

Mr and Mrs Charles Leslie

Planning and Environment,
Infrastructure Services,
Woodhill House,
Westburn Road,
Aberdeen.
AB16 5GB

16th July 2020

For the attention of [REDACTED] Head of Planning and Environmental Service.

Dear Sir,

**Your Reference: LDP2021 NN
Proposal for Development at Site OP1, Longside**

I write in connection with the above Proposal for development. I know the proposed site well, and having examined your letter, the proposed local development plan, its appendices, and the relevant "Strategic Environmental Assessment of new allocated sites and alternative bid sites – Buchan" I wish to object strongly to your proposal for development.

Your "Strategic Environmental Assessment of new allocated sites and alternative bid sites – Buchan"
Site Ref OP1 BU029

Is a proposal for a development of fifty (50) homes, while your letter is a proposal for thirty (30) homes, and your Allocation in page 316 of the proposed local development plan is for an allocation of thirty (30) homes. Which figure is correct?

Climatic Factors

With reference to the Climatic Factors section I do not believe enough consideration has been given to flood risk. The southern part of the field floods regularly and has poor drainage as the South of the field is bounded by a substantial embankment (which rises to approximately six (6) metres) of the former railway: this retains flood water in the area of the proposed development. I think insufficient consideration has been given to the effects on the local hydrology of a development in an already flood prone site.

Biodiversity

The development will have a SIGNIFICANT long-term irreversible adverse impact on biodiversity. I regularly see bats (all of which are European protected species) overflying the site and believe they may roost on the site. The site is also home to bird species recognised as "birds of conservation concern" by the RSPB, such as Tree Sparrows, Yellowhammers and Skylarks. Even if mitigations such as a "buffer strip" were provided it would take decades for hedges and trees to mature into a replacement habitat.

Landscape

I resist your assessment that the proposed site is "flat" when it is on a rise from West to East towards Auchlee Farm, and there is also a substantially raised historic railway embankment to the Southern boundary of the proposed site.

Further:

The residents of Station Terrace and Station Place have chosen to live there because of the quiet, and pleasant countryside views. This development will eliminate this aspect of life in their homes. The detrimental impact on proprietors and residents is not reflected in any part of your assessments.

Proposed Local Development Plan

Page 316 of Appendix 7B of the proposed local development plan mentions construction of "a new junction on Station Road [sic, *Station Terrace*] which meets adoptable standard including visibility requirements." Knowing the site as I do, I cannot see how this is possible, as the junction with the Auchlee Farm road and Station Terrace is on a dangerous "blind bend", which could not be straightened without encroaching on the front garden of a house on Station Terrace. The farm road is currently lightly used, but the inevitable increase in traffic a development would have is highly likely to have a detrimental impact on road safety. Auchlee Farm would require that heavy agricultural vehicles continue to use any route, which would inevitably reduce amenity of any upgraded road. Station Terrace itself is not suitable for additional traffic: it is an unlisted road, does not have pavements to both sides for pedestrians, and in any event is barely wider than the Auchlee Farm Road itself.

Further, there will no doubt be a great increase in traffic, as it is unreasonable to expect people who reside in a rural area (such as Longside) not to have personal transport. There is a bus stop at Main Street, Longside, but it is at least a mile walk down the Auchlee Farm road and along Station Terrace, a great deterrent, especially given our Aberdeenshire weather and the lack of adequate paving on Station Terrace.

With reference to the Local Development Plan as a whole, I can see no need for the allocation of the Longside OP1 site. There have been no neighbouring housing developments in over twenty-five years, and more recent housing development in Longside has been concentrated to the South West of the village. Mintlaw is only two miles away, has many more services, much better transport links, and already has a considerable area of land allocated for residential development.

Conclusion

Given all the foregoing, I cannot see why the land in Longside OP1 is proposed to be so allocated. I anticipate the opportunity to make personal representations in this matter to the relevant parties, should this prove necessary.

Yours Sincerely

Charles and Jane Leslie

