

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE Development Management Sub-Committee

DATE 19 April 2012

LEAD HEAD OF SERVICE
Margaret Bochel

DIRECTOR
Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT North Garthdee Farm Planning Brief

REPORT NUMBER EPI/12/101

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012 highlights the requirement for a Planning Brief to be produced for allocated site OP65 – North Garthdee Farm.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a brief produced by Ryden for the site; this has been appended to this report. The Planning Brief went to the Development Management Sub-Committee on 22 March 2012 but was deferred until the 19 April 2012 to ensure that the contents, page numbers and headings were accurate and to clarify some points on the consultation process. These issues have now been addressed and are highlighted in paragraphs 5.6 and 5.7 of this report.
- 1.3 The North Garthdee Farm Planning Brief (March 2012) can also be viewed by accessing the following link:

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning
- 1.4 A hard copy of the Planning Brief is available in the Member's Library and within the Planning and Sustainable Development Service at Ground Floor North, Marischal College.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- 2.2 (a) Adopt the North Garthdee Farm Planning Brief as interim planning advice,

 (b) Agree for officers to implement the process to ratify the planning brief as Supplementary Guidance to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan by the Scottish Government.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report outwith normal officer time to evaluate the Planning Brief. The developers have met the cost of preparation of the Planning Brief, including all consultation and engagement.

4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no known property, legal or equipment implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 The Planning Brief reduces the risk of piecemeal and inappropriate development within the site, by setting out the policies, opportunities and constraints up front.
- 4.3 Approving the Planning Brief will contribute to efficiencies in determining future planning applications by giving clear guidance on planning matters up front.
- 4.4 In accordance with the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, Appendix 4, the Proposed Action Programme and the Infrastructure and Developer Contributions Manual, the Planning Brief references the need to highlights these requirements including cumulative and local transport infrastructure, public transport and walking and cycling.
- 4.5 A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken on the North Garthdee Farm site as part of the preparation for the Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

5 BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 The North Garthdee Farm site is allocated in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan for 80 homes for the period 2007 - 2016, with the requirement for a Planning Brief.
- 5.2 The vision for the site is –
- to create a sustainable development and a community where people aspire to live,
 - to ensure attractive pedestrian and cycle access throughout the site and onto the Deeside Way and
 - to create a high quality neighbourhood, firmly rooted in the designing streets philosophy.
- 5.3 The Planning Brief sets out planning and design principles for the site, highlighting opportunities, constraints and policy reference. This section also highlights further studies, contributions and assessments which are required as part of a planning application.
- 5.4 Connectivity and accessibility are key parts of the brief, with the emphasis being on pedestrian and cycle movement, connectivity, access to public transport and minimizing private car use.
- 5.5 A consultation exercise was carried out by the agent on the 13 December 2011. A summary of the comments received as part of the consultation are included in Appendix 1 of the brief.

- 5.6 The consultant has amended the brief ensuring the contents page, contents and headings are included and properly numbered. They have also amended a few typing errors within the brief.
- 5.7 The consultant has confirmed that Cults, Bieldside and Milltimber Community Council were invited to the joint consultation event for the planning brief and the planning application on 13 December 2012. It should also be noted that the planning brief is site specific guidance highlighting planning policy, opportunities and constraints. The planning application for the site has now been submitted, and the community councils will be able to comment on the detailed proposal through this process. A paragraph related to the planning application has been added to paragraph A1.11 of the planning brief.

6 IMPACT

- 6.1 The site includes access to walking and cycling networks.
- 6.2 The Planning Brief contributes to the following Single Outcome Priorities: 1 – We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe; 10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need; 12 – We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect and enhance it for future generations.
- 6.3 The proposal contributes to the 5 year Business Plan in terms of working with our partners to attract visitors, workers and investment to protect the economic future of the city, encouraging the growth of local businesses through support of existing business sectors and development of new sectors and facilitating new development projects to improve Aberdeen's living and working environment.
- 6.4 The proposal is consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan, in particular delivering high levels of design from all development, maintaining an up-to-date planning framework, sustainable development and open space provision.
- 6.5 The proposal is consistent with the Planning and Sustainable Development Service Plan, in particular engaging the community in the planning process.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Aberdeen Local Development Plan (Feb 2012)
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Planning/ldp/pla_local_development_plan.asp
- 7.2 Aberdeen Masterplanning Process (July 2010)
<http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/masterplanning/>

8 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Laura Robertson
Senior Planner
Larobertson@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522246



Residential Development of Land at North Garthdee Farm

Planning Brief

Planning and Sustainable Development
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4 | Ground Floor North
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB
www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

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REFERENCES

The following publications and guidance have been used to inform and support this planning brief and should be used for further reference:

- Scottish Planning Policy 2010
- Designing Places – A Policy Statement for Scotland 2008
- Designing Streets – A Policy Statement for Scotland 2010
- Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan 2009
- Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012
- The Aberdeen Masterplanning Process 2011
- Open Space Interim Supplementary Guidance 2011
- Transport supplementary Guidance 2004
- Landscape Guidelines 2011
- NESTRANS Regional Transport Strategy/2021
- Aberdeen Local Transport Strategy 2008–2012
- Core Paths Plan 2009
- PAN 65 Planning and Open Space
- PAN 67 Housing Quality
- PAN 68 Design Statements
- PAN 72 Housing in the Countryside
- PAN 74 Affordable Housing
- PAN 75 Planning for Transport
- PAN 77 Designing Safer Places
- PAN 78 Inclusive Design
- PAN 81 Community Engagement – Planning With People
- PAN 83 Masterplanning

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This draft planning brief has been prepared by Ryden LLP for Barratt East Scotland on behalf of David Wilson Homes to provide a strategic context and clear guidelines for the development of land at North Garthdee Farm for residential development in accordance with the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012) (ALDP).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT

- Proposals must adopt the principles of 'place making', high quality building design, high quality urban design and high quality landscape design;
- Movement to/ from and throughout the site must be designed according to the principles of 'Designing Streets' and should provide pedestrian linkage to the former Deeside Railway Line pedestrian/ cycleway and open amenity area;
- Neighbourhood open space should be a focal point of the site layout and dwellinghouses should overlook this area to take advantage of passive surveillance.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

- 2.1 This planning brief interprets guidance from a wide range of sources; Scottish Planning Policy is Scotland's national land use policy statement and provides high level guidance for development, in addition to this Designing Places and Designing Streets also provide specific policy guidance. These documents are supplemented by subject-specific Planning Advice Notes (PAN).
- 2.2 All development must be in accordance with the development plan; at the time of development of the site the development plan for Aberdeen

City will comprise the Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Structure Plan (2009) and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2012). The Structure Plan sets a target for development to generally have no less than 30 dwellings per hectare.

ABERDEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ALDP) (2012)

- 2.3 The ALDP identifies this site as OP65 for the development of 80 homes in the period 2007 – 2016, subject to the preparation of a planning brief. This planning brief considers an integrated approach to site planning, urban design, sustainable transport, ecology, landscaping and community involvement to ensure the development of the site is of a high standard.

DELIVERY STRATEGY

- 2.4 Planning Permission will be sought in the spring of 2012. Subject to planning approval, development should commence in 2012 at a rate dictated by market circumstances, with a view to complete by 2015.



FIGURE 1: EXTRACT FROM ABERDEEN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND APPRAISAL

- **Location** 2.5 miles west of Aberdeen to the north of Garthdee Road, immediately east of the allotments at Pitfodels Station Road and north-west of the RGU Campus;
- **Size** 3.1 hectares;
- **Designation** Lies within the Pitfodels Conservation Area – layout and design should work with the site’s topography and include landscaping appropriate to the designation;
- **Current Use** Vacant scrubland, farmhouse and yard;
- **Surrounding Uses** Mix of uses, RGU Garthdee Campus and sports facility to the south, public house and restaurant to the east, fitness club and supermarkets within 1.6km;
- **Access** Pedestrian footways run along Garthdee and Auchinyell Roads, the site is bounded by the Deeside Railway foot/cycleway; vehicular access is via a private driveway from Garthdee Road;
- **Boundaries** Granite walls, post & wire fence, trees to north;
- **Topography** Gently undulating and generally south facing. Deeside Railway line sits at higher level than site;
- **Features** Deeside Railway line forms the northern boundary; allotments to the west; open space to the north-east and south-east, housing to the east at a higher level. The site includes Garthdee Farmhouse and trees;
- **Ecology/ Biodiversity** Scrubland, little exists on site – a row of trees have been planted for amenity of the farmhouse;
- **Service** Service connections lie within the site’s vicinity;
- **Drainage** The site appears free from drainage constraints, a Drainage Impact Assessment must be undertaken;

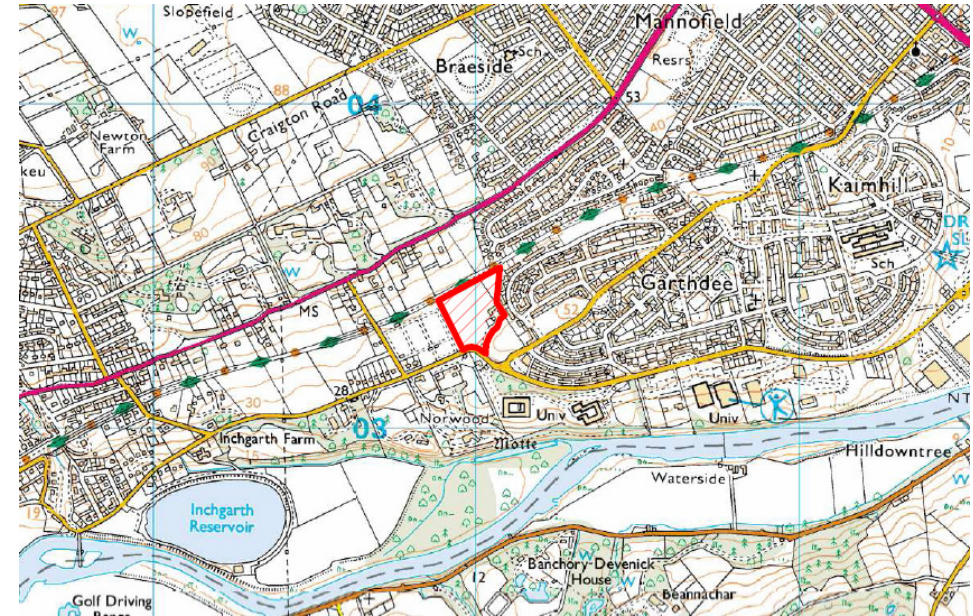


FIGURE 2: OP65 SITE LOCATION

- **Density** Using a mix of house types within the site provides an opportunity to introduce a mix of densities within the development;
- **Constraints** The existing farmhouse and derelict outbuildings on the site, the curtilage of which is bound by immature deciduous trees. A development of 80 dwellinghouses will require a secondary vehicular access into the site; in the absence of a second access capacity of the site will be limited to circa 60 dwellings;
- **Opportunities** The development will visually connect the housing in the east and the allotments to the west, providing a pedestrian and cycle link between Garthdee/ Invergarth Road and the Deeside Railway line. The existing housing sits higher than the site, prohibiting pedestrian linkage.

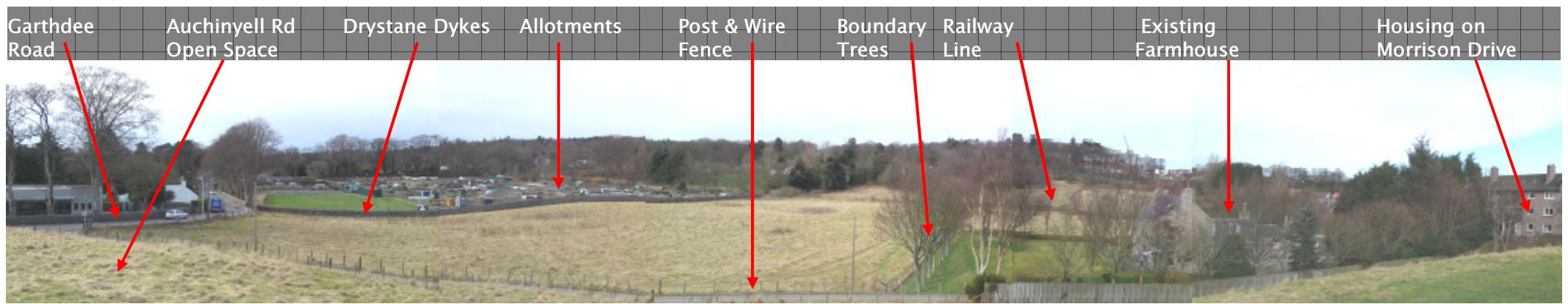


FIGURE 3: SITE FEATURES - FROM AUCHINYELL RD AMENITY AREA

4.0 VISION STATEMENT

- Barratt East Scotland on behalf of David Wilson Homes strive to create sustainable development and communities where people aspire to live.
- Enabling pedestrian and cycle accessibility through the site from the former Deeside Railway line pedestrian/ cycleway to the north between Garthdee Road and the RGU campus to the south is a priority. Attractive pedestrian and cycle linkages will be formed from the Railway line into and through the site to connect with Garthdee/ Inchgarth Road to the south.
- Using high quality materials, attention to detail and a natural palette of colours, the development should respect the Pitfodels Conservation area. North Garthdee Farm should provide areas of neighbourhood open space and pedestrian-friendly streets, firmly rooted in the Designing Streets philosophy, where streets should end in streets and have central open space, rather than cul-de-sacs.



FIGURE 4: SITE CONTEXT

Key:		
	Site	Allotments
	Residential Area	Leisure Uses
	Education	River Dee
	Deeside Railway	Main Roadway

5.0 PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

5.1 The development will provide high quality family homes to address the requirement within the city, including a mix of types and sizes. The development will feature streets, squares and with active street frontages focussed around neighbourhood open space. The internal layout and connections to the wider area should give priority to pedestrians– in line with *Designing Places* and *Designing Streets*. A Design and Access Statement will accompany any future planning application.

- **Character & Identity** Important aspects include open space, pedestrian priority, interaction with the railway line and enhancement of the Pitfodels Conservation Area. The development will be designed to a high standard and incorporate high quality materials and design features, appropriate for the Conservation Area setting; the development should be of a traditional scale and mass, resulting in a traditional neighbourhood setting laid out into streets and squares rather than cul-de-sacs.
- **Scale & Density** Dwellings will be a maximum of 3 storeys in height, at a density in the range of 20 – 30 dwellings per hectare. The land along Morrison Drive to the east lies at a higher level; at this point 3-storey dwellings could be more readily absorbed into the landscape.
- **Overlooking** Dwellings should be laid out on site to respect neighbouring privacy in accordance with the ALDP. Dwellings will face onto the street and open space to fully utilise passive surveillance to increase safety.
- **Open Space** It is likely that the open space provided onsite will be neighbourhood open space. Located at the heart of the development and overlooked by housing, the space will serve a range of recreational uses, per the Council's [Open](#)

[Space guidelines](#), providing landscaping and recreation for the development and the immediate neighbourhood.

- **Landscaping** Natural boundary materials and reuse of granite from existing buildings will enhance the existing dykes; hard and soft indigenous landscaping will emphasise connectivity with surrounding areas and Green Space Network. The trees on site have been planted in recent years for the privacy of the dwellinghouse. A tree survey, landscaping scheme and management plan are required as part of any planning application, the Council's guidelines can be found [here](#).
- **Sustainability** The site is south facing, design must maximise solar gain. The benefits of energy efficient and local materials to create a low-carbon development are fundamental and will be considered at all design/development stages.
- **Affordable Housing** The ALDP requires the affordable housing to comprise no less than 25% of the total units.
- **Developer Contributions** Through the [Action Programme](#) and [Infrastructure & Developer Contributions Manual](#) proportionate contributions are sought towards: water and sewage infrastructure; core paths and local walking/ cycling networks; Kaimhill Primary School (dependent on capacity); local healthcare; and local and strategic infrastructure, the latter through the [Strategic Transport Fund](#).
- **Existing Buildings** Conservation Area consent will be sought for the removal of existing buildings; ALDP policy D4 requires the granite to form part of the new development.
- **Other Considerations** Drainage Impact Assessment, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, topographical survey, tree survey and management plan, waste/recycling storage consideration and construction waste surveys and management plans will support any planning application. Direct pedestrian linkages to the allotments are not proposed to maintain their security.

6.0 CONNECTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY









6.1 Access and connectivity will be one of the guiding principles of the site layout, maximising accessibility and circulation both to, from and throughout the site. The layout will be designed in accordance with the principles of Designing Streets (2008), including, shared surfaces, varying widths, use of street furniture and attention to speed reduction and parking spaces. Emphasis should be on pedestrian and cycle movement and connectivity, access to public transport and minimising private car use.

- **Pedestrian & Cycle** The site is well-connected to the surrounding area with excellent pedestrian and cycle connectivity along the former Deeside Railway (aspirational) core path; footpath links to integrate these existing routes with the development are required
- **Public Transport** Bus Stops to and from the city centre and RGU Campus are located within 400m of the site on Auchinyell and Garthdee Roads
- **Vehicular** Access is obtained from Garthdee Road at the south of the site. Discussions with Roads and Transportation officers regarding junction arrangements, traffic assessment and appropriate mitigation of any impacts are required.
- **Car Parking** Should be provided in line with the parking standards set out in the [Transport Supplementary Guidance](#)
- **Green Travel Plan** GTP guidance on sustainable travel should be agreed with the Council's Sustainable Travel team and provided to all new residents
- **Community** Pupils will attend Kaimhill Primary School and Harlaw Academy; subject to any rezoning exercise
- **Allotments** The drystone dyke along western boundary will keep the residential site and allotments separate.



FIGURE 5: INDICATIVE CONNECTIVITY DIAGRAM

Key:

-  David Wilson Homes Site
-  Main Road
-  Deeside Railway Pedestrian/ Cycle Way
-  Pedestrian/ Cycle Site Access / Desire Lines
-  Vehicular Site Access
-  Indicative Street Layout
-  Central Open Space/ Amenity Area
-  Bus Stops

7.0 DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

AGENCIES

- 7.1 Consultation with the Councils Roads and Transport officers is strongly recommended in the early stages of design of the development; other relevant consultees include Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, Grampian Police Architectural Liaison Officer, emergency and other services.

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

- 7.2 Development over 50 dwellings is classed as a 'major development'; developers require to submit a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) with the Council and Community Council at least 12-weeks prior to the submission of a planning application. Developers are required to undertake statutory Pre-application Consultation with the community and submit a report of consultation at the time of application for planning permission.
- 7.3 A PoAN has been submitted to Aberdeen City Council and the community consultation on the development proposals ran in tandem with the consultation on the development brief on 13 December 2011.
- 7.4 Subject to adoption of this brief as supplementary guidance and completion of supporting studies it is anticipated that an application for planning permission will be submitted in quarter 1 of 2012, along with a report of consultation which will discuss comments received from the community consultation and demonstrate how they have been incorporated into the development where appropriate.
- 7.5 Subject to planning and other consents, development should commence in 2012; it is anticipated that the site will be developed in a single phase at a rate of build dictated by market conditions.

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

PLANNING BRIEF

- A1.1 In line with the steps set out in the Council's Masterplanning Supplementary Guidance the draft brief drew together Scottish Planning Policy and guidance, approved Structure and Local Plan policy, the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, existing and proposed Supplementary Guidance and the infrastructure requirements highlighted by third parties. The draft brief related these policies and guidelines in the context of the site, its constraints and opportunities to provide a clear set of development guidelines.
- A1.2 Following consultation with the Council's Capacity Building Officer the proposed development strategy and public consultation process were presented and discussed with Garthdee Community Council at their meeting of 8th November 2011. In addition Braeside & Mannofield and Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber Community Councils were sent an invitation to attend the event; Braeside & Mannofield Community Council were also offered a presentation at their November meeting as their boundary adjoins the development site. Posters advertising the date and venue of the drop-in public consultation exhibition were displayed in Inchgarth Community Centre and Kaimhill Primary School and distributed to shops in the Garthdee area; the event was advertised in the Evening Express on 5th December 2011; and leaflets were also delivered to Kaimhill Primary School on 8th December 2011 for the pupils to take home (appendix 2).
- A1.3 The drop-in exhibition ran from 4 – 8pm on 13th December 2011 at Inchgarth Community Centre and exhibited both the planning brief and the initial design proposals; representatives of Ryden, Halliday Fraser Munro, Barratt East Scotland and David Wilson Homes were on-hand to discuss the development strategy, planning brief and initial proposals with the local community.

A1.4 Feedback forms were provided and comments sought on the night, by post and email; 40 written responses were received.

A1.5 Around 20 members of the public attended the exhibition, the split between residents of the Garthdee ward and the Cults, Bieldside & Milltimber (CBM) ward was even. In discussion with attendees, those from the CBM ward sought the reservation of part of the site for a link road connecting North Deeside Road and Garthdee Road, as the current roads linking these routes were not designed to carry the amount of traffic currently using them and are traffic-calmed. The residents of the Garthdee ward however were against an additional road bringing traffic on to Garthdee Road and increasing traffic through the area, which would further exacerbate any traffic increases they anticipate from the consolidation of the RGU campus at Garthdee.

A1.6 Of responses received, one response was received from a resident of the Garthdee ward; 32 formal responses were received from residents of the CBM ward; 7 responses had no postal address. 20no. of the responses contained the same bullet points, of these 5 were the responses with no postal address, therefore it is assumed that at least 37 of the 40 responses were from residents of the CBM ward.

A1.7 The response from the Garthdee ward was the only response to the planning brief received on the feedback form provided:

- Positive aspects of Garthdee: Local green space and vicinity of the and its surroundings? Railway Line, river Dee and green belt linking the two (between Garthdee and Cults).
- Connection and integration : Access Road taken from with the existing settlement? Auchinyell Road and paths to old Railway Line and link to Garthdee Road Pavement.

- Importance of improved public: N/A – so close to buses at transport provision to the site? Auchinyell Road and Garthdee Road
- Key landscape characteristics: Open space to the south, west and environmental qualities and north – with grassed knoll, allotments and green belt land

A1.8 Additional Comments: We've got to be realistic and accept that this land is not going to be merely landscaped. Housing is the lesser of two evils – the other being a main link road between North Deeside Road and Garthdee Road.

A1.9 The 39 remaining responses raised the following:

- The developer should be required to set aside part of the site for a link road between North Deeside Road and Garthdee;
- The developer should make a financial contribution to the new road;
- The developer should be required to be responsible for the building of the part of the road between Inchgarth Road and the old railway line.

A1.10 The draft brief was amended to incorporate the comments at A1.7 relating the development of the site. The site is allocated in the Adopted Local Development Plan for residential development and no provision of a link road is required.

PLANNING APPLICATION

A1.11 Further to the Statutory pre-application consultation required as part of a major development, there will be a further statutory period for public comment on submission of the planning application(s) for development of the site. As the site bounds the Deeside Railway Line the application will require to be advertised, the representation period will run for 21 days from the date of the advert and comments from all parties should be made directly to the Council.

APPENDIX 2: CONSULTATION EVENT POSTER



