

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 11 October 2018. Minute of Meeting of the PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Boulton, Convener; and Councillors Allan, Cooke, Copland, Greig, Avril MacKenzie and Malik.

Councillors MacGregor and Samarai were in attendance as Ward Members.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found at:-
<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/documents/g6510/Public%20reports%20pack%2011th-Oct-2018%2009.30%20Planning%20Development%20Management%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1. There were no declarations of interest intimated.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING 302 FLATS OVER 4 AND 5 STOREYS, ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, ACCESS ROADS AND LANDSCAPING - WELLHEADS ROAD DYCE ABERDEEN - 181050/DPP

2. The Committee conducted a site visit prior to the Hearing. The Committee was addressed by Mr Matthew Easton, Senior Planner, who summarised the proposal for the overall site.

The Convener explained that the Committee would return to the Town House to commence the Hearing.

With reference to article 2 of the meeting of the Planning Development Management Committee of 16 August 2018, the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic, Place, Planning, which (1) advised that the Council's adopted guidelines required that where a planning application had been the subject of more than 20 objections and was a development in which the Council has a financial interest, a report to Committee was triggered to seek a decision on whether or not a public hearing should be held; (2) indicated that the Committee resolved to hold a discretionary public hearing in respect of the application for 302 flats at Wellheads Road in Dyce, Aberdeen; and (3) provided background information on the proposal for the purposes of the hearing and explained that at this stage no assessment of the merits or failings of the proposal was made in the report.

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The Committee heard from the Convener who opened up the hearing by welcoming those present and providing information on the running order of the hearing. She explained that the first person to address the hearing would be Mr Matthew Easton and asked that speakers adhere to their allocated time in order for the hearing to run smoothly and in a timely manner.

The Committee then heard from **Matthew Easton, Senior Planner, Strategic Place Planning** who addressed the Committee in the following terms:-

Mr Easton explained that the application related to a site within Stoneywood Industrial Estate which can be divided into four elements – a cleared brownfield site, a car park, an area of landscaping and Wellheads Road which was a private non-adopted road but available for public use. He indicated that the cleared site was formerly home to a multi-storey car park and BP's Excel Leisure Club. The car park beside Stoneywood Road has around 60 spaces and was leased by the Council to BP and was currently in use. To the north was a mix of commercial and residential uses, to the east are industrial units, to the south was the car park associated with the BP headquarters building and to the west was Stoneywood Road and the Aberdeen to Inverness railway.

Mr Easton outlined the proposal advising that detailed planning permission was sought for the erection of 302 residential flats, across five blocks. The buildings would be either four or five storeys in height, positioned on a north/south orientation, with each block containing between 52 and 69 flats. These would be a mixture of flat sizes with the majority being one or two bedrooms and a smaller number of three and four bedrooms. Hard and soft landscaping would be provided between the blocks, with a grassed open play area and two equipped play areas also provided.

Mr Easton intimated that car parking would be located around the edge of the site, predominately in a car park along the northern boundary and at right angles along the two lengths of Wellheads Avenue. 178 parking spaces and 19 motorcycle spaces were proposed plus 4 car club spaces.

Mr Easton outlined the main policy considerations which would need to be taken into account in assessing the application, as follows:-

- Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) indicated that proposals that accord with up-to-date plans should be considered acceptable in principle and consideration should focus on the detailed matters arising. For proposals that do not accord with up-to-date development plans, the primacy of the plan was maintained and that SPP and the presumption in favour of development that contributes to sustainable development would be material considerations;
- Planning should take every opportunity to create high quality places by taking a design-led approach, taking a holistic approach that responded to and enhanced the existing place while balancing the costs and benefits of potential opportunities over the long term;

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- Planning should support development that was designed to a high-quality, which demonstrated the six qualities of successful place (distinctive, safe and pleasant, welcoming, adaptable and resource efficient, easy to move around and beyond);
- SPP highlighted that Design was a material consideration in determining planning applications. Planning permission may be refused and the refusal defended at appeal or local review solely on design grounds. Bringing that together, SPP required that the planning system should direct the right development to the right place.

Mr Easton referred to the Scottish Government Policy document Designing Streets which steered residential street design towards place-making and away from a system focused upon the dominance of motor vehicles.

Mr Easton made reference to the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2017), and explained that in the adopted local plan, the site was zoned as mixed-use area where Policy H2 applies. It stated that applications for development or change of use within such area must consider the existing uses and character of the surrounding area and avoid undue conflict with the adjacent land uses and amenity. Where new housing was proposed, a satisfactory residential environment should be created which should not impinge upon the viability or operation of existing businesses in the vicinity.

He advised that the area of grass embankment and trees on the west side of the site was zoned as Green Space Network. In such areas policy required the Council to protect, promote and enhance the wildlife, access, recreation, ecological and landscape value of the Green Space Network. Proposals for development that were likely to destroy or erode the character and/or function of the Green Space Network would not be permitted.

He intimated that Policy H3 (Density) stated that an appropriate density of development would be sought. All residential developments over one hectare must meet a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare but in doing so must have consideration of the site's characteristics and those of the surrounding area; create an attractive residential environment and safeguard living conditions within the development; and consider providing higher densities in the City Centre, around local centres, and public transport nodes.

He advised that Policy H4 (Housing Mix) requires that developments of more than 50 units need to achieve an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, including smaller 1 and 2 bedroom units.

On open space, the Council would require the provision of at least 2.8ha per 1,000 people of meaningful and useful open space in new residential development. Public or communal open space should be provided in all residential developments, including on brownfield sites.

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In terms of trees, there was a presumption against all activities and development that would result in the loss of, or damage to, trees and woodland. Buildings and services should be sited so as to minimise adverse impacts on existing and future trees and appropriate measures should be taken for the protection and long-term management of existing trees and new planting both during and after construction.

Mr Easton advised that Policy T2 on Managing the Transport Impact of Development requires that new developments need to demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise the traffic generated.

Policy D3 on Sustainable and Active Travel stated that new development should be designed to minimise travel by private car, improve access to services and promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging active travel.

Mr Easton indicated that with the site being adjacent to the airport, Policy T5 which deals with noise was relevant. It stated that in cases where significant exposure to noise was likely to arise from development, a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) will be required as part of a planning application. Housing and other noise sensitive developments would not normally be permitted close to existing noisy land uses without suitable mitigation measures in place to reduce the impact of noise.

Policy B4 on Aberdeen Airport addresses aircraft noise specifically and indicated that applications for residential development in areas where aircraft noise levels were in excess of 57 decibels, as identified on the airport noise contour map would be refused, due to the inability to create an appropriate level of residential amenity, and the need to safeguard the future operation of Aberdeen International Airport. Mr Easton advised that in this case the site was well within the 57-decibel contour and straddles the higher noise level 60-decibel contour. The 57dB contour was significant as it was the point which government and the Civil Aviation Authority consider community annoyance becomes significant in relation to noise exposure.

Mr Easton explained that the Scottish Government Planning Advice Note on Noise promoted the principles of good acoustic design and a sensitive approach to the location of new development. It promoted a pragmatic approach to the location of new development within the vicinity of existing noise generating uses, to ensure that quality of life was not unreasonably affected, and that new development continued to support sustainable economic growth.

Mr Easton indicated that the issues which may be relevant when considering noise in relation to a development proposal include:-

- The type of development and likelihood of significant noise impact;
- The sensitivity of the location and existing noise level and likely change in noise levels; and
- The character of the noise, its duration, frequency of any repetition, and time of day the noise is likely to be generated.

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Mr Easton advised that when considering applications for a new noise sensitive development close to an existing noise source, the likely level of noise exposure at the time of the application and any increase that may reasonably be expected in the foreseeable future were likely to be relevant, as will the extent to which it is possible to mitigate the adverse effects of noise.

Mr Easton explained that on residential development, it stated that it was preferable that satisfactory noise levels could be achieved within dwellings with the windows sufficiently open for ventilation, however local circumstances, particularly relating to the existing noise character of the area, should influence the approach taken to noise levels with open or closed windows. It may be appropriate to take a different approach to noise levels in different areas and that sound levels in gardens and amenity areas may also need to be considered in terms of enabling a reasonable degree of peaceful enjoyment of these spaces for residents.

Mr Easton made reference to several other policies in the local development plan which were listed in the report and which would apply in considering more detailed aspects of the development such as landscaping, developer obligations, flooding and drainage and waste management.

In terms of consultations, Mr Easton advised that Dyce and Stoneywood Community Council had objected on the basis that they consider the development to be unsympathetic to the surrounding area, that parking provision was not adequate and that the proposed flats would have a poor level of amenity.

He advised that the Council's Environmental Health service had objected as it was not satisfied that future residents of the proposed development would be suitably protected from environmental noise at the development under all reasonable circumstances and was therefore unable to support the application.

He intimated that other consultees had provided largely technical advice which was listed within the report.

Mr Easton advised that a total of 323 representations had been received, of which 283 of these object to the proposal and 36 were in support. In summary the objections originated from those living in Dyce and related to:-

- The scale, layout and design;
- The level of amenity available for future residents;
- The impact of the development on the amenity of existing uses;
- The impact on public services and infrastructure; and
- The impact on the road network and parking provision.

Mr Easton advised that the main matters raised by those in support were:-

- More affordable housing was required in the city;

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- The development was considered to be suitably designed; and
- The development was in a good location.

In conclusion, Mr Easton explained that a full list of the specific points raised in the representations were contained within the report.

The Committee then heard from **Scott Lynch, Senior Engineer, Roads Development, Strategic Place Planning** on aspects of the application.

Mr Lynch advised that there were 302 flats proposed, and that the Supplementary Guidance required 120 cycle spaces, 38 motorcycle and 242 car parking spaces.

He indicated that the applicant proposed to provide 302 cycle spaces (182 over-provision), 19 or 20 motorcycle spaces, which were acceptable as the Council's standards were particularly onerous in this regard, 194 car parking spaces plus 3 car club spaces or 178 car parking spaces plus 4 car club spaces, depending on which document submitted was accurate.

He advised that the preference would be for 3 car club spaces with the associated larger parking provision as car club could offer an accessible alternative to private car ownership, however, there was a point of diminishing returns where it would cease to be effective. For this reason, the preference would be 3 car club spaces plus 194 regular spaces. He intimated that if the car club then proved to be under-utilised (and removed), then the development site would not be left with a large shortfall in parking.

Mr Lynch advised that in relation to the car club, a large over provision of cycling would be of no concern to Roads, however when these over-provisions were used as a justification for permitting a shortfall in parking, then that would be a concern.

He intimated that there were diminishing returns with these measures and explained if the applicant were to reduce the level of parking proposed, then that would both reduce the level of parking required, as well as yield more space upon which to provide parking. A large amount of parking was proposed for Wellheads Avenue, and Roads would typically not be in favour of so much parking off a road such as this, however as it is within the applicants red line boundary and not proposed for adoption, then there would not be an objection, however, the road should still be fit for purpose and adequate geometry would be required in terms of the standards.

Mr Lynch advised that the internal road reduced below 6 metres in areas, therefore this should not be permitted where there was perpendicular parking.

He intimated that a footway would be required on Wellheads Avenue and the applicant's plans show that this has been removed.

Mr Lynch explained that the site was bound on all sides by internal and external roads (90m North, 75m East, 160m South and 75m West). Traffic calming would be required to prevent any continuous stretch being in excess of 60m. The swept paths showed there

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to be overlapping between the refuse vehicle and oncoming traffic, as well as the 250mm buffer at the edge of the carriageway being crossed. Therefore, revised swept paths were required.

Mr Lynch concluded by advising that concerns were noted regarding emergency service vehicles not being able to get to within 45m of all points within all dwellings, which was a requirement.

The Committee then heard from **Mark Nicholl, Environmental Health Officer, Operations** who provided details on aspects of the application.

Mr Nicholl advised that the Environmental Health Service was a statutory consultee to the Planning Service and therefore considers planning applications in the context of relevant development policies with the aim of protecting public health. In any application where development proposals may have an adverse impact, Environmental Health would advise the Planning Service with reference to any relevant policies and standards for their consideration of the application overall.

Mr Nicholl indicated that the Environmental Health Service assessed the detailed planning permission application, which included a review of relevant documentation and resources and a visit to the area. Additionally, a review of their complaint database advised 30 aircraft noise complaints had been received by this Service since 1st January 2013. The Civil Aviation Authority was however the relevant enforcing authority for aircraft noise exposure.

Mr Nicholl advised that from the assessment, it was evident the proposed development site was located 360 metres to the east of the Aberdeen International Airport and immediately adjacent to the A947 also to east of the site.

Mr Nicholl explained that in relation to aircraft noise, the UK Government states that communities become significantly annoyed by aircraft noise above 57dB LAeq. With the parameter LAeq or the Equivalent Continuous Sound Level, essentially being the average noise level in decibels over a given time period typically 16 hours. This was reflected in the Planning Policy B4 on Aberdeen Airport and development proposals in areas where aircraft noise levels were in excess of 57dB LAeq.

Mr Nicholl indicated that the site location was established on the relevant noise contour map produced by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Essentially, every four years, the CAA produces contours which estimate the average aircraft related noise experienced by people living around Aberdeen International Airport. The contours were derived from the common international measure of aircraft noise, the summer 16-hour dB LAeq measurement. This provided average noise levels for the busiest 16 hours of the day, between 0700 – 2300 hours over the busiest three months of the year, from mid- June to mid-September.

Mr Nicholl indicated that on the most recent 2016 contour map, the site straddles two noise contours. Most of the site falls well within the 57 LAeq 16 Hour Contour with the average noise levels across this portion of the site being considered to vary somewhere

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between 57 to 60. Additionally, a lesser part of the site closer to the airport is located within the louder 60 LAeq 16 Hour Contour.

He explained that the UK Government threshold level of 57dB LAeq was therefore considered likely to be exceeded at the site resulting in significant annoyance. Additionally, the WHO Guideline Values for Community Noise advised that a noise level more than 55 dB LAeq 16 Hour in external amenity areas would cause 'Serious Annoyance'.

Mr Nicholl advised that without effective mitigation, future residents at the external areas of the development were at risk of being impacted upon by Aircraft noise. Additionally, road traffic noise from the A947 was also considered to impact on the site but was less concerning as ground level road traffic noise was easier to mitigate against.

He indicated that the application had been accompanied by a Noise Impact Assessment (Reference: Project Number: 60566497 date: 1 June 2018) associated with the proposed development which was reviewed. The measurement data included within the assessment was obtained between 19 February to 13 March 2018, (excluding days from 28 February to 6 March 2018, due to exceptional weather conditions and snowfall). The residual lying snow was considered to potentially provide greater noise absorbency in the later part of the noise survey. Road traffic levels were also thought to be potentially affected by the adverse conditions during this period. The noise levels established during the measurement survey may have been lower than would be expected during other times of the year. On this basis it cannot be said with any certainty how representative the noise measurement data was.

Mr Nicholl intimated that the review of the Noise Impact Assessment focused on predicted general noise levels and acute noise incidents throughout daytime and night-time period. Acute noise incidences were considered, those from fixed wing and helicopter flight passes and the associated relevant noise parameter of LAMax. The LAMax parameter essentially being the Maximum Sound Pressure Level in decibels within a measurement period.

He explained, that to put this in perspective, for the period over the three months of the year 2017, from 15 June to 16 September was most likely to be the busiest three months of the year, there were on average 284 daily flights or acute noise incidents at Aberdeen International Airport (AIA).

Mr Nicholl advised that whilst there was no specific data within the noise report advising of the daytime LAMax or maximum sound level experienced from the daytime flights, the report advised the external maximum sound level at night was in range from 69 to 73 dB LAMax.

Mr Nicholl indicated that whilst there was an existing planning permission condition restricting the times of general helicopter flights at the airport, there was no such planning condition restricting fixed wing flight times. It was also understood that since 2005 AIA had operated on a 24-hour basis and only voluntarily adopts Department for Transport

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night-time noise restrictions, which limited noise levels between the hours of 23.00 and 06.00 Hours.

He advised that the review concluded several relevant points, namely:-

- (1) Daytime and Night-time Internal Amenity Average Throughout 16 Hour Day and 8 hour night – In relation to daytime and night-time internal average noise levels, the Noise impact assessment had demonstrated that a reasonable average 16 hour daytime noise level and a reasonable average 8 hour night-time noise level in internal areas may be achieved with suitable mitigation measures including, closed windows and provision of alternative ventilation throughout the development;
- (2) Night-time Internal Amenity Acute Noise incidents - the Noise impact assessment had also demonstrated a night-time internal maximum sound levels (LAFmax) of between 36 to 40 dB at night maybe achieved with suitable mitigation measures including, closed windows and provision of alternative ventilation throughout the development. This complied with the WHO standard for night-time internal maximum sound levels.
- (3) Daytime External Amenity Average Throughout 16 Hour Day – in relation to the external amenity areas, the noise impact assessment advised an average 16 hour daytime noise level limit of 55 dB (LAeq 16 Hour) was acceptable and that minor exceedances of this level may occur and would also be considered acceptable. The WHO Guideline Values for Community Noise advised such a noise level would cause 'Serious Annoyance'. For new developments the WHO guidance advocated an average 16 hour daytime noise level limit for external amenity areas of 50 dB (LAeq 16 Hour) to be more appropriate. The report had not therefore demonstrated compliance with the requirements of the relevant WHO Guideline Value for Community Noise and provision of a reasonable level of outdoor amenity would be achieved throughout the day.
- (4) Daytime Internal and External Amenity – Acute Noise incidents – In relation to acute noise incidents from both fixed wing and helicopter passes impacting on the internal living areas and external amenity areas of the proposed development site during the day, these were considered numerous and intrusive in particular at peak times of activity. The noise impact assessment had not demonstrated how acute noise incidents would be mitigated against to help provide a reasonable level of internal and external amenity.
- (5) Alternative Runway Usage - It was understood that during certain weather conditions and wind direction, an alternative runway 32 was used for helicopter traffic with potential for periods of hovering before landing. This was considered to bring the noise sources into closer proximity to the site and for longer periods than normal resulting in elevated noise levels. No consideration of this aspect of aircraft movements had been included within the assessment.

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Mr Nicholl referred to the consultation response from the Service on the 18 July 2018 for these reasons the Environmental Health Service was not satisfied that future residents of the proposed development would be suitably protected from environmental noise at the development under all reasonable circumstances.

The Committee asked a number of questions from officers in relation to noise levels particularly in relation to the development's proximity to the Airport; parking in the vicinity; access for emergency services; design, scaling and positioning of the housing blocks; education/schooling capacity forecast details, NHS services and traffic and road safety issues.

Members of the Committee suggested that officers provide details in relation to (1) car club and bicycle uptake for social housing; (2) whether additional double yellow lining would be required to prevent emergency service vehicles being blocked by rogue parking; (3) disabled bay numbers, whether 3 spaces or 6% of the total number of spaces, whichever is greater was required; (4) the number of electric charging points required for standards in the Supplementary Guidance; and (5) whether the north east flatted properties on Wellheads Avenue had been evaluated as part of the Noise Impact Assessment.

The Committee then heard from the applicant **Steve Keenon, First Endeavour LLP** on aspects of the application.

Mr Keenon advised that he and his colleague Paul Gee had worked with Aberdeen City Council to bring forward joint proposals to build and develop Social Housing on this site.

He indicated that First Endeavour was committed to bringing forward social and affordable housing across Scotland and presently they had in excess of 700 Affordable Homes either being built or in the planning process.

He intimated that in Aberdeen they had worked with the Council and the community to bring forward 138 homes at St Machar which was under construction and a second phase of 34 homes was currently awaiting approval from planning.

Mr Keenon explained that socially affordable and Council Housing was not just a matter of finding a site and building, it was about creating a development that would integrate not alienate the existing Community. An example of that was the two phases at St Machar, both of which received full community support.

He advised that he attended the Community Council meetings at Tillydrone and listened to what they wanted and provided a secure children's play area that the whole community could use. A further Community wish was for a Dennis Law all weather floodlit football pitch which they were happy to provide as part of the development on phase 2 and that they had also provided three Co-Wheels cars.

He explained that by incorporating and funding these facilities as part of their developments, it strengthened the community and immediately integrated the new tenants and provided an enormous physical and mental health boost for all.

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Mr Keenon advised that in every development, they worked closely with Council Departments and in Aberdeen they started assessing a site by speaking to the Housing Department to understand what the need was on the housing waiting list, which was then reflected the demand for homes in their design.

He intimated that they would then assess school rolls, transportation links and existing facilities, which was where they were today in the form of their planning application for 302 Council Houses at Wellheads Drive.

Mr Keenon explained that unlike other areas of Aberdeen, Dyce had very few Council housing developments and following discussions with Aberdeen Housing Department, they understood that there was a requirement for increased Social Housing in Dyce and across the City and 302 homes would reduce the waiting list considerably.

He advised that the intention for this development was to build 302 homes and sell them to Aberdeen City Council for use as Social Housing as part of the Council House new build program.

He explained that the development reflected the desperate need for Council Housing in Dyce which would provide one bedroom homes for those just starting their career, two bedroom homes for those with a child, and three and four bedroom homes with their own front door and garden for those with larger families.

He indicated that they also had ground floor homes for the disabled and a provision within the development to meet a requirement to support the Armed Forces by adapting a minimum of three homes for those who have been injured in service.

He advised that this development would satisfy some of the need to give newly qualified Teachers and Nurses a quality home at a social rent which would enable them to feel secure in their chosen profession.

He indicated that Scottish Government statistics continuously prove that access and availability of low cost quality housing reduced the pressure on filling Key Worker Jobs.

He explained that Dyce was a commercially successful part of Aberdeen which supported a satellite Global Headquarters for BP employing over a thousand people, a global hub for Halliburton and an International Airport, but there were many people who could not afford to buy but were attracted to Dyce for the employment opportunities.

He intimated that all political parties had signed up to delivering 2000 Council Houses in Aberdeen and the Scottish Government were committed to helping councils throughout Scotland to deliver at least 50,000 affordable homes by 2021.

Mr Keenon advised that many of the objectors to their development agreed that there was a desperate need for Council Housing, but did not want it on their own doorstep.

He indicated that based on Schooling figures provided by the Education Service, the site was within the catchment area for Dyce Primary, factoring the development into the 2017 School Roll forecasts and would not result in the school going over capacity.

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He made reference to Environmental Health objecting to the proposal in terms of the 'Potential' to be affected by existing noise sources such as Aircraft noise associated with Aberdeen Airport which was approximately 360 metres to the West of the site and an element of Road Traffic noise from the A947 adjacent to the west of our site, however they had consulted experts who could assure members and planners that noise was definitely not an issue.

He advised that only three objectors had mentioned aircraft and road noise in their submissions.

Mr Keenon indicated that Aberdeen International Airport had been fully consulted with the planning application did not object to the development despite policy B4 being 'Intended to meet the needs of safeguarding the future operations of Aberdeen International Airport'.

He advised that NATS had also been fully engaged and consulted and did not object and had provided information on how many aircraft lights they would wish to incorporate on the roof of the buildings.

He explained that a child playing in one of the four safe play outdoor areas would encounter a lower decibel level from a Boeing 737 Jet landing or taking off than they would when they return to their own home to watch television.

He indicated that the site was zoned as mixed use and already had planning approval for over 100,000 sq ft of offices and over 300 car parking spaces.

He advised that objectors had raised traffic congestion as a possible issue however the consented office block would create more traffic congestion at the peak hours of early morning and late afternoon than the proposed residential development. He also indicated that Transport Scotland's own traffic flow figures for the Wellheads Roundabout had shown a reduction of 23% for HGV traffic and 14% for cars and vans once the AWPR was opened.

He advised that there was an option to increase electric car club cars from four to seven, however the Council indicated that there was only a requirement for three. These electric cars with on site electric charging points would be the cars that teachers and nurses would use to travel to work at an extremely low cost to them. Environment and extra electric cars would reduce the carbon footprint and reduce the need for large areas of tarmac on the development which could be used for more green space and community areas.

He indicated that he would continue to work with the planning department to lower Aberdeen's Carbon Footprint and increasing the number to 7 inclusive of charging points would respect the decision made by elected members in September to help reduce emissions.

He intimated that they had listened carefully to those who had objected to the proposal, specifically in relation to the overstretched existing medical facilities within the Dyce area

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and had already spoken to NHS Grampian about their needs and how we could help them deliver facilities in Dyce.

He indicated that Aberdeen City Council had a policy to deliver 2000 Social Homes by 2022 and that the proposed development would provide the Council with an opportunity to deliver 302 of those homes and would help towards addressing an urgent unmet need for social housing across the Aberdeen Housing market area.

He advised that some of the objections from the Dyce public and the Environmental Health Service were not unsurmountable and could be mitigated against.

He concluded by explaining that he would work with officers to mitigate against any objections so that they could deliver Social Housing which would help fulfil the commitment to build 2000 Social houses across Aberdeen.

The Committee then heard from **Ian Fraser, Halliday Fraser Munro**, the applicant's agent who provided further details in relation to the application.

Mr Fraser advised that the development related to a 6 acre brownfield site with open frontages to Stoneywood Road to the west and BP Headquarters to the south.

He explained that there were industrial units to the north and east and beyond them the Stewart Milne and Barratt housing.

He intimated that the site was designated as 'mixed use' in the local development plan and planning consent was granted for 11,500 square metres of office accommodation and 380 car parking spaces, which was approximately twice than what was now proposed and had been marketed unsuccessfully for several years.

In terms of the location, Mr Fraser indicated that this was an exceptional site for residential development, and in particular, social housing, school capacities; employment opportunities; local facilities and the strategic traffic network.

He advised that Dyce Primary's school pupil role was predicted to fall to 62% by 2023 whilst the Secondary School was currently at 72% cap.

He intimated that there were employment areas within close walking distance at Wellheads, Dyce itself and Stoneywood; that local services in Dyce were all within easy walking distance and importantly, the site was adjacent to the Strategic Transport Network (main road and station) with regular city wide and country bus services; and that Dyce Railway Station with commuter and national network links was within a 15 minute walk.

Mr Fraser indicated that Aberdeen City Council's Open Space Audit stated that Dyce had the highest provision of open space of any city ward and this site was within 5 to 10 minute walk to all the Major Open Spaces; Local Open Spaces and Neighbourhood Open Spaces. All these were within the distances stated in supplementary guidance as having a positive environmental impact on the site.

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Mr Fraser advised that the school playing fields, community centre, the Riverside Parklands picnic areas and walks were all within 10 to 15mins walk of the site.

In terms of the layout and design, Mr Fraser advised that this was a prominent site especially when approaching from Aberdeen as the character of development along Stoneywood Road had large buildings similar to BP Headquarters separated by areas of landscaping and dense mature tree belts and the development followed the scale and rhythm of these other buildings.

He intimated that the views of the site from the north and east were obscured by the existing residential and industrial buildings but indicated how the development fitted in with the general scale and character of the area.

He made reference to Scottish Government Documents and the Local Development Plan which listed the qualities needed to create a successful place and explained that they had followed this guidance. Shelter sunshine and safety were three of those qualities which they had focused on.

He advised that noise was a factor which they recognised could affect the success of these aims and AECOM, one of the countries leading noise consultants were engaged as part of the design team from the outset. This resulted in environmentally aware buildings which shelter each other and the open spaces between them, not just from weather and prevailing winds but also noise.

He explained that the buildings were laid out on a north south axis creating sheltered linear parks between the blocks with open southerly aspects. These buildings were between 20 to 24 metres apart with landscaping and footpaths, which for comparison was wider than King Street at 18m wide and Union Street at 20m.

Mr Fraser advised that every property would benefit from sun all year round and from the sun path analysis we know that the open spaces between the blocks would have 12 hours sunshine a day in midsummer and a minimum of 5 hours in midwinter.

He advised that the parks were designed to reflect the different needs and uses of the community with small private gardens for ground floor residents, especially young families, the disabled or the elderly.

Mr Fraser indicated that the housing would be a mix of 1,2,3 and 4 bed flats based on the Council's housing requirements. Ground floor flats would be wheelchair accessible and the majority could be converted to full wheelchair or disabled standards if required.

He intimated that the equipped play and sitting areas, some covered, had been located within the "linear parks" and were the main accesses to the blocks which were overlooked by the flatted properties themselves providing safe secure and sheltered areas.

Mr Fraser advised that to ensure minimum practicable disruption, noise and acoustics were important design inputs. He indicated that they had also engaged with the CAA,

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AAA and NATS throughout the design process and none of these organisations had objected to the application.

He intimated that noise levels in the area were no greater than many other sites in the city in similar locations. For instance, Craiginches had constant noise levels well above 70 dB and it was considered acceptable that the flats there would require windows to be closed to achieve the internal noise levels stated in guidance and policy documents. The same situation would occur on any development adjacent to the main transport routes into the city.

Mr Fraser advised that in their own experiences in North Anderson Drive, Great Northern Road and King Street can confirm this to be the case and advice from WHO BS and Planning Policy stated:-

For traditional external areas that are used for amenity space, it is desirable that the external noise level does not exceed 50dB with an upper guideline value of 55dB. However, it is recognised that these values may not be achievable in all circumstances where development is desirable, such as the city centre or areas adjoining the strategic transport network. In such cases development should be designed to achieve the lowest practicable noise levels in these external amenity spaces.”

He explained that 48% of the amenity areas in the scheme would have levels of 55dB and below and as such, comply with these desired aims. A further 22% had levels just above 55dB which were described as “minor or negligible adverse”. In other words, 70% of the open space was within noise levels that were recognised throughout the country as “levels not likely to be a key decision making issue”.

Mr Fraser indicated that internal noise levels could be achieved in all flats.

He claimed that there were occasions e.g. helicopters passing overhead, when to maintain these levels the window must be shut. They had calculated that the majority of flats would be able to have open windows 5 hours a day outwith these ‘spikes’ without exceeding any noise levels. Those facing Stoneywood Road would be in a similar situation as Craiginches and other developments facing a busy road and would need to close windows to achieve the recommended levels.

He advised that higher densities and open space provision on brownfield sites were matters for debate and discussion.

He indicated that there was 1.2 Ha of open space which was 0.28 Ha below the provision required for a greenfield site and Scottish Planning Policy and the Council’s own local development plan policies encouraged higher densities in the interests of sustainable and efficient land use and maintaining viability and vitality of local services and facilities.

He intimated that they had achieved the correct balance and studying previously approved schemes had shown how it compared favourably with them.

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Mr Fraser listed the Open Space Density developments as follows:

- Wellheads (50%) - 24d/Ha
- St Machar, Tillydrone (45.5%) - 148d/Ha
- Craiginches (41%) - 100d/Ha
- Bannermill (32%) - 148d/Ha
- Kittybrewster (27.5%) - 143d/Ha

Mr Fraser advised that whilst the application complied with the parking requirements and Roads were satisfied with the mix of 3 car club and unallocated parking spaces, they did seek to provide a greater number of the community car spaces. Co-Wheels were supportive of the proposal to install 7 spaces which would serve the wider community and which in conjunction with an overprovision of cycle spaces and the proximity of public transport, would have delivered an exemplar sustainable, low carbon development in line with Local and National Government aims and objectives. He indicated that this approach was not supported but the offer was still on the table.

In conclusion, Mr Fraser intimated that this application was an outstanding example of a sustainable, brownfield site which delivered the levels of housing, open space and amenity that resource efficient and responsible planning objectives were aiming for.

The Committee asked a number of questions from the applicant and their agent and the following was noted:-

- that standard methodology based on guidance was used to address potential noise concerns in the new development;
- that approximately 30% of flats required noise mitigation measures, although all flats would be able to open their windows;
- that drawings would be resubmitted in terms of the middle section of the development to ensure that emergency services have appropriate access to all properties;
- that although key workers living in the development would have access to the car club, it would be available for the whole community to use, with drop off points in the city centre and various other locations;
- that hedging instead of fencing was proposed for the play areas;
- that high level ventilation would be standard for all flats; and
- that a Head of Terms had been submitted to the Council in relation to the social housing aspect of the development

The Committee then heard from **Bill Harrison, Dyce and Stoneywood Community Council** who objected to the application.

Mr Harrison advised that there was a total of 323 representations submitted, of which, 283 (89%) objected to the proposal.

Mr Harrison outlined some of the reasons why the community council were not objecting to the application, he explained that the following were not appropriate:-

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- we do not want council houses in Dyce;
- we object to the social backgrounds of likely occupants of the flats; and
- the development will lower property prices in Dyce.

Mr Harrison then outlined the reasons why the community council were objecting to the application, as follows:-

- opposing the development reflected the views expressed by the majority of the local community of Dyce and Stoneywood;
- we had serious concerns regarding many inconsistencies with the Aberdeen City Local Development Plan (2017);
- the inappropriate scale and massing of a high-density 'inner city' development of multi-storey flats;
- inadequate parking provision;
- poor integration of the development with Dyce village;
- severe pressure on community facilities and services in the village;
- poor amenity for the flats themselves regarding their north-south orientation and airport noise (as identified by Environmental Health);
- un-optimal location in terms of commuting to other parts of the city; and
- the location was not identified as a brownfield or Opportunity Site for residential development in the Local Development Plan.

Mr Harrison indicated that the community council had established a social media (Facebook) page and the reasons submitted for objecting to the application were outlined above, with the main concern being the scale and massing of the five large blocks which was inappropriate and inconsistent with the character of Dyce village.

Mr Harrison outlined the following planning policies which required consideration as follows:-

- H1 (Housing) – overdevelopment, inappropriate scale and massing for suburban site and unsympathetic to low density housing in Dyce Village;
- H2 (Mixed-Use) – adjacent to industrial units, poor residential amenity, north-south orientation and airport noise;
- H3 (Density) – 124 dwellings per hectare (302d/2.44ha) was excessive and it does not create an attractive residential environment;
- Parking: 178 spaces for 302 accommodation units fall well short of ALDP supplementary guidance requirements (302 x 0.8 = 242 based on social housing or approx. 450 for flats). The community council disagree with the applicant that car club spaces would make up the difference resulting in an over spill on to nearby streets; and
- NE4 (Open Space Provision) – 2.8ha per 1000 new residents.

Mr Harrison indicated that although welcome, the proposed £240,000 developer contributions for healthcare would not solve the problem as the number of residents moving in to the area with the new development (approx. 1000) would in fact exacerbate the problem and put further pressure on community facilities.

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He advised that there would be a lack of sunlight in some of the flats, particularly the north side block. He also intimated that the noise from the airport would be difficult to mitigate.

He advised that the road/traffic noise characteristic was different from that of an airport explaining that road noise was consistent, and the airport has short bursts of extreme noise.

Mr Harrison indicated that it would be fantastic if teachers and nurses moved to the area as anticipated, however if they did, they would need to commute to their place of employment, therefore a significant number would be using their own cars adding traffic to the already congested A947.

Members then asked a number of questions of Mr Harrison, and the following was noted:-

- that there was a strong community feel in Dyce village;
- that approximately 7000 people lived in Dyce;
- that the two events at the Marriott Hotel were well attended; and
- that the community council meeting to consider that application was very well attended (approx. 20).

The Committee then heard from **Linda Cox**, resident of Dyce who had objected to the application.

Ms Cox advised that her reasons for objection were as follows:-

- the area was ear-marked for commercial development;
- that there was no consultation with the local community; and
- that too many flats were proposed for the area which will impact on local amenities and other recent developments i.e. Middlefield
 - Medical facilities in area already an issue
 - Local schooling
 - Parking (big issue and impact for all)
 - Community facilities / Play areas (not enough)
 - transport

Ms Cox indicated that parking in the area was currently being used as an additional car park for office workers and enquired where these vehicles would go if the development was given the go ahead. She intimated that cars were also parking alongside the area where the 302 flats were proposed.

She referred to the Council decision that the area proposed for 302 flats was earmarked for commercial use and sought confirmation why this had been revoked.

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Ms Cox advised that the area was a traffic black spot at peak times of the day and sought answers on what provision had been made for managing this as it took longer to travel from Dyce to Stoneywood than it does from Dyce to Bridge of Don.

She indicated that Doctors were in short supply and local surgeries were at breaking point at present and a number of new developments were already in the process of being built.

Ms Cox enquired as to the capacity at local schools and leisure facilities, which were very poor at present.

Ms Cox advised that Aberdeen City Council had not given due consideration to public opinion and explained that if this was a private development they would not have been granted permission for that many flats in such a small area. She intimated that the area was better suited to terraced family homes with gardens and off-street parking.

She indicated that the new Exhibition Centre would have an impact which would result in additional traffic and parking issues in the surrounding areas.

In conclusion Ms Cox intimated that more consultation with the local community was required, including local services i.e. schools, medical practices and the lack of areas for play and exercise.

In response to a question from Councillor Cooke, Ms Cox advised that if the development was approved, cars in the overspill BP office car park would go to the Burnside area as Riverside and Wellheads Avenue had double yellow parking restrictions.

The Convener thanked all those who attended the hearing, specifically those who had presented their case, submitted representations and provided information. She advised that the Chief Officer – Strategic, Place, Planning would prepare a report for submission to the Planning Development Management Committee for subsequent consideration and determination.

- **COUNCILLOR MARIE BOULTON, Convener.**

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