

Environmental Policy team response - planning application, masterplan, and development framework consultations

PROPOSAL DETAILS

	Enter details in this column
Application / plan name	Application Address: High Point 242 North Deeside Road Peterculter Aberdeen AB14 0UQ Proposal Description: Erection of 14 residential flats over 3 and 4 storeys, 1 shop unit and subdivision of existing flat to form 2 flats with associated infrastructure
Application reference number / reference	211791/DPP
Planning case officer	Robert Forbes
Date of request	23/12/2021
Date response required	13/1/2022
Date of response	
EP team (name of responder)	Richard Brough
Other EP team members	Guy Bergman Kevin Wright Choose an item. Choose an item. Choose an item.
Other Services consulted by EP	e.g. Environmental Services Specify:
Site Visited?	Choose an item.

POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Relevant policy and legislation	Enter text in this column
Relevant LDP policies Link Relevant Supplementary Guidance/Technical Advice Note Link	NE4 - Open Space Provision in New Development NE6 - Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality Choose an item. SG/TAN; First select a Topic Area Green Space Network and Open Space First select a Topic Area Choose an item. Development Frameworks / Masterplans:
Other key references, e.g. ACC strategies, Local Biodiversity Action Plan, Scottish Planning Policy, National Planning Framework, TPO/Cons area/GSN GIS tool	Local Planning Advice: Other Key References: Choose an item.

COMMENTS

Topic	Comments (including compliance, non-compliance and reasoning)
Natural Heritage	<p>The LNCS incorporating Culter Burn is located at its nearest point, approximately 110m to the Northwest of the proposal site. The Drainage Impact Assessment states that the collection, treatment, and attenuation of surface water will be on site utilising permeable paving and will be discharged into the existing combined sewer. If this option is taken, there should be no negative impacts on the LNCS Cutler Burn.</p> <p>The submitted bat survey is not adequate to rule out the use of the outbuildings by bats; a further activity survey will be required to be undertaken at an appropriate time of year to rule out the use of the building by bats. A potential roost</p>

	<p>feature was identified in Building C and the survey concludes that the buildings have ‘very little bat roost potential’. In terms of Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines the survey has concluded that the building has ‘low roost suitability’ as potential roost features have been identified. For buildings identified with low roost suitability a single activity survey is required to be undertaken during the bat activity season. Whilst the survey report notes that ‘any areas where bats could roost are covered in cobwebs’ this only demonstrates that potential roost features have not been recently used and does not rule out the use of the building by bats over a longer time period.</p> <p>Please note bat surveys cannot be conditioned; the application should not be determined until an adequate bat survey has been submitted.</p>
Landscape	<p>There is a lack of open space within the proposed site layout to accommodate meaningful areas of landscaping. A reduction in the footprint of the proposed building would allow for further areas of open space and landscape planting. This would better accord with LDP policy D2 Landscape and potentially contribute more to biodiversity using native plants and/or plants suitable for pollinators. The submitted landscape plan does not include any tree planting. There is scope for tree planting within the amenity space shown in the north of the site. The use of raised beds and planters is encouraged to further soften the development. Although the Surface Water Assessment states there is no significant demand for non- potable water on site, if raised beds are incorporated into the development, rainwater captured on site and stored in water butts could be used for watering plants. Raised beds would also provide an opportunity for small scale food growing.</p> <p>The Surface Water Assessment states that implementing green roofs would not offer a practical or cost-effective surface water drainage option however surface water drainage is not the only benefit/function green roofs and walls provide. Particularly on developments where there is limited space for soft landscaping, green walls and roofs can make a valuable contribution to biodiversity and carbon sequestration. They can also soften the appearance of buildings and look attractive.</p> <p>A detailed landscape plan is required. This should include species, numbers, planting size and densities. A landscape maintenance scheme is required.</p>
Trees	<p>The proposed development is unlikely to result in any significant impacts on the existing tree stock. The theoretical root protection area of tree 14 may be marginally impacted if re-surfacing works of the current access are undertaken. However it is unlikely that the displayed RPA on the tree survey drawings are as extensive as shown due to local restrictions to the tree rooting environment.</p> <p>A small area of the development is located within the zone of influence of trees on the north boundary of the property. Whilst this impact is worth noting the trees in their current state have a limited retention period and may benefit from</p>

	<p>such works as outlined in the survey report. If undertaken this would reduce their overall height and consequently reduce the ZOI of the existing trees.</p>
<p>Open Space</p>	<p>Background information</p> <p>There is a proposed erection of 14 residential flats over 3 and 4 storeys, 1 shop unit and subdivision of existing flat to form 2 flats with associated infrastructure.</p> <p>The quality of open spaces in the local area is mixed with a number of sites that have a low-quality score according to the open space audit 2010 quality criteria and could therefore be improved. Households in the Lower Deeside ward have poor access to equipped play space provision and there is no play space within the 400m recommended open space distance thresholds of the development. Lower Deeside is lacking in major park and allotment provision however a high percentage of households have access to Natural / Semi-Natural open spaces.</p> <p>Impact of Development</p> <p>The proposed development would lead to a reduction in open space and would provide an additional 14 accommodation units. This would result in an increase in population generating additional demand on existing open spaces such as local parks, play and open and green spaces.</p> <p>Open Space Provision</p> <p>Open space provided as part of a new development should be functional, useful and publicly desirable. Access to good quality open space helps to make Aberdeen an attractive place to live, work and invest and improves the health and wellbeing of our citizens and this is particularly important for flatted developments.</p> <p>The development has a dense layout and lacks meaningful open space. Meaningful public or communal open space should be provided in all residential developments. Consideration should be given to reducing the footprint and number of units / layouts on site to provide larger, better connected and more meaningful open spaces with a clearer identity and purpose. There appear to be areas that are spaces left over after planning (SLOAP) included as formal open spaces.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to reducing the amount of hard standing surfaces and proposed car parking spaces to soften the proposal and this would also improve drainage. A reduction in car parking and an increase in amenity areas would soften the site and provide better amenity for residents.</p>

	<p>What are the proposed specifications of the green / amenity areas on the landscape plan? Further detail is required. The position of the drying green next to car parking is also not optimal.</p> <p>The amenity space to the north east of the site is isolated could be better connected to the open space to the west of the site.</p> <p>Opportunities to improve communal areas through planters, raised beds, and appropriate furniture should be explored and this would enhance the amenity of the proposed development.</p> <p>Note that balconies cannot be included as overall open space provision . Balconies are not public open spaces however these are welcome positive design features and offer recreational and health benefits for residents.</p> <p>Where there is insufficient open space provided as part of the proposal in reference to Supplementary Guidance: Green Space Network & Open Space, or where the Council’s Open Space Audit demonstrates that the minimum quantity and accessibility standards are not met by existing provision, then a contribution towards raising the quality of existing provision may be necessary.</p>
Outdoor Access	
Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures	
Construction	
Other	

CONCLUSION

Summary of environmental effects of concern
Natural Heritage
<p>Landscape</p> <p>There is a lack of open space within the proposed site layout to accommodate landscaping. A reduction in the footprint of the proposed building would allow for further landscape planting. This would better accord with LDP policy D2 Landscape and make a better contribution to biodiversity. A detailed landscape plan is required. This should include species, numbers, planting size and densities. The landscape plan does not include any tree planting. There is scope for tree planting within the amenity space shown in the north of the site. The use of raised beds and planters is encouraged to further soften the development. A landscape maintenance scheme is required. Green walls and roofs should be given further consideration.</p>

Trees
<p>Open Space Open space provided as part of a new development should be functional, useful and publicly desirable. Consideration should be given to reducing the footprint and number of units and layout on site to provide larger, better connected and more meaningful open spaces with a clearer identity and purpose. Opportunities to improve open space provision through a revised layout which addresses the concerns highlighted should be explored.</p> <p>Where there is insufficient open space provided as part of the proposal in reference to Supplementary Guidance: Green Space Network & Open Space, or where the Council’s Open Space Audit demonstrates that the minimum quantity and accessibility standards are not met by existing provision, then a contribution towards raising the quality of existing provision may be necessary.</p>
Outdoor Access
Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures
Construction
Other

ACTION POINTS

<p>Natural Heritage 1.</p>
<p>Landscape 2. A revised site layout with a reduced footprint is recommended to allow for a more meaningful landscape layout that better accords with Policy D2 Landscape. A detailed Landscape Plan is required together with a Landscape Maintenance Schedule.</p>
<p>Trees 3.</p>
<p>Open Space 4. Consideration should be given to reducing the footprint and number of units / layouts on site to provide larger, better connected and more meaningful open spaces.</p>
<p>Outdoor Access 5.</p>

Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures 6.
Construction 7.
Other 8.