

Planning Development Management Committee

SITE BETWEEN, ZONE H COUNTESSWELLS ROAD, HAZLEDENE ROAD

APPLICATION FOR MATTERS SPECIFIED IN CONDITIONS OF PERMISSION REF A8/0530 - RELATING TO MEANS OF ACCESS, SITING, DESIGN AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF THE BUILDINGS, AND LANDSCAPING OF ZONE H ONLY, FOR 48 DWELLINGS (CONDITION 23); AND MEASURES FOR THE CONTROL OF SURFACE WATER RUNOFF DURING CONSTRUCTION ACROSS THE WHOLE HAZLEDENE SITE

For: Dandara

Application Type : Approval of Conditions for Planning Permission in Principle

Application Ref. : P130820

Application Date: 05/07/2013

Officer: Gavin Evans

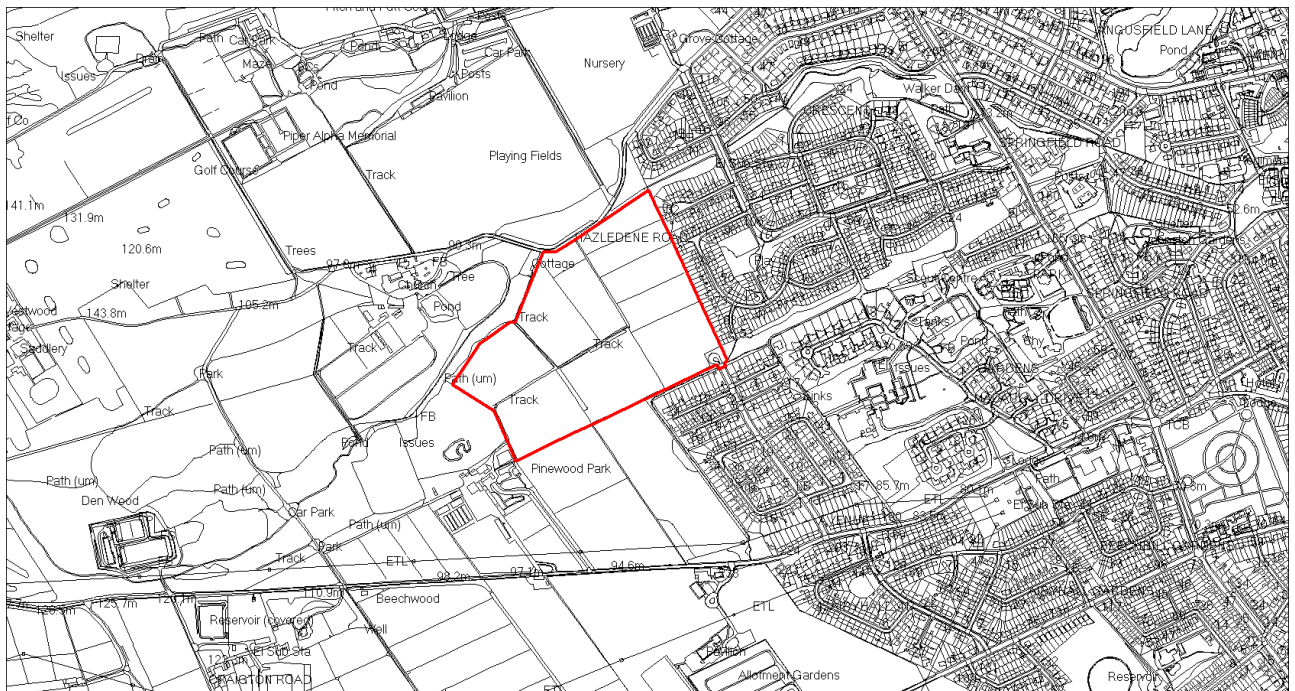
Ward : Hazlehead/Ashley/Queen's Cross(M Greig/J Stewart/R Thomson/J Corall)

Advert : Can't notify neighbour(s)

Advertised on: 31/07/2013

Committee Date: 28 November 2013

Community Council : Comments



RECOMMENDATION:
Approve subject to conditions

DESCRIPTION

The Hazledene development site (OP52) is located between Hazledene Road to the north and the adjacent Pinewood development site to the south. The adjoining Pinewood (OP57) site is in turn bounded by Countesswells Road to the south. The Pinewood and Hazledene sites collectively form a wider development area, L-shaped in plan view, which sits directly to the west of the established residential areas of Countesswells and Craigiebuckler. Their combined site area is some 27 hectares, of which roughly 10.5ha is contained within the Pinewood site and 16.5ha within Hazledene.

The current application relates principally to Zone H of the Hazledene site, which is an area of 4.25ha to the south-eastern corner of the site, incorporating a SUDS detention pond, a length of the newly formed distributor road and the area of new housing development enclosed to the south of that road. Zone H extends 320m and 135m along the southern and eastern Hazledene site boundaries respectively.

RELEVANT HISTORY

Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) was granted for a development comprising *'Proposed residential development to accommodate circa 250 plots and 3No.neighbourhood shop units'* on the Hazledene site in August 2010, through approval of application A8/0530. A condition restricted that consent to development not exceeding 200 dwelling units and 3 local shop units.

A subsequent application in January of 2012 sought approval of the majority of the matters specified in conditions attached to that grant of PPiP. At the August 2012 meeting of the Development Management Sub-committee (as was), members expressed a willingness to approve that application subject to appropriate arrangements having been made for the payment of financial contributions in lieu of improvements to the local road network and subject to confirmation that payment had been made to Transport Scotland in lieu of works to the A90(T) trunk road.

A series of further applications have now been made in relation to matters specified in conditions attached to the grant of Planning Permission in Principle. Some of those applications relate to outstanding matters, while others seek approval of alternative proposals in relation to conditions previously the subject of MSC approval.

PROPOSAL

This application seeks approval in relation to conditions 4 and 23 of Planning Permission in Principle ref A8/0530. Condition 23 relates to the approval of further details relating to (i) means of access; (ii) siting; (iii) design and external appearance of the buildings; and (iv) the landscaping of the site. Condition 4 relates to the provision of a construction method statement, detailing temporary measures to deal with surface water run-off during construction and prior to the operation of the final Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).

This application seeks approval in relation to condition 23 for only part of the Hazledene site, Zone H, which lies at the south-eastern corner of the site, near

the site of the existing bus terminus at the end of Countesswells Avenue. To the east, Zone H is bounded by the rear gardens of properties on Burnieboozle Crescent, and to the south by the rear gardens of properties on Pinewood Road. To the north and west of Zone H lie zones A, and zones B and C of the Hazledene site, respectively. Separate applications have been submitted in relation to the approval of various matters specified in conditions for those other zones.

The plans submitted in support of this application demonstrate a phase of 48 detached dwellings, accessed off the extended Countesswells Avenue which would in time be extended through the site, serving as its main distributor road and linking up with Countesswells Road to the south. Housing within Zone H would present a direct, north-facing frontage onto that distributor road, looking out across the open space beyond. Internally, Zone H would be arranged around a secondary 'shared surface' route, running east-west before turning northwards and connecting with the distributor road. At the point where the shared surface would turn to take vehicles northwards pedestrian/cyclist routes continue westwards, allowing direct pedestrian access to the distributor road at a later point, and southwards, connecting to the Pinewood development, respectively. The 'shared surface' route described incorporates areas of greenspace and tree planting to create 'Homezone' areas where there is vehicles are given less importance and speeds are passively managed by the roads layout and composition. No vehicular through route would be provided from Hazledene Road to Countesswells Road, other than for emergency vehicles by means of a connection between zones A and H. Zone H is bounded to the north by the new distributor road described above, beyond which lies a belt of landscaped open space, between Zone H and Zone A.

The proposed development incorporates 48 detached homes of 4-5 bedrooms, presented in 5 house styles across Zone H. Their composition is as follows: 18no 'Maple', 16no 'Oak', 9no 'Spruce', 4no 'Cedar' and 1no 'Devonshire'. Each of these house types is constructed across 2-storeys, with variation in garage positions, dormer windows and single-storey elements. A common palette of materials is utilised across the house types, with white render, natural stone and reconstituted stone used in wall treatments, dark grey roof tiles and flashings, and natural timber porches where present. The entrance to the Hazledene site from Countesswells Avenue would be defined by low masonry walls with gate pillars. The primary street would feature low drystone walls and hedges to defined front gardens. Elsewhere, low stone walls would be used in front gardens. Where private garden space abuts the street, 1.8m walls or hedges are used, though hedging will generally be used to soften such walls and create interest. Where private gardens bound the existing mature core path to the south of Zone H, post and wire fencing will be retained along with the existing stone wall beyond.

Information relating to construction methodology has been provided, including a plan which identifies existing on-site drainage and water supplies across both the Pinewood and Hazledene sites, and proposes the use of a French drainage system during the construction phase, prior to operation of the final Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS) scheme.

Supporting Documents

All drawings and the supporting documents listed below relating to this application can be viewed on the Council's website at - <http://planning.aberdeencity.gov.uk/PlanningDetail.asp?130820>

On accepting the disclaimer enter the application reference quoted on the first page of this report.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

The application has been referred to the Sub-committee both because the local Community Council have expressed objections to the proposal and due to 9 letters of representation having been received from members of the public. Accordingly, the application falls outwith the scope of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

CONSULTATIONS

Roads Projects Team – Notes that French drainage has been proposed to deal with surface water run-off during construction, and that ACC's Flooding team are satisfied with this approach. Following discussions with the applicant, appropriate swept path analysis has been provided, demonstrating that the site can be adequately accessed by refuse vehicles.

Environmental Health – No observations

Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure (Flooding) – No adverse comments regarding surface water drainage.

Community Council – The local Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council have expressed objection to the proposals on the following basis:

- This proposal, in conjunction with other residential development across the Pinewood and Hazledene sites, would contribute to a significant volume of additional traffic, causing congestion at the following junctions: Countesswells Ave and Countesswells Road; Countesswells Road and Springfield Road; and Seafield Road and Anderson Drive.
- Note no reference is made in this application to the developer contributing towards roads infrastructure improvements required to facilitate extra traffic movement arising from the development.
- Construction works would result in disturbance to residents of Countesswells Avenue, adversely affecting their quality of life.
- The development, in conjunction with other development across the Pinewood and Hazledene sites, would add further burdens to health and educational services in the area. There appears to be no reference to the developer contributing towards the additional costs incurred by these services as part of this application.
- The natural springs within the Pinewood and Hazledene sites often result in the site being waterlogged. It is expected that existing drainage problems will be exacerbated as a result of this proposal, which incorporates significant areas of hard surfacing. The field drains shown on a submitted drawing are not considered to be capable of serving an urban landscape.

- The applicant's approach to drainage is questioned, with no indication of the capacity of the drainage basins given.
- The detention basins are of concern, potentially representing a hazard for children.
- Highlight drainage issues, with water collecting in excavations relating to construction of 'sales pod' on site.

REPRESENTATIONS

9 letters of representation have been received. The objections raised relate to the following matters –

1. Opening up dead end at Countesswells Avenue would be a safety hazard for local people and would affect currently safe routes to schools.
2. Loss of green spaces for people to walk/children to play.
3. Increased pollution from vehicles/buses.
4. Rat-running from Hazledene Road to Countesswells Avenue.
5. Doubts are expressed regarding public access being maintained to the north and Hazlehead Park during construction.
6. It is understood that there are butterfly and frog species present in the fields, which in turn attract birds of prey and small mammals. The surrounding forest is home to deer and foxes. Where will these animals go if the site is to be developed?
7. A precedent would be set by development on this site, leading to building on other green areas of the city and a resultant adverse impact on quality of life. This land was understood to benefit from protection from housing development by virtue of its green belt status.
8. The land in question is particularly prone to flooding due to its poor drainage. Has this historic flooding been taken into account?
9. Is the drainage scheme proposed sufficient to ensure that the site can be adequately drained? Who will be responsible in the event of a flooding event in future?
10. Concern is expressed over the presence of a Core Path route between existing housing and new housing within the development site.
11. Queries whether traffic-calming measures are to be provided on Countesswells Avenue.
12. Will the developer be required to construct the access road prior to proceeding with the housing development?
13. Will Countesswells Road be widened up to the new roundabout junction? If widening is proposed, will Compulsory Purchase of gardens on Countesswells Road be necessary?

It is noted that many points were raised regarding other phases of the development, which are not relevant to consideration of this application. Such matters will be considered, where appropriate, in the assessment of the various other applications made by the applicants.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy and Guidance

Designing Places

Designing Places identifies that the most successful places tend to have certain qualities in common. These include a distinct identity, safe and pleasant spaces, and an arrangement of space which is easy to move around, particularly on foot. Visitors feel a sense of welcome. These qualities are seen as being at the heart of good design, alongside adaptability and a good use of resources. Designing Places sets out the value of good design and the price of poor design.

Designing Streets

Designing Streets is Scotland's policy statement for street design, marking a change in emphasis of guidance on street design towards place-making and away from a system focused upon the dominance of motor vehicles. It sits alongside Designing Places in setting out the Scottish Government's place-making agenda.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

As regards the location and design of new development, SPP states that new housing should take account of its setting, the surrounding landscape, topography, character, appearance, ecologies and the scope for using local materials, with the aim of creating spaces with a distinct character and identity.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan

T2: Managing the Transport Impact of Development

New development will need to demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated. Maximum car parking standards are set out in the relevant Supplementary Guidance on Transport and Accessibility.

D1: Architecture and Placemaking

This policy requires that all new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting.

D2: Design & Amenity

In order to ensure that development provides appropriate levels of amenity for residents, development should be designed with regard to a stated set of principles, relating to matters such as privacy, provision of a public face to the street, access to sitting out areas, and 'designing out' crime.

D3: Sustainable and Active Travel

New development will be designed in order to minimise travel by private car, improve access to services and promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging active travel.

H1: Residential Areas

The site lies within a designated Residential Area (H1), as defined in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. Within such areas Policy H1 of the ALDP will apply, requiring that residential development will be acceptable in principle provided it satisfies certain specified criteria. It is further stated that non-residential uses will be refused unless (a) they are considered complementary to residential use; or (b) it can be demonstrated that the use would cause no conflict with, or any nuisance to, the enjoyment of existing residential amenity.

NE1: Green Space Network

Proposals for development that are likely to destroy or erode the character or function of the Green Space Network will not be permitted.

NE5: Trees and Woodlands

There is a presumption against all activities and development that would result in the loss of or damage to established trees and woodlands that contribute significantly to nature conservation, landscape character or local amenity.

NE9: Access and Informal Recreation

New development should not compromise the integrity of existing or potential recreational opportunities including access rights, core paths, other paths and rights of way. Core Paths are shown on the Proposals Map. Wherever appropriate, developments should include new or improved provision for public access, permeability and/or links to green space for recreation and active travel.

Supplementary Guidance

The Council's published supplementary planning guidance on 'Transport & Accessibility' is of relevance, as is the guidance contained within the Pinewood and Hazledene development brief.

Other Relevant Material Considerations

The allocation of the Pinewood and Hazledene sites in the ALDP, the previous grant of Planning Permission in Principle on both of those sites, and the previous approval granted in respect of the majority of Matters Specified in Conditions to those grants of PPIP carry significant weight in the determination of the current application, establishing these sites as locations for new residential development. The principle of housing on this site may not legitimately be revisited through assessment of this proposal.

EVALUATION

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) require that, 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.

Principle of Development

As noted previously, the principle of residential development on the Hazledene site has been established through the granting of Planning Permission in Principle, its identification as an opportunity site with residential zoning in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan, and the subsequent approval of matters specified in the majority of those conditions attached to the initial grant of Planning Permission in Principle. This assessment will focus on the specific requirements of the conditions in question, the provisions of the development plan as it relates to the matters those conditions specify, and any other material planning considerations identified.

Matters relating to developer contributions and affordable housing have been

addressed via necessary legal agreements, which have now been successfully concluded, and the consideration of such matters is not relevant to assessment of this application.

Zoning

The Hazledene site is zoned for residential purposes, with policy H1 of the ALDP applicable, and is also identified as an 'opportunity site' for residential development. This zoning, along with the permission previously granted for Planning Permission in Principle, sets the context for consideration of this proposal. The principle of development will not be revisited in this assessment, which will focus on the manner in which the proposal addresses the matters specified in conditions 4 and 23 of the Planning Permission in Principle.

Means of access and roads issues

As noted earlier in this report, the majority of the development proposed across the Pinewood and Hazledene sites would be accessed via a loop road, formed by extending the existing Countesswells Avenue, which currently terminates in a bus turning point, westwards through the site and then south, before linking up with a new roundabout junction formed on Countesswells Road. The applicant has intimated that Zone H, the subject of this application, would be the first phase in the wider development, with access initially taken solely via Countesswells Avenue. The stated intention is to construct the new distributor road and site access junctions simultaneously with the initial phase of housing within Zone H. By doing so, later phases of the development will benefit from being readily accessible during construction, thereby serving to lessen the impact on existing residential areas.

General arrangement and pedestrian accessibility

New pedestrian footpaths would be provided alongside the newly formed distributor road. This route serves as the only traditional 'road', featuring segregated surfaces for pedestrians and vehicles respectively. Other than this principal route, shared surfacing would be utilised, and focus placed on the creation of more informal 'home-zone' style spaces, with new homes either arranged around intimate landscaped spaces or otherwise to have an outlook onto wider open space provided to the north. Provision is made for segregated pedestrian paths within Zone H, which would link in with a wider network of pedestrian routes across the Pinewood and Hazledene sites.

Core Path route

A designated Core Path exists within the site, running parallel with its eastern and southern boundaries, before continuing south down the eastern edge of the Pinewood site. Core Path number 65 is the Hazlehead and River Dee Path. Access would be maintained along this route, with the new internal footpath network connecting in to the retained Core Path route. The Core Path route would connect the southern drainage detention pond, which lies in the south-eastern corner of the application site / Zone H, with the northern detention basin, which lies outwith the current application site, in the north-eastern corner of Zone A, and provides onward connection to Hazledene Road. The east-to-west section of Core Path 65 is located outwith the site, but runs in close proximity to its

southern boundary. This Core Path route would be retained and uninterrupted, running to the rear of the house plots on Pinewood Road and those of the new development respectively. That Core Path route ultimately progresses southwards to connect with Countesswells Road. Taking these matters into account, it is concluded that the proposal would maintain the integrity of the existing core path routes present on the site, with permeability through the site preserved and linkages formed with the network of new paths proposed.

Environment created for new residents

The wider development demonstrates a desire to create a sense of place, with extensive open space and woodland provided through the central 'wetland park area' and the orientation of home zone areas around central landscaped spaces. Many homes are either oriented around such home zones and their associated landscaping, or otherwise benefit from open aspects and views towards areas of landscaped open space and trees, including the central 'wetland park' area to the north of the new distributor road. A good pedestrian environment is proposed, with appropriate surfacing used to indicate home zone areas and underline pedestrian priority. Links are provided to a wider network of paths within the site and beyond. The individual homes vary in type and size, but each presents a public frontage to a street and a private frontage to an enclosed area of private garden. Separation distances are appropriate for a suburban context and can ensure appropriate privacy for residents. An appropriate density of development is achieved, which is comparable to and consistent with that seen in the surrounding area. A sense of arrival is created through the presence of gate piers and granite wall at the entrance to the development site via the extended Countesswells Avenue. A granite boundary wall of approximately 1.8m would identify the 'Hazelwood' site, with a woodland backdrop provided by the area to the north-east of Zone H, incorporating a SUDS basin, new landscaping, the Core Path running up the eastern edge of the Hazledene site, and both existing and proposed tree cover.

Design and external appearance of the buildings

As noted earlier in this report, 5 distinct house types are proposed within Zone H: Maple, Oak, Spruce, Cedar and Devonshire. These house types utilise a consistent palette of materials, including dark grey tiles, white render, stone cladding, aluminium guttering and uPVC windows. The use of existing drystone walls and new walling rebuilt from duntaken dykes contributes towards the identity of the new place to be created, whilst also demonstrating an efficient use of local materials and recognition of the site's history. Similarly, the consistent use of materials across a number of different house styles helps to create an identity for the new place created.

Trees & Landscaping

A detailed scheme of landscaping for the site has been provided as part of this application. The area at the entrance to the site via Countesswells Avenue would be defined by new planting alongside the existing trees retained along the eastern site boundary. The area around the SUDS detention pond would be extensively planted with new trees (incorporating a variety of species at minimum heights of 3.5m), along with lower-level 'wetland shrub' planting and bulb planting. The access point from the main distributor road to the secondary route,

leading west, would also be extensively planted, firstly on its northern side (the 'gateway' into the secondary streets) and then at a central 'Home Zone' area (3.5m-4m height). Further areas of tree planting are present at the eastern side of the secondary street, as it progresses northwards to meet up with the distributor road adjacent to a new bus stop. A group of existing trees, to the west of Zone H and on the eastern side of the distributor road as it curves southwards, would be supplemented by new tree planting and the use of dry stone walls to define an area of public open space. Ample provision is made for public open space within the 'wetland park' area, which lies immediately to the north of Zone H. A condition attached to the grant of Planning Permission in Principle requires that no unit be occupied on the Hazledene site until open space has been provided as shown on drawings approved by ACC.

The submitted tree survey highlights that the trees within the wider site are relatively few, and are confined to narrow belts and strips along field boundaries. The trees present on site are generally arranged along internal field boundaries, and are understood to be predominantly of planted origin, intended to provide shelter for the former nursery business. Generally those trees present are relatively young, and as such are of relatively small size and stature. The survey conducted demonstrates that the overall condition of the trees across the Hazledene site is noticeably poor. The tree cover around the site is generally poor and scrappy, with little long term potential. Many trees appear to be in decline and dying, and consequently the tree and hedge cover within the Hazledene site is assessed as being of low retention value. There are two distinct bands of trees currently present within Zone H, arranged along north-south axes and reflecting field boundary positions. The first of these contains 24 specimens, of which 16 are classified as unsuitable for retention and the remaining 8 are classified category C, denoting low quality and value. Category C includes trees with significant structural defects and/or decay, trees of low growth and under stress, and those with a limited life expectancy. The report concludes that these trees are not of a value which would warrant them being considered a constraint to development, and they would be removed.

The second belt of trees within zone H lies further west, at the open space on its very edge, adjacent to the primary road. Of those trees, 19 were classified within category C, 8 were classified as unsuitable for retention, and the remaining 5 were classified as category B, denoting moderate quality and value. These are to be thinned out, with 13 of the better quality specimens retained and supplemented by new planting.

In addition to those two internal tree belts noted above, there is a substantial strip of continuous tree planting, including sycamore, ash, silver birch and Swedish whitebeam, planted along the eastern boundary of Zone H. These trees are to be retained where possible, however there is a significant number of dead and dying specimens within that area, which will be removed and replaced with new planting of approximately 3.5-4m in height. Where possible, existing trees will be retained, and protected during the period of construction. Based on the submissions made, it has been demonstrated that trees of any particular value will be retained where possible, with poor quality and diseased/dying trees removed and replaced by new tree planting of an appropriate height. Having had

regard for the condition and quality of those trees to be removed, and the extent of replacement planting proposed as part of the landscaping scheme for the site, it is concluded that there would be no loss of or damage to established trees and woodlands that contribute significantly to nature conservation, landscape character or local amenity, and therefore there would be no conflict with policy NE5 (Trees and Woodlands) of the ALDP.

Green Space Network

A section of the Hazledene site, running from east to west along its southern boundary, is designated as a part of the Green Space Network. The Green Space Network is a strategic network of woodland and other habitats, active travel and recreation routes, greenspace links, watercourses and waterways. This encourages connectivity between habitats, improving the viability of species and the health of previously isolated habitats and ecosystems. Given the previous cultivation of this land in connection with its former use, the principal function of this narrow band of the network is to act as a link between other habitats, particularly the extensive area of Green Space Network designation to the west and north, which includes Hazlehead Park and Den Wood. The proposed development encroaches upon the existing connection, however the significant open space provision included within the wider development of the Hazledene site provides for an alternative green space link, running from the area around the SUDS basin at the south-eastern corner of the site (within Zone H), between Zone B and Zone A before connecting with the Green Space Network at a slightly different and arguably better point. The proposal involves the green space through the development connecting with the extensive site 33 at a point on the north-western boundary of the Hazledene site. The advantage of a green space connection in this location is that it would also link directly with Core Path 61 (Hazledene Road to Countesswells Road, running through Den Wood), whereas the existing green space network connection is shown connecting with the premises of the adjacent Ben Reid nurseries, where there is no immediate Core Path connection. On this basis it is considered that, whilst the development encroaches upon land designated as part of the Green Space Network, that value of that part of the network lies in connecting otherwise isolated areas of green space in the surrounding area. The proposed development replicates that green space connection in a manner which enhances its access value, providing dedicated pedestrian links alongside green space and connecting with the Core Path network. Taking these matters into account, it is concluded that the neither the character or function of the Green Space Network would be adversely affected by the proposal, and that it therefore demonstrates accordance with policy NE1 (Green Space Network) of the ALDP.

Relationship with approved Development Brief

The development brief for the Pinewood and Hazledene sites, first subject to consultation in 2003, was prepared against a substantially different policy context, however many of its design aspirations remain relevant. It is noted that the brief envisaged the Pinewood site being developed first, however the applicant is free to proceed as they see fit, with no obligation to this effect incorporated into the grants of Planning Permission in Principle for the respective sites. The development brief places considerable importance on the incorporation of significant areas of open space, structure planting and a footpath network. It is

further stated that, in order to ensure the most efficient use of land, slightly higher density than that seen in the surrounding area may be appropriate within some parts of the development. It is further stated that designs must ensure that they fit into the landscape. Developers are encouraged to examine opportunities for creating a sense of place with interest and character through imaginative use of: open space and landscaping; colour and texture of building materials; range of house types and storey height; the provision of distinctive features and landmarks at key viewpoints. It is noted that the design demonstrates significant open space across the site in a meaningful and useable form. 'Home Zone' areas are focused around intimate green spaces, with properties commonly oriented to benefit from views towards open space and tree planting. A clear network of footpath links is provided through the wider site, with Core Path routes maintained. Taking these matters into account, it is evident that the proposals demonstrate due regard for the design aspirations expressed in the Pinewood and Hazledene Development Brief.

Matters raised by Community Council

The concern expressed by the Community Council in relation to increased traffic volumes and congestion at junctions is noted, however it should be noted that the principle of residential development on the Pinewood and Hazledene sites has been established through the granting of Planning Permission in Principle. Those grants of PPIp included detailed assessment of the road traffic implications of the development. It is not legitimate for such matters to be entirely reconsidered at this stage of the process. The access remains as previously proposed, with Countesswells Avenue extended to form a new loop route, subsequently linking up with Countesswells Road. This has been previously accepted and approved, and the Roads Projects Team make no objection to the access arrangements.

Similarly, developer contributions payable in relation to the development proposal have also been considered previously at PPIp stage, and will not be revisited at this stage. This applies to all developer contributions, including roads infrastructure and health/educational services.

It is acknowledged that construction works may result in some disturbance to nearby residents, however this is to some extent unavoidable where a significant site is released for development. The applicants have intimated that their intention is to construct the new loop road at the same time as the first phase of housing within Zone H, in order that access after the first phase can be taken from Countesswells Road.

The poor drainage of the Pinewood and Hazledene sites is acknowledged, and previous applications have included appropriate drainage impact assessments and proposals for surface water drainage through Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems. The measures proposed have been previously accepted as being fit to serve the proposed residential development. The means of dealing with surface water runoff during construction have been presented as part of this proposal, with a herringbone arrangement of French drains utilised to drain the site during that construction period. This has been accepted by the Council's Roads Projects Team and the Council's Flood Prevention Team as being sufficient for its

intended purpose. It should be highlighted that submissions relate to drainage during the construction phase only, with the overall drainage scheme for the site having been previously approved by ACC.

The collection of water in excavations made during construction of a sales pod is not of direct relevance to consideration of this application, with that sales pod benefiting from an entirely separate consent.

Matters raised in representations

The access and roads arrangements for the site have been accepted by the Council's Roads Projects Team. It is evident that the character of the street will be altered by it no longer being a cul-de-sac, however the Countesswells Avenue access has been well established through the granting of Planning Permission in Principle and the guidance contained in the Pinewood and Hazledene development framework. It is not appropriate for the principle of access via Countesswells Avenue to be revisited through assessment of this application.

It is acknowledged that an area of existing green space will be lost, however this must be considered in the context of the site's allocation for housing in the current Local Development Plan and the Aberdeen Local Plan previously. Meaningful open space is to be provided throughout the wider Pinewood and Hazledene sites. Core Path Routes exist at the edges of the site, and such routes may not be closed off or diverted without going through a legal process. It is noted that there is no longer any green belt zoning of the Pinewood and Hazledene sites. Any other housing proposals around the city will be considered on their own merits, with due regard for the allocations and zonings set out in the Local Development Plan. This proposal has no bearing on how green belt sites would be considered.

Whilst vehicular traffic would increase on certain roads as a result of the proposal, it should be noted that this would remain a suburban area, and the level of traffic will be consistent with that suburban character. No through access is to be provided to Hazledene Road other than for emergency vehicles, therefore there would be no legitimate means of rat-running. As this application relates to certain matters only, and the principle of development has been previously established, it is not appropriate to revisit any potential impact on wildlife. There are not understood to be any protected species present within the site, and should any be found there remain licencing processes controlled by other legislation.

The planning authority is aware of the existing poor drainage, which has led to incidents of flooding in the recent past. The applicants' proposed means of dealing with surface water during construction has been accepted by the Council's Roads Projects Team and the Council's Flood Prevention Team. The long-term approach to drainage has been considered and approved through previous applications. Responsibility in the event of any flooding incident is not a matter for this application to consider, and it is understood that there is separate relevant legislation governing the matter.

No traffic-calming measures are proposed on Countesswells Avenue, however a separate application, ref P131037, seeks approval of matters including the means to calming traffic and the use of 20mph speed limits within the development. It is therefore not relevant for this issue to be considered in assessment of this proposal. It is noted that when PPIp was granted, it was envisaged that the Pinewood site would be developed first, however there is nothing contained within the respective consents which would preclude the Hazledene site being built out first. The applicants have intimated that the initial phase of the development, within Zone H, would be constructed at the same time as the new loop road, with the intention that subsequent phases of the development would not be reliant on Countesswells Avenue alone for access. The construction of the new roundabout junction to serve the Pinewood and Hazledene site has been previously approved, and is not understood to require any compulsory purchase in order to accommodate road widening.

Core Path route 65 (Hazlehead runs along the southern and eastern boundaries of the Hazledene site. The paths on this route are generally unsurfaced and unlit, and to some extent are enclosed by trees along the edges of the site. The Local Development Plan supports the retention of Core Paths and other access routes. The Core Path route along the eastern boundary of the Hazledene site would be afforded an open aspect at its southern end, adjacent to the new SUDS basin, with subsequent sections being more enclosed by new housing as the path progressed northwards. Much of that route is outwith Zone H, however, and is therefore not relevant to assessment of this application. The Core Path route running along the southern boundary of the Hazledene site also lies outwith the current application site boundary, with a distance of approximately 10m separating the rear enclosures of new housing from those of existing housing on Pinewood Road. It is noted that the existing Core Path route runs to the rear of houses on Pinewood Road. The retention of such Core Path routes is supported by the ALDP, as noted earlier in this report, and the retained Core Path route will provide connections to the internal path network within the new development and southwards to Countesswells Road.

As noted previously in this report, the developer has intimated that the new road and zone H would be constructed simultaneously, in order that subsequent phases of development may be accessed via Countesswells Road. Matters relating to the phasing of development and construction access are covered by other conditions, currently the subject of separate applications, and are not for consideration in the planning authority's assessment of this proposal. Similarly, the roads improvements necessary to facilitate this development have been previously established through the grant of planning permission in principle, and may not be revisited in assessment of this proposal. There is understood to be a degree of road widening necessary on the northern side of Countesswells Road at its junction with Springfield Road, however the detail of any compulsory purchase will be a matter for the Roads Construction Consent process.

Summary

The proposal demonstrates the retention of the existing Core Path route, which gives access to and from Hazledene Road and Hazlehead Park, beyond. Ample provision is made for the landscaping of the site at its boundaries, in order to

avoid any adverse impact arising from the removal of existing trees found to be in a poor state of health. Bearing in mind that the purpose of this application is to assess only those submissions made in respect of the specified conditions, it is considered that appropriate separation between buildings is maintained, boundary treatments are sufficient to ensure that privacy will be protected, and the street layout demonstrates a pleasant environment for future residents, based on intimate landscaped spaces and an informal shared surface, where pedestrians have priority and speeds are lower. It is concluded that the proposal demonstrates due regard for the relevant policies of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan and the relevant national policy set out in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), 'Designing Places' and 'Designing Streets'.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposal submitted demonstrates an appropriate form of residential development on a site allocated for residential purposes, incorporating a variety of house types, utilising a consistent range of materials and appropriate use of boundary treatments in order to create a sense of character and place. Street layouts are arranged around intimate 'Homezone' spaces, incorporating shared surfaces to promote pedestrian priority within secondary streets. Appropriate pedestrian linkages are provided across the site, linking into the wider development and the surrounding Core Paths network. North-south pedestrian access is maintained, with direct routes provided through the development to ensure good access to Hazlehead Park and the surrounding green spaces. Ample provision is made for the landscaping of the site, both through the provision of a central new open space, to the south of Zone A, and in the management and replacement of existing trees where necessary. Tree removal within the site is not excessive and is generally limited to those in poor condition and not suitable for long-term retention, as well a small number necessary to form internal roads layouts. The existing Green Space Network will not be fundamentally compromised, with green space links provided in an alternative arrangement of space. Taking these matters into account, it is concluded that the proposal demonstrates appropriate details in relation to the means of access, design and external appearance of buildings, and landscaping of the site. The proposal demonstrates due accord with policies I1 (Infrastructure and Developer Contributions), T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development), D1 (Architecture and Placemaking), D2 (Design & Amenity), D3 (Sustainable and Active Travel), H1 (Residential Areas), NE1 (Green Space Network), NE5 (Trees and Woodlands) and NE9 (Access and Informal Recreation) of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP), alongside the relevant content of the 'Transport and Accessibility' and the main aims of the 'Pinewood and Hazledene Development Brief' supplementary guidance documents, respectively. Whilst vehicular through access is not provided for, it is considered that specifics of the site may render such access inappropriate. In other respects, the residential environment created is considered to accord with the aims of 'Designing Streets', particularly with regard to shared surfaces and pedestrian priority. The distinct

identity created in the new development and the provision for pedestrian linkages is consistent with the aims of 'Designing Places'. The proposal contributes

towards achieving the housing targets set in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP) and is consistent with the designation of the site in the ALDP for residential development.

CONDITIONS

it is recommended that approval is granted subject to the following conditions:-

(1) that any tree work which appears to become necessary during the implementation of the development shall not be undertaken without the prior written consent of the Planning Authority; any damage caused to trees growing on the site shall be remedied in accordance with British Standard 3998: 2010 "Recommendations for Tree Work" before the building hereby approved is first occupied - in order to preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.

(2) that no materials, supplies, plant, machinery, spoil, changes in ground levels or construction activities shall be permitted within the protected areas specified in the aforementioned scheme of tree protection without the written consent of the Planning Authority and no fire shall be lit in a position where the flames could extend to within 5 metres of foliage, branches or trunks - in order to ensure adequate protection for the trees on site during the construction of the development.

Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.