
- The trees, ground vegetation and surface roots can trap sediment and remove nutrient and other pollutants in water draining from adjacent land on route to the watercourse.
- Riparian woodlands as a whole provide diverse niches for wildlife and tend to be ecologically rich due to the variety of habitats that they support.
- They often form important refuges for wildlife and help to assist migration by linking other woodland and related habitats in the wider landscape.
- Can reduce the risk of flooding by increasing the channel 'roughness', slowing flows and stopping flows increasing downstream
- Trees on the river's edge have a huge and beneficial impact on the biological health of the river. Invertebrates falling into the water from leaves and branches form up to 90% of the diet for a number of fish, such as the brown trout. The undercuts and deep pools created along a tree-lined river bank give shelter and shade to salmonid fish. Shade is important as it keeps the growth of water weeds in balance, and regulates the temperature of the water. Many species of plants and animals utilise riparian vegetation; for example, otters use tree roots as places for rest and protection, and bats use trees as roosts. Species in the water environment can be highly dependent on riparian vegetation; for example, insects falling off plant foliage can form a significant component of the food for salmon and trout. Indeed, leaves and other plant materials falling into watercourses from riparian

vegetation can form the basis for the entire food chain in the water environment.

- Woody debris, often sourced from the riparian zone, plays an important role in storing/recycling organic material in rivers, which in turn feeds invertebrates.
- It also provides refuge for fish. The shade and cover which riparian vegetation creates can also be important for aquatic organisms.
- In addition, the strips of riparian habitat along watercourses are often the only semi-natural habitat present in an area. The 'corridor' of habitat that a river bank can provide links areas together allowing species to move between them.
- Tree shelter belts around the north eastern part of the site will soften any noise associated with football matches played at weekends on the football pitches a short walk away as well as providing an additional ecosystem and wildlife habitat

## For People:

- Another benefit of riparian woodlands is their attractiveness to people, being valued both in terms of recreation and landscape views.
- There is an ever changing, seasonal visual beauty to the landscape which provides an attractive setting and backdrop for informal recreation.
- Trees provide shelter from wind and rain
- It's often quieter in woods than in more open spaces – trees can reduce noise levels
- Trees and woods give a sense of cover and seclusion
- More people can visit woodland than an open green space without disturbing each other

- Being able to view woodlands seems to help to reduce stress and mental fatigue
- Behavioural and emotional problems may improve with exposure to woodlands and greenspace

# The Site and its Environs

The site is situated to the north west of Peterculter village centre. It is accessed from Malcolm Road, and passed Culter Football Club at Crombie Park. Currently it is a 14 acre (5.7 ha) field used for grazing.

Within the scheme a road with associated parking would run parallel to the old truck road which now forms part of the local core path network. There are two existing historic entrances and access to the field. All the built development would take place on high ground, which does not flood. The planting of riparian woodland would take place on a partial flood plain.

The road from Malcolm Road to the field has seen development over the years with individual and small clusters of residential dwellings, 2 football pitches and home of Culter Football Club, and 2 industrial units which operate as a garage and vehicle body repair workshop.

A development of this size for elderly and social housing as outlined would be likely to have no or a negligible impact on noise in comparison to any of the activities taking place in the surrounding vicinity. Due to the extending of existing marginal riparian buffer to a significant extent, screen planting and the creation of wild flower meadow, and a strong emphasis of green space throughout the creation of this scheme would greatly enhance biodiversity and the environment for wildlife rather than diminish or detract from it.

The scheme is an appropriate use of land within the boundary of Peterculter, provides a solution to some identified current and future needs, with sufficient space without geographical or ownership constraints, to create a very special landmark facility of regional and national significance. It can be delivered in a timely fashion in order to address these needs as quickly as possible.

# Some Relevant Policy Indicators

Scottish Planning Policy states that “the planning system should identify a generous supply of land for each housing market area...maintaining at least a five year supply of effective housing land at all times”. It should be informed by a robust housing need and demand assessment (HNDA). As part of the HNDA, “local authorities are required to consider the need for specialist provision that covers accessible and adapted housing, wheelchair housing and supported accommodation, including care homes and sheltered housing. This supports independent living for elderly people and those with a disability. Where a need is identified, planning authorities should prepare policies to support the delivery of appropriate housing and consider allocating specific sites”. The HNDA should include a detailed survey and analysis of older people, their housing tenure, population projections and a breakdown of older people’s disabilities including those with dementia. One of the priority proposals in the draft Scotland National Dementia Strategy 2016-2031 is to work collaboratively with Integrated Joint Boards to support locality planning giving attention to the broader housing and accommodation needs of people with dementia; and to supporting social inclusion.

Aberdeen City and Shire Housing Need and Demand Assessment was published in 2017

Population projections suggest that the largest population increase in both City and Shire will be in people of pensionable age and in particular those over 75. In 2016 32,000 (14.4%) of population in Aberdeen City were aged 65

and over. In addition to this there was a continuing trend of an increasing population of in people over 80 between 2001 and 2011. For the year 2014-2039 there is a projected increase in population of pensionable age by 20.5% in the City and 35.2% in the Shire. The population aged 75 and over will increase significantly by 66% in the City and by 107% in the Shire during the same period.

18,285 households in Aberdeen City were headed by someone aged 60-74 in 2014, and 10,971 were headed by someone aged 75+

Figures in March 2014 showed a drop in care homes for older people in Aberdeen City from 38 to 31. This resulted in a reduction in care home places by 270 (15.3%)

In the document “Dementia and Town Planning” evidence has shown that “good quality housing and well planned, enabling local environments can have a substantial impact on the quality of life of someone living with dementia, helping them to live well for longer and of course, town planning has a key role to play if health and social care policies are to succeed. If you get an area right for people with dementia, you get it right for older people, for young disabled people, for families with small children, and ultimately for everyone.” “It is vital that people with dementia stay as active as they can - physically, mentally and socially. People with dementia need meaningful activities they enjoy, which can maintain their confidence.” However, a survey by Alzheimer’s Society found that 35 percent of people with dementia said they only go out once a week or less and 10 percent said once a month or less. The local environment is a fundamental factor contributing to the quality of life of older people, it can either be enabling or disabling. Access to green space and nature has particular benefits for people with dementia, including better mood, memory and communication, and improved concentration. It is

also important to consider the significant role that consistency and familiarity plays in giving people confidence and helping them to feel safe. Clearly careful consideration should be given to the design and location of housing for older people; whether this is mainstream housing, bungalows, step free apartments, sheltered housing, extra care, retirement or residential care homes.

National Planning Policy Accessible and Adapted Provision National Policies  
There is a range of national legislation and policy that will have an impact on the provision of accessible and adapted housing.

- Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Self-Directed Support (Scotland) Act 2013
- The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
- Age, Home and Community: A Strategy for Housing for Scotland's Older People 2012-2021
- Reshaping Care for Older People: A Programme for Change 2011- 2021
- Scotland's National Dementia Strategy 2013-2016
- All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an Ageing Population 2010
- Shifting the Balance of Care
- Improving the Design of Homes to Assist People with Dementia Local Policy

This includes and helps inform:

- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Strategic Plan Housing Contribution Statements
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Local Housing Strategies 2012-2017
- Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Schemes of Assistance Property Needs

In Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire there is a wide variety of accessible and adapted property types. These include housing that is ground level access or lift access, housing for varying needs, wheelchair accessible, ground-level, barrier-free; accessible kitchens and bathrooms; sheltered, very sheltered and extra care housing. Specific interventions include community alarms, low level appliances, ramp access, dementia friendly design features, adaptations, Telecare and assistive technology.

These types of housing are suitable for:

- Older people
- People with disabilities
- People with dementia

The provision of suitable housing is one of the key challenges presented by an ageing population. Older people are more likely to either live alone, or in a household where all persons are aged 65 or older. Unsuitable housing impacts directly on health and providing appropriate housing of suitable quality and standard offers the potential to reduce costs to health and social care, and allow older people to remain independent.

## Property Needs

The older generation are more likely to require smaller housing and there is a requirement for local authorities to ensure that there is an adequate supply of sheltered, very sheltered and amenity housing.

It is also important to consider the locality of housing for older people; the close proximity to local services, the informal support network of older people is likely to be in their local neighbourhood, and to move vulnerable people may increase social isolation.

The key features of housing for older people are based on the standards for general needs housing with additional features which must include:



- Barrier free access where accommodation is on the ground or first floor level or in blocks over two storeys high served by at least one lift.
- Space standards should be the same as for one or two person general needs houses.
- Handrails provided on both sides of all common access stairs, and on at least one side of all common access areas and passages.
- Bathroom doors are either sliding or capable of opening outwards, and fitted with locks operable from the outside and have floors with a non-slip finish. Handrails are fitted beside the WC and bath/shower.
- Appropriate heating system in place with light switches and socket outlets fixed as per legislation.
- A warden and a community alarm service is provided.
- Very sheltered housing has all the features for sheltered housing with additional special bathroom facilities, 24 hour on site support and the provision of a hot meal each day.

Technology plays an increasing role in everyday life and is being integrated into housing service development transforming service delivery. Features such as telecare and assistive technologies are being rolled out to all sheltered and very sheltered facilities in the social rented sector.

More flexible support packages through the use of electronic assistive technology systems are needed to improve the quality of life for vulnerable older people to enable them to maintain their independence.

5.16 The key aim of the Integration of health and social care set out through the Public bodies (Joint Working Act (2014) is to enable independent living where appropriate.

Across Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire there has been a gradual reduction in the provision of care homes for the elderly and this will increase demand

for homes designed for older people or housing that can be adapted to meet their needs.

There is a limited range of housing options for older people other than sheltered housing or residential care. **There is a lack of affordable housing of suitable size and design to suit this client group. Building new affordable housing to meet older people's needs is a priority to enable downsizing where appropriate and provide homes that are accessible and adaptable.**

One of the Scottish Government key drivers in the integration of health and social care is 'shifting the balance of care' towards independent living in the community and reducing the use of institutional care settings. Older people want to live in their own homes for as long as possible, rather than in hospitals and care homes and this is supported through the following policy documents and legislation. The key aim of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 is to address the challenges associated with the current health and social care system in Scotland including the need to respond to an ageing population and shifting the balance of care from acute to community-based facilities.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, RSLs and other housing organisations make a contribution to achieving many of the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and this is reflected in the Housing Contribution Statements. **It shows the important role the provision of suitable housing (including housing with care or support) plays in helping to "shift the balance of care" and promote independent living for as long as possible in the community.**

In April 2016, health services and local authorities formally integrated services to provide a more joined-up and person centred approach to health and social care, enabling independent living where appropriate. National health and wellbeing outcomes and associated joint strategic commissioning plans

and housing contribution statements provides a practical framework and set an ambitious agenda to improve the health and wellbeing of people across Scotland within a challenging context of an ageing population, public sector budget constraints, technological change and increasing expectations.

Further evidence will be gathered locally to inform the locality plans within both Aberdeen city and Aberdeenshire. **Housing is at the heart of**

**independent living and can improve the lives of vulnerable and older people and significantly reduce health and care costs.**

In Aberdeen City, 6650 over 65 year olds receive some sort of social care. It has been acknowledge in the Social Care Survey that the number of people with dementia is under reported and are significantly lower than the figures produced by Alzheimer Scotland

## **FUTURE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY AND POSITIVE WAYS FORWARD FOR PERSON CENTRED CARE OF ELDERLY / VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS**

There is a limited range of housing options for older people other than sheltered housing or residential care. There is a lack of affordable housing of suitable size and design to suit this client group. Building new affordable housing to meet older people's needs is a priority to enable downsizing where appropriate and provide homes that are accessible and adaptable. Engagement has taken place with partners on the Particular Needs Strategic Outcome Group.

With a high proportion of older people projected to live alone this will mean increasing pressure on housing, health and social care services with some

households requiring high level intensive support. A main factor for people with dementia is to keep them in familiar surroundings which helps to maintain their independence for as long as possible and both local authorities are committed to providing care at home for older people with complex needs, including those with dementia. However, the number of people in Scotland with dementia is expected to double over the next 25 years which presents a number of challenges. In 2016 Alzheimer Scotland reported 3,372 people with dementia in Aberdeen city and 4,189 in Aberdeenshire with 96% in the 65+ age group. In future, the majority of care home residents will display symptoms of dementia. The model of care and staff training will need to adjust to support residents to manage daily routines safely and optimise their quality of life.

There are often difficulties in staffing care facilities due to high housing cost and rental prices within the City and Shire in comparison to the relatively low wages most care workers receive.

Grampian Women's Aid is currently commissioned to provide accommodation and support to women fleeing domestic violence in both local authority areas. GWA also run their "Pathway From Abuse Project" which assists and supports individuals or families for up to 6 months with one to one support, counselling, community learning classes, job search support, and support to maintain an existing or new home. There are currently no such services for men in the same position.

Aberdeen Cyrenians' Domestic Abuse Support and Accommodation Project (DASAP), in partnership with Aberdeen City Council's, provides an intensive three-month support service and accommodation for men and women fleeing domestic violence in Aberdeen City. DASAP assists in gathering information for statutory assessment of homelessness or discretionary move, provides support to maintain an existing tenancy where it is desired and safe

to do so, and provides practical and emotional support to move into and maintain a new tenancy.

In recent years and at 30 October 2017, Grampian Women's Aid provides:

- Aberdeen city block of flats comprising 6 flats of 1-3 bedrooms
- Aberdeen city 4 scatter flats comprising 2 x 1-bedroom and 2 x 2-bedroom units
- Aberdeenshire communal refuge over two floors all with en-suite shower rooms

In future years it is important to consider that provision should meet need that arises from a large geographical area across Aberdeenshire. In Aberdeen city it should be recognised that the number of homeless presentations fleeing from a violent/abusive dispute has risen significantly since 2012-2014 and these trends should be monitored in the future to ensure there is sufficient provision. In Aberdeen city, two refuges with 11 bed spaces were provided and closed at the end of 2016/17. Currently housing support is provided to residents in a tenement with 6 flats and 4 cluster flats. This new service will be reviewed to ensure it is meeting this specific need with the potential for additional support to be provided if necessary.

# Conclusion

This is a green field site on the edge of Peterculter, within the settlement boundary of Peterculter. It is currently an open field used for grazing, with no significant landscape, environmental or technical features to impede development. Servicing the site can be done within a reasonable cost and various options and solutions are available making it a highly deliverable site in practical terms. Access can be achieved with little impact. There is already right of way to the site and the current means of access can be upgraded, which would be of additional benefit to existing residents, businesses and community facilities already taking their access from it too.

The landscaping which plays such an important role in the ethos behind the proposal with physical, social and emotional benefits for individuals it brings, also makes a huge positive contribution to the physical natural environment of the area, local ecosystems and biodiversity by increasing and enhancing wildlife habitats and adding to the amenity value and enjoyment of the local countryside for the whole community.

If zoned this is a unique, 'stand alone' model village which will be created and developed in a thoughtful, considered way can bring positive solutions and address some difficult existing challenges regards the housing and support of a range of people in specific circumstances, whilst promoting the valuable contribution the land, countryside and natural environment brings to a high quality life experience and community.

# References

All images used in this document are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst some are the bid proposers' own, others, taken from examples of excellence in design, horticultural contexts, and care of the elderly from across the globe have been used to help demonstrate the aspirational ambience we hope to create in Peterculter.

Credit:

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Urban wildlife garden, London fields