

CRAIGIEBUCKLER AND SEAFIELD COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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Dear Mr Evans

Planning Application Reference 150311

Sub-division of residential curtilage and erection of a new dwelling house.

Detailed Planning Permission

Applicant: Mr and Mrs N Greig, 22 Kinaldie Crescent, Aberdeen.

We are concerned that the site selected for the above referenced proposed development forms part of a narrow corridor of green space in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan which has not been allocated for house building. It is listed as a local nature conservation site by the Local Authority and is referred to as "Site No. NJ90NW1136 by the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland who have mapped it to illustrate its link with Rubislaw.

In Aberdeen City Council's document, "Local Nature and Conservation Sites", page 44, "The Walker Dam Rubislaw Link", the Walker Dam and the surrounding green space is described as follows:-

"This is a charming mixture of landscaped areas and semi-natural habitats. The main feature is the large pond with a small burn and areas of wet woodland.

The site shows a succession from open water to marsh and willow scrub and contains a good range of wetland plants for such a small urban site. There are also areas of broadleaved woodland, neutral grassland and improved grassland. There is a good footpath running through the site making it one of Aberdeen's more accessible areas of open water. As it lies within a residential area of the City, it is an important recreational and educational resource."

The accuracy of this statement is borne out by the numbers of joggers, dog walkers, cyclists, walkers, parties of school children and study groups (because this is a site of scientific interest) who frequent the core path above the southern bank of this beautiful pond to access the grassed area to its east. By virtue of this popular walkway they are linked directly with Woodburn Gardens or Springfield Road.

It is our contention that the construction of this proposed large dwelling house will have an intrusive and disruptive effect on the access and attractiveness of the Walker Dam site. The position of the proposed dwelling, on completion, will destroy the vista viewed from the seating area at the east of the dam.

This is apparent from the location plan which is also illustrative of the applicants intention to access the site of the proposed development by approaching it from the South, via the existing narrow roadway between 30 and 32 Kemnay Place..

The driveway is proposed to be constructed on what (we are informed) is described on the resident's land certificates as “ the amenity area, which should be held in all time coming for the benefit and amenity of the whole subjects”. We submit that the developer should not be permitted to remove this valued recreational space because, in doing so, a precedent would be created which would lead to further development on the amenity areas of this estate, thereby adversely affecting the quality of the lives of its residents.

Constructing the proposed dwelling and driveway would require the acquisition of publicly owned land to the west of the Walker Dam. We submit that this would not be in the public interest because it would encroach on this Council owned recreational amenity which is an integral part of the greenspace network.

Policy NE1 of the ALDP 2012 states: “The City Council will protect, promote and enhance the wildlife, recreational landscape and access value of the Greenspace Network. Proposals for developments that are likely to destroy or erode the character or function of the Greenspace Network will not be permitted”. We submit that this planning application should be refused because allowing it would cause the City Council to contravene Policy NE1 of its own Local Development Plan.

We also refer to the conditional planning permission pertaining to a planning application by Stewart Milne Homes, dated 23rd February 1999, which was, on 2nd December 1999 (Ref.No; 99/0316), the subject of a meeting of the Planning and Strategic Development Department. The application was for the demolition of an existing building and the erection of 15 dwellings with garages at Kemnay Place, Walker Dam School, Aberdeen. A condition of granting planning permission was that “The landscaped areas shown on the approved scheme shall not be used for any purpose other than that of landscaping unless the planning authority has given written approval for a variation – in the interests of the amenity of the area.” We contend that this condition, which protected the landscaping of the Walker Dam amenity area, applies in respect of this planning application to build a dwelling house, which encroaches on the same amenity area.

We call your attention to the planning history of the Craigiebuckler area of the city. Throughout the 1950s this part of West Aberdeen was extensively developed by the builder, Donald C. Stewart, to create a housing estate which consisted of homes that were uniformly similar in their particular style of architecture. When planning consent was granted to the Stewart Milne Group to build the new homes on Kemnay Place it was conditional that their appearance did not contrast with those built by Donald C Stewart. The Stewart Milne Group were required to submit plans which demonstrated their compliance with this condition. Consequently the new homes, for example 30 and 32 Kemnay Place, are in keeping with the character of the street and surrounding area. The proposed dwelling house does not appear to comply with the previous planning conditions.

Furthermore a precedent was created when, in 1999/2000, a planning application by the Stewart Milne Group to build houses in the gardens of 20 and 22 Kinaldy Crescent (the same area of land), was refused. We submit that, by reason of this precedent, planning permission should also be refused for building this proposed dwelling house.

At present there is no access road to the site of the proposed dwelling house. The proposed access

road can only be constructed by extending the established short road which was formed between Nos 30 and 32 Kemnay Place in order to provide access to their off-street parking and garages.

The continuation of the established access road to link it with the site of the proposed dwelling house would entail the loss of part of the amenity ground.

The site of the proposed dwelling house, which is on a gradient, sloping towards Nos 30 and 32 Kemnay Place, would probably have to be excavated to provide level foundations for the building. Excavating and removing a considerable tonnage of earth may be necessary to prepare the site for building the house.

The only access to the site would be via the road between Nos 30 and 32 Kemnay Place. This access road, which is comes to a “dead end”, is 5.6 metres wide. All excavations and subsequent construction work can only be made possible by virtue of this narrow access road which, as stated above, facilitates access to Nos 30 and 32 Kemnay Place. We object to the disruption which the noise and site traffic could cause to the residents of N0s 30 and 32 Kemnay Place as well as the residents of neighbouring properties and the environment of the dam.

All site traffic will have to use this access, including heavy commercial vehicles. Furthermore, the streets, Kemnay Place and Kildrummy Road, which link the site to the distributor road, Craigiebuckler Avenue, are narrow and unsuited to the anticipated volume of heavy construction traffic. There is also an increased risk of RTCs on those streets because of construction traffic, if this planning application is allowed. We have concerns about the safety of those moving vehicles.

We are also concerned about the potential for flooding because no details have been provided by the applicants to address this matter. Furthermore we contend that the run-off of water from the site could damage the environment of the Walker Dam.

Yours sincerely
William Sell
Chair