

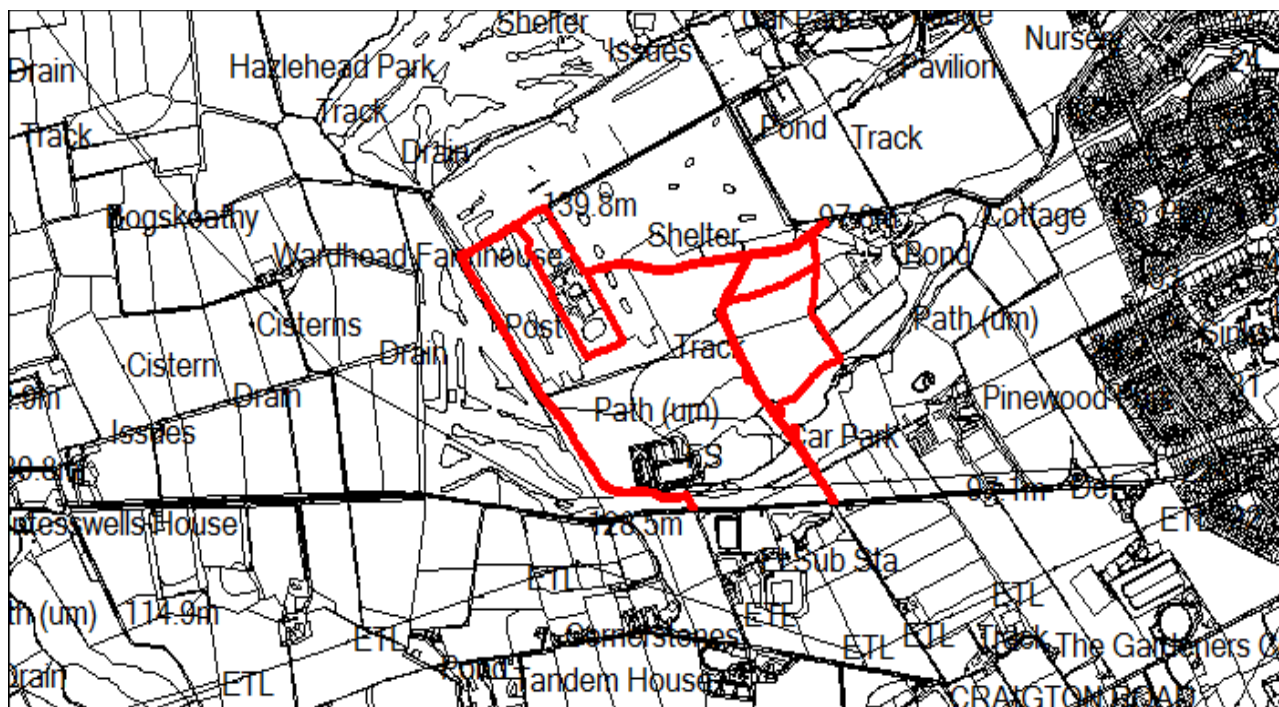
HAYFIELD RIDING CENTRE AND FIELDS TO
THE EAST OF HAZLEDENE ROAD,
HAZLEHEAD PARK

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTRY
HOUSE HOTEL CIRCA 200 BEDROOMS, SPA,
SWIMMING POOL, FUNCTION AND
CONFERENCE FACILITIES, RESTAURANTS
AND EQUESTRIAN CENTRE ON THE
HAYFIELD SITE, ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING
/ ALTERATIONS TO ACCESS ROADS.

For: Mr Alan Massie

Application Type : Planning Permission in
Principle
Application Ref. : P141026
Application Date: 24/07/2014
Officer: Lucy Greene
Ward : Hazlehead/Ashley/Queen's Cross(M
Greig/J Stewart/R Thomson/J Corall)

Advert : Dev. Plan Departure
Advertised on: 20/08/2014
Council Date: 13th May 2015
Community Council : Comments



RECOMMENDATION: Willingness to approve conditionally, subject to referral to Scottish Ministers and permission to be withheld pending the securing of developer contributions, towards:

- upgrading of access roads and paths,

- recreational and wildlife enhancements to Hazlehead Park,
- public bus services and
- the Strategic Transport Fund.

This would also ensure the provision of facilities including the swimming pool, spa, restaurants, banqueting / conference facilities and equestrian centre and that these facilities are open to the public as well as hotel guests.

Background

This report follows a Pre-determination Hearing that was required to be held as this is major applications and was deemed to be a significant departure from the development plan.

The purpose of the hearing was for elected members to hear the views of those who have made representations on the application, prior to the application being determined by full Council.

The application has been referred to the full Council for determination because this is a requirement for a major development that is deemed on submission as significantly contrary to the development plan. Accordingly, the application falls outwith the scope of the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

Following any resolution of Willingness to Approve by Council, the application must be referred to the Scottish Ministers who may call in the application for their own determination, this is because this a major application that was deemed on submission as significantly contrary to the development plan.

DESCRIPTION

The application site consists of two large areas linked by access roads and paths of varying widths and qualities.

Site A, the easternmost area, consists of a roughly square shaped area of fields that is approximately 5.48 hectares in size. The fields are used for the grazing of horses and are grassed. There is a dry stone wall running east – west across the area and two mature trees are growing adjacent to the wall.

Site A lies approximately 300m to the north west of Countesswells Road and to the east of Site B. This site is accessed from the road that leads between Hazledene Road (to the north) and Countesswells (to the south). In recent years the surface of this road has become significantly eroded and barriers have been erected in an effort to prevent vehicular through access.

The submitted topographical drawing shows that the land slopes from the west to the east and to a lesser extent from north to south. The highest point on the western boundary is approximately 10.0m higher than the lowest point at the south eastern corner. The gradient is fairly evenly spread across the site.

The topographical study also shows the tree canopy at approximately 21 – 25m above ground level along the northern site boundary and around 16m along the eastern site boundary.

Site B consists of a rectangular shaped site of approximately 3.72 hectares. This currently contains the Hayfield Riding Centre, with stables, indoor and outdoor school, two terraced houses, a steading, a detached house and ancillary buildings. The houses and steading are granite and traditional in nature. There are paddocks within the northern portion of the site.

Site B is accessed via a single track road that leads off Hazledene Road. This road lies within the application site, as well as the paths that leads from the north west corner of the site and loop round to meet the shooting range to the south.

Site B lies within the golf course, although there are lines of trees along the east and west boundaries and woodland to the south. To the north is a track with drystone dyke along the site boundary.

The wider area contains the golf course and park to the north, the site of the former Dobbie's nursery to the east and woodland to the south and west.

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held on 14th November 2014 and the following points were made:

Members questions: The following information was given in response to Members questions, and further information sought :

- that officers would look at the possibility of access to the site via Countesswells Road
- that officers would confirm (with all members) if the Hayfield Riding School was contained within the Hazlehead Park Policy documents
- that the exact definition of "special events" could be determined and conditioned if required
- that agreed "maintenance" costs could be negotiated
- that other junctions/roads in the vicinity would be assessed for the impact the development may have on them
- that there would be landscaping on both sites of the development
- that an ecology report was undertaken on the site
- that further traffic assessments would be undertaken
- that traffic calming on site would be considered at the next stage of the process
- that tree thinning was to be undertaken on site in the near future
- that the officers and the developer would receive important information from the Hearing which would give them a steer as to the main issues that required to be addressed.

Members raised the following issues following the presentation by the applicant's road engineer Mr Robertson:

- It was suggested that if Countesswells Road was to serve as both entrance and exit to the site, then some improvements might be required at the junction of Seafield Road and Countesswells Road. The Committee heard that the Seafield junction was to be upgraded as part of another development, but that threshold assessments would be undertaken.
- In relation to concerns about access from Countesswells Road being used as a rat-run, Mr Robertson explained that the access from Countesswells would solely lead to the hotel, and therefore there would be no through route for traffic.
- In response to a query about the low grade walls in the area, Mr Stuart (the applicants architect) explained that part of these would need to be repaired, but that they would not be removed.
- It was noted that the design of the equestrian centre was of a differing style to the hotel, and Mr Stuart explained that this was to provide a contrast.
- In response to a suggestion that the construction traffic did not use Hazledene Road to access the site, Mr Robertson advised that the developer was willing to look at the best option.
- In response to a query about whether there would be an impact on public usage of the golf course, Mrs Farquharson-Black (the applicants planning agent) advised that the application would not affect usage of the golf course by the public.
- In response to a query about how the general public would make use of facilities if the hotel was busy with guests, Mr Stuart advised that the developer was in discussion with service providers and that there would be a proviso from the developer that the public would have suitable access to hotel facilities.
- There was a query in relation to potholes on the surrounding roads and whether any resurfacing would be undertaken. Mr Robertson explained that the road would be upgraded to an appropriate standard for the amount of traffic using the access.
- There was further discussion about whether work would be undertaken in the Denwood area to improve the tree coverage, and Mr Stuart advised that the developer would want to work on a woodland management plan with the Council.
- In relation to a query about whether the methods proposed for the protection of the red squirrels were effective, Mr Rudd, Ecologist advised that the methods had been employed elsewhere. He noted that it might be the case that the rope bridges were found to be unnecessary, depending on the amount of tree canopy coverage.
- In relation to a query about whether the organisation was comfortable with the development being built on a network of unadopted roads, Mrs Farquharson-Black advised that access and maintenance arrangements would be covered as part of the legal and maintenance agreements. Mr Stuart also noted that in order for the roads to be adopted, they would likely need to be widened. The

developer was keen to retain a 'park' feel to the site, and widening the roads would change this. Mr Stuart added that increasing the width of the roads would also probably lead to an increase in traffic speed.

- In response to a query about the landscaping at the front of the hotel, Mr Stuart advised that while the initial planting might look sparse, there would be significant tree input to the site from the beginning of the development. The trees would be at least 4.5 metres in height. A formal garden style would be adopted at the front of the hotel. It was noted that there would be a detailed report on sustainability, but that the new buildings were designed to use as limited an amount of energy as possible. It was suggested that consideration could be given to using a biomass plant to generate power for the hotel
- In response to a query about why the proposal had not been taken through the development plan process, Mrs Farquharson-Black advised that the development plan process had commenced before the development was proposed, but added that she felt that the process of early public consultation and the pre-determination hearing was very thorough.

Issues raised by the Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council (CSCC):

- At the time of consultation on the existing adopted Local development Plan (LDP) the CSCC had agreed with the Council that sufficient greenfield sites were allocated, however, times have changed. Although broadly supportive of the hotel, the CSCC would not wish to see a precedent set leading to the further development on the city's green spaces. Concerns that the wished to have taken into account:
 - a) Tree removal, loss of habitat and impact of noise
 - b) Use of Hazledene Road by construction traffic and other heavy traffic
 - c) Concern for safety of pupils from Hazlehead Academy, due to traffic on local roads
 - d) Use of Hazledene Road where there is no right turn onto Queens Road. This may also result in drivers diverting down other local roads.
 - e) Volume of traffic along Hazledene Road as the main access to the hotel, especially if vehicles are parked. Concern is expressed that in the longer term this would lead to the removal of trees to widen the road.
 - f) That there are natural springs on the site and development could disrupt the flow of water resulting in flooding. Any approval should be conditional upon a hydrological survey.
 - g) Implications for natural environment. This is Scotland's only climate change park. The two concepts seem incompatible.
 - h) Demand for a high quality hotel, there would be a positive impact for tourism. It would be likely to be advantageous for the economy, in terms of employment and business for the supply chain.
 - i) The size of facility is queried, based on the proposal at the time of the hearing.
 - j) The site is well suited to the proposal, s it is well screened and would have minimal visual impact., due to its proximity to the park, golf courses, paths and gardens. It is not clear how tee times would be arranged.
 - k) There would be a positive impact in terms of the image of the city.
 - l) Positive comments on the 'modern baronial' style of architecture.

- m) In conclusion, concerns relate to infrastructure and changing of the natural ambiance of the park. The positive aspects would be the social benefits of the proposed uses and the economic and tourism advantage.
- n) It was acknowledged that parents of Airyhall Primary (outside boundary of) had commented on safety of children crossing Countesswells Road.

Two local residents addressed the hearing and made the following comments:

- i. Although not against the idea of a five star hotel, this is the wrong site, as it would upset the balance of nature and result in detrimental impact on plants and wildlife.
- ii. Proposal could result in introduction of residential use, if not rigorously controlled.
- iii. Use of the park for informal and recreational purposes should be preserved.
- iv. Increases in volume of traffic and size of vehicles on the roads, in particular Hazledene Road.
- v. Possibility for traffic being displaced into the neighbouring areas with consequence safety concerns.
- vi. There is a Tree Preservation Order in the area, road widening could be required which could result in tree loss.

Comments from Project Officer from Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels:

- 1. Increase in traffic would lead to squirrel deaths on the roads
- 2. Loss of trees would result in tree canopy loss
- 3. Concern that road signs and rope bridges would not be effective as mitigation measures.
- 4. Expresses wish to work with developers if the proposal is approved.

PROPOSAL

The application is for Planning Permission in Principle and the proposals have been amended since the public hearing. The main changes were that all holiday lodges are removed from the application, the golf club house has been removed and the hotel and conference facility have been reduced in size. The application consists of the following:

Site A (the fields to the east):

- a hotel containing 200 bedrooms, restaurant and banqueting / function / conference facilities to seat a maximum of 800 people, spa and swimming pool

Parking would be provided as below:

300 car spaces (including 16 disabled)
57 cycle parking spaces
22 motorcycle

A large proportion of the parking would be provided underground.

Site B (existing Hayfield site):

- Equestrian centre, indicative plans show the retention of the existing stone stables, and dwellings. An indoor arena, stables and ancillary staff facilities would be provided. In terms of outdoor facilities, there would be training areas, a larger external arena, cross country course / field and polo field.

These would be located broadly in the south / central area of the site, approximately where the existing buildings are located.

The Planning Supporting Statement by Knight Frank, dated June 2014, states that improvements would be provided to the core path and cycle network within the Hazlehead Area

The application includes plans that are indicative only and the details of the proposal, including design and massing of the buildings, would be dealt with under further applications for Matters Specified in Conditions.

To provide a rough idea of the size of hotel building, the indicative plans show a building with main block and two wings at right angles (ie forming three sides of a square). The building of three and a half / four storeys, is indicated as being approximately 15m in height on the wings and a maximum of 18m in height at the central feature on the main block. The maximum extent of the footprint is indicated as extending across an area approximately 110m by 95m.

On Site A, the trees to the north are shown as being approximately between 21 and 25m in height, whilst the trees to the east are indicated as being approximately 16m in height. The height and massing of the building is indicative only, with the highest element being the central portion of the main block. This element is shown as being closer to the east site boundary and is slightly higher than the tree canopy at the closest point.

Landscape proposals:

Indicative landscape proposals have been submitted as part of the indicative plans. These are not detailed and show proposals for:

Site A: Proposals indicate the planting of extra heavy standard trees planted largely within grassland. There are also areas indicated as wildflower planting, shrubs planting, paths and repaired dry stone walls as well as new stone walls at the entrance. The central area enclosed by the wings of the hotel is indicated as a formal garden.

Site B: Proposed woodland planting within the site boundaries around the southern end of the site and the eastern edge, alongside existing. It is also proposed to plant a number of extra heavy standard trees.

The planning statement states that the hotel would be of a 5 star standard and would fill a gap in the market, following the possible closure of the Marcliffe Hotel.

The planning statement contains an analysis of alternative sites where a facility of this might be located, this is in the form of a sequential test and includes opportunity sites within the Local Development Plan.

Access:

The revised Transportation Assessment contains three options for access:

Option 1: Access via Hazlehead Avenue and Groats Road one way, two way access along Hazledene Road and one way egress only via Countesswells Road.

Option 2: Access via Hazlehead Road and Groats Road one way. Two way access along Hazledene Road and two way access via Countesswells Road, the latter to site A only

Option 3: Access via Hazledene Road to site B and access to site A via Countesswells Road

The applicant has stated that a shuttle bus to the city centre would be provided for staff and guests and that this would run hourly between 7am and midnight.

The applicant has submitted a Socio Economic Assessment, which describes the following socio-economic benefits:

- Visitor spending suggested at £3.8 - £4.8m per annum, supporting 30 – 40 jobs. This is cited as a cautious estimate based on available information about the proposed development and tourism expenditure in Aberdeen.
- Up to 250 Full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in the hotel
- Up to 60 jobs supported by hotel's activity and expenditure
- Up to 7 FTEs supported by the riding school
- Potential to boost revenue to local golf course by up to £25,000 per year
- Up to 400 jobs in peak construction period supported during a two year build period, based on construction investment of £50 million

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?ref=141026>

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

The supporting documents include:

- Indicative Design Concept, Additional Supporting Information dated February 2015
- Transportation Assessment (revised)

- Ecological Report
- Plans and indicative drawings
- Supporting Planning Statement dated February 2015
- Report on the Pre-application Consultation
- Socio-Economic Assessment
- Letter from VisitAberdeen

PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

The proposed development was the subject to pre-application consultation earlier this year between the applicant and the local community, as required for applications falling within the category of major developments as defined in the 'Hierarchy of Development' Regulations. The consultation involved one public meeting and a meeting with the Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council.

CONSULTATIONS

Roads Development Management – A revised Transport Assessment (TA) has been submitted. Site B (Hayfield site) is now exempt from travel impact and Strategic Transport Fund (STF) contribution.

Matters are considered in line with Scottish Government policy 'Designing Streets' which advocates greater permeability of new developments by street users on hierarchical basis, giving highest priority to pedestrians and lowest to private cars.

Pedestrian access between the development sites and the adopted road network would be poor and the distances would be restrictive to people choosing to walk. Similarly cycle provision is poor.

Public transport: even when the no.15 bus has been extended into Pinewood, the distance require to walk to the nearest bus stop would be restrictive.

There would be a shuttle bus provided by the developer, this would offer an hourly service (between 7am and midnight) to Union Street for staff and guests. Access for service vehicles would be via Countesswells Road, to remove the need for these larger vehicles to travel through the park. It is debatable how access by delivery vehicles would be restricted to Countesswells Road and in order to do this, very detailed consideration would need to be given to the barrier system.

Deployment of the barrier system to prevent rat-running through the development by private cars would be essential.

The impact of traffic generated by the development would not have a significant impact on the surrounding adopted road network, however, there would be an adverse impact on the park roads, with increased traffic causing inconvenience and safety concerns to pedestrians and cyclists.

In terms of LDP policy T2 – 'Managing the Transport Impact of Development' indicates that to take a reasoned decision, account must be taken of the availability and quality of types of transport that are currently available and proposed measures to ensure a reasonable choice of modes will be available.

It also states that planning conditions and legal agreement may be used to bind the targets in the Travel Plan and to set out arrangements for monitoring, enforcement and review.

The following conditions would be required to be attached to any approval:

- I. Signing strategy to direct visitors to the hotel
- II. To retain all existing access arrangements within the park and provide emergency access to the development (which would need to be approved by emergency services).
- III. Barrier system would need to be installed to ensure there is no potential rat-run between Hazledene Road and Countesswells Road (it is also proposed that service / delivery vehicles only take access / egress from Countesswells Road so the barrier control would need to be set up to prevent alternative access / egress by service / delivery vehicles)
- IV. Swept path assessments would be required for coaches, service vehicles and emergency vehicles (road widening and passing places and bend improvements may be required as a result)
- V. Improvement of roads through the park, including the existing bridge, and suitable drainage provision, would be required (need to debate whether a Maintenance Agreement with ACC Environment would be required; whether park roads should be illuminated; whether advisory speed limit of 15mph should be retained; whether to remove or alter the current Prohibition of Driving Order)
- VI. Improvement of off-road paths through the park would be required (need to debate issues of maintenance and lighting)
- VII. Travel Plan required to encourage alternative modes of transport to the private car (this should include a Parking Management Plan and commitment to providing courtesy shuttle bus service)
- VIII. Strategic Transport Fund contribution would be required

Economic Development

- The Aberdeen City and Shire Tourism Partnerships' "Strategy for Growth" 2013-2020 aims to grow tourism expenditure to £410m-£510m by 2020 from a 2013 base of £340m.
- A number of actions are prioritised including the improvement and expansion of accommodation provision and reducing seasonality. Golf and business tourism activities are specifically highlighted to capitalise and link to the Trump International Golf Links and the conference economy respectively.
- The Strategy also highlights capacity for large, high quality hotels and an objective to grow the accommodation sector, highlighting the need to grow weekend city occupancy. Encouraging the development of a 4*+ destination

hotel within the city centre, and encouraging new product/ asset development are identified as gaps in the existing offer.

- The proposal supports the overall priorities and Vision for the Aberdeen City & Shire Tourism Strategy.
- The estimate of impacts are not discounted to reflect the effects of deadweight (economic benefit that could happen regardless of the development) and displacement (those estimated benefits that are accounted for by reduced benefits elsewhere in the city, for example, jobs), or leakage (where the outputs benefit those outside the city centre economy).
- **Construction impacts** are temporary and should not be considered in the context of the overall development. Reflecting this, construction benefits could be counted in 'job years', for example, a construction job for a period of 12 months is counted as a 'job year'.
- **Direct impacts** up to 250 direct full time equivalents (FTEs) , these figures are gross. Fifty of these are restaurant, spa and function jobs.
- **Indirect/ Induced Impacts** – the multipliers used are reasonable. Up to 60 FTE jobs through hotel spending, 30-40 FTE supported by visitor spending in Aberdeen City and Shire, 7 FTE supported by riding school
- Golf course/ equestrian/ other impacts, these are not tested but seem reasonable. Comparator/ competitor analysis not undertaken. However, there is only one 5* hotel in the city and this development would increase the overall offer/ competition
- Conference – there is no analysis of the conference market and demand for this type of space in Aberdeen. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the scale being proposed here (approximately 800 delegates) is needed.
- Gross Value Added (GVA) based on reasonable estimate of GVA/ job. We would expect the net additional GVA to be lower on the assumption the calculation is based on the gross job figure.

In conclusion, the net economic impact of the development is not articulated. Depending on what assumptions are made for deadweight and displacement (assuming no leakage), the net impact will be lower than the estimates here. Based on the information reviewed, the proposal directly supports the overall aims of the Area Tourism Partnership's Strategy.

Environmental Health – Request attachment of condition relating to a noise assessment.

Developer Contributions Team – Contributions have been agreed in relation to priority projects from the park plan including core paths, footpaths, hacking routes, signage. It is noted that the contribution also includes for wildlife mitigation measures.

Communities, Housing & Infrastructure (Flooding) – The requirement for Drainage Impact Assessment could be dealt with by condition.

Education, Culture & Sport (Archaeology) – Requests attachment of condition requiring an archaeological dig prior to development.

Scottish Environment Protection Agency – Require attachment of conditions any consent granted, relating to: a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) for surface water drainage, the submission of a site specific Construction and

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) – no comments.

Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels (SSRS) - SSRS raises concern about the development proposal as Den Wood is a key site for red squirrels in Aberdeen.

The SSRS has been working in the park since 2009, prior to that, trapping was carried out by SNH from around 2005.

Evidence exists that the red squirrel population has undergone a remarkable recovery – Hazlehead Park constitutes a reservoir of red squirrels of major importance for their successful recolonisation of wider Aberdeen.

Concern is expressed that the proposed development would impact negatively on red squirrels. This is due to the need to upgrade roads, thus reducing habitat, increasing fragmentation of habitat and increasing the risk of traffic related mortality.

At present the road is narrow enough for red squirrels are able to cross the canopy. Road sign and rope bridges are considered to be ineffective.

It is considered that the proposed work would be contrary to objectives of the Aberdeen City Council Nature Conservation Strategy, in relation to preserving and sustainably managing natural heritage, increasing the value of wildlife corridors and considering nature conservation in all Council projects.

It is requested that roads are placed within the landscape so as to avoid bisecting woodland blocks.

Craigiebuckler and Seafield Community Council (CSCC) – Refer to the consultation on the Main Issues Report for the emerging Aberdeen local Development Plan 2016 (emerging LDP), whereby the Community Council in their response supported the Council's preferred approach, not to allocate further sites. This was for the reason that the allocations already provide a generous supply of housing and employment sites and that increasing the supply of land for development would result in exacerbating the traffic congestion. The Community Council therefore states that it is bound to concur with all decisions by the Council to refuse planning permission in principle to applicant who propose to build on land which is not designated for development in the emerging LDP.

CSCC is aware that a luxury hotel to the west of the city is about to close leaving a gap in the market. It is considered that there would be advantages to the economy if this gap was filled with a new high quality luxury hotel and leisure complex.

The sites are well suited to the purpose because of the visual appeal of their surroundings, proximity to the golf course, paths and gardens.

The location is well screened and development should have minimal visual impact.

REPRESENTATIONS

19 no. number of letters of representation have been received. The objections raised relate to the following matters –

- Impact on Park: Hazlehead Park is a valuable facility that has been enjoyed for generations. It is well used by walkers, joggers, cyclists and horse riders and golfers. It is also one of few unspoilt areas through largely undeveloped land and a haven for wildlife – birds, wild animals and deer. The park has already been affected by the Dandara development at Countesswells Road and adjoining pathways through fields have been lost. The development would detract considerably from the park, due to:
 - o Development in the heart of the Park detracting from amenity;
 - o volume of traffic – would change character of park and be hazardous to walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Green Belt: This is green belt land where development is wholly inappropriate. Even if there were some justification for the Hotel and Country Club, there is no justification for serviced chalets/ holiday homes / second homes / timeshare properties which may result in residential development. This may set a precedent for further development.
- Development would fragment the green belt.
- Scale of development is inappropriate;
- Roads would not cope with the additional traffic – widening would impact upon trees and drystone dykes;
- Development would be out of keeping with the surrounding area
- Negative impact on wildlife habitat, in particular:
 - o The woods are red squirrel habitat, disruption would impact on red squirrels which have thrived due to efforts in recent years.
 - o Buzzards – nest on site A
 - o Bats forage over the fields
 - o Owls feed on field mice from the fields
- Noise disturbance to residential areas due to increase in traffic in streets used for access, including those leaving functions at night.
- Alternative sites: that it has not been adequately demonstrated that suitable alternative sites have been considered objectively, especially in peripheral areas and Aberdeenshire. Including comments on the following:
 - o Grove nursery, the remaining area, could be considered;
 - o The Marcliffe site could be used

- It is stated that access through a housing estate is not acceptable for a quality hotel operator – the appropriateness of Hazledene Road is questioned.
- Queries as to whether transport assessment (TA) takes into account PrimeFour.
- The possibility of creating a rat run through the area has not been modelled and this would not be acceptable.
- Hazledene Road is crossed by those attending Hazlehead Primary and Academy and increased traffic is a safety risk.
- The TA is based on a 200 bed hotel, whereas the application is for 250 bedrooms – Note: the TA has been updated to reflect this.
- That the Queens Road / Hazledene Road junction is not fit for purpose to accommodate this development.
- Drainage is a problem in the area and has been exacerbated by recent development.
- That the park is being revitalised as the first Climate Change Park in Scotland. The proposed development's large carbon footprint would be the antithesis to sustainability.
- The proposal would result in undesirable light pollution in an area that is currently dark.
- That the proposal could risk the future existence of the golf course and the area be developed for housing.
- The Country Club would be very expensive and not affordable to most.
- The Hazlehead Complex belongs to the citizens of Aberdeen and should be kept as such.
- That the Council wish to sell the Hazlehead Golf complex to the private sector.

Letter from VisitAberdeen

This states that the proposal could address various gaps. That the quality of hotel proposed is needed within the city, that the size of conference facility proposed in combination with hotel would fill a gap in the market.

That the opportunity to secure upscale restaurants and spa facilities should be taken with alacrity and sully supports the proposal.

Once the Marcliffe closes there would be a total of 46no. 5* rooms in the city, which is wholly inadequate. No 5* hotels are planned that VisitAberdeen are aware of.

PLANNING POLICY

National Policy and Guidance

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

SPP reiterates the Scottish Government's central purpose is to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.

The SPP introduces a presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development.

Paragraph 28 states that: The planning system should support economically, environmentally and socially sustainable places by enabling development that balances the costs and benefits of a proposal over the longer term. The aim is to achieve the right development in the right place; it is not to allow development at any cost.

Decision should be guided by various principles including:

- giving due weight to net economic benefit; and
- protecting, enhancing and promoting access to natural heritage, including green infrastructure, landscape and the wider environment.

The SPP contains a strong emphasis on creating high quality places by taking a design-led approach, at every level.

One of the core principles of the SPP is the plan-led approach to planning.

Paragraph 49 of SPP identifies the purpose of the green belt as:

- directing development to the most appropriate locations and supporting regeneration;
- protecting and enhancing the character, landscape setting and identity of the settlement; and
- protecting and providing access to open space

Paragraph 50 of SPP describes the types of uses which may be included within green belt policy as acceptable within the green belt. In addition to those included within the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2012, these also include:

- development meeting a national requirement or established need, if no other suitable site is available.

SPP lists key documents, including: Tourism Development Framework for Scotland (see below).

Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP)

The overall vision of the SDP is:

Aberdeen City and Shire will be an even more attractive, prosperous and sustainable European city region and an excellent place to live, visit and do business.

We will be recognised for :

- Our enterprise and inventiveness, particularly in the knowledge economy and in high-value markets;
- The unique qualities of our environment; and,
- Our high quality of life.

The vision looks to further develop a robust and resilient economy, whilst development being sustainable, dealing with climate change and creating a more inclusive society.

To contribute towards the Scottish Government's central purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth, the aims of the SDP include diversifying the regional economy. To support this and other aims, the SDP plans, amongst other things, to make sure the area has enough jobs to support the level of services and facilities needed to maintain and improve quality of life, protect the natural environment, to meet high standards of design and make the most efficient use of the transport network

All areas of the City, including this site, lie within a strategic growth area. The strategy focuses development on places where there are clear opportunities to encourage people to use public transport, planning for significant growth in a limited number places.

The structure plan contains objectives that relate to providing opportunities for economic development, protecting the natural environment and sustainability.

The Economic Growth objective states that a strong service sector is important and in particular all forms of tourism, will have a role to play

Green belt: Paragraph 4.31 describes the continuing vital role of the green belt around Aberdeen in protecting the character and landscape setting of the City. The SDP recognises that the green belt will need to change to meet the growth sought within the plan. The green belt must guide development to appropriate places while protecting the most important areas.

Accessibility objective: to make sure all new development contributes towards reducing the need to travel and encouraging people to walk, cycle, or use public transport.

Reference is made to the Regional Transport Strategy.

Aberdeen Local Development Plan

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

The sites are zoned within the green belt and Green Space Network.

Policy NE2 'Green Belt'

No development will be permitted in the green belt for purposes other than those essential for agriculture, woodland and forestry, recreational uses compatible with an agricultural or natural setting, mineral extraction or restoration or landscape renewal. There are exceptions to the policies, including the following:

- Proposals for development associated with existing activities in the green belt;
- Essential infrastructure;

- Conversion of buildings of historic or architectural interest that contribute to the character of the green belt;
- Proposals for extensions of existing buildings as part of a conversion or rehabilitation scheme.

Policy NE1 'Green Space Network'

The wildlife, recreational, landscape and access value of the network will be protected and enhanced. Proposals that destroy or erode this will be resisted. Where development crosses this, it shall take into account the coherence of the network, including measures to allow access across roads for wildlife and for access and outdoor recreation. Development that has an impact on existing wildlife habitats must be mitigated through enhancement of the network.

Policy D1 'Architecture and placemaking'

To ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context.

Policy D3 'Sustainable and Active Travel'

New development will be designed to minimise travel by private car, improve access to services and encourage active travel

Policy D4 'Aberdeen's Granite Heritage'

Retention of granite buildings will be encouraged, even where are not listed or within conservation areas.

Policy D6 'Landscape'

Development must avoid, inter alia:

- Significantly adversely affecting landscape character;
- Disturbance or loss to important recreation, wildlife or woodland resources or to the physical links between them;
- Sprawling onto important green spaces or buffers between communities or places with distinct identities

This policy highlights consideration of impact on existing landscape elements, linear and boundary features or other components that contribute to local amenity, and development should provide opportunities for conserving or restoring them.

Policy NE5 'Trees and Woodlands'

Presumption against all activities that will result in loss or damage to established trees and woodlands.

Policy NE6 'Flooding and Drainage'

Development will not be permitted where it would increase the risk of flooding, be at risk of flooding itself.

Policy NE8 'Natural Heritage'

Development that has an adverse effect (even taking into account mitigation measures) on protected species or areas, will only be acceptable where it take into account Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)

Policy NE9 'Access and informal recreation'

New development must not compromise the integrity of existing or potential recreational opportunities including access rights, core paths, other paths and rights of way. Where possible development should include new or improved provision for public access and links to green space for recreation and active travel.

Policy T2 'Managing the Transport Impact of Development'

Measure must be taken to minimise traffic generated and maximise opportunities for sustainable and active travel.

Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required.

Policy D3 'Sustainable and Active Travel'

New development will be designed in order to minimise travel by private car, improve access to services and encourage active travel. Development will maintain and enhance permeability. Access will prioritise transport modes in the the order – walking, cycling, public transport, car.

Supplementary Guidance (SG)

Transport and Accessibility

Bats and Development

Other Relevant Material Considerations

Regional Transport Strategy and Local Transport Strategy

These are translated through into LDP policy in Policy T2 and T3 (see above) as well as in the Supplementary Guidance 'Transport and Accessibility'

Tourism Strategy for Scotland

This document is referred to in SPP.

Paragraph 2.65 reports on analysis of a VisitScotland Visitor Survey that identifies requirements, including:

- Investing in new accommodation from budget to high end luxury resorts which can attract visitors to Scotland.

Paragraph 2.67: cites a requirement including in Aberdeen to provide further 4 and 5 star accommodation to support business tourism, in particular close to major conferences, and provide for short break international and affluent mature domestic market.

Paragraph 2.72: States that the country house hotel, for so long a generator of short break tourism in Scotland is under pressure. It is stated that this type of hotel needs to evolve the experience to meet the changing needs of customers.

There is an associated action, that includes:

In partnership with local and national stakeholders, VisitScotland encourages development planning authorities to consider further accommodation requirements at locations where there is evidence of market demand. Other priorities include:

Identifying locations for investment in new hotel accommodation in towns and rural areas, including the country house hotel product.

Theme 5 – Nature Heritage and Activities, encourages the provision of tourism development opportunities along the designated path network (that includes core paths) to enhance their tourism potential and take advantage of the basic asset of our natural environment.

Aberdeen City and Shire Tourism Partnerships’ “Strategy for Growth” 2013 – 2020.

In order to achieve desired outcomes one of the actions is to improve and expand accommodation provision. The strategy states that the area has capacity for large, high quality hotels.

Climate Change Park Report 2013

EVALUATION

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

Green Belt and Landscape

Site B: The proposal on site B is for a replacement of the equestrian centre that currently exists on the site. The proposal is for the re-use of the existing traditional buildings on the site and the erection of replacement buildings on the area of the site where there are existing modern buildings in a poor state of repair. The use exists and is related to the natural setting and recreational use of the green belt. Subject to suitable conditions, including to conditions to ensure that the design of the buildings is appropriate to the context, the proposal would comply with Policy NE2 ‘Green Belt’ and policy relating to green belt in the SDP and SPP. The replacement of existing buildings of poor appearance on the site would have a positive impact on visual amenity within the green belt.

Site A (hotel): Green belt policy contains a presumption against development except in very limited circumstances. The proposals for Site A do not fit within any of the categories of development cited in the LDP that may be acceptable within the green belt.

The hotel is described by the applicant as a country club hotel. This is defined by the UK tourist authorities (VisitBritain, VisitScotland and VisitWales) as: ‘A hotel with ample grounds or gardens set in a rural or semi-rural situation; the property has an emphasis on peace and quiet.’

The proposed hotel would be set within a relatively large site. This would be especially so, taking into account the surrounding woodlands and park, although these would not be in the ownership of the hotel, guests would be able to access these areas with ease and they would contribute to the setting of the hotel.

Given the nature of a country house hotel, a countryside setting, or at least natural setting of considerable size is a key factor. This requirement rules out many vacant and allocated sites around Aberdeen city.

It should also be noted that a country house hotel would relate well to recreational uses that are themselves compatible with a natural setting and appropriate within the green belt.

The purpose of the green belt, as defined in the LDP is to maintain the identity of Aberdeen and the communities within and around the city by defining their physical boundaries clearly, avoiding coalescence and urban sprawl, maintaining the landscape setting and providing access to open space. The green belt directs planned growth to the most appropriate locations and supports regeneration.

Breaking this purpose down into its component, it is possible to analyse the impact of the proposed hotel and its associated activity, on the purpose of the green belt.

The proposal would be located on a site that is well screened on all sides from surrounding areas, other than the immediate site boundaries. Due to topography the site is not visible within long range views and there would be no loss of wooded landscape structure. Conditions could be attached to any permission, limiting the size of the hotel in terms of number of bedrooms, floorspace, footprint size and height. The precise size of the hotel within these parameters would then be agreed at the time of the further formal application that would be required for Matters Specified in Conditions. Taking the foregoing into account and relating it to the purpose of the green belt, it is considered that the proposal would not impact adversely on the identity of the city or its communities and it would not create coalescence or urban sprawl.

Concerns have been raised regarding the setting of an undesirable precedent and whether the consequent approval of similar proposals may result in a cumulative effect that would result in an adverse impact upon the factors mentioned in the previous sentence, With this in mind the following should be noted:

- There is a limited market for high quality country house hotels such as that proposed;
- This particular site is very well screened and is unusual in its relationship with an area of outstanding recreational value;
- In terms of accessibility (discussed further below), this particular site is relatively close to the urban area, so that although it does not have direct public transport links, they are available. The distance to the city centre also means that provision of such a link by the hotel, for its guests and staff is a viable, convenient and worthwhile option.

Taking into account the particular attributes of the proposed use and the site, it is clear that alternative uses on this site, for example, housing or offices, would not have the same specific locational requirements, synergy with the surroundings

and surrounding uses, nor benefits for the city (discussed further below) in terms of economic development or the social benefits of the proposed facilities.

Considering the other element of the purpose of the green belt, namely, to direct development to the most appropriate location and to support regeneration, it should be noted that this proposal relates to a very particular type of use that would not be appropriate in the urban area and is most appropriately located in a rural or semi-rural location. It is acknowledged that it is not a use listed within the criteria in the green belt policy and the application is being dealt with as a departure to the development plan.

Representations have raised the point that the applicant should have followed the procedure for having the site assessed and, depending upon the outcome, possibly allocated within the local plan. In this regard it should be pointed out that there was no developer bid submitted for this site at the time of the commencement of the process for the emerging LDP. The site therefore did not undergo this form assessment. However, officers considered that carrying out this assessment would be beneficial to inform the consideration of the application. The overall outcome was the site was considered as 'desirable', with accessibility coming out as the main constraint:

"The two separate but related sites sit within Hazlehead Park and occupy a well concealed and secluded position within the woodland that would complement the existing recreational activities within Hazlehead. The Site A hotel proposal is not in accordance with Local Development Plan Greenbelt policy. However, it would not conflict with the overall aims of the policy in that the topography, woodland and nature of the proposal would ensure that neither visual nor physical coalescence would occur between the development and the surrounding area. The site is also on the edge of the built-up area of Aberdeen, and would not contribute to a 'sprawling' pattern of development into the countryside.

Both sites have a good aspect, good drainage, no risk of flooding and are well connected to walking and cycling routes. The proposals would provide an employment, tourism and leisure opportunity that will enhance the area as an attractive tourist destination.

The key constraint is access. The current approach along Hazledene Road has a very peaceful and rural nature, fitting with the setting of Hazlehead Park, which could easily be lost through increased traffic volumes, road widening, tree loss or street lighting. If this could be resolved, the two sites would represent a good development opportunity."

As described above, the physical form of the development would have limited impact on the character of the green belt, other than in the immediate locality. Conditions would be attached requiring further consideration of design matters and this would require further application. The other aspect of potential impact on the character of the green belt is the comings and goings to the hotel, a significant number of which would be by private car or taxi. It is accepted that these trips would be minimised as far as possible by measures agreed in terms

of the condition that requires a traffic management plan, and also by the provision of a bus service to the city centre. The traffic management plan would also include measures for conferences and other special events.

The following should also be noted:

- The applicant has stated that the hotel would be a 5 star establishment. The extent to which this could be ensured is discussed below, however, it is considered that a limited number of guests coming to stay at such an establishment would be likely to arrive and depart by public transport even if it were more readily available.
- Access routes are discussed further below, however, the preferred option, that would be subject of condition, is for most larger vehicles to use the Countesswells Road access, whilst other vehicles would have the choice of Hazlehead Road, Hazledene Road and Groats Road, this would spread and disperse the traffic impact and result in considerably less impact on any single access route to the hotel.
- Countesswells Road is a busy commuter route, despite its rural nature as it heads westwards.
- Until a few years ago, when the barriers were erected on the Hazledene Road through Den Wood, this was also used as a rat run by significant numbers of private cars.
- As noted below, although the surface of the road requires upgrading, it would remain a country road in nature. Urbanising aspects such as pavements, kerbs and street lighting columns would not be part of the requirement for the upgrade. Widening would be minimised as the intention would be that road widths would act as a form of traffic calming.

Taking all of the above into account it is considered that the changes to the nature of the park roads and character of the green belt, due to traffic from the development, would be capable of being minimised.

Green Space Network (GSN)

Site A: The proposal would not cause a break in the network of green space that provides for recreation, wildlife, access and has value for in terms of landscape. The hotel site would not impact on the woodlands that surround site and substantial areas of open landscaped grounds would be created further enhanced by new habitats and additional tree planting on what is currently open fields – resulting in enhancement rather than degradation of the the GSN

Site B: There would be insignificant change to the GSN as the built up areas of the riding school site which is already substantially developed in the same areas.

Taking into account the foregoing the proposals comply with LDP Policy NE1.

Transport and Accessibility

Three options for access have been proposed by the applicant. The Roads Development Management Team have stated in their consultation response, that Option 2 is preferable, as it aligns with the aims of Designing Streets. This is the option with all routes, ie, one way access into the sites from Groats Road and Hazlehead Road, two way access along Hazledene Road and two way access via Countesswells Road. A barrier system would prevent 'rat running'. This would be the subject of condition.

The Transport Assessment is based on a worse case and covers various scenarios:

Weekday, day to day hotel operations:

24 arrivals, 29 departures during peak hour (0800 – 0900)

43 arrivals, 61 departures during peak hour (1700 – 1800)

Weekday conference (in addition to day to day hotel):

98 arrivals, 19 departures during peak hour (0900 – 1000)

130 arrivals, 22 departures during peak hour (1700 – 1800)

Saturday scenario with two weddings (total 500 guests):

28 arrivals during Saturday dinner peak hour (1400 – 1500)

47 arrivals during Saturday reception peak hour (1800 – 1900)

The size of the proposed hotel has been reduced (from 250 bedrooms to 200, the conference facility from maximum 1000 to 800 and lodges and golf club house removed) since the hearing and the volumes of traffic would not result in the requirement for works to the adopted road network. The traffic impact on the wider road network would be taken into account by the payment of Strategic Transport Fund contribution to which the applicant has agreed.

In terms of the park roads to be used for access, these would not be adopted roads, however, the applicant would be required to pay for the upgrade of the surface of the roads, lighting, (likely to be in the form of bollards) and drainage of the roads. Although road widening would be required in some areas, the Roads Projects Team has confirmed that this is capable of being managed around the results of detailed tree surveys and this would be required by condition. Passing places would be an acceptable solution and there are existing car parking areas at regular intervals along the Hazledene Road.

It is proposed to restrict service deliveries to the Countesswells access in order to minimise the number of larger vehicles passing through the park. Refuse lorries would still use all routes, as well as emergency vehicles. A condition would be attached requiring erection of barriers within the hotel site in order to prevent rat running, this would also involve careful layout of the internal access roads within the hotel site.

In terms of pedestrian access, the core path leading from the south eastern corner of the site to the Pinewood / Hazledene housing development would be upgraded and there is to be a bus stop for the no. 15 bus within that development. This is at a walking distance of 500m from the hotel and through woodland. Upgrade, including bollard lighting, of this path would be required by condition, however, it is acknowledged that this pedestrian access is poor.

Design, scale and massing

The proposals show an indicative design that is based on a 'modern Scottish baronial' style, with a footprint and massing that bears some resemblance to a 'main house' with subservient wings. The style of architecture is questioned as

the submission fails to demonstrate that the architectural approach indicated would be successful or of sufficiently high quality. The applicant has indicated that this is a style prevalent in many 'country house hotels' within Scotland and that as was the reasoning behind the approach to the indicative design. It is considered that to reproduce Scottish Baronial style in modern materials is extremely challenging. The submission is helpful, however, as an indication of how a building of the size required to accommodate the number of rooms and floorspace applied for, would sit within the site. The size of hotel has been reduced since the hearing, and the lodges omitted. It should be reiterated that design, massing and scale would be the subject of further application for Matters Specified in Conditions (MSC). It is considered that considerable improvement and refinement of the design of the hotel will be required at the matters Specified by Condition stage but this matter can legitimately be reserved for agreement at that time. Approval of this planning permission in principle would relate to the principle of the use and would not be approval of the design shown within the submitted documents. The purpose of these drawings is, in this context, to indicate how a building of the size required to accommodate 200 bedrooms and the various additional facilities, would fit within the site.

The indicative proposals show a building with formal floorplan – three sides of a square. The approach is that the central building would form the more dominant building and would be a storey higher. This would contain the entrance to the hotel. The two wings would be subservient, at three storeys in height. The indicative plans show a building that is generally lower than the tree canopy. The highest and central part of the building would be slightly higher than the tree canopy to the east. Any permission granted would be subject to conditions providing for a maximum height above ordnance datum and a maximum floorspace and number of rooms.

The result would be that the proposed building would only be visible from the boundaries of the site and would be well contained within its landscaped setting. There would be no longer range views of the hotel and consequently no wider adverse visual impacts that would erode the landscape setting of the City. With suitable conditions as explained above, it is considered that the broad principles relating to the size of the building are acceptable in their visual impact on the surrounding area.

In terms of Site B, there are indicative layout plans only for the proposed replacement riding school, with the indication of the retention of the traditional buildings. Given the nature of the buildings proposed and footprint size similar to the existing buildings, it is considered that with conditions requiring full details to be submitted, the proposals for Site B are acceptable in terms of design. Indeed, there are benefits to the removal of poorer quality buildings and their replacement by buildings of higher quality design.

With appropriate attachment of conditions as outlined above, it is considered that the proposals on Sites A and B would be acceptable, as far as they go, in terms of LDP policies D1 and D4.

Trees

Although the trees in the areas surrounding the sites are not subject to Tree Preservation Order, these are within the Local Nature Conservation Site and LDP Policy NE5 presumes against loss of trees that contribute significantly to nature conservation, landscape character or local amenity, including ancient and semi-natural woodland that is irreplaceable.

Trees that would be lost as part of the development include two mature trees within the centre of Site A, a row of small mature trees along Countesswells Road would be required to be removed for visibility. Trees at the corner of the Hayfield access junction may be required to be removed subject to the swept path analysis. Trees along the site boundary of the hotel, where the access road would enter the site would also be lost. These were highlighted at the site visit at the time of the public hearing. Any permission granted would be conditional upon a detailed tree survey being submitted and any trees lost would be required to be replaced on a two for one basis. It should be noted that a large number of replacement trees are indicated on the indicative landscape plans for the site. Any permission would be subject to condition requiring a detailed landscaped plan for the site. This would require native species that help to bed the site within its woodland surroundings and provide habitat for the wildlife that exists around the site, some of which forages on the site.

With regard to the park roads, these would not become adopted roads, as such there is much greater flexibility to allow road widths to vary and passing places to be utilised all to ensure the retention of mature trees. There are already a number of parking areas that could also function as passing places. The benefits of this approach are that road widths would act as traffic calming, impact on wildlife would be minimised and the impact on the character of the park would be minimised.

Conditions would be attached to any proposal requiring that a detailed tree survey be submitted and that detailed road layout design take into account the need to protect trees.

Within Site B there would be no tree loss envisaged as the proposal occupies similar footprints to those existing buildings. Tree planting is proposed to the edges of the site and details of these trees would be required to be submitted by condition. There would be a positive impact on the treed setting of the city. It is considered that with the attachment of conditions the proposals would comply with LDP Policy NE5.

Wildlife

An Ecology Report was submitted and surveys were carried out for badger, bats, birds and red squirrel. The report also notes that no impacts are predicted for any other notable species.

Badgers: there are setts within the vicinity and badgers would forage on the site.. Mitigation measures proposed are for the planting of native hedges and / or scrub around and through the sites.

Bats: Non-breeding bat roosts were found on Site B within two existing buildings, work that would disturb these would require a licence from SNH. One of the buildings is a dilapidated portacabin and would be removed under the proposals. Mitigation measures that would be subject of condition are the installation of bat boxes, further surveys prior to removal of any tree with bat roost potential, pre-construction surveys and the implementation of mitigation measures included with the Ecology Report.

SG on bats and development advises that where licences would be required, the planning authority should satisfy itself that these licences would be granted. SNH will only grant a licence if the proposal satisfies all three tests:

1. That there is a licensable purpose for which licenses can be granted. For example, a licence may be granted 'to preserve public health or public safety or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment'.

If this is satisfied, 2 further tests must be satisfied: -

2. That there is no satisfactory alternative to the granting of a licence; and
3. That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the EPS concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

The planning authority is satisfied that these licences would be granted.

Red Squirrels – These are present in areas around the sites. Mitigation measures are the limiting of tree removal and tree planting / habitat management., speed restrictions, rope bridges and appropriate signage.

Other species: It is recommended that native aquatic planting in proposed water features would help increase invertebrate diversity with benefits for amphibians and bats.

Conditions would be attached to any permission, requiring pre-construction surveys, to specify that trees are taken down outside the bird nesting season and the mitigation measures noted above. In addition, landscape proposals to be submitted would require to take cognisance of the need to enhance wildlife habitats.

Tourism and Economic Development

The benefits for tourism and economic development have been set out above in the consultation response from the Head of Economic Development and the letter from VisitAberdeen. The proposals would clearly align with the aims of the Scotland wide and Aberdeen tourism strategies.

The main benefits of the proposal relate to its high quality and country house hotel nature, as well as the predicted visitor spending in the local economy. There would also be jobs created. The provision of the bus service into the city centre would also have to benefits shops and restaurants in the centre.

There would also be social benefits for locals and other users of Hazlehead Park due to the increased range of facilities available and that these complement the recreational use.

In planning terms, permission is granted for hotel and a change in the star rating, or level of luxury of the hotel would not normally be something that would be sought to be controlled through planning. In this instance, it is considered that the quality of the hotel is important to justifying its impact on economic development and its particular niche in terms of tourism. It is considered that control by condition could ensure that the facilities such as the spa, swimming pool, banqueting facilities and restaurants are provided at the outset. This would go some way towards ensuring that the hotel is at the upper end of the quality range. It is acknowledged that in the longer run it would be very difficult to ensure, through planning controls that the hotel remained at that level although this is highly likely given the location of the hotel and the facilities to be provided

The SDP aims include the diversification of the regional economy to contribute towards the Scottish Governments purpose to increase economic growth. The attachments of conditions to agree appropriate proposals in terms of landscaping and design the proposal would help ensure the protection of the natural environment.

The SDP states that a strong service sector is important and in particular all forms of tourism are highlighted as having a role to play. Similarly SPP states that net economic benefit of proposals should be given due weight, as well as protection of natural heritage. As mentioned above, measures would be put in place via conditions to ensure that the natural environment is protected and it has been demonstrated that the site could be developed for the particular use proposed, without significant wider landscape impact or compromising the wider purpose of the green belt.

The proposal does not comply with green belt policy in the LDP, however, as has been described it does not compromise the wider purpose of the green belt, nor would the proposal, subject to conditions, impact significantly on the character of the green belt in the general Hazlehead area, other than in the immediate vicinity of the hotel. The most significant impact would be the increase in vehicular traffic, however, traffic levels have previously been heavier than is currently the case, without significant impact on the character of the park.

Issues raised in representations and questions at the public hearing.

The following are responses to questions raised by Members:

- Access from Countesswells Road has been included and all deliveries would be made this way.
- Confirmation as to whether Hayfield falls within the Hazlehead policies will be made at Council, though it is not a planning matter
- There would be no need to define special events as access would be permitted via Countesswells Road. Barriers would be erected within the site to prevent rat running.
- Maintenance costs would be a matter for consideration in any land deal between a developer and the Council as land owner. However, future

maintenance has been taken into account in the specification for the upgrade of the road.

- The Transport Assessment has been revised and data indicated that 3 existing junctions needed to be modelled (further details in the Roads Development Management Team response attached to this report). The junctions are:

- 1) Hazledene Road / Queen's Road
- 2) Countesswells Road / Den Wood
- 3) Countesswells Road / Springfield Roads signalised junction

It is accepted that the Queen's Road / Hazlehead Avenue / King's Gate roundabout which is heavily congested at peak times, does not need to be modelled because the uplift in traffic due to the development would be less than 5%.

- Landscaping on both sites is indicated and the landscape scheme details would be the subject of MSC;
- A revised Ecology Report has been submitted and the measures recommended would be the subject of condition. Further pre-construction surveys would also be required.
- Further traffic assessment has been carried out as described above.
- That traffic calming would be considered as part of a traffic management plan, it is proposed that this be done through the nature of the road rather than physical measures being introduced.
- Tree thinning is being carried out as part of the Tree Maintenance Plan for Den Wood.
- Following the hearing the further discussions took place with the developer that resulted in the scale of the proposals being reduced, as noted above.
- It is assumed that the junction in question is the Springfield Road / Countesswells junction which would be improved by the developer of the housing at Pinewood / Hazledene. There would be no significant impact on the Seafield Road / Countesswells junction.
- Rat running has been covered above.
- Stone walls would be the subject of MSC applications
- Construction Traffic – the route for this would be agreed by conditions in relation to a detailed tree survey.
- Use of the golf course would be within the control of the Council and the hotel would need to arrange tee times.
- The ability for the facilities in the hotel to be available to the public would be the subject of legal agreement.
- The roads that would be used for access within the park would be upgraded.
-

The remaining points in relation to Members questions raise issues that are covered above.

In relation to the points made by the Community Council, these have largely been covered in the report above. The following should be noted in response to outstanding points:

c) Safety of pupils going to Hazlehead Academy – this will be less of an issue now that large service vehicles and buses would use Countesswells. Other

vehicles would be divided between several routes in accordance with 'Designing Streets' government policy.

d) The issue of driver diversion onto minor roads was considered and it is concluded that many of the drivers accessing the hotel would not be particularly familiar with local roads. It is considered unlikely that this would happen to any significant degree.

e) Hydrological survey and drainage impact assessment would be required by condition.

f) Contributions towards priority projects within the Park, would be used in accordance with the climate change paradigm that exists in the Park management. Projects include improvements to paths and tree planting. The action points from the Climate Change Report also include the introduction of some commercial uses to some areas.

n) Given the numbers of service vehicles, buses and peak numbers of drivers and also the existing use of Countesswells by commuters, it is considered that there would be an insignificant impact on safety of children crossing to Airyhall Primary.

Other comments and issues have been discussed above.

Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan

The Proposed ALDP was approved at the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Infrastructure Committee of 28 October 2014 . It constitutes the Council's settled view as to what should be the content of the final adopted ALDP and is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, along with the adopted ALDP. The exact weight to be given to matters contained in the Proposed ALDP (including individual policies) in relation to specific applications will depend on whether:

- these matters have been subject to public consultation through the Main Issues Report; and
- the level of objection raised in relation these matters as part of the Main Issues Report; and
- the relevance of these matters to the application under consideration

The foregoing can only be assessed on a case by case basis. In relation to this particular application the following policies are relevant:

Policy D2 – Landscape

Policy D3 – Big Buildings *

Policy D5 – Our Granite Heritage

Policy I1 – Infrastructure Delivery and Planning Obligations

Policy T2 – Managing the Transport Impact of Development

Policy T3 – Sustainable and Active Travel

Policy T5 – Noise *

Policy NE1 – Green Space Network

Policy NE2 – Green Belt

Policy NE5 – Trees and Woodlands

Policy NE6 – Flooding, Drainage and Water Quality

Policy NE8 – Natural Heritage

Policy NE9 – Access and Informal Recreation

Policy R7 – Low and Zero Carbon Buildings and Water Efficiency

In relation to this application, most of the policies are similar in effect to those within the extant LDP. Those that are new or different are asterixed above.

Environmental Health have requested the attachment of a condition relating to noise. This would ensure compliance with Policy T5 above.

This is a big building given the context, however, it would be largely screened by the surrounding woodland. For the reasons explained above, this particular use is considered to be acceptable within this location. Design and massing would be subject to MSC and there would be conditions limiting the size of the hotel due to the consideration of the impact on the green belt.

RECOMMENDATION:

Willingness to approve conditionally, subject to referral to Scottish Ministers and permission to be withheld pending the securing of developer contributions, including towards upgrading of access roads and paths, enhancements to Hazlehead Park including for wildlife, bus services and Strategic Transport Fund. This would also ensure the provision of facilities including the swimming pool, spa, restaurants, banqueting / conference facilities and equestrian centre and that these facilities are open to the public as well as hotel guests.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Site A: The proposal for the hotel does not comply with Green Belt policy NE2 in the adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan (LDP) as it does not consist of one of the categories of development listed as acceptable, however, it complements recreational uses that are appropriate within the Green Belt and does respond to an acknowledged need identified in the Tourism Strategy for Scotland and the Aberdeen Tourism Strategy. There would be a minor and localised impact on the character of the Green Belt in the immediate vicinity, but not on the wider Green Belt, nor on its purpose as described in Scottish Planning Policy and the LDP. There would be an insignificant impact on the green space network and the proposal complies with Policy NE1 in the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP). Detailed design and landscaping proposals would be the subject of Matters Specified in Conditions applications (MSCs), indicative proposals lead to the conclusion that subject to the details there would not be an adverse impact on the character of the green belt or the park. Tree loss would be minimised and replacement planting would take place subject to details approved under MSC applications, in accordance with LDP Policy NE5. Impact upon protected species is capable of mitigation and these measures would be controlled by condition, the proposal accords with Policy NE8. There would be no change to the transport impact of the development. It is considered that the proposal complies with Scottish Government Policy in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP). There would be benefits to the proposal in terms of economic development – visitor spending and jobs, as well as

benefits for tourism, including in terms of enhancement of recreational facilities particularly the path network, habitat creation and by providing a high quality hotel within a country location that has a clear synergy with the surrounding Hazlehead Park. The proposal complies overall with policy in SPP and in tourism and economic development objectives in the Strategic Development Plan.

With the foregoing in mind it is concluded that, whilst there would be localised impacts on landscape and traffic, the development of the site specifically for a high quality country house hotel of the size proposed, set in spacious unobstructed landscaped grounds laid out to complement the wildlife and landscape of the adjoining wooded parkland would not unacceptably erode landscaped setting of the Green Belt when set against other material considerations in favour of the development. These specific material considerations constitute; the positive synergy of the hotel development with the recreational uses Hazlehead Park and the wider economic and tourism benefits of this specific proposal to the Aberdeen City and the north east region. Accordingly, on balance and for this specific proposal, the material considerations in favour of the development are considered to outweigh the provisions of the Green Belt Policy of the adopted Development Plan. It is important to note that approval of the application in no way establishes the principle of development of the site for any other use whatsoever.

Site B: The proposal for the equestrian centre complies with green belt policy NE2 and green space network policy NE1 in the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) as it is a replacement of an existing use. Detailed design and landscaping proposals would be the subject of Matters Specified in Conditions applications (MSCs), indicative proposals lead to the conclusion that subject to the details there would not be an adverse impact on the character of the green belt or the park. Existing granite buildings are indicted as being retained and refurbished in accordance with LDP Policy D4 and higher quality buildings would replace existing poorer quality modern buildings. There would be no tree loss, in accordance with LDP Policy NE5. Impact upon protected species is capable of mitigation and these measures would be controlled by condition, the proposal accords with Policy NE8. There would be no change to the transport impact of the development. It is considered that the proposal complies with Scottish Government Policy in Scottish Planning Policy (SPP).

CONDITIONS

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

(1) that no development on either Site A or Site B pursuant to the planning permission in principle hereby approved shall be carried out until such time as a further application or applications has/have been made to the planning authority for approval of the matters specified in the conditions attached to this planning

approval relating to that site that require the further agreement of the planning authority prior to the commencement of development and such approval has been granted;

- in order to comply with Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006.

(2) that this planning permission in principle shall lapse unless all further application(s) for approval of the matters specified in conditions attached to this grant of planning permission in principle have been made before whichever is the latest of the following;

(i) the expiration of 3 years from the date of this grant of planning permission in principle;

(ii) the expiration of 6 months from the date on which an earlier application for the requisite approval of matters specified in conditions was refused;

(iii) the expiration of 6 months from the date on which an appeal against such refusal was dismissed;

- in order to comply with Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006.

(3) that this planning permission in principle shall lapse on the expiration of 2 years from the approval of matters specified in conditions being obtained (or, in the case of approval of different matters on different dates, from the requisite approval for the last such matter being obtained) unless the development to which the permission relates is begun before that expiration - - in order to comply with Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006.

(4) that no development pursuant to the planning permission in principle hereby approved shall be carried out for either site A or B until such time as further applications have been made relating to that site to the planning authority for approval of the matters specified in the conditions relating to

(i) means of access,

(ii) siting,

(iii) design and external appearance of the building(s) and

(iv) the landscaping of the site

- in order to comply with Section 59 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended by the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006

(5) The development shall not take place unless a traffic management plan for access to the development at site A and B has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority by way of a formal application for approval of matters specified by condition. The development on any one site shall not be brought into use unless all measures in the approved plan have been implemented on site that relate to the site in question unless the planning authority has given written approval for a variation.

Access to the development shall be in accordance with Option 2 within the Hyder Transportation Assessment dated 5 February 2015, or other subsequently approved.

The details to be included in the traffic management plan shall include:

- a) signing strategy to direct visitors to the hotel development;
- b) routes for emergency vehicles and retention of all existing access arrangements within the Park;
- c) details of a barrier system and road layout within the site that would prevent 'rat running' through the Park.
- d) Swept path assessments shall be required for coaches, service vehicles and emergency vehicles.

Unless the planning authority has given written approval for a variation

- in the interests of road safety

(6) Service / delivery vehicles shall take access to the hotel via Countesswells Road only, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority – in the interests of reducing the level of larger vehicles on the park roads.

(7) that no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition, a detailed layout and specification for the upgrade of the park roads between the adopted section of Hazledene Road, Countesswells Road and Hayfield site. The proposals shall include details of road drainage and lighting.

Such proposals shall take into account the findings of tree surveys submitted in accordance with conditions on this permission and shall propose road widening and / or passing places as appropriate.

No development shall be brought into use unless the upgrade works as so agreed have been fully implemented unless the planning authority has given written approval for a variation

– in the interests of providing usable and safe access to the development.

(8) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition,, a detailed layout and specification for the upgrade of the core path between the site and the path link into the Pinewood

/ Hazledene site . The proposals shall include details of lighting, taking into account any possible impact on wildlife.

Such proposals shall take into account the findings of tree surveys submitted in accordance with conditions on this permission.

The development on site B shall not be brought into use unless the upgrade of this stretch of core path within the park has taken place in accordance with the details as submitted unless the planning authority has given written approval for a variation – in the interests of providing usable and safe access to the development and encouraging the use of public transport.

(9) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition a detailed Green Transport Plan, which outlines sustainable measures to deter the use of the private car, in particular single occupant trips and provides detailed monitoring arrangements, modal split targets and associated penalties for not meeting targets. The plan shall include the provision of bus service to be made available for the use of guests and staff and operating hourly between at least 7 am and midnight, seven days per week. The hotel shall not be brought into use unless the measures, including the bus, have been implemented and are available for use, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the planning authority - in order to encourage more sustainable forms of travel to the development.

(10) That development on sites A and B hereby granted planning permission in principle shall not be occupied unless a scheme detailing cycle storage provision has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the planning authority, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with said scheme for that site unless the planning authority has given written approval for a variation - in the interests of encouraging more sustainable modes of travel.

(11) That the uses hereby granted planning permission shall not take place on sites A or B unless provision has been made within the site in question for refuse storage and disposal in accordance with a scheme(s) which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority – in order to preserve the amenity of the neighbourhood and in the interests of public health.

(12) that no development shall take place on any particular site unless a plan showing those trees to be removed and those to be retained and a scheme for the protection of all trees to be retained on that site during construction works has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition and any such scheme as may have been approved has been implemented on that site. Such a plan shall consist of a full tree survey including details of the location, height, canopy spread, species and quality assessment -in order to ensure adequate protection for the trees on site during the construction of the development.

(13) that no part of the development hereby approved on any particular site shall be occupied unless a plan and report illustrating appropriate management proposals for the care and maintenance of all trees to be retained and any new

areas of planting (to include timing of works and inspections) on that site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The proposals shall be carried out in complete accordance with such plan and report as may be so approved, unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation. - in order to preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.

(14) 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.

(15) 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.

(16) That no development shall take place on Site A unless there has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition a design statement for the proposal and the following:

- a) a rationale for the architectural approach to the development taking into the account the context;
- b) a visual assessment of the development from public viewpoints as agreed with the planning authority;
- c) a survey of tree canopy heights in the surrounding area;
- d) a plan showing the existing levels and proposed levels across the site;
- e) heights of the buildings to be no higher than the tree canopy nearest to that part of the building, unless otherwise agreed with the planning authority;
- f) details of all external finishing materials;
- g) a minimum of three cross sections north –south and a minimum of three cross sections east-west showing the proposed building, ground level and adjacent woodland.
- h) scaled layout plans, elevations and cross sections showing all proposed buildings and boundary enclosures on the site
- i) layout plan showing the existing dry stone walls on the site, and proposals for their retention and repair. All dry stone walls shall remain, with the exception of the wall that runs across the site. The wall along the western site boundary may be relocated only in accordance with details to be submitted and approved in compliance with this condition.

The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the details as so agreed unless the planning authority has given written consent for a variation – in the interests of preserving the character of the green belt and visual amenity.

(17) That no development shall take place on Site B (Hayfield) unless there has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition a design statement for the proposal. This shall include the following:

- a) a rationale for the architectural approach to the development taking into the account the context;
- b) a visual assessment of the development from public viewpoints as agreed with the planning authority.;
- c) a survey of tree canopy heights in the surrounding area;
- d) a plan showing the existing levels and proposed levels across the site;
- e) details of all external finishing materials;
- f) cross sections, as agreed with the planning authority, showing the proposed building, ground level and adjacent woodland.
- g) details of the refurbishment / renovation of existing detached house, stables and semi-detached houses. The equestrian centre shall not be brought into use unless these existing buildings have been renovated in accordance with such details, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.
- h) scaled layout plans, elevations and cross sections showing all buildings as existing and as proposed on the site (including existing and proposed walls and boundary enclosures). All dry stone walls to remain, other than as otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority.

The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the details as so agreed unless the planning authority has given written consent for a variation – in the interests of preserving the character of the green belt and visual amenity.

(18) That the development at Site A shall not take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by, the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition details of car parking. No more than 75 spaces shall be provided above ground, with the remainder being underground. The development shall not be brought into use unless the parking as so agreed has been laid out on site all in accordance with such details. Thereafter the car parking area shall not be used for any purpose other than car parking All unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority. – in the interests of visual amenity and road safety.

(19) The development at Site B shall not take place unless there has laid out on site car parking in accordance with a plan to be agreed in writing with the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition. Thereafter the car parking area shall not be used for any purpose other than car parking – in the interests of road safety.

(20) Site A: that no development shall take place unless a scheme of all drainage works designed to meet the requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning

Authority in consultation with SEPA by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition, and thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied unless the drainage has been installed in complete accordance with the said scheme - in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the development can be adequately drained. To ensure adequate protection of the water environment from surface water run-off.

(21) Site B: that no development shall take place unless a scheme of all drainage works designed to meet the requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority, in consultation with SEPA, by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition and thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied unless the drainage has been installed in complete accordance with the said scheme - in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the development can be adequately drained. To ensure adequate protection of the water environment from surface water run-off.

(22) Site A: that the development hereby granted planning permission in principle shall not take place unless there has been submitted a full Drainage Impact Assessment by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition, and the development shall not be occupied unless all drainage works as be approved in writing by the planning authority for the purpose have been installed in complete accordance with the said plan - in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained.

(23) Site B: that the development hereby granted planning permission in principle shall not take place unless there has been submitted a full Drainage Impact Assessment by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition, and the development shall not be occupied unless all drainage works as be approved in writing by the planning authority for the purpose have been installed in complete accordance with the said plan - in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the proposed development can be adequately drained.

(24) That the proposed hotel development on Site B shall provide no more than 200 bedrooms, nor shall there be provided more than a total of 27,000m² gross floorspace (external measurements) (including the lower ground floor car parking),— in the interests of visual amenity and the character of the green belt.

(25) Site A: that no part of this development shall take place unless a detailed assessment of the likely sources and levels of noise arising within, and those audible outwith, the premises (including any externally mounted equipment) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition,.

The noise assessment shall be carried out by a suitably qualified independent noise consultant. All noise attenuation measures identified by the noise assessment which are required in order to prevent any adverse impacts on the amenity of users in the surrounding area shall be installed prior to commencement of the use hereby approved, unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation - in the interests of amenity within the park.

(26) No development shall take place within the area indicated (in this case the area of the whole development) until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition,. The programme of archaeological work will include all necessary post-excavation and publication work.- in the interests of preserving archaeology

(27) That water features indicated the plans shall not be installed unless detailed plans have been submitted to, and approved in writing by the planning authority in consultation with SEPA by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition, include detailed information on the size and design of the features, where the water to fill them would be sourced and how much would be required, whether the features would be online or offline and if it is proposed to stock the ponds with fish – in the interests of the water environment.

(28) No development shall commence on site A or on site B unless a site specific Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for that site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with SEPA [and SNH or other agencies as appropriate] by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition. All works on site must be undertaken in accordance with the approved CEMP(s) unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Planning Authority. The CEMP shall also include:

- a) Measures identified in the Updated Ecology Report (Including 2014 Unpdated Bat Survey) by Direct Ecology, 29.01.15 (version 2.1), or other such report as may be approved in accordance with these conditions;
- b) Route of construction vehicles, taking into account results of the tree survey

- In order to minimise the impacts of necessary demolition/construction works on the environment.

(29) That no development shall take place on site A or site B unless there has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the planning authority by way of an application for approval of matters specified by condition, pre-construction surveys for that site. These shall survey for the same species that are included in the Updated Ecology Report (Including 2014 Unpdated Bat Survey) by Direct Ecology, 29.01.15 (version 2.1), shall be carried out by suitably qualified persons and recommend mitigation measures. No development shall take place on the sites unless all mitigation measures recommended for that site within the aforementioned report, or subsequent survey report if different, have been fully

implemented on site, with the exceptions of tree planting and landscaping that may take place in accordance with the relevant conditions on this permission. All unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority. – in the interests of wildlife.

(30) That no removal of vegetation or trees (including turf stripping) shall take place during the bird nesting season (March to September) – in order to protect nesting birds.

(31) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority, by way of MSC application, a layout plan showing proposed path network within the sites and including plans showing the path network within the surrounding area.

Development on the sites shall not be brought into use unless the paths on that site, as so agreed, have been laid out and are available for use, fully in accordance with the details as so approved – in the interests of encouraging walking and providing safe access for pedestrians

(32) That no scheme for external lighting shall be implemented unless it has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Lighting shall take into account the impact on wildlife and shall be of the bollard type, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the planning authority – in the interests of wildlife and the character of the green belt.

(33) that no development pursuant to the planning permission in principle hereby approved shall be carried out on any particular site unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority a further detailed scheme of landscaping for that site, which scheme shall include proposed areas of tree/shrub planting including details of numbers, densities, locations, species, sizes and stage of maturity at planting. Such plans shall take into account the need to blend landscaping in with the surrounding area and measures identified in the the Updated Ecology Report (Including 2014 Updated Bat Survey) by Direct Ecology, 29.01.15 (version 2.1 - in the interests of the amenity of the area.

(34) that all planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme(s) of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development on that site and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a size and species similar to those originally required to be planted, or in accordance with such other scheme as may be submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority - in the interests of the amenity of the area.

Informatives

Informative 1: The scheme shall be developed in accordance with the technical guidance contained in The SUDS Manual (C697) and should incorporate source control.

Informative 2: That notwithstanding the indicative drawings, the granting of planning permission in principle does not imply that the design approach indicated would be considered acceptable. Design would be a matter to be fully considered in future MSC applications.

Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.