

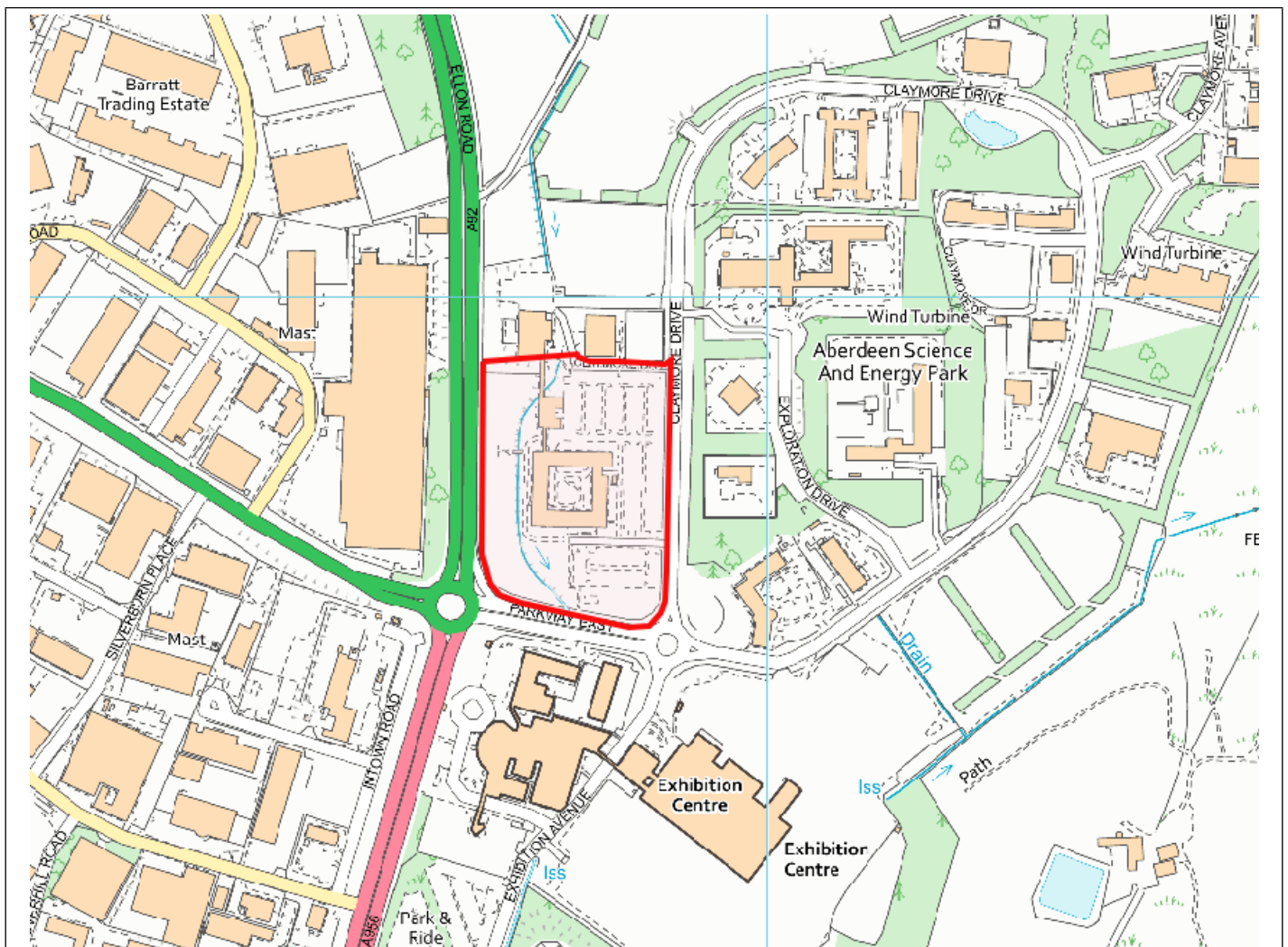


# Pre-Application Forum

Report by Development Management Manager

**Committee Date: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

<b>Site Address:</b>	Silverburn House, Claymore Drive, Aberdeen, AB23 8GD
<b>Application Description:</b>	Major residential development of around 100 to 150 units (mix of house types and flats), potentially including facilities consisting of approximately 1000-3000 sqm of class 1(shops), 2(financial, professional and other services) and class 3(food and drink)
<b>Application Ref:</b>	191150/PAN
<b>Application Type</b>	Proposal of Application Notice
<b>Application Date:</b>	18 July 2019
<b>Applicant:</b>	Parklands View LLP Per CTL Estates
<b>Ward:</b>	Bridge Of Don
<b>Community Council:</b>	Bridge Of Don
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Gavin Evans



## RECOMMENDATION

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It is recommended that the Forum

- (i) Note the key issues identified;
- (ii) If necessary seek clarification on any particular matters; and
- (iii) Identify relevant issues which they would like the applicants to consider and address in any future application.

## APPLICATION BACKGROUND

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### Site Description

The site is that of the former Silverburn House, a recently-demolished office building located in a prominent position on a main route (A92 Ellon Road) into Aberdeen from the north. The site has recently been cleared, but Silverburn house had provided 5 floors of office accommodation, laid out in a series of four interconnected wings, arranged around a central inner courtyard. The building is understood to have been constructed in the 1980s and was formerly occupied by Baker Hughes. The site also included 414 car parking spaces and a separate sports building, though the latter lies outwith the application site. The building was set back from Ellon Road by approximately 50m, with this ground in between planted with grass and trees. The car parking was located to the eastern side of the site, which is estimated to be of approximately 3.7 hectares.

This site forms part of the Aberdeen Energy Park, which lies north of the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre and on the eastern side of Ellon Road. Silverburn House and the surrounding land to the north and east is identified in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) as 'Specialist Employment Areas', with a focus on Class 4 (business) uses.

To the south of the site lies the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre, which is zoned within a 'Mixed Use' area and identified as Opportunity Site OP13 in the ALDP. An application for Planning Permission in Principle for the redevelopment of the now-disused AECC facility was submitted in May 2015, proposing *'demolition of existing buildings and erection of a mixed use development to include (approximately 498) residential units, commercial and business use, recycling centre and park and ride facility'*. The Planning Development Management Committee considered this application in December 2015 (and again in May 2018) and expressed a willingness to *'Approve conditionally with permission to be withheld until a legal agreement is entered into to secure: affordable housing; and developer obligations relating to primary education, community facilities, sports and recreation, healthcare, transportation and open space'*.

Beyond the former AECC site lies existing residential development, accessed from via King Robert's Way, from the Ellon Road/North Donside Road roundabout. On the western side of Ellon Road (A92) is the Bridge of Don Industrial Estate, which is zoned for Business and Industrial Use under policy B1 of the ALDP.

## APPLICATION DESCRIPTION

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### Description of Proposal

The submitted Proposal of Application Notice form describes the proposed development as follows:

*“Major Development – Residential development of around 100-150 units (mix of house types and flats), potentially including facilities such as medical centre, convenience store, coffee shop, play park”*

## **CONSIDERATIONS**

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### **National Planning Policy and Guidance**

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP): Scottish Government policy on nationally important land use planning matters.

Designing Streets: Scottish Government policy and technical guidance on street design.

Creating Places: Scottish Government policy statement on architecture and place.

### **Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2014) (SDP)**

The purpose of the SDP is to set a spatial strategy for the future development of the Aberdeen City and Shire. The general objectives of the plan are promoting economic growth and sustainable economic development which will reduce carbon dioxide production, adapting to the effects of climate change, limiting the use of non-renewable resources, encouraging population growth, maintaining and improving the region's built, natural and cultural assets, promoting sustainable communities and improving accessibility.

From the 29 March 2019, the Strategic Development Plan 2014 will be beyond its five-year review period. In the light of this, for proposals which are regionally or strategically significant or give rise to cross boundary issues between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development will be a significant material consideration in line with Scottish Planning Policy 2014.

The Aberdeen City Local Development Plan 2017 will continue to be the primary document against which applications are considered. The Proposed Aberdeen City & Shire SDP 2020 may also be a material consideration.

### **Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2017)**

- Policy D1 – Quality Placemaking by Design
- Policy D2 – Landscape
- Policy I1 – Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations
- Policy T2 – Managing the Transport Impact of Development
- Policy T3 – Sustainable and Active Travel
- Policy T4 – Air Quality
- Policy T5 – Noise
- Policy B2 – Specialist Employment Areas
- Policy H3 – Density
- Policy H4 – Housing Mix
- Policy H5 – Affordable Housing
- Policy NE1 – Green Space Network
- Policy NE4 – Open Space Provision in New Development
- Policy NE5 – Trees and Woodlands
- Policy NE6 – Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality

- Policy NE8 – Natural Heritage
- Policy NE9 – Access and Informal Recreation
- Policy R6 – Waste Management Requirements for New Development
- Policy R7 – Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency
- Policy CI1 – Digital Infrastructure

### **Supplementary Guidance and Technical Advice Notes**

- Master Plans;
- Energetica;
- Transport and Accessibility;
- Noise;
- Planning Obligations;
- Affordable Housing;
- Landscape;
- Green Space Network and Open Space;
- Trees and Woodland;
- Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality.
- Aberdeen Masterplanning Proces

### **Other Material Considerations**

- Planning Advice Note 67: Housing Quality
- Planning Advice Note 75: Planning for Transport
- Planning Advice Note 83: Master Planning
- Planning Advice Note 1/2011: Planning and Noise

## **EVALUATION**

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### **Principle of Development**

The Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) designates the Silverburn House site and the land to the south and east as 'Specialist Employment Areas'. In such areas, policy B2 applies. Policy B2 sets out that only Class 4 (Business) uses will be permitted, with a focus on activities associated with research, design and development, knowledge-driven industries and related education and training. Policy B2 provides for a mix of Class 4 (Business), Class 5 (General Industrial) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) uses at the Aberdeen Energy Park, and allows for facilities that 'directly support business uses' where they would 'enhance the attraction and sustainability of the Specialist Employment Area for investment'.

The terms of policy B2 do not provide for residential development, and the scale of the development proposed is such that it could not reasonably be considered to 'directly support business uses' or enhance the attraction of the Specialist Employment Area for its intended uses. On that basis, the proposal would likely be considered as a significant departure from the Development Plan, necessitating a statutory Pre-Determination Hearing in addition to the usual procedures relating to Pre-Application Consultation and submission of a Proposal of Application Notice for a 'Major' development.

In terms of assessing any such departure, the planning authority's assessment would need to consider the implications of introducing a residential use in this location, which may create conflict

with existing commercial/industrial land uses (both existing and future planned development), along with the implications of losing a significant proportion of a Specialist Employment designation. It should be noted that current difficulties in marketing office accommodation would not in itself justify a residential use in this location.

The Local Development Plan aims to allocate land to meet identified housing needs, and the City's housing land supply is audited each year as part of the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Housing Land Audit (HLA). Such audits aim to establish the extent of any constraints affecting supply, in order to determine whether a five year effective land supply is maintained, based on the housing requirements set out by the Strategic Development Plan. The 2018 HLA identified an 8.1 year supply, which suggests that there is no shortage of available housing land where such residential development might be accommodated. It may also be for the planning authority to consider the extent to which accommodating residential development on land designated for other purposes could serve to undermine the aims of the plan in terms of offering certainty to communities and developers on the location and extent of new residential developments.

### **Layout and Design**

This Proposal of Application Notice was not accompanied by detailed proposals, so this report identifies general principles that would be relevant based on the red line boundary and the detail in the application form provided. As noted above, the principle of residential development on this site is contrary to the provisions of the Development Plan, and any advice on matters of design, scale and layout should be read in that context.

Issues of layout, scale and design will need to be considered against Policy D1 - Quality Placemaking by Design and Policy D2 – Landscape. Policy D1 advises that all development must ensure high standards of design and have a strong and distinctive sense of place which takes into account the context of the surrounding area and will be required to offer opportunities for connectivity which take in to account the character and scale of the development.

Developments that contribute to placemaking will help sustain and enhance the social, economic, environmental and cultural attractiveness of the city. Proposals will be considered against six essential qualities:

- Distinctive
- Welcoming
- Safe and pleasant
- Easy to move around
- Adaptable
- Resource efficient

Policy D2 (Landscape) requires that developments have a strong landscape framework, which “improves and enhances the setting and visual impact of developments, unifies urban form, provides shelter, creates local identity and promotes biodiversity”. Any application must be accompanied by a landscape strategy and management plan, incorporating hard and soft landscaping design specifications.

Notwithstanding issues of principle, the following points should be considered in developing any proposals further:

- The relationship between any development and Ellon Road will be a significant factor influencing its layout. Given the volume of traffic carried by the road and the associated noise, it is likely that a buffer will be required between buildings and the road – the extent of that buffer might be determined by assessment of likely noise levels relative to standard

requirements for residential accommodation. Noise and location relative to the road may undermine the value of any public open space in this location, so the useability of any such spaces will require careful consideration.

- Policy D2 (Landscape) seeks enhancement of landscape setting and promotion of biodiversity. Proposals should include a landscape strategy and management plan, detailing hard and soft landscaping design specifications. In this case, the location of the site relative to an arterial route into the city is of relevance in terms of enhancing that approach.
- Public Open Space provision, with a clearly identifiable open space or play function, must be made on-site wherever practicable. Open space provision should be integrated into the layout, and spaces should be useable and convenient for the homes they serve. Policy NE4 set out standards for the provision of open space in new residential development, with further detail contained in related SG.
- Building heights and form are not provided, so little advice can be offered on these aspects of the proposal. A Design Statement would be required to accompany any application, demonstrating how the proposal has evolved in response to the site context and any constraints. This should have regard for the development frameworks/masterplans previously prepared for the Bridge of Don AECC and employment land at Murcar.
- The relationship between any proposed residential development and the neighbouring land uses will also be a key consideration in assessment of any proposal. The emerging context will be influenced by existing land uses, as yet undeveloped allocations and any planning consents granted, such as that at the Bridge of Don AECC site. Potential conflict between residential use and current and future business and industrial sites will be a major factor, and will influence the layout of any proposals. The response to these factors should be set out as part of a Masterplan and Design and Access Statement.
- On-site car parking provision should generally be made in accordance with the rates set out in the Council's 'Transport and Accessibility' Supplementary Guidance. Whilst sustainable travel is supported, it is recognised that there will be a requirement for car parking sufficient to meet the needs of the development, and this site is located some distance from the City Centre, in the 'outer city' as identified in the Council's SG. Any under-provision of car parking must be adequately justified based on the circumstances of the site, and may necessitate mitigation in terms of measures to support sustainable travel or contribution towards on-site or local car club provision.
- Policy H4 states a requirement for developments over 50 units to include a mix of dwelling types and sizes, in accordance with a masterplan. Provision should be made on site for smaller 1 and 2 bedroom units, along with provision for accessible properties such as bungalows, which are particularly suited to older people or those with mobility issues. If accommodation is not to achieve an appropriate mix, then supporting information will be required to evidence any case that the market does not support a particular form of accommodation in this location.
- As noted above, policy H4 requires a Masterplan to be provided. A clear design strategy is expected to inform and support any proposals, with the masterplan process to be applied to larger sites, such as this. The Aberdeen Masterplanning Process Technical Advice Note sets out expectations for the content of any masterplan document accompanying an application, though it is noted that the full process of adoption as Supplementary Guidance

would not apply, given the significant departure from the Development Plan inherent within this proposal.

- Any Masterplan and Design and Access statement provided in support of an application should address the density of development. Policy H3 requires that residential developments achieve a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare (net), and supporting documents should demonstrate what areas have been included in any calculation.
- H5 (Affordable Housing) – No less than 25% of housing units shall be affordable. Further guidance is available in the related SG, with the expectation that these will be delivered onsite.

### **Transport and Accessibility**

With regards to sustainable and active travel, Policies T2 - Managing the Transport Impact of Development and T3 - Sustainable and Active Travel are of relevance. Policy T2 requires that all new developments demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel.

In terms of Policy T3, new developments must be accessible by a range of transport modes, with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport. The internal layout of developments must prioritise walking, cycling and public transport penetration. In addition, links between residential, employment, recreation and other facilities must be protected or improved for non-motorised transport users, making it quick, convenient and safe for people to travel by walking and cycling.

Proposals are likely to require a Transport Assessment/ Statement and Travel Plan, which should demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel, both internally and in linking the site to its surroundings. 'Safe Route to Schools' are critical in identifying preferred routes between new residential developments and schools infrastructure, and making provision for improvements to pedestrian infrastructure where necessary and linked to the nature and scale of development. Such improvements would be required from the point of first occupations. It is recommended that the applicants liaise with ACC's Roads Development Management team for further advice regarding vehicular access/egress and roads layout, as well as any crossing (pedestrian and multi-modal) points of roads. Passive/Active electric vehicle charging points should be provided in accordance with ACC's 'Transport and Accessibility' SG.

Policy NE9 – Access and Informal Recreation advises that developments should include new or improved provision for public access, permeability and/or links to green space for recreation and active travel. There is an existing path network in the vicinity of the site, therefore every effort should be made to show connectivity to these areas.

### **Technical Matters**

Development must be accompanied by the infrastructure, services and facilities required to support new or expanded communities and the scale and type of developments proposed. Where additional demands on community facilities or infrastructure that would necessitate new facilities or exacerbate deficiencies in existing provision, the Council will require the developer to meet or contribute to the cost of providing or improving such infrastructure or facilities. The level of infrastructure requirements and contributions will be outlined by the Council, through an assessment of Developer Obligations, and will relate to the scale and impacts of the development proposed, in line with Policy I1 - Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations. Early engagement with the Council's Developer Obligations Team is encouraged in order to establish headline requirements and establish the likely scope and extent of any obligations.

Any requirements for improvement to transport infrastructure in the surrounding area would be identified by the Council's Roads Development Management Team.

Given the location of the development relative to a busy main road and existing and future commercial/industrial uses, it is likely that there will be exposure to noise. As such and as per the requirements of Policy T5 – Noise, a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) will be required in support of any application. The Council's Environmental Health service will be able to advise on the scope and methodology for a Noise Impact Assessment.

As per the requirements of Policy NE6 - Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality, a Drainage Impact Assessment (DIA) will be required in support of any application. The DIA should detail how surface water and wastewater will be managed. Surface water drainage associated with development must: (i) be the most appropriate available in terms of SuDS; and (ii) avoid flooding and pollution both during and after construction.

All new developments should have sufficient space for the storage of general waste, recyclable materials and compostable wastes where appropriate. Flatted developments will require communal facilities that allow for the separate storage and collection of these materials. The commercial/retail aspect of the development shall include recycling facilities, where appropriate. Details of storage facilities and means of collection must be included as part of a planning application for any development which would generate waste as per the requirement of Policy R6 - Waste Management Requirements for New Development. ACC's Waste Strategy Team can provide feedback on the location of any infrastructure to support waste/recycling storage and collection.

Buildings must meet at least 20% of the building regulations carbon dioxide emissions reduction target applicable at the time of the application through low and zero carbon generating technology. With regards to water efficiency, all new buildings are required to use water saving technologies and techniques. This is a requirement of Policy R7 - Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency and details should be submitted with any application or would be requested via condition.

## **PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION**

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At the time the Proposal of Application was submitted, the applicants had proposed to hold a Pre-Application Consultation event at the sports centre on Claymore Drive, on Tues 8<sup>th</sup> October, between 12 noon and 7pm.

## **NECESSARY INFORMATION TO SUPPORT ANY FUTURE APPLICATION**

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As part of any application, the following information would need to accompany a formal application for planning permission –

- Pre-Application Consultation Report
- Drainage Impact Assessment
- Analysis of Business/Industrial and Housing Land supply
- Details of mitigation of potential conflict between housing and business/industrial uses
- Masterplan
- Design and Access Statement
- Landscape Strategy and Management Plan



- Transport Assessment / Transport Statement (depending on number of units proposed)
- Travel Plan
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Affordable Housing Delivery Strategy
- Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan
- Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency Statement

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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It is recommended that the Forum

- (i) Note the key issues identified;
  - (ii) If necessary, seek clarification on any particular matters; and
  - (iii) Identify relevant issues which they would like the applicants to consider and address in any future application.
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