

PROPOSED ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 RESPONSE FORM

As part of the production of the Local Development Plan, a 'Main Issues Report' was published in January 2019. The responses from these consultations have helped to inform the content of the Proposed Local Development Plan ("the Proposed Plan").

The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan will direct decision-making on land-use planning issues and planning applications in Aberdeenshire for the 10-year period from 2021 to 2031. The Proposed Plan was agreed by Aberdeenshire Council in March 2020 as the settled view of the Council. However, the Proposed Plan will be subjected to an independent examination and is now open for public comment.

This is your opportunity to tell us if anything should be changed in the Proposed Plan, and why.

When writing a response to the Proposed Plan it is important to specifically state the modification(s) that you would wish to see to the Plan.

This is the only remaining opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan. The reasons for any requested changes will be analysed and reported to Scottish Ministers. They will then appoint a person known as a Reporter to conduct a public examination of the Proposed Plan, focusing particularly on any unresolved issues and the changes sought.

Ministers expect representations (or responses) to be concise (no more than 2000 words) and accompanied by limited supporting documents. It is important to ensure that all of the information that you wish to be considered is submitted during this consultation period as there is no further opportunity to provide information, unless specifically asked.

Please email comments to ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or send this form to reach us by 31 July 2020*.

We recommend that you keep a copy of your representation for your own records.

**UPDATE 16 June 2020: Consultation period was extended from 17 July 2020 for a further two-week period.*



ACCESSIBILITY

If you need information from this document in an alternative language or in a Large Print, Easy Read, Braille or BSL, please telephone 01467 536230.

Jeigu pageidaujate šio dokumento kita kalba arba atspausdinto stambiu šriftu, supaprastinta kalba, parašyta Brailio raštu arba britų gestų kalba, prašome skambinti 01467 536230.

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații din acest document într-o altă limbă sau într-un format cu scrisul mare, ușor de citit, tipar pentru nevăzători sau în limbajul semnelor, vă rugăm să telefonați la 01467 536230.

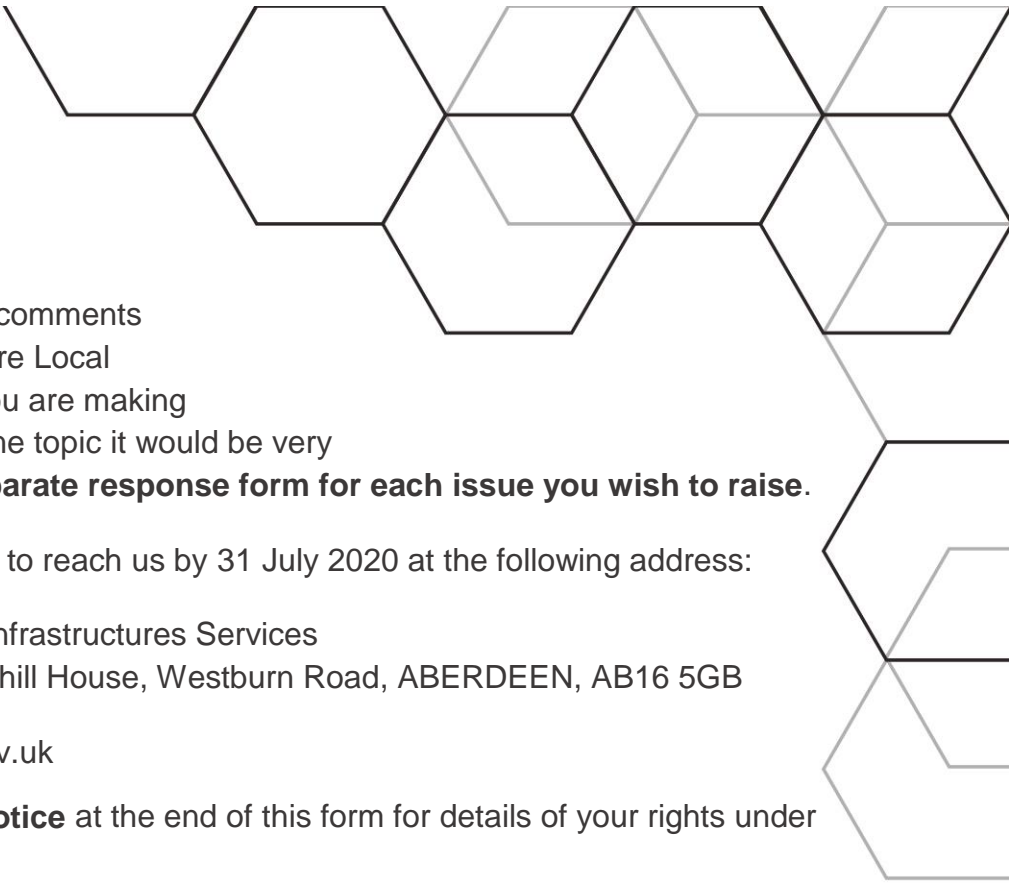
Jeśli potrzebowali będą Państwo informacji z niniejszego dokumentu w innym języku, pisanych dużą czcionką, w wersji łatwej do czytania, w alfabecie Braille'a lub w brytyjskim języku migowym, proszę o telefoniczny kontakt na numer 01467 536230.

Ja jums nepieciešama šai dokumentā sniegtā informācija kādā citā valodā vai lielā drukā, viegli lasāmā tekstā, Braila rakstā vai BSL (britu zīmju valodā), lūdzu, zvaniet uz 01467 536230.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan
Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB

Tel: 01467 536230
Email: ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Web: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp
Follow us on Twitter @ShireLDP

If you wish to contact one of the area planning offices, please call 01467 534333 and ask for the relevant planning office or email planning@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.



Please use this form to make comments on the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2020. If you are making comments about more than one topic it would be very helpful if you could fill in **a separate response form for each issue you wish to raise**.

Please email or send the form to reach us by 31 July 2020 at the following address:

Post: Planning Policy Team, Infrastructures Services
Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, ABERDEEN, AB16 5GB

Email: ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Please refer to our **Privacy Notice** at the end of this form for details of your rights under the Data Protection Act.

YOUR DETAILS

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Title: | Mr |
| First Name: | Angus |
| Surname: | Dodds |
| Date: | 31/07/20 |
| Postal Address: | Savills [REDACTED] [REDACTED] |
| Postcode: | [REDACTED] |
| Telephone Number: | [REDACTED] |
| Email: | [REDACTED] |

Are you happy to receive future correspondence only by email? Yes No

Are you responding on behalf of another person? Yes No

If yes who are you representing?

Tick the box if you would like to subscribe to the Aberdeenshire LDP eNewsletter: Yes

An acknowledgement will be sent to this address soon after the close of consultation.

YOUR COMMENTS

Please provide us with your comments below. We will summarise comments and in our analysis will consider every point that is made. Once we have done this we will write back to you with Aberdeenshire Council's views on the submissions made. We will publish your name as the author of the comment, but will not make your address public.

Modification that you wish to see (please make specific reference to the section of the Proposed Plan you wish to see modified if possible, for example Section 9, paragraph E1.1):

Modification

Section 07: 'Shaping Development in the Countryside', Paragraphs 2.11 – 2.14 and Planning Advice: 'Organic Growth of Settlements'

Include

Cullerlie Smithy, Cullerlie, as an identified settlement in the Garioch area where organic growth is permissible under the terms of policy R2 (sections R2.11 to R2.14).

Suggested Text

New Identified Settlement to be called: Cullerlie Smithy

Key Supporting Documents

Appendix A – Main Issues Report Form for Site GR098

Appendix B – Call for Sites Development Bid for Site GR098

Appendix C – Location Plan

Appendix D – Representation to site GR099 Proposed Local Development Plan 2020

Reason for change:

Introduction

Cullerlie Estate seeks the inclusion of site GR098 alongside land to the east, south and south-west of the site as an identified settlement where organic growth is permissible under the terms of Policy R2.

This representation must be read in conjunction with, the initial Development Bid and Main Issue Report (MIR) submissions submitted in support of site GR098, and representations put forward by Cullerlie Estate for site GR099 on Land East of Birchmoss Depot.

We are disappointed to note that GR098 has not been included within the Proposed Plan, as the site has had continued support from Cullerlie Estate, and we consider that there is demand for countryside plots at this location which provide important variety within the local housing market.

Vision

As described in the original Main Issues Report Form, Cullerlie Estate are interested in facilitating a small mixed-use development to help sustain the site around Flora's Restaurant, Cullerlie. The concept behind the suggested development would be primarily to provide self-build housing plots (potentially live-work units) with small-scale retail/employment uses ancillary to this. Such provision could build on the existing service that Flora's restaurant provides, thus helping to maintain an important rural business, and offering an underprovided opportunity for living and working.

Including the area at Flora's and the land to the east, south and south-west of site GR098 as an acknowledged small settlement would allow the creation of a rural hub in an area where there is already established employment and residential uses. We consider that Cullerlie already has the characteristics of a small settlement due to the housing and in particular the services that Flora provides.

The Birchmoss Depot provides a significant level of employment in the local area, and the separate representation put forward by Cullerlie Estate (Site GR099) for an extension to this employment land area, could if supported, further enhance the concept promoting Cullerlie more generally as a place to live and work. This would allow the Estate to reinvest any associated revenue within the Estate, boosting the rural economy of Aberdeenshire.

Issues and Actions Paper

Aberdeenshire Council's Issues and Action Paper that informs the PLDP notes that:

"Cullerlie ... lacks facilities and access to public transport."

And

"Cullerlie is an unsustainable location and that development should be focused towards existing settlements, as per Scottish Planning Policy..."

Cullerlie Estate does not agree that this analysis provides sufficient rationale to exclude the site at Cullerlie Smithy. Many potential house purchasers would like to occupy semi-rural and rural locations where they can enjoy more outdoor living and larger gardens. The benefits of space and the amenity this provides can be valued more highly than any competing amenity provided by a higher number of nearby services. In addition, Floras

itself provides services that would reduce the distance and time spent leaving the area to buy essential products.

Aberdeenshire Council has already permitted the development of single plots in other identified settlements as part of its 'Organic Growth' policy under policy R2 of the currently Adopted LDP. This policy fundamentally accepts that car-use is an inevitable consequence if smaller rural communities are to be sustained. In the case of Cullerlie Smithy, the presence of Flora's ensures that the already existing cluster of houses enjoy local services.

Self-build properties or small scale developments on larger than normal plots, allow home-working facilities to be integrated into house designs. One of the likely effects of the current COVID-19 pandemic is that larger rural properties with greater private amenity space will continue to be desirable to the market. Savills Rural residential team has seen an uplift in interest in these types of properties throughout summer 2020.

Savills Development colleagues provide commentary on this:

"Following the onset of the Coronavirus / Covid-19 pandemic, enquiries and demand for self-build plots has increased as purchasers seek to design their own homes to suit their specific needs and enjoy more outdoor space and larger gardens.

The Scottish Government continue to support this market as a means of encouraging the development of more homes across the Country. The Scotland Self-Build Loan Fund runs for 3 years and offers loans of up to £175,000 to help with the construction of self-build projects in both urban and rural areas.

Undoubtedly there are challenges in relation to self-build plots in the countryside including a lack of access to amenities, community facilities or lack of public transport. However, this has not hindered demand for plots in semi-rural or rural Aberdeenshire, particularly those that benefit from a 'Deeside' location, as many purchasers have a preference for more remote locations where they have access to larger plots, garden space and views of the countryside"

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of New Allocated Sites and Alternative Bid Sites (April 2020) – Landward Sites – Alternative Sites – Site GR098

Aberdeenshire Council undertook a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of New Allocated Sites and Alternative Bid Site (April 2020) to help inform the PLDP. This evaluated all of the sites promoted through the LDP process to date, and attributed a score to each site against a number of key indicators.

This assessment concluded that a proposed development at Cullerlie Smithy would have neutral effects post-mitigation on: air, water, climatic factors, soil, biodiversity, landscape, material assets, and cultural heritage. Population was identified as being likely to result in a positive/neutral effect.

The site scored as having a negative effect post-mitigation on Human Health. We object to this assessment (SEA assessment text provided in italics).

Human Health

Development is within the Health and Safety pipeline consultation zone.

Notwithstanding comments made at the MIR stage to address this concern, it was disappointing to note that the SEA update continued to cite the pipeline consultation zone as grounds for a negative score.

To reiterate earlier comments, an application was recently approved for the erection of dwelling houses approximately 1 kilometre from the site at Barnton Farm (APP/2018/2405). The Report of Handling explained how detailed discussions with the pipeline operator had confirmed that proximity to this asset would not warrant refusal of the application. Further consultation could evidently be taken with the pipeline operator in due course to confirm what design approaches could be taken to satisfy the operator on safety grounds.

We do not feel that this is a matter for which the site should be given a negative score post-mitigation. A series of extant permissions for new houses within the pipeline consultation zone show that housing can be accommodated here.

Comments on Biodiversity, Landscape and Human Health

We also object to the neutral scoring for Biodiversity, Landscape and Human Health.

We consider that the allocation of GR098 would have a positive effect on biodiversity, landscape and human health, as development here would exhibit the six qualities of successful place set out in SPP. A sense of place can be achieved through the synthesis of housing units and small-scale retail and employment. In addition, private open space and biodiversity enhancements as a result of potential advanced planting, could be important elements of a future development on the site.

It is considered that the historic buildings in and around the Smithy would create a pleasant and identifiable context for a modest development that would need to reflect the character of existing host buildings. Any design framework coming forward would show linkages throughout the site and to surrounding roads. Flora's restaurant could be retained as the focal point of any future development.

Climatic Factors

We note the scoring attributed to the site under 'Climatic Factors'. The SEA states that post-mitigation, the proposal would have a neutral effect on climatic factors owing to the site's scale. This reasoning is supported, and helps illustrate the decreasing impact of private car use in this area. We consider that distance from services is now a less important principle in the fight against climate change as cycle use increases, and changes in Government policy means that half of all new cars must be ultra-low emission by 2030.

The delivery plan to Aberdeenshire Council's 'Low Emission Vehicle Delivery Plan 2018' states that Aberdeenshire is well placed to be at the forefront of a widespread uptake of electric cars. If such a trend becomes established it helps to dilute the impact of private cars as these will increasingly be low emission vehicles. It is also significant that there is excellent electrical grid infrastructure at Cullerlie. This will be a major barrier to more rural locations decarbonising through the critical role electrification of transport and heat will have in the future decarbonising of Scotland.

Finally we also envisage that the plots provided could be used to develop live-work units, and therefore some residents would be employed directly in the area. This again reduces the need for habitual journeys being taken from the site.

Overall, we consider it important to revisit the concept of there being an urban/rural, sustainable/unsustainable dichotomy. The scoring of this site as being neutral in terms of climatic factors seems like a welcome acknowledgement of the need to revisit this outdated concept.

Section 7 Shaping Development in the Countryside: 'Organic Growth of Settlements' (R2.11 to R2.14)

The Spatial Strategy map on page 21 of the PLDP confirms that the site is within the 'Accessible Rural Area'. This is significant as paragraph R2.12 states that within this area, housing as part of 'organic growth' of the settlement will only be considered in those settlements where there are no opportunity sites. No such opportunity sites exist in Cullerlie. In the circumstances, recognition of Cullerlie Smithy as a small settlement would be appropriate.

We accept that in accordance with paragraph R2.13 if Cullerlie Smithy was to be identified as a settlement, only a 20% growth with a maximum of 10 new homes, could be permitted during the next plan period. We consider that permitting a higher number of plots to be developed here would be beneficial to the concept of creating a more vibrant 'rural hub'. However, we accept that the 20% threshold allows for growth that is incremental and proportionate.

Conclusions

Cullerlie Estate believe that GR098 and its surroundings at Cullerlie Smithy should be identified as a small settlement in the next LDP, as it would help to serve the local self-build market in the short to medium-term in a location that is already a well-established rural service centre.

Given the unusual occurrence of a facility such as Floras here, it is considered that the Council should reflect again on the amount to which a modest development at this site could help sustain a facility like Floras, which performs an important local function.

The site has the potential to offer something uniquely attractive and marketable in the local area, and could deliver the range and choice of homes that are currently under-provided in the local property market. This representation clearly demonstrates that identifying Cullerlie Smithy as a small settlement would allow further but proportionate growth to take place here in a location that enjoys good services, and links to local employers and larger facilities and services in settlements nearby.

PRIVACY NOTICE

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PUBLIC COMMENT



The Data Controller of the information being collected is Aberdeenshire Council.

The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at Town House, 34 Low Street, Banff, AB45 1AY.

Email: dataprotection@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Your information is being collected to use for the following purposes:

- To provide public comment on the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The data on the form will be used to inform Scottish Ministers and individual(s) appointed to examine the Proposed Local Development Plan 2020. It will inform the content of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021.

Your information is:

| | |
|--|---|
| Being collected by Aberdeenshire Council | X |
|--|---|

The Legal Basis for collecting the information is:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Personal Data | |
| Legal Obligations | X |

Where the Legal Basis for processing is either Performance of a Contract or Legal Obligation, please note the following consequences of failure to provide the information:

It is a Statutory Obligation under Section 18 of the Town and Country (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, for Aberdeenshire Council to prepare and publish a Proposed Local Development plan on which representations must be made to the planning authority within a prescribed period of time. Failure to provide details requested in the 'Your Details' section of this form will result in Aberdeenshire Council being unable to accept your representation.

Your information will be shared with the following recipients or categories of recipient:

Members of the public are being given this final opportunity to comment on the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The reasons for any changes that the Council receives will be analysed and reported to Scottish Ministers. They will then appoint a person to conduct a public examination of the Proposed Plan, focusing particularly on the unresolved issues raised and the changes sought.

Your name and respondent identification number (provided to you by Aberdeenshire Council on receipt of your submission) will be published alongside a copy of your completed response on the Proposed Local Development Plan website (contact details and information that is deemed commercially sensitive will not be made available to the public).

In accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 where the appointed person determines that further representations should be made or further information should be provided by any person in connection with the examination of the Proposed Plan the appointed person may by notice request that person to make such further representations or to provide such further information.

Your information will be transferred to or stored in the following countries and the following safeguards are in place:

Not applicable.

The retention period for the data is:

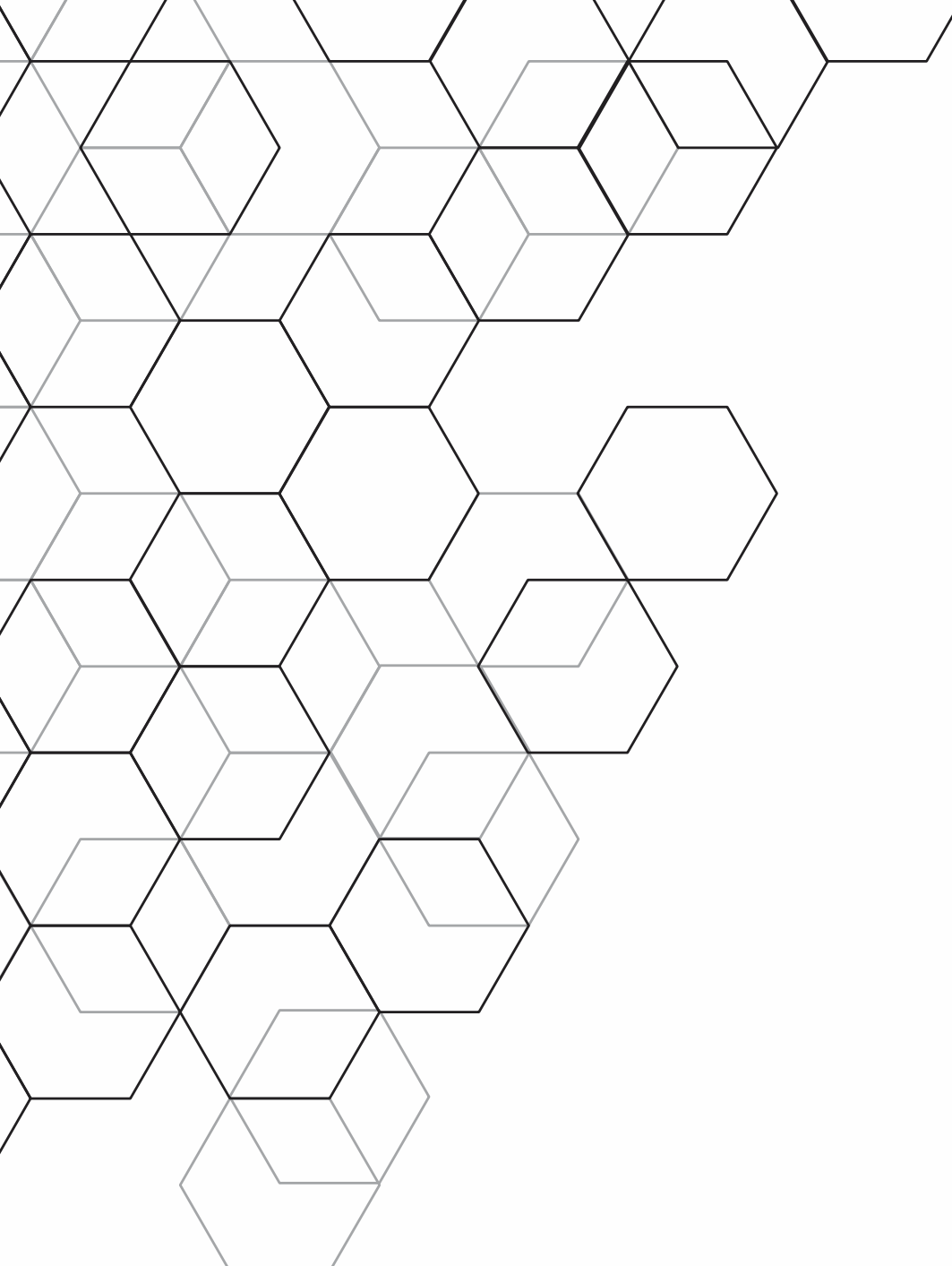
Aberdeenshire Council will only keep your personal data for as long as is needed. Aberdeenshire Council will retain your response and personal data for a retention period of 5 years from the date upon which it was collected. After 5 years Aberdeenshire Council will review whether it is necessary to continue to retain your information for a longer period. A redacted copy of your submission will be retained for 5 years beyond the life of the Local Development Plan 2021, possibly until 2037.

The following automated decision-making, including profiling, will be undertaken:

Not applicable.

Please note that you have the following rights:

- to withdraw consent at any time, where the Legal Basis specified above is Consent;
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (after raising the issue with the Data Protection Officer first);
- to request access to your personal data;
- to data portability, where the legal basis specified above is:
 - (i) Consent; or
 - (ii) Performance of a Contract;
- to request rectification or erasure of your personal data, as so far as the legislation permits.



Supporting Statement: Land adjacent to Floras, Cullerlie

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This supporting statement provides further detail for a proposed small-scale, low density mixed-use site at Land adjacent to Flora's Restaurant, Cullerlie. This statement should be read in conjunction with the Call for Sites form.
- 1.2. Cullerlie Estate are interested in facilitating a small mixed-use site to promote sustainable rural development. The site will primarily provide self-build housing plots (with live-work units a potential) with small-scale retail or employment use as ancillary uses. The development will hopefully build on the existing service that Flora's Restaurant provides. The ultimate aim is to provide a rural hub which can provide a mix of affordable and market value housing, alongside work opportunities and the potential for increased local services. Associated open space and biodiversity enhancements are also considered important elements of the prospective site.
- 1.3. The Birchmoss Depot provides a significant level of employment in close proximity to the proposal site. Cullerlie have also submitted a proposal for an extension of this employment area (an additional 4ha). It is envisaged that the two proposal sites will complement each other, consolidating a hub of activity in this part of Aberdeenshire.
- 1.4. The proposal site has recently become vacant, and so Cullerlie Estate are interested in trying to spark redevelopment. An allocation within the next LDP will give the Estate the opportunity to move the site forward, and when revenues are generated, these can be reinvested on the Estate boosting the rural economy of Aberdeenshire.

2. Site Context

- 2.1. The proposal site is primarily agricultural land, used for rough grazing and/or livestock. It comprises a relatively flat, triangle of land, with the Smithy buildings located on the land to the west of the road. There are other small-scale agricultural buildings on the site, and pigs have been kept on the land. Currently the visual appearance is untidy and unattractive.
- 2.2. There is a number of detached housing units located around the site (c.8) with shelter planting and garden planting evident. To the north of the site is Flora's Restaurant, which sits on a minor junction on the B9125 (running east-west) and two minor roads that run south-west and south-east respectively.
- 2.3. More widely the site is surrounded by agricultural land. The Birchmoss Depot is 1.5km to the west. Skene is 7km to the north-east and Peterculter the same distance to the south-east. Banchory is 8.km to the south-west. The new AWPR will be in close proximity to the site to the east.

3. **Planning Policy Context**

- 3.1. At the Council's Rural Seminar on March 22 it was discussed that rural areas require a flexible approach to development, with weight on facilitating business space and housing. Mixed use allocations were discussed as a potential solution given the diversity of use that such allocations allow.
- 3.2. Cullerlie Estate consider that this site has good potential because of the existing business which is adjacent, and the Birchmoss Depot nearby (which has the potential to extend). As a result there is an opportunity to build a critical mass through small scale development appropriate to the site context.
 - *Countryside Development*
- 3.3. The 'Shaping Development in the Countryside' section of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017 (LDP) states that the Council want to promote a "welcoming approach...that meets needs and encourages prosperous, sustainable communities and businesses while protecting and improving the quality of the environment". Cullerlie Estate are supportive of this overarching policy aim and consider it sits well with the aims of the proposals for the site.
- 3.4. To be clear the site is not within the green belt.
- 3.5. Under Policy R2 it is considered that a limited level of development/re-development is acceptable, for example redevelopment of the Smithy and its outhouses. However, with regards to flexibility, our opinion is that a Call for Sites submission provides the best forum for discussion of the site. In due course, an allocation then provides the best framework to develop/re-develop the site. It is also our opinion that the level of land required for the development/re-development merits an allocation over a planning application.
- 3.6. We have provided our initial thoughts on site delivery below, it is considered that precise uses will be driven by marketing/Council opinion/potential site investigations, however it is considered that the site is suitable for:
 - Visitor accommodation (glamping etc.),
 - Housing (with potential for ancillary work units)
 - Small scale Class 1
 - Small scale Class 4
 - Small scale Class 10
- 3.7. We do consider that the provision of visitor accommodation could be implemented without the accommodation having to be considered as housing, as per our understanding of the current policy position in the 'Shaping Development in the Countryside'. For example, if specific holiday accommodation such as teepees, glamping pods etc. were built. However, an allocation would mean that this potential debate would be avoided.
- 3.8. It is possible that the agricultural use will mean that contamination has occurred on part of the site. Cullerlie Estate consider that remediation may be required, and the expense of this will be a viability consideration.

o *Placemaking*

3.9. The 2017 Aberdeenshire LDP states that designs have to demonstrate the six qualities of successful places. As a result we have considered the site in this context below.

- We consider that a sense of place can be created given the attractive views the site has, stretching over the countryside to the east, south and west. The site already has a focal point in Flora's Restaurant and the locale has attractive planting and features such as drystone walls. Redevelopment of the site will therefore positively develop the sense of place.
- Development/redevelopment of the site will make it safer and more pleasant. The purpose of the rural hub proposal is to increase activity and this brings an associated benefit to security for the locale. The redevelopment will also make the site more pleasant i.e. through removal of the agricultural clutter, redevelopment of buildings and enhancement of positive features of the locale such as drystone walls and planting.
- Dependent on the ultimate development approach, there is potential for architectural expression through provision of self-build plots. In addition, potential communal open space and green infrastructure will help improve visual appeal. Links through the site will also make the site more welcoming. One idea is potential outdoor seating for Flora's restaurant and associated play space etc.
- The development could be flexible through provision of sizeable plots to allow adaptation of houses in response to circumstances such as climate change and old age. There will be a mix of housing to provide accommodation for people on a range of incomes. Provision of uses such as an extension to the restaurant or glamping pods would be easily removable with low land impact if future needs changed. It is considered that live-work units could allow a range of employment uses complimentary to leisure/business use etc.
- Development will be south facing to take advantage of solar orientation and other renewable energy provision is also possible (see below). There is also green infrastructure potential on the site.
- The site is in close proximity to settlements to the west of Aberdeen. In addition, the Birchmoss Depot is close by and it is possible that housing could serve this employment area.

3.10. We have also completed a Place Standard assessment to help engender discussion of the site. We have shown the matrix at Figure 1:

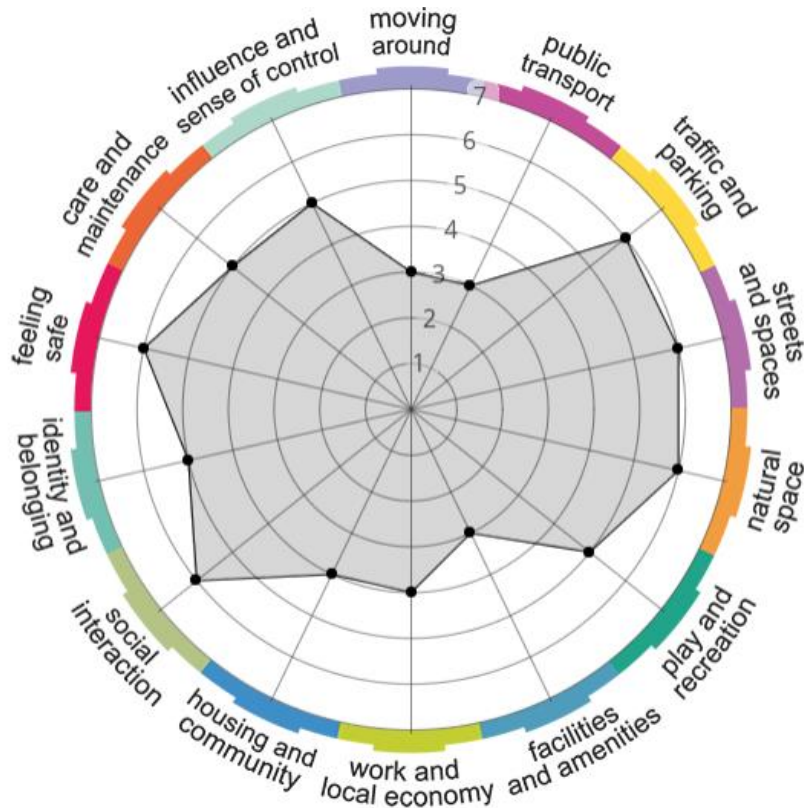


Figure 1: Place Standard Assessment Matrix, Land adjacent to Floras

- 3.11. The matrix shows that there is limited sustainable transport and/or public transport links to/from the site. However, it is a short drive to bus services to Aberdeen (i.e. from Banchory or Peterculter) and the surrounding roads are quiet and suitable to walk/cycle on.
- 3.12. Cullerlie is a rural area and car use is to be expected. However, the potential of live-work units and electric vehicle charging counter unsustainable travel risks. In due course it would be hoped that development could spark provision of such links directly from the site.
- 3.13. As the site has room to provide a range of development and it is surrounded by open fields there is good potential for high quality development in terms of layout. It is noted that a need for engagement and consultation with surrounding users leading to defined uses for the site would improve the scoring for economy, facilities, care, housing and sense of control. The LDP review process helps to start these discussions.

4. Site Delivery

- 4.1. Cullerlie Estate do not envisage this allocation to be solely for residential use in the countryside, instead the Estate are keen to develop a mixed use “rural hub” as outlined.
- 4.2. The land is available and so development can commence on adoption of the new LDP. A reasonable timescale for development to be completed is 6-10 years from a site start. However, this can only be an estimate at this time.
- 4.3. The density of the site will be significantly lower than a settlement or edge of settlement location. It is considered that c. 8 residential units and c.500m² of business and office or other floor space will bring an appropriate level of development that will not detract from the character of the site or its rural location.
- 4.4. To be clear, the Estate expect at least 25% of the development to be affordable housing.
- 4.5. The Estate will not be reliant on external finance to bring the site forward. There is an option to consider servicing of the site which would bring additional up front cost, however this would require to be full investigated before any firm commitment could be given. Cullerlie Estate would prefer to have the Council's opinion on the site at the Main Issues Report stage before consideration of servicing. At the current time there are no issues evident that would preclude development.

5. Natural Heritage and Biodiversity enhancement

- 5.1. We do not expect any natural heritage impacts as a result of development. If necessary, a Phase 1 habitat survey could be undertaken.
- 5.2. At this stage, we are only aware that the SPP paragraph 194 points: connected with benefits for biodiversity, and to support opportunities for enjoying the natural environment, are relevant. In particular, site assembly could allow for habitat creation in public open space, native tree planting, ponds and soakaways, and wildflowers etc. There is land ownership within and surrounding the Estate to allow this to occur.

6. Historic Environment

- 6.1. Pastmap shows that the Smithy has an historic environment record detailing the former use of the building. Overall it is not considered that the proposals bring any adverse impact on the historic environment.

7. Landscape Impact

- 7.1. The site is not within a Special Landscape Area.
- 7.2. Development of the site will not bring any particular landscape impacts. We envisage a low density development and this would likely mean either one storey or one-and-a-half storey buildings (in line with those within the locale). The land is flat and we consider that new planting and use of landscape features such as drystone walls etc. would lead to a successful landscape fit.
- 7.3. Prospective properties would be able to take advantage of fine panoramic views.

8. Infrastructure

- 8.1. Cullerlie Estate have reviewed the potential for green gardens and are supportive of their integration into the site in principle. In addition, we also consider that the site could incorporate open space and green infrastructure such as swales and seasonal wetland etc.
- 8.2. Dependent on the method of site assembly, plot specific features (green roofs, window boxes, green walls etc.) would be down to individual plot owners or the developer. However, the development management system could pick up on this and encourage positive placemaking.
- 8.3. The 2016 school roll forecasts show that there are no capacity issues to 2022 with regards to Echt Primary School. However, it is accepted that an agreed contribution may be required to allow an extension at Alford Academy, due to expected capacity constraints at this school in due course.
- 8.4. In terms of utilities connections, mains gas is not available. However, there is capacity available for water and waste water connections. Electricity is available at the site.
- 8.5. We do not consider that there will be any issues with achieving vehicular access. The site is served by two minor roads and there is ample land ownership to achieve visibility splays and parking requirements.
- 8.6. We have outlined that the site can contribute open space and green infrastructure. This will be in line with the standards in the Aberdeenshire Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. However, we would welcome dialogue on this issue once there is more information on potential uses.
- 8.7. Savills Energy team have assessed the site in terms of possible renewable energy. Their opinion is that the proposal provides good potential for a small district heating scheme that could be operated by Cullerlie Estate. Cullerlie Estate owns local commercial forestry which could provide fuel for a biomass scheme, or part of the site could potentially be used for a ground source heat pump. The site is south facing and so there is roof top solar potential for prospective buildings.

9. Other Constraints

9.1. The ground conditions are unknown at this time, we have stated that the agricultural use may mean that contaminated land should be investigated.

10. Conclusions

10.1. Cullerlie Estate would like to work with Aberdeenshire Council to explore the potential for a rural hub at the proposal site. In particular, the Estate would like to secure an allocation to give greater certainty to further investigations on the site and work to establish an appropriate mix of development uses.

10.2. We consider that the site brings potential to build on sense of place in terms of existing amenity and housing. In addition, the redevelopment of the agricultural use will bring a significant improvement to the amenity of the site. There is also open space and green infrastructure benefits possible from redevelopment of the site.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021: Main Issues Report 2019 **Main Issues Report Response Form**

Important Information: Please Read

The Main Issues Report (MIR) is a key stage in preparing the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021 (LDP 2021). The MIR sets out options for how the LDP 2021 could be improved both in terms of the policies that Aberdeenshire Council will use to determine planning applications as well as identifying land allocations for development. The MIR has been published along with a Monitoring Report and Interim Environmental Report of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. These, along with other supporting documents are available at: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans-and-policies/ldp-2021/main-issues-report/>.

Comments are sought on the MIR and Interim Environmental Report, or indeed any other matter that you feel that we need to consider, by 5pm on Monday, 8 April 2019. Responses can be emailed to us at ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or received via post, Planning Policy Team, Infrastructure Services, Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB.

Please note that in order for comments to be considered as valid you must include your contact details.

We will use these details to confirm receipt of your comments and to seek clarification or request further information as required. Should you have any concerns regarding the holding of such information please contact ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. Anonymous comments will not be considered as part of the consultation process. Petitions will only be noted in the name of the person submitting the document.

All comments received will be carefully assessed and will be used to inform the preparation of the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. There will be a further opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan when it is published in December 2019.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name | ██████████ |
| Organisation (optional) | Savills |
| On behalf of (if relevant) | Cullerlie Estate |
| Address | ██████████ ██████████ |
| Postcode | ██████████ |
| Telephone (optional) | ██████████ |
| E-mail (optional) | ██████████ |



Doing things digitally is our preference. Tick the box if you are not happy to receive correspondence via email:

Tick the box if you would like to subscribe to the Aberdeenshire LDP eNewsletter:

Fair processing notice

Please tick to confirm your agreement to the following statements:

By submitting a response to the consultation, I agree that Aberdeenshire Council can use the information provided in this form, including my personal data, as part of the review of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. This will include consultation on the Main Issues Report (including any subsequent Proposed Plan).

I also agree that following the end of the consultation, i.e. after 8 April 2019, my name and respondent identification number (provided to you by Aberdeenshire Council on receipt of your submission) can be published alongside a copy of my completed response on the Main Issues Report website (contact details and information that is deemed commercially sensitive will not be made available to the public).

The data controller for this information is Aberdeenshire Council. The data on the form will be used to inform a public debate of the issues and choices presented in the Main Issues Report of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021. It will inform the content of the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

Aberdeenshire Council will only keep your personal data for as long as is needed. Aberdeenshire Council will retain your response and personal data for a retention period of 5 years from the date upon which it was collected. After 5 years Aberdeenshire Council will review whether it is necessary to continue to retain your information for a longer period. A redacted copy of your submission will be retained for 5 years beyond the life of the Local Development Plan 2021, possibly until 2037

Your Data, Your Rights

You have got legal rights about the way Aberdeenshire Council handles and uses your data, which include the right to ask for a copy of it, and to ask us to stop doing something with your data.

If you are unhappy with the way that Aberdeenshire Council or the Joint Data Controllers have processed your personal data then you do have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Officer, but you should raise the issue with the Data Protection Officers first. The Data Protection Officers can be contacted by writing to:

- [REDACTED], Data Protection Officer, Aberdeenshire Council, Business Services, Town House, 34 Low Street, Banff, AB45 1AY

If you have difficulty understanding this document and require a translation, or you need help reading this document (for example if you need it in a different format or in another language), please phone us on 01467 536230.



| | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| Which document(s) are you committing on? | Main Issues Report | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | Draft Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Strategic Environmental Assessment Interim Environmental Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Your comments

Introduction

This statement provides further detail as to why we think the site at Land adjacent to Flora's restaurant at Cullerlie, south-west of Garlogie should be a preferred option within the next Local Development Plan.

As described in our Call for Sites representation, Cullerlie Estate are interested in facilitating a small mixed-use site to promote sustainable rural development. The concept behind our suggested development of the site would be primarily to provide self-build housing plots (with live-work units a potential) with small-scale retail or employment use ancillary to this. The rationale being that such development could build on the existing service that Flora's Restaurant provides, thus helping to maintain an important rural business, and offering a locally underprovided opportunity for living and working.

The ultimate aim will be to provide a rural hub which can provide a mix of affordable and market value housing, alongside work opportunities and the potential for increased local services. Associated open space and biodiversity enhancements are also considered important elements of the prospective site, which would result in a recognisably rural development that would support jobs and provide much needed rural housing to a range of occupiers.

The Birchmoss Depot provides a significant level of employment in the local area, and the separate representation put forward by Cullerlie for an extension to this employment land area, could if supported, further enhance the concept of providing a hub of rural business activity in this area.

The example of the Lairhillock public house in Netherley offers an appropriate comparison to the scale and type of development envisaged on this site. The Lairhillock Inn has in recent decades been consolidated by the addition of a new Primary school and some small-scale development around it. The gradual development around this facility shows that important local services even within the Aberdeen Housing market area, need to be supported in order to remain vital. The value that local populations place on such facilities cannot be understated, and if modest and proportionate development can be encouraged, new and interesting development opportunities for individuals or small developers can be taken to the market.

An allocation as set out in this Representation within the next LDP will give the Estate the opportunity to move the site forward, and when revenues are generated, these can be reinvested within the Estate, boosting the rural economy of Aberdeenshire.

Site Context

The proposal site as it stands is on approximately 1.5 ha of agricultural land, used for group grazing and/or livestock, and most recently used for pigs. There are historic Smithy buildings and other small-scale agricultural buildings on the site directly to the south of Floras restaurant. There are also historic buildings on the west side of Coupers Road, which links the site to the North Deside Road to the west of Drumoak. Currently, the visual appearance of the site is untidy and unattractive.

As the MIR response states, the proposed site is situated in the countryside adjacent to Flora's restaurant. However, we would like to reiterate that the Birchmoss Depot is 1.5km to the West, Westhill/Skene is 7km to the north-east, and a number of North Deeside settlements are within 8 kilometres of the site to the south. The new AWPR is in close proximity to the site a short distance to the east of Westhill at Kingsford.

Main Issues Report Analysis

The MIR response states that the site is distant from amenities and community facilities, however we would argue that self-build plots, and particularly live-work plots seldom benefit from proximity to settlement services. Purchasers have a preference to occupy semi-rural locations where they can enjoy outdoor living and larger gardens, as well as undertaking employment that may not be possible in suburban residential dominated areas. Very few self-builders seek plots in the centre of villages or towns that would offer them the proximity to typical settlement facilities. To this group the benefits of space and the amenity that this provides often usurps the competing amenity provided by nearby services. In addition, land allocated in the immediate proximity of villages, towns and cities is often held under option or sold to large housebuilders.

As it stands, therefore, there are very limited options for self-builders within these larger allocated areas, and accordingly smaller sites in more remote location areas, such as at Cullerlie, would continue to serve the self-build market in the short to medium-term. Allied to this, the fact that Floras does provide services in the form of a provision store and restaurant, means that this site is unusually well-suited to provide both the much sought after space and rural amenity, alongside a well-established rural service centre.

The MIR assessment states that the site would promote car reliance to amenities and community facilities. However Aberdeenshire Council, and indeed many other Local Authorities throughout the country have permitted the development of single plots throughout the countryside. Aberdeenshire's own strategy of promoting 'organic' growth in more remote rural areas accepts that car-use is an inevitable consequence allowing more remote settlements to remain vital. Given the unusual occurrence of a facility such as Floras here, it is considered that the Council should reflect again on the amount to which a modest development at this site could help sustain a facility like Floras, which performs an important local function in a similar manner to a convenience store or Public House further west in the County.

While we do not disagree that the site is distant from some amenities and community facilities, distance from services is increasingly less of a criterion that has the same importance in the fight against climate change as it did some years ago. Recent changes in Government policy means that by 2030 half of all new cars must be ultra-low emission. Given the period the emerging Local Development Plan will cover, this is a material factor that should be informing our approaches to the long term planning of the Aberdeenshire countryside. It is also important to stress that Flora's sells essentials such as newspapers, milk etc. which would serve a local population, and potentially cut down on the journeys people would have otherwise taken to larger settlements to buy these products.

A further factor to be considered in the context of car reliance is the opening of the new AWPR since the original Call for Sites was held. The Main Issues Report explains how a more detailed review of Aberdeen's greenbelt is likely to be held once the AWPR has opened and had a chance to 'bed in' in order that 'driver behaviour can be compared to the predicted traffic modelling'. While car reliance will continue owing to the lack of public transport immediately available, the proximity of sites like Cullerlie to the new road and attendant direct public transport links to the wider region, may mean that multi-modal trips with only some car-reliance may become part of the overall 'behaviour' that will be adopted. It is important to stress that public transport service around Aberdeenshire does not at present serve a large proportion of the countryside. This has not hindered the demand for plots in the area. Sustainably sited live-work plots that help to support small-scale local services and have nearby access to regional-scale infrastructure will be attractive in offering choice to a market that is underprovided for at present.

The Main Issues Report assessment of the site notes more generally that Employment development would be better located within villages and towns. However, as has hopefully been set out clearly in the paragraphs above, the intention is not to create a dedicated employment land site here, but rather to allow for the creation of a rural hub that will build on Floras as a service centre and incorporate a modest amount of residential development with accompanying space for a range of employment uses that will sustain the residents.

Finally, in relation to the site lying within the Health and Safety Executive's pipeline consultation zone, it is useful to reflect that a proposal was recently approved for the erection of three dwelling houses approximately 1 kilometre from the site at Barnton Farm, also in close proximity to a pipeline. The Committee Report explains how detailed discussions with the pipeline operator had confirmed that proximity to this asset did not warrant refusal of the application. At the site promoted here, further consultation can be taken with the pipeline operator in due course to confirm what design approaches could be taken in order to satisfy the operator on safety grounds.

Landscape Fit

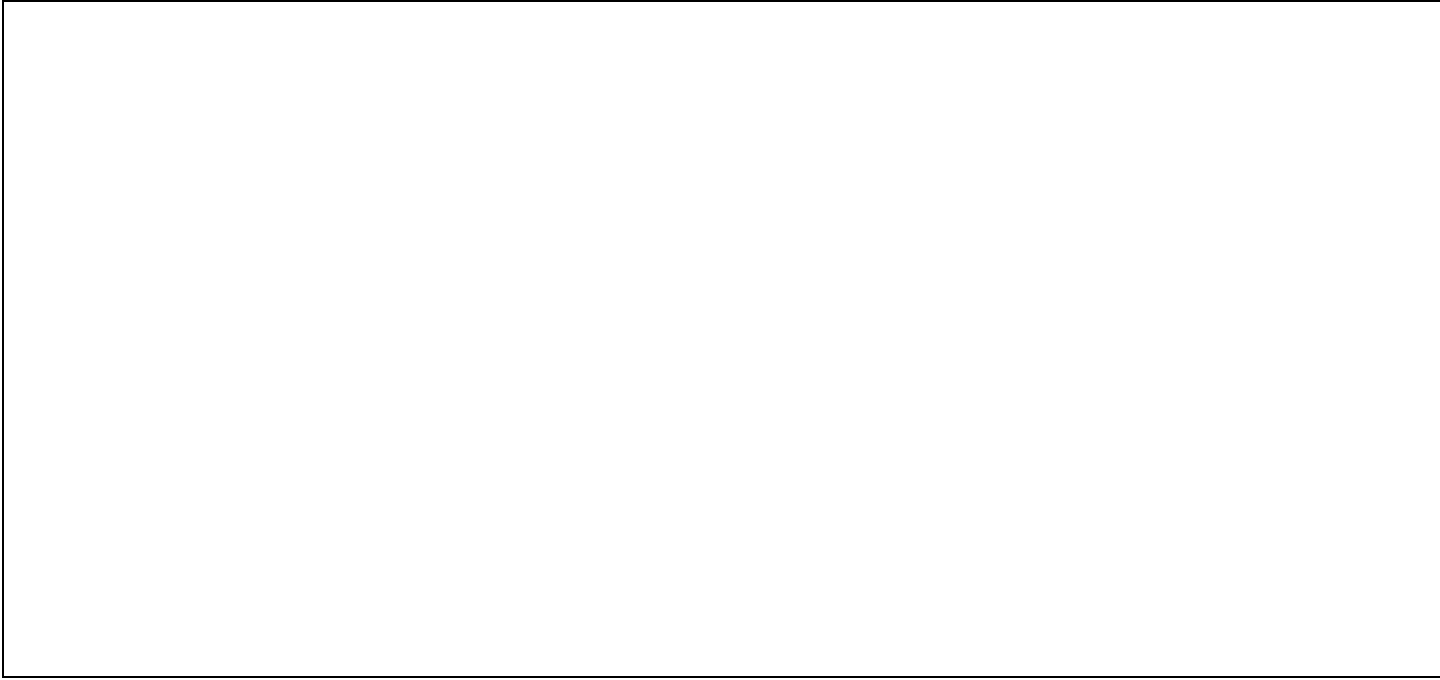
It was shown within our Call for Sites representation that the site has the ability to exhibit the six qualities of successful places that should be the touchstone for all new development, and that a sense of place can be created through the synthesis of housing units and small-scale retail and employment uses.

An attractive and safe place can be created with good views stretching over the countryside. The historic buildings at the Smithy and those lining Coupers Road create a pleasant and identifiable context for a modest development. Any design framework to come forward could show how linkages throughout the site and to the surrounding roads would be maintained, and how the already existing focal point of Flora's restaurant could be maximised.

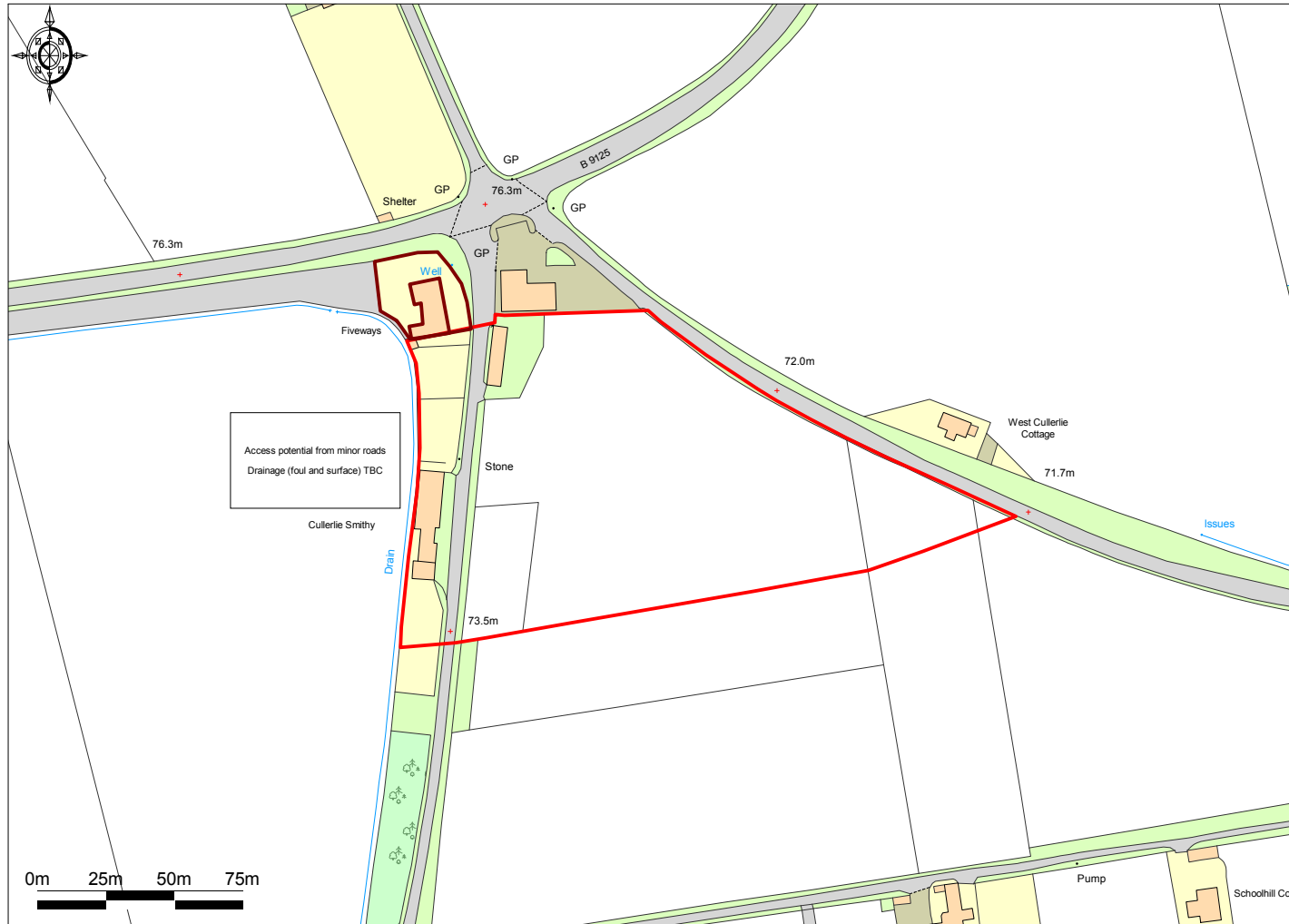
Conclusion

Cullerlie is a rural area and car use is to be expected here. However, the area immediately to the south of Floras Restaurant is unusual as it offers immediate access to a multi-functional rural service centre. A modest amount of residential-led development here could help support this centre, and if properly planned as a cluster of live-work units or plots for creative self-build houses, this site has the potential to offer something uniquely attractive and marketable in the local area. Importantly, this could deliver the range and choice of homes as espoused by SPP but under-provided for by the local property market.

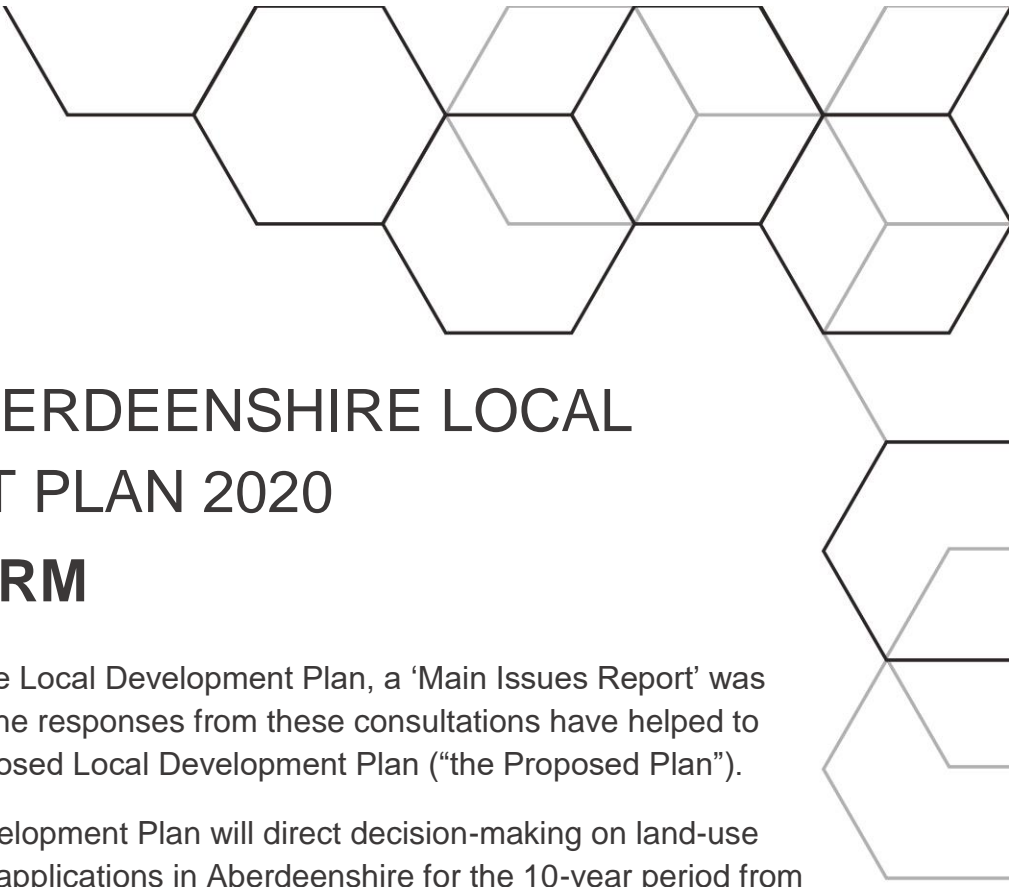
Your comments (continued)



Land adjacent to Flora's Cullerie



Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2018. All rights reserved. Licence number 100022432. Plotted Scale - 1:2500



PROPOSED ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020 RESPONSE FORM

As part of the production of the Local Development Plan, a ‘Main Issues Report’ was published in January 2019. The responses from these consultations have helped to inform the content of the Proposed Local Development Plan (“the Proposed Plan”).

The Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan will direct decision-making on land-use planning issues and planning applications in Aberdeenshire for the 10-year period from 2021 to 2031. The Proposed Plan was agreed by Aberdeenshire Council in March 2020 as the settled view of the Council. However, the Proposed Plan will be subjected to an independent examination and is now open for public comment.

This is your opportunity to tell us if anything should be changed in the Proposed Plan, and why.

When writing a response to the Proposed Plan it is important to specifically state the modification(s) that you would wish to see to the Plan.

This is the only remaining opportunity to comment on the Proposed Plan. The reasons for any requested changes will be analysed and reported to Scottish Ministers. They will then appoint a person known as a Reporter to conduct a public examination of the Proposed Plan, focusing particularly on any unresolved issues and the changes sought.

Ministers expect representations (or responses) to be concise (no more than 2000 words) and accompanied by limited supporting documents. It is important to ensure that all of the information that you wish to be considered is submitted during this consultation period as there is no further opportunity to provide information, unless specifically asked.

Please email comments to ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or send this form to reach us by 31 July 2020*.

We recommend that you keep a copy of your representation for your own records.

**UPDATE 16 June 2020: Consultation period was extended from 17 July 2020 for a further two-week period.*



ACCESSIBILITY

If you need information from this document in an alternative language or in a Large Print, Easy Read, Braille or BSL, please telephone 01467 536230.

Jeigu pageidaujate šio dokumento kita kalba arba atspausdinto stambiu šriftu, supaprastinta kalba, parašyta Brailio raštu arba britų gestų kalba, prašome skambinti 01467 536230.

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații din acest document într-o altă limbă sau într-un format cu scrisul mare, ușor de citit, tipar pentru nevăzători sau în limbajul semnelor, vă rugăm să telefonați la 01467 536230.

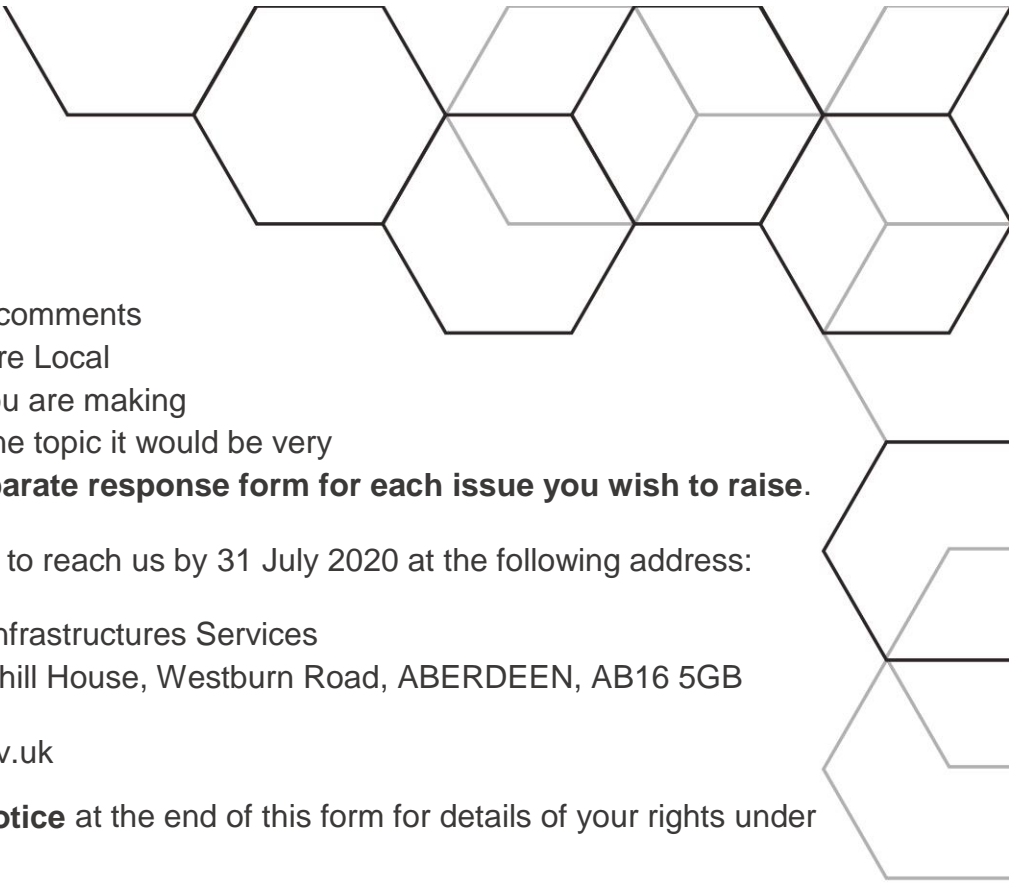
Jeśli potrzebowali będą Państwo informacji z niniejszego dokumentu w innym języku, pisanych dużą czcionką, w wersji łatwej do czytania, w alfabecie Braille'a lub w brytyjskim języku migowym, proszę o telefoniczny kontakt na numer 01467 536230.

Ja jums nepieciešama šai dokumentā sniegtā informācija kādā citā valodā vai lielā drukā, viegli lasāmā tekstā, Braila rakstā vai BSL (britu zīmju valodā), lūdzu, zvaniem uz 01467 536230.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan
Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB

Tel: 01467 536230
Email: ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
Web: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp
Follow us on Twitter @ShireLDP

If you wish to contact one of the area planning offices, please call 01467 534333 and ask for the relevant planning office or email planning@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.



Please use this form to make comments on the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2020. If you are making comments about more than one topic it would be very helpful if you could fill in **a separate response form for each issue you wish to raise**.

Please email or send the form to reach us by 31 July 2020 at the following address:

Post: Planning Policy Team, Infrastructures Services
Aberdeenshire Council, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, ABERDEEN, AB16 5GB

Email: ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Please refer to our **Privacy Notice** at the end of this form for details of your rights under the Data Protection Act.

YOUR DETAILS

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Title: | Mr |
| First Name: | Angus |
| Surname: | Dodds |
| Date: | 31/07/2020 |
| Postal Address: | Savills [REDACTED] [REDACTED] |
| Postcode: | [REDACTED] |
| Telephone Number: | [REDACTED] |
| Email: | [REDACTED] |

Are you happy to receive future correspondence only by email? Yes No

Are you responding on behalf of another person? Yes No

If yes who are you representing?

Tick the box if you would like to subscribe to the Aberdeenshire LDP eNewsletter: Yes

An acknowledgement will be sent to this address soon after the close of consultation.

YOUR COMMENTS

Please provide us with your comments below. We will summarise comments and in our analysis will consider every point that is made. Once we have done this we will write back to you with Aberdeenshire Council's views on the submissions made. We will publish your name as the author of the comment, but will not make your address public.

Modification that you wish to see (please make specific reference to the section of the Proposed Plan you wish to see modified if possible, for example Section 9, paragraph E1.1):

Modification Section 7D: Settlement Statements: Garioch

Include

Allocate Site GR099 'Land East of Birchmoss Depot, Cullerlie' as Employment Land

Suggested wording:

Cullerlie

OP1: Land East of Birchmoss Depot

Allocation: 4.8 ha Employment Land

This is a newly allocated site that forms a logical extension to the already existing Birchmoss Depot. New and extended planted boundaries will ensure that the development of the site will be sympathetic to the character and setting of the surrounding area. Employment land uses in Classes 4,5 and 6 with supporting ancillary uses are considered to be acceptable here.

Key Supporting Documents

Appendix A – Main Issues Report Form for Site GR099

Appendix B – Call for Sites Development Bid for Site GR099

Appendix C – Location Plan

Appendix D – Representation to site GR098 Proposed Local Development Plan

Reason for change:

Introduction

Cullerlie Estate object to the exclusion of the site MR099 at Land East of Birchmoss Depot, Echt, Westhill (See Appendix C) from the Proposed Plan and seek its inclusion within the Proposed Plan's Garioch Settlement Statement as a Landward site.

We are disappointed to note that the site has not been included within the Proposed Plan despite having continued support from Cullerlie Estate, and despite there being likely demand for space at the site. This representation must be read in conjunction with the initial Development Bid (2018) and Main Issue Report (MIR) submissions.

Vision

Cullerlie Estate are interested in facilitating an easterly extension to the existing employment development land at Birchmoss. It is considered that with the completion of the new AWPR, either through recovery of the oil industry or large-scale diversification into the fabrication of renewables, a location like this would provide an attractive option for research or storage uses for specialist engineering of this type.

We continue to consider that this site could provide opportunities for small or medium sized businesses which are seeking small plots of land to establish or grow their operations on smaller footplates than more established oil and gas operators had latterly grown accustomed before the oil price downturn in 2014-2016.

Cullerlie Estate considers that the site could be marketed as a series of smaller lots, to take account of the market in this area. The Savills Aberdeen Business Space team continue to believe that there may be demand for space at the site, and that the uses evident at the adjacent Birchmoss Depot could also be contained on the proposal site.

Aberdeen City Council is currently promoting an Energy Transition Zone (ETZ) area around the new harbour at Nigg. This concept seeks to support new jobs, and develop and diversify markets for the supply chain in the City and Shire. The ETZ will encourage innovative and entrepreneurial ideas and help start-ups commercialise their technologies - we consider that this site could offer an alternative solution to those start-ups catalysed by the new ETZ, that will be seeking land but who cannot afford to locate to the more established Business Parks.

An allocation in the Local Development Plan would provide an attractive and well-located space within the Shire to accommodate new businesses connected to this regional transition. Such an allocation will also provide Cullerlie Estate the confidence to be able to market the site effectively.

We consider that the land to the east of Birchmoss Depot site corresponds well with the type of development that the Council fundamentally seeks to promote in paragraph 4.5 of the PLDP. This states that the Council are continuing to identify a range of different employment sites in line with the Strategic Development Plan's Strategy, which seek to encourage *employment development in rural areas, and stimulate wider economic growth*.

Issues and Action Paper

Aberdeenshire Council's Issues and Actions Paper informed the PLDP and looked at settlements across the Shire, characterising their special qualities, assessing them for their current levels of service and future needs. In terms of Cullerlie, this noted that:

"Cullerlie... lacks facilities and access to public transport."

"Cullerlie is an unsustainable location and that development should be focused towards existing settlements, as per Scottish Planning Policy...."

"No established need for housing or employment has been demonstrated."

Cullerlie Estate does not agree that these views provide robust justification for the exclusion of site GR099 in the upcoming Local Development Plan. Since publication of the Issues and Actions paper, the site's location has become less peripheral as the completed AWPR has brought it closer to fast connections via trunk roads around the region and beyond. These include Aberdeen airport via the AWPR to the north, and the soon to be completed new Aberdeen South Harbour via the AWPR Fastlink to Altens/Tullos.

More widely, as was previously the Estate's position, we consider that as the region's economy adapts to turbulent economic conditions, this site can provide opportunities to smaller operators who wish to build smaller, bespoke premises for engineering works or use the site for open storage. We feel that this location will be considered favourably by commercial occupiers seeking alternative property solutions.

The existence of both housing land and employment land are essential in demonstrating the ongoing sustainability of both landward areas and existing settlements. On balance, the provision of a generous supply of both types of land in all areas will reduce the need to travel for those that wish to work nearer to home. Recent evidence during the Covid-19 pandemic points to a marked increase in those looking for new residential properties in the countryside. Such demand should also be acknowledged by allowing modest but meaningful allowances of employment land in the countryside.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of New Allocated Sites and Alternative Bid Sites (April 2020) – Landward Sites – Alternative Sites – Site GR099

The SEA Assessment identifies that this site would have neutral effects post-mitigation on: air; water; soil; biodiversity; material assets; population; human health; and, cultural heritage. We object to the assessment of the site against Climatic Factors and Landscape that resulted in a negative mark being attributed to the site. *(SEA assessment text in italics)*

Climatic Factors

The development could have a long-term negative impact due to the potential for increased travel requirements (the need to travel long distances to services) and increased emissions. Availability of public transport is lacking in this area and communities are largely car reliant.

There are no mitigation measures available at this time to reduce car dependency at this location.

We agree that the site is not accessible by public transport, however this is the case for many sites which have been developed in rural areas. Housing in rural areas provide homes for people employed locally as well as in larger population centres. Accordingly, those living in such areas may not be commuting significant distances, especially where appropriate employment facilities are nearby.

As noted previously, Birchmoss Depot employs over 200 people likely to include many that live in rural areas surrounding the site. A lack of public transport to the site need not therefore mean that unsustainable travel is a direct result of rural business space. Conversely, this also demonstrates that the site's location has not had a detrimental effect on employment numbers at Birchmoss. If housing development was supported at Floras Restaurant (see site GR098), there would be an increased provision of housing in close proximity.

Evidence from Savills rural residential Team in Scotland indicates that interest in rural properties has increased significantly since the Covid-19 pandemic began. Allied to this, recent announcements by Government across the UK on future acceleration in the delivery of safe cycling infrastructure, mean rural areas in relatively close proximity to population centres should become attractive for those that want to access places of employment by active travel means. In the circumstances, the binary distinction between urban/rural as being sustainable/unsustainable needs to be revisited.

It was disappointing to note the negative post-mitigation assessment of this site despite Savills Energy team having assessed the site at an earlier stage of the LDP's evolution to explore a range of possible renewable energy proposals that could work here. There was shown to be good potential for a small district heating scheme that could be operated by Cullerlie Estate. There were two clear options for this: Cullerlie Estate owns local commercial forestry which could provide fuel for a biomass scheme; or, the land adjacent to the development could potentially be used for a ground source heat pump.

Due to the south facing nature of the site as it falls toward the B9125, a rooftop or small ground-mounted solar PV system could provide part of the development's electricity needs, further enhancing its attractiveness to smaller scale operators. Cullerlie Estate owns the adjoining land which could accommodate the array.

The Birchmoss site also has excellent access to both the electrical grid and mains gas grid, a major barrier to development in much of the county. It would also allow for renewable energy generation to take place onsite, providing low carbon energy to onsite users, as well as export to the electrical and gas grid. The UK government has announced continued support for both through various mechanisms such as the Green Gas Support Scheme, CfD, and Capacity Markets.

Overall, we consider that the site holds renewable energy potential, and the likely future increase in active travel to access the site, could outweigh the temporal issue of current car dependency at this location.

Landscape

The nature of land use in the area will be changed and displaced. The relationship between landforms and land use; field pattern and boundaries as well as buildings and structure will change.

The landscape experience is likely to change - openness, scale, colour, texture, visual diversity, line, pattern, movement, sound, solitude, naturalness, historical and cultural associations. A landscape buffer would be required to screen development and mitigate impact to landscape.

Cullerlie Estate believe that with simple, standard mitigation measures in place, the long-term impact of any such changes will be of no consequence. The site already has established boundaries, with a dry-stane dyke separating it from the B9125 to the south, while a planted boundary exists to the west, where the Birchmoss Depot has a now mature double stand of coniferous trees. These established boundary treatments could be replicated around this site, albeit in an enhanced manner comprising a combination of mixed, broadleaved trees, along with sections of dry-stane dyke. A landscape framework document would ensure that this assimilates well with the local landscape and local built vernacular.

Echoing earlier comments on this site, we believe that biodiversity benefits could be designed into the final landscaping response/solution. Furthermore, in terms of movement and sound, we consider that employment uses are sometimes better situated in areas where there are less residential uses to conflict with.

Conclusion

Cullerlie Estate believe that site GR099 should be allocated within the next LDP as an area of employment land (classes 4,5 and 6). It would provide a logical extension to the existing Birchmoss depot, while offering excellent opportunities for local businesses seeking smaller plots and spaces more suited to their operational requirements.

Site GR099 could service a particular type of occupier that is likely to be looking for a particular type of site in this vicinity. In the absence of any large-scale brownfield sites coming forward nearby, the provisions of paragraph 2.18 may not be of much utility to such occupiers as currently worded.

This site is well serviced and connected to the electricity and gas grid and positioned to offer more industrial space either as the North-East oil and gas recovery picks up pace, or when energy transition begins in earnest.

PRIVACY NOTICE

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PUBLIC COMMENT

The Data Controller of the information being collected is Aberdeenshire Council.

The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at Town House, 34 Low Street, Banff, AB45 1AY.

Email: dataprotection@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Your information is being collected to use for the following purposes:

- To provide public comment on the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The data on the form will be used to inform Scottish Ministers and individual(s) appointed to examine the Proposed Local Development Plan 2020. It will inform the content of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021.

Your information is:

| | |
|--|---|
| Being collected by Aberdeenshire Council | X |
|--|---|

The Legal Basis for collecting the information is:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Personal Data | |
| Legal Obligations | X |

Where the Legal Basis for processing is either Performance of a Contract or Legal Obligation, please note the following consequences of failure to provide the information:

It is a Statutory Obligation under Section 18 of the Town and Country (Scotland) Act 1997, as amended, for Aberdeenshire Council to prepare and publish a Proposed Local Development plan on which representations must be made to the planning authority within a prescribed period of time. Failure to provide details requested in the 'Your Details' section of this form will result in Aberdeenshire Council being unable to accept your representation.

Your information will be shared with the following recipients or categories of recipient:

Members of the public are being given this final opportunity to comment on the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The reasons for any changes that the Council receives will be analysed and reported to Scottish Ministers. They will then appoint a person to conduct a public examination of the Proposed Plan, focusing particularly on the unresolved issues raised and the changes sought.

Your name and respondent identification number (provided to you by Aberdeenshire Council on receipt of your

submission) will be published alongside a copy of your completed response on the Proposed Local Development Plan website (contact details and information that is deemed commercially sensitive will not be made available to the public).

In accordance with Regulation 22 of the Town and Country (Development Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2008 where the appointed person determines that further representations should be made or further information should be provided by any person in connection with the examination of the Proposed Plan the appointed person may by notice request that person to make such further representations or to provide such further information.

Your information will be transferred to or stored in the following countries and the following safeguards are in place:

Not applicable.

The retention period for the data is:

Aberdeenshire Council will only keep your personal data for as long as is needed. Aberdeenshire Council will retain your response and personal data for a retention period of 5 years from the date upon which it was collected. After 5 years Aberdeenshire Council will review whether it is necessary to continue to retain your information for a longer period. A redacted copy of your submission will be retained for 5 years beyond the life of the Local Development Plan 2021, possibly until 2037.

The following automated decision-making, including profiling, will be undertaken:

Not applicable.

Please note that you have the following rights:

- to withdraw consent at any time, where the Legal Basis specified above is Consent;
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (after raising the issue with the Data Protection Officer first);
- to request access to your personal data;
- to data portability, where the legal basis specified above is:
 - (i) Consent; or
 - (ii) Performance of a Contract;
- to request rectification or erasure of your personal data, as so far as the legislation permits.

