



Pre-Application Forum

Report by Development Management Manager

Meeting Date: 25 August 2022

Site Address:	Former Cordyce School, Riverview Drive, Dyce, Aberdeen AB21 7NF
Description of Proposal:	Major residential development with associated infrastructure, open space and landscaping
Notice Ref:	220815/PAN
Notice Type:	Proposal of Application Notice
Notice Date:	27 June 2022
Applicant:	Barratt And David Wilson Homes
Ward:	Dyce/Bucksburn/Danestone
Community Council:	Dyce And Stoneywood
Case Officer:	Dineke Brasier



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RECOMMENDATION

It is 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 applicants to consider and address in any future application.

BACKGROUND

Site Description

The proposed development site is an irregular shaped area extending to c.7.9ha and is located in the green belt. The site is bounded by the River Don to its north and east, and mature trees to its south and west. Beyond the tree belt to the south is Riverview Drive, which provides a direct connection to the residential area, shops and community facilities in Dyce. To its west are some scattered buildings, including some residential dwellings and farm buildings, with the A947 – Oldmeldrum Road beyond.

The site was previously occupied by the Cordyce Special Needs School and associated facilities, including playground and playing fields. The school closed in 2018 following the opening of the Orchard Brae School, and all buildings have since been demolished, following fire damage, with all rubble removed off site. An existing access road leads to Riverview Drive. There is a distinct level difference between the relatively flat area that was previously occupied by the school buildings and associated playing fields and the river to the north and east, which lies at a lower level. In addition to the tree belts to the south and west, within the site are some further groups of trees. There is a footpath running along the riverbank.

Relevant Planning History

A Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) was submitted for this proposal under planning reference 220815/PAN on 27th June 2022. Details submitted included the intention to undertake a public consultation event, but no details of when this would take place were submitted. The PoAN therefore remains pending until further information is available.

DESCRIPTION

Description of Proposal

A major residential development of approximately 90 dwellings with associated infrastructure, open space and landscaping.

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legislative Requirements

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that where, in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the provisions of the Development Plan and that determination shall be made in accordance with the plan, so far as material to the application unless material considerations indicate otherwise

Development Plan

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (2020)

The current Strategic Development Plan for Aberdeen City and Shire was approved by Scottish Ministers in September 2020 and forms the strategic component of the Development Plan. No issues of strategic or cross boundary significance have been identified.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2017)

Section 16 (1)(a)(ii) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires that, where there is a current local development plan, a proposed local development plan must be submitted to Scottish Ministers within 5 years after the date on which the current plan was approved. From 21 January 2022, the extant local development plan will be beyond this 5-year period. The Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2020 has been submitted to the Planning & Environmental Appeals Division at the Scottish Government in July 2021. The formal examination in public of the Proposed Local Development Plan 2020 has commenced with reporters appointed. Material consideration will be given to the Proposed Local Development Plan 2020, in the context of the progress of its examination, in the assessment of planning applications.

Given the extant local development plan is beyond its five-year review period consideration, where relevant, weight should be given to paragraph 33 of the Scottish Planning Policy (2014) which states: "Where relevant policies in a development plan are out-of-date or the plan does not contain policies relevant to the proposal, then the presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development will be a significant material consideration.

The following policies are relevant –

- NE2: Green Belt
- D1: Quality Placemaking by Design
- D2: Landscape
- I1: Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligation
- T2: Managing the Transport Impact of Development
- T3: Sustainable and Active Travel
- B4: Aberdeen Airport
- H3: Density
- H4: Housing Mix
- H5: Affordable Housing
- NE1: Green Space Network

- NE4: Open Space Provision in New Development
- NE5: Trees and Woodland
- NE6: Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality
- NE8: Natural Heritage
- NE9: Access and Informal Recreation
- R6: Waste Management Requirements for New Developments
- R7: Low and Zero Carbon Building and Water Efficiency
- C11: Digital Infrastructure

Supplementary Guidance

Affordable Housing
 Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality
 Green Space Network and Open Space
 Natural Heritage
 Planning Obligations
 Resources for New Development
 Transport and Accessibility
 Trees and Woodlands

Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2020)

The Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan (Proposed ALDP) was approved at the Council meeting of 2 March 2020. A period of representation in public was undertaken from May to August 2020 and the Proposed ALDP has since been submitted to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division for Examination in Public. The Proposed ALDP constitutes the Council's settled view as to what the final content of the next adopted ALDP should be and is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2017 will continue to be the primary document against which applications are considered. The exact weight to be given to matters contained in the Proposed ALDP (including individual policies) in relation to specific applications will depend on whether –

- such matters have or have not received representations as a result of the period of representations in public for the Proposed ALDP;
- the level of representations received in relation to relevant components of the Proposed ALDP and their relevance of these matters to the application under consideration.

The foregoing can only be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The following policies are relevant –

- LR1: Land Release
- WB1: Health Developments
- NE2: Green and Blue Infrastructure
- NE3: Natural Heritage
- NE4: Our Water Environment
- NE5: Trees and Woodland
- D1: Quality Placemaking
- D2: Amenity
- D4: Landscape
- D5: Landscape Design
- R5: Waste Management Requirements in New Development
- R6: Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency
- H3: Density
- H4: Housing Mix and Need
- H5: Affordable Housing

- I1: Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations
- T2: Sustainable Transport
- T3: Parking
- C11: Digital Infrastructure
- B3: Airport and Perwinnes Radar

EVALUATION

Principle of Development

The site is currently located in land designated as green belt in the 2017 Aberdeen Local Development Plan, and as such, policy NE2 (Green Belt) would apply. This policy is very restrictive and generally does not allow development apart from that essential for agriculture; woodland and forestry; recreational uses compatible with an agricultural or natural setting; mineral extraction/ quarry restoration; or landscape renewal.

However, following the closure of the Cordyce School in 2018, the site is now allocated in the 2020 Proposed Local Development Plan as OP14. The accompanying text to this proposed allocation sets out that the site could be suitable for a number of uses, including housing (50-100 units); a garden centre; and a health and fitness village. As part of the Proposed LDP consultation process, a total of six representations were received in relation to this proposed allocation, which thus forms part of the currently ongoing Examination of the proposed local plan. The allocation of the site is thus a material consideration, but the weight that can be afforded to the Proposed LDP is limited at this time. This situation will change following receipt of the Report of Examination and subsequent Adoption of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, anticipated to be in early 2023. The timing of any formal application submission is therefore important.

It should be noted that in both the current and proposed local development plan, the site is covered by a Green Space Network designation around the brownfield development area, and policy NE1 would apply. This policy sets out that the Council will protect, promote and enhance the wildlife, access, recreation, ecosystem services and landscape value of the Green Space Network, and that proposals for development that are likely to destroy or erode the character and/or function of the Green Space Network will not be permitted. Development which has a negative impact on existing wildlife habitats and connections, or other features of value to natural heritage, open space, landscape and recreation, should be mitigated through enhancement of the Green Space Network.

Layout, Scale and Design

Issues of layout, scale and design will need to be considered against policy D1 (Quality Placemaking by Design). This policy advises that all development must ensure high standards of design, and have a strong and distinctive sense of place which takes account of the context of the surrounding area, and will be required to offer opportunities for connectivity, which take into account the character and scale of the development, and how it will sit within this wider context.

Proposals will be considered against six essential qualities:

1. Distinctive;
2. Welcoming;
3. Safe and pleasant;
4. Easy to move around;
5. Adaptable; and
6. Resource efficient.

Given the setting of the site immediately adjacent to the River Don in a relatively undeveloped area to the north east of Riverview Drive and the main settlement of Dyce, policy D2 (Landscape) will also be important. This policy sets out that developments will have a strong landscape framework which improves and enhances the setting and visual impact of the development, unifies

urban form, provides shelter, creates local identity and promotes biodiversity.

Policies H3 (Density) and H4 (Housing Mix) are both relevant. Policy H3 seeks an appropriate density of development on all residential development sites. It sets out that a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare is required for sites exceeding 1ha, but that consideration should be given to the site's characteristics and those of the surrounding area to achieve an acceptable level of development. Policy H4 sets out that housing developments of more than 50 units are required to achieve an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes.

Policy NE4 (Open Space Provision in New Development) sets out that new open space should be provided as part of any development, with a minimum of 2.8ha of meaningful and useful open space provided per 1000 people delivered. Public or communal open space should be provided in all residential developments.

Natural Environment

The site is adjacent to and includes part of the River Don Corridor Local Nature Conservation Site (LNCS) along its edge with the river. It contains and borders onto areas of woodland and mature trees to the west and south, with additional tree clusters located centrally within the site. Due to the presence of the trees and the river, the site is considered a suitable bat habitat. Taking this together, policies NE5 (Trees and Woodland) and NE8 (Natural Heritage) apply.

NE5 sets out that there is a presumption against all activities and development that will result in the loss of, or damage to, trees and woodlands that contribute to nature conservation, landscape character, local amenity or climate change adaptation and mitigation. It also sets out that the majority of development sites offer opportunities for the planting of trees and hedgerows.

Policy NE8 sets out that direct and indirect effects on sites protected by natural heritage designations are important considerations in the planning process. Development that is likely to impact on a locally designated site, including LNCS, should seek to address this through careful design and mitigation measures. In addition, development should seek to avoid any detrimental impact on protected species through the carrying out of surveys and submission of protection plans describing appropriate mitigation measures where necessary.

Part of the site is included in the SEPA flood risk maps, and may be liable to flooding. Policy NE6 (Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality) sets out that a Flood Risk Assessment will be required to ensure that the proposed development would not increase the risk of flooding both on the development site, or in the surrounding area. This will thus need to be submitted with any application on the site.

Transport and Access

Policy T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development) sets out that all new development must demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated and to maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel. Under policy T3 (Sustainable and Active Travel) it must be demonstrated that all new development should be accessible by a range of transport modes, with an emphasis on active and sustainable transport, including consideration of its position in relation to active bus, cycle and pedestrian routes. Furthermore, policy NE9 (Access and Informal Recreation) sets out that new development should not compromise the integrity of existing or potential recreational opportunities including general access rights to land and water, Core Paths, other paths and rights of way; and that, wherever possible, developments should include new or improved provision for public access, permeability and/or links to green space for recreation and active travel.

Technical Matters

Waste

Policy R6 (Waste Management Requirements for New Developments) sets out that all new

developments should have sufficient space for the storage of general waste, recyclable materials and compostable wastes. Details of storage facilities and means of collection must be included as part of the planning application submission.

Sustainable Development

Policy R7 (Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, and Water Efficiency) sets out that all new buildings must meet at least 20% of the building regulations carbon dioxide emissions reduction target applicable at the time of the application through the installation of low and zero carbon generating technologies. Furthermore, all new buildings are required to use water saving technologies and techniques.

Digital Infrastructure

Policy C11 (Digital Infrastructure) sets out that all new residential development will be expected to have access to modern, up-to-date high-speed communications infrastructure.

Aberdeen Airport

The site falls within the Aberdeen Airport Safeguarding Map, and will thus be subject to consultation with Aberdeen Airport Safeguarding Team. Any proposed development must not compromise the safe operation of the airport. Matters such as the height of buildings, external lighting, landscaping, bird hazard management and impact on communication and navigation equipment will be taken into account in assessing any potential impact.

Developer Obligations

Policy I1 (Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations) sets out that 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 a development will place 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. In addition, policy H5 (Affordable Housing) sets out that all residential development of 5 or more units are required to contribute no less than 25% of the total number of units as affordable housing.

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

In 220815/PAN, the applicant has indicated that, as a minimum, they will undertake a public consultation event and set up a dedicated website. These events are expected to take place late Summer/ early Autumn 2022, but no further details have been submitted at this stage. The results of any pre-application consultation will need to be submitted as part of the Pre-Application Consultation Report, which will form part of the planning application.

NECESSARY INFORMATION TO SUPPORT ANY FUTURE APPLICATION

As part of any application, the following information will need to accompany the formal submission

- Design and Access Statement, including visualisations;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Landscape Strategy;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, including Bat Roost Potential for trees;
- Planning Statement;
- Pre-Application Consultation Report;
- Transport Assessment/Transport Statement;
- Travel Plan; and

- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment;

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Forum –

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