

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM

ABERDEEN, 25 September 2025. Minute of Meeting of the PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PRE-APPLICATION FORUM.
Present:- Councillor McRae, Convener; Councillor Greig, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Alphonse, Boulton, Clark, Copland and Macdonald.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURE NOTE

1. The Forum had before it the procedure note and guidance for members on the operation of Forum meetings.

The Forum resolved:-

to note the procedure note and guidance for members.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 7 NOVEMBER 2024

2. The Forum had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 7 November 2024, for approval.

The Forum resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

MAJOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT WITH ASSOCIATED OPEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING, INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING LINK ROAD AND ENGINEERING WORKS - LAND AT INCHGARTH ROAD, CULTS, ABERDEEN - 250723

3. The Forum had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, on the submission of a Proposal of Application by Ryden LLP on behalf of CALA Management Ltd for the proposed major residential development with associated open space, landscaping, infrastructure including link road and engineering works, at land At Inchgarth Road, Cults, Aberdeen, planning reference number 250723.

The report advised that in terms of the site description, the site subject to this proposal comprised an area of 10.6 hectares within the green belt and the Pitfodels

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Conservation Area, broadly separating the established residential areas of Garthdee and Cults. The site was on the northern side of the Lower Deeside Dee valley and slopes from north to south towards the River Dee, which was located approximately 500m to the south. It was bisected by the Deeside Old Railway Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS) and the Deeside Way (Core Path Number 66). The defined boundary of the River Dee Special Area of Conservation was at its closest approximately 300m to the southeast. The River Dee Corridor LNCS was approximately 130m to the south. North Deeside Road (A93) and Inchgarth Road bound the northern and southern extremities of the site respectively. The residential curtilage of low-density detached dwellinghouses within large residential plots bound the site to the west and east. The site mainly consists of former fields that have largely become self-seeded with plants and woodland and is primarily identified as open space in the Open Space Audit 2024. The site included a significant proportion of the green belt in this part of Aberdeen City.

The open space within the site was also included in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023 as Green Space Network, primarily as undeveloped natural / semi-natural open space of open ground and woodland. There were several informal recreational paths within the open spaces and historic granite boundary walls. An overhead power line crosses the site from the north to the south and a pylon is located at the edge of the site near the Deeside Way.

There were mature trees throughout the site visible from a range of public areas within and around the site. All trees on the site were protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) 8, 21 and 237. An area to the south of the site was included within the Ancient Woodland Inventory. The nearest listed buildings are the category C listed (former) Pitfodels Station Building, which was approximately 20m outside of the application boundary on the northern side of the Deeside Way. The boundary walls of the category C listed Inchgarth House bound the site to the south, on the opposite side of Inchgarth Road.

The application site was located within the Pitfodels Conservation Area and there were several historic assets within the site boundary. The Pitfodels Castle Motte was approximately 300 m to the south-east.

In terms of the proposal, it was noted that the proposed development comprised a major residential development with associated open space, landscaping and infrastructure, including a link road and engineering works. The number of residential dwellings, the extent of ground developed, the details of any link road, including its relationship with the Deeside Way, would be established through a subsequent application for planning permission. However, the documentation submitted to the planning authority with the Proposal of Application Notice stated that there would be between 100 to 115 new dwellinghouses, a link road running north-south through the site connecting Inchgarth Road and North Deeside Road, and engineering works, comprising land cutting and filling to create suitable levels for development, due to the slope of the site.

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The Forum heard from Mr Roy Brown, Senior Planner, who addressed the Forum and provided details regarding the planning aspects of the application.

Mr Brown provided details on the relevant planning policies noting that the following policies were relevant to the proposed application in regards to National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and also the Local Development Plan (LDP) (2023):-

NPF4:-

- Policy 1 (Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises)
- Policy 2 (Climate Mitigation and Adaptation)
- Policy 3 (Biodiversity) • Policy 4 (Natural Places)
- Policy 5 (Soils)
- Policy 6 (Forestry, Woodland and Trees)
- Policy 7 (Historic Assets and Places) • Policy 8 (Green Belts)
- Policy 11 (Energy)
- Policy 12 (Zero Waste)
- Policy 13 (Sustainable Transport)
- Policy 14 (Design, Quality and Place)
- Policy 15 (Local Living and 20 Minute Neighbourhoods)
- Policy 16 (Quality Homes)
- Policy 18 (Infrastructure First)
- Policy 20 (Blue and Green Infrastructure)
- Policy 21 (Play, Recreation and Sport)
- Policy 22 (Flood Risk and Water Management)
- Policy 23 (Health and Safety)
- Policy 24 (Digital Infrastructure)
- Policy 25 (Community Wealth Building)

Local Development Plan:-

- Policy CI1 (Digital Infrastructure)
- Policy D1 (Quality Placemaking)
- Policy D2 (Amenity) • Policy D3 (Density)
- Policy D4 (Landscape)
- Policy D5 (Landscape Design)
- Policy D6 (Historic Environment)
- Policy D7 (Our Granite Heritage)
- Policy H3 (Density)
- Policy H4 (Housing Mix and Need)
- Policy H5 (Affordable Housing)
- Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations)
- Policy NE1 (Green Belt) • Policy NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure)
- Policy NE3 (Our Natural Heritage)
- Policy NE4 (Our Water Environment)

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- Policy NE5 (Trees and Woodland)
- Policy R2 (Degraded and Contaminated Land)
- Policy R5 (Waste Management Requirements for New Developments)
- Policy R6 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency)
- Policy T1 (Land for Transport)
- Policy T2 (Sustainable Transport)
- Policy T3 (Parking) • Policy WB1 (Healthy Developments)
- Policy WB2 (Air Quality)
- Policy WB3 (Noise)

It was noted that as part of the application, the applicant had been advised that the following information would need to accompany the formal submission:-

- Pre-Application Consultation Report
- Design and Access Statement
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report (the scope of which was to be confirmed through the forthcoming scoping opinion, 250936/ESP).
- Construction Environmental Management Plan
- Contaminated Land Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Drainage Impact Assessment
- Heritage Statement
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Light Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; and
- Transport Assessment

The Forum then heard from Michael Lorimer, Ryden LLP, agent for the proposed application, and Ross McLennan and Gavin Sharp from CALA.

Mr Lorimer began the presentation and advised that the site benefitted from Planning Permission in Principle from 2023 for a residential- led over 50's retirement village, and noted that the site was marketed for the above however that proposal was no longer viable. CALA were now seeking to take the site forward from a residential development as a viable alternative.

Mr Lorimer explained that CALA had a successful track record of delivering sustainable residential developments and the current proposal would allow for approximately 103 homes, of which 25% would be affordable housing, substantial open space and new links to the Deeside Way. He indicated that both the previously approved development and the current proposal included a much needed link road between North Deeside Road and Inchgarth Road.

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The layout followed similar principles to the existing permission and masterplan. With development focused to the east of the proposed route of the new link road. A large swathe of public open space was identified along the link road corridor and to the west of it, with provision for SUDS identified near Inchgarth Road access.

Mr Lorimer noted that the removal of some of the higher density elements of the previous masterplan including the care home, commercial area and apartment blocks, created the opportunity for a more organic layout, respecting the established character and plot layouts with the immediate surroundings.

In terms of consultation, Mr Lorimer advised that the Proposal of Application Notice was submitted on 7 July 2025 and two consultation events were held at the Marcliffe Hotel in August and September 2025. The first event presented the site context, planning history and draft proposals and the second event presented more advanced proposals, a summary of feedback received and CALA's responses to feedback. It was noted that the consultation advertising measures exceeded the statutory requirements.

Mr Lorimer advised that both events were well attended and feedback was mostly positive but with some opposition.

In conclusion Mr Lorimer advised that it was a viable development to deliver the link road, there would be improved safety and amenity for residents of streets used as rat runs, there would be improved connectivity to the Deeside Way, the design would futureproof a potential bus route connection, it was a less dense development than the previously approved application and there was a range of house types proposed to meet the various demands, which included a mix of open market and affordable housing.

In regards to the next steps, a survey and design process was still ongoing, which would take consultation and Community Council feedback into account, it was anticipated that the complete application would be submitted at the end of 2025, should the application be approved it was hoped that CALA could be on site by autumn 2026, with the first homes completed by summer 2027 and the road completed by the summer of 2028.

Members were then given the opportunity to ask questions of both Mr Brown and the applicant team and the following was noted:-

- They would retain the granite where possible;
- The affordable housing would be a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties;
- Within the Local Development Plan 2023, the land was retained as greenbelt;
- A transport assessment would be carried out and this was a key part of the application;
- There had been discussions with bus companies, however this had not progressed presently but would resume once the planning application was submitted;

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- It was anticipated that the zoned schools would be Cults Primary and Cults Academy;
- They had engaged with the local medical practises and this would be incorporated into the final planning application; and
- At present no traffic calming measures were proposed.

The report recommended:-

that the Forum –

- (a) note the key issues identified;
- (b) if necessary, seek clarification on any particular matters; and
- (c) identify relevant issues which they would like the applicant to consider and address in any future application.

The Forum resolved:-

- (i) to thank Mr Lorimer, Mr Sharp and Mr McLennan for their informative presentation; and
 - (ii) to request that the applicant consider the points raised above.
- **Councillor Ciaran McRae, Convener**