

Planning Development Management Committee

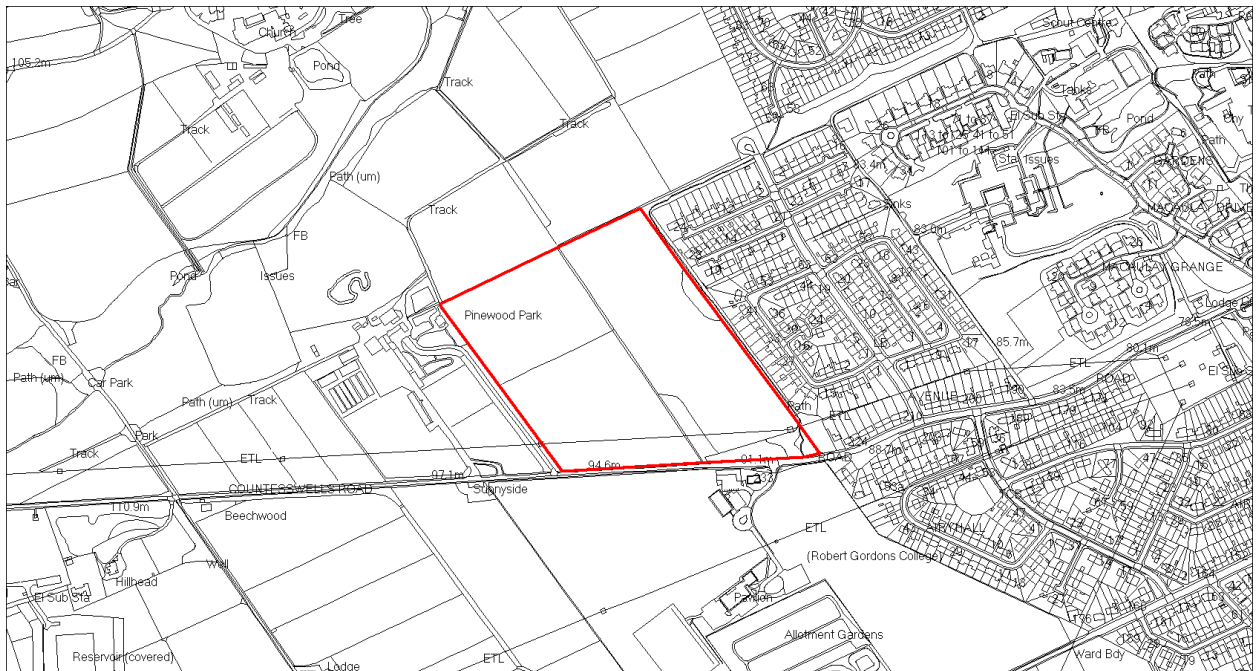
PINEWOOD ZONE D E F & G,
COUNTESSWELLS ROAD, HAZLEHEAD

APPLICATION FOR MATTERS SPECIFIED IN
CONDITION 12 (SITING, DESIGN AND
EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF BUILDINGS
AND LANDSCAPING) RELATING TO A7/2178
PLANNING PERMISSION IN PRINCIPLE

For: Dandara Ltd

Application Type : Approval of Conditions for
Planning Permission in Principle
Application Ref. : P131055
Application Date: 23/07/2013
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 application site is the OP57 Pinewood Development site, identified in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan for residential development, having been carried forward from the Aberdeen Local Plan 2008. The site, which comprises two fields on the immediate western outskirts of the Countesswells area of the city, is bounded by the OP52 Hazledene opportunity site, to the north, and Countesswells Road, to the south. The two sites combine to form a wider development area, L-shaped in plan view, with a combined site area of some 27 hectares, of which roughly 10.5ha is contained within the Pinewood site and 16.5ha within Hazledene.

The western part of the site is enclosed by dry-stone dykes and was formerly used for the rearing of horticultural plants (though currently in grass) related to the Ben Reid Nursery and Garden Centre, a short distance to the west. The fields to the north, within the Hazledene site, were also formerly in horticultural use. The site is bounded by mature woodland on the east and west sides and is subdivided by hedges and dry stone dykes.

Core Path 65 (Hazlehead to River Dee) runs north-to-south down the eastern edge of both the Hazledene and Pinewood sites, providing a connection from Hazlehead Park to Countesswells Road and beyond.

RELEVANT HISTORY

Planning Permission in Principle (PPiP) was granted for a development comprising a '*Proposed residential development and formation of access roundabout and access roads*' on the Pinewood site in August 2010, through approval of application A7/2178.

A subsequent application in January of 2012 sought approval of proposals relating to several matters specified in conditions attached to that grant of PPiP, including open space provision, landscaping, sustainable drainage, roads infrastructure works, archaeological investigation and the re-use of downtakings from drystone walling within the development site. At the August 2012 meeting of the Development Management Sub-committee (as was), members resolved to approve that application.

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 condition 12 of Planning Permission in Principle reference A7/2178, which 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.

The plans submitted in support of this application demonstrate a residential layout comprising 174 dwellings, accessed off the new spine road serving both Pinewood and Hazledene development sites. That spine road would be formed

through the extension of Countesswells Avenue from the existing bus terminus, progressing westward through the Hazledene site before turning southwards through the Pinewood site and connecting with Countesswells Road, at which point a new roundabout junction would be formed, as detailed in a separate application.

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?131027>

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

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO SUB-COMMITTEE

The application has been referred to the committee because the local Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council have expressed objection to the proposal. Accordingly, the application falls outwith the scope of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

CONSULTATIONS

Roads Projects Team – Following discussions with the applicant, appropriate swept path analysis has been provided, demonstrating that the site can be adequately accessed by refuse vehicles. No objection to the proposal.

Environmental Health – No observations

Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure (Flooding) - No observations

Education, Culture & Sport (Archaeology) -

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.
- The upgrading of the core path and connections to other footpaths within the development may attract unwanted motorbike racers to the area, resulting in health and safety concerns.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

- Plan f does not take into account recommendation in the Mackay woodland assessment, calling for 17m safety zone. Plots 41, 42, 43, 44, 48, 49 & 50 (and others) are too close to mature beech trees up to 28m in height. Puts trees at risk of severe pruning by new residents
- Zone G – Buckler burn which flows to a pond in the James Hutton institute & Johnston gardens. Plan shows plots 15, 16, & 17 built over source wetland for this watercourse. Is the stream to be killed off by removal of catchment?
- Site is designated as Green Belt
- No survey appears to have been carried out in relation to wildlife using the site
- Previous applications involved large water basins which do not seem to be present now – they are in Hazledene site, serving both for purposes of drainage
- Unlikely that primary schools will be able to cope with the increase in pupil numbers
- Increased road congestion on a road that is already not fit for purpose (Countesswells Road)
- Conflict of interest for ACC as they were main land owner
- Objects to removal of tree no 40. No detail given of what is wrong with that tree. Removal would lead to exposed outlook to rear of 81 Burnieboozle Crescent.
- Queries whether access road will be built before proceeding with any construction work on new houses. This would avoid any inconvenience to residents
- Assume widening of Countesswells Road up to new roundabout – if this is the case, would it mean compulsory purchase of garden grounds to the front of properties on Countesswells Road.

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.

D6: Landscape

Development will not be acceptable unless it avoids significantly adversely affecting landscape character and elements which contribute to, or provide, a distinct 'sense of place' which points to being either in or around Aberdeen or a particular part of it.

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 Pinewood 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 condition in question (condition 12), the provisions of the development plan as it relates to the matters that condition specifies, 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 Pinewood 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 condition 12 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. A separate application, in which the applicant is required to set out a phasing plan for the development, intimates that the adjacent Hazledene site would be developed first, alongside the new spine road. The applicant has stated that the loop road would be constructed at outset, with a temporary surfacing during the construction phase, prior to final surfacing as each phase is completed. This approach would avoid construction traffic using Countesswells Avenue any more than is necessary, minimising disturbance on the residential area to the east of the development sites.

General arrangement and pedestrian accessibility

A new pedestrian footpath 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 extensively 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 south. Provision is made for pedestrian paths within the Pinewood site, providing connections to a wider network of pedestrian routes across the Pinewood and Hazledene development and to the adjacent Core Paths. Core Path 65 (Hazlehead and River Dee path) runs from north-to-south, along the eastern edge of the Pinewood and Hazledene sites, outwith but immediately adjacent to the current application boundary. The existing core path route would be maintained, with connections made to the eastern part of the Pinewood development. Taking these matters into account, it is concluded that the proposal would maintain the integrity of the existing core path routes present in and around the site, with permeability through the site preserved and linkages formed with the network of new paths proposed.

Environment created for new residents

The development of the Pinewood and Hazledene sites proposed is based around a central band of open space which progresses through the core of the site and is well-located for use by residents of all zones. The substantial open space proposed runs along the northern side of the primary distributor road serving the development before branching off to provide a green space connection to the north-western corner of the Hazledene site, forming a green space connection with the adjacent Hazlehead Park and augmenting the existing Green Space Network designation present on the site. The open space provision is central to the development and well located for all users, incorporating a series of pedestrian and cycle routes providing connections to other parts of the development and nearby Core Path routes. The open space includes a children's play area, comprising a safe play surface and a minimum of 5 items of play equipment.

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 open space alongside the spine road and at the south of the site, at its road frontage on Countesswells 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 overall density of development is achieved, incorporating a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced homes. The wider development would benefit from a readily identifiable character, based around the extensive retention and re-use of drystone walls across the site, the retention of existing mature trees and formation of new open space and landscaping, and the use of a consistent palette of materials in the new housing proposed.

Design and external appearance of the buildings

As noted earlier in this report, the layouts submitted indicate 174 dwellings, which would incorporate 8 distinct house types used: Ash, Baldwin, Townhouse, Sycamore, Maple, Oak, Spruce and Cedar, with further variation in the use of garages and detailing. 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

The open space proposed would be extensively landscaped, as detailed in the submitted landscaping scheme. The primary distributor road would be lined with consistently placed new tree planting, distinguishing it from the surrounding, more intimate 'Homezone' spaces and serving to assist in wayfinding. In addition to regularly spaced planting emphasising the status of the main avenue through the development, the open space to the north would incorporate grass and shrub planting, with new trees incorporated into the mixed planting 'buffer zones' to the edges of the open space, where it borders residential plots. New tree planting would utilise specimens of a minimum 3.5-4m in height, in order to minimise the time necessary for the open space and landscaping to become established. An open ditch running through the open space would serve as a feature, collecting water during periods of wet weather and leading to the open water detention basin at the south-eastern corner of the Hazledene site. Seating, litter bins etc would be incorporated within the open space, and the SUDS detention basin would be fenced and gated appropriately. Shrub planting adjacent to the fencing enclosing the basin would help to soften its appearance and reduce visual impact, integrating it with the open space.

Tree cover across the Pinewood and Hazledene sites is generally relatively limited, and confined to narrow belts and strips along field boundaries. The trees present 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 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 site is assessed as being of low retention value.

A readily distinguishable tree belt runs north-to-south through the heart of the Pinewood site. The majority of the trees within that belt would be retained and protected during construction, to form part of the landscaped open space to the east of the main avenue as it progresses south to join Countesswells Road. These retained trees would contribute to the woodland character of the site, provide the landscape setting for homes facing westwards onto that main avenue, and contribute towards the woodland character of the development site. Of a total of 62 trees along this belt, 10 would be removed for reasons of poor health, determined through an arboricultural survey by an independent practitioner, and a further 7 would be removed directly to accommodate the development layout, generally at points where secondary streets and pathways would branch off from the main avenue and across the tree belt. In the context of the site, and the need to accommodate a coherent street layout, the level of tree removal is very minor, with the majority of healthy trees retained as part of the landscaping of the site. The retention of this number of trees, particularly in such a regular arrangement alongside the main distributor road serving the development, would assist in embedding the development into the surrounding landscape and establishing a mature landscape character from first occupation. As noted previously, the central area of open space would be extensively planted with shrubs and trees. In addition, a native planting mix, incorporating new tree

and shrub planting, would be used alongside footpaths/cycle routes and in 'Homezone' spaces within secondary streets. An area to the south of the site, at its frontage to Countesswells Road, would be extensively landscaped, with grassland enclosed by shrub and tree planting, as well as the retained drystone walling referred to above. In addition to proposals for the initial landscaping of the site, an exhaustive landscape maintenance and management plan has been submitted for the site as part of a separate application relating to Matters Specified in Conditions, detailing the measures to be undertaken in relation to the respective landscape elements and a timetable for actions, to serve as a guidance document for the factoring company to be appointed to undertake long-term landscaping works. Taking these matters into account, the proposal is considered to accord with policy NE5 (Trees and Woodlands) and would contribute towards the development demonstrating due regard for its context and making a positive contribution to its setting, as required by policy D1 (Architecture and Placemaking), and respecting the landscape character of the site and its 'sense of place' as required by policy D6 (Landscape) of the ALDP.

Green Space Network

A small section of Green Space Network designation covers a wedge of the site at its south-eastern corner, however that area would be incorporated into the landscaped frontage onto Countesswells Road. It is therefore concluded that 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 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 enclosure of detention basins with fencing and screening with low-level landscaping is considered sufficient to minimise any risk arising from their presence.

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.

A core path route exists adjacent to the site boundary, and there is no reason to consider that the retention of that route would result in increased anti-social behaviour arising from inappropriate use by motorcyclists. The same point could be made in relation to any footpath route, and the benefits of maintaining good pedestrian connections across the site and its surroundings are considered to outweigh any perceived risk. It is noted also that the police have powers relating to anti-social behaviour and the appropriate use of motorcycles.

Matters raised in representations

The site is zoned within a residential area and is identified as an opportunity site in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan. Any previous zoning as green belt has been superseded by the current ALDP, and is not relevant to consideration of the current proposal. Similarly, the impacts of the development and the associated package of developer contributions have been previously established at the time of the initial application, and it is therefore not appropriate to reconsider any impact on education provision or the surrounding roads network.

Aberdeen City Council's ownership of the site is noted, however there is no requirement for notification to ministers unless the proposal also constituted a significant departure from the development plan strategy. With the site having been zoned for residential development and identified as an opportunity site for housing, there is no such requirement for notification.

An updated tree survey for the site, carried out by Donald Rodger Associates, makes no specific recommendation regarding appropriate distance from trees adjacent to the eastern boundary of Zone F. The Council's arboriculturalist has made no comments relating to impact arising from that eastern boundary, and it is therefore concluded that the presence of those trees does not preclude the development layout proposed. Any removal of existing trees adjacent to site boundaries will be mitigated through new planting of specimens of approximately 4m in height.

A culverted watercourse, running from west to east across the Pinewood site, was identified in the Drainage Impact Assessment submitted as part of a previous application relating to Matters Specified in Conditions. There is no mention of that watercourse being interrupted through the development of the site, and it is noted that this is not a matter for consideration in the planning authority's assessment of the current application, which relates specifically to matters specified in condition 12 of the consent.

Similarly, habitat surveys are not a relevant matter to be considered at this stage, the principle of development already having been established through the granting of Planning Permission in Principle.

The drainage basins referred to in representations remain part of the overall proposal, being located at the north-eastern and south-eastern corners of the Hazledene site. As noted previously, drainage proposals have been previously agreed, and are not relevant to consideration of this particular application.

The applicants have intimated in a separate application that construction access is to be taken via the new access road being constructed and roughly finished, allowing for access from Countesswells Road and avoiding construction vehicles being routed through the residential streets to the east of the site. Any road widening works and compulsory purchase arrangements are matters separate from this application process, and are not relevant to determination of the current application.

Summary

Taking account of the points raised above, it is concluded that proposal demonstrates an appropriate residential layout, incorporating a mix of house sizes and styles, generous provision for open space, landscaping and the provision of pedestrian/cycle routes throughout the site. Appropriate connections would be made to the adjoining site and the adjacent core paths, with north-south access maintained, allowing travel to and from Hazlehead Park. The arrangement of space around a central, tree-lined spine road allows for easy wayfinding and the formation of more intimate Homezone spaces, incorporating landscaping and shared surfaces to promote pedestrian priority and control traffic speeds. The extensive retention of dry stone walling and trees, and the re-use of downtakings in new boundary treatments, throughout the site will contribute towards the character of the new development and its sense of place. 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, in the adjoining Hazledene site, 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 adversely affected, being incorporating into a landscaped frontage onto Countesswells Road. 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 accordance with policies T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development), D1 (Architecture and Placemaking), D2 (Design & Amenity), D3 (Sustainable and Active Travel), D6 (Landscape), 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 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.

(2) 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.

Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.