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LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PUBLIC COMMENT

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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
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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.

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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.

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Not applicable.

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- 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:
 - Consent; or
 - Performance of a Contract;
- to request rectification or erasure of your personal data, as so far as the legislation permits.



HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO

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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 refer to Aberdeenshire Council's Privacy Notice at the start of this form for details of your rights under the Data Protection Act.

Your Details

Date: **30/07/2020**

Name:	Halliday Fraser Munro
Telephone Number:	[REDACTED]
Email address:	[REDACTED]
Postal Address:	[REDACTED]
Postcode:	[REDACTED]

Are you happy to receive future correspondence only by email? Yes

Are you responding on behalf of another person? Yes

If yes who are you representing? **W & W Mackie**

Would you like to subscribe to the Aberdeenshire LDP eNewsletter: Yes

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



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Your Comments (no more than 2000 words)

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):

Appendix 7f – Marr Settlement Statements

Modification Sought: *Allocation of site MR032 for residential development up to 30 units and community facility and/or retail unit.*

Modification Sought: *Include Montgarrie as a designated settlement.*

Reason for change:

PLEASE SEE SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Attached document:

PLDP response report

Supporting Documents:

MG1 – *Bid Document*

MG2 – *MIR Response*

MG3 – *Proposed Plan Committee Report 5th March*



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**ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
RESPONSE TO PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
LAND AT MONTGARRIE EAST, ALFORD**

MR032

JULY 2020

On behalf of
W&W Mackie



HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO
CHARTERED ARCHITECTS & PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Proposal
3. Main Issues Report Comments
4. Proposed Local Development Plan
5. Housing Strategy
6. Conclusion



HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Halliday Fraser Munro, Chartered Architects and Town Planning Consultants, on behalf of W&W Mackie Ltd. It is written in response to the Aberdeenshire Proposed Local Development Plan 2020 (PLDP).
- 1.2. This response seeks allocation of site MR032 in Montgarrie for residential development up to 30 units and a community facility and/or retail use. We also request that Montgarrie be included in the LDP as a designated settlement. This is outlined below for clarity.

Modification Sought: *Allocation of site MR032 for residential development up to 30 units and community facility and/or retail unit.*

Reason for Change: *Montgarrie is a popular village in the Marr area of Aberdeenshire, development here would support and sustain services in the local area. The proposal would provide facilities and services which the village doesn't have currently.*

Modification Sought: *Include Montgarrie as a designated settlement.*

Reason for Change: *Without Montgarrie being a designated settlement the rural development policies in the PLDP do not allow for future development of the village.*

- 1.3. The MIR assessment published in 2019 did not identify any constraints to development on this site. The lack of facilities and services in Montgarrie was raised in the MIR. We made representation to the MIR in April 2019 and proposed to include opportunities for small scale commercial and community facilities as part of the MR032 allocation addressing the lack of facilities and services.
- 1.4. The vision for Montgarrie East is to create a sensitive and measured extension to the established village settlement of Montgarrie, reflecting the setting and landscape character of the area. Indicative site layout is shown in Figure 1.



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Figure 1: Indicative Site Layout outlined in Red

2. Proposal

2.1. Montgarrie is a popular and successful location for housing in the Alford area. In the 2012 and 2017 Aberdeenshire LDP it was subject to the 'organic growth' and brownfield development policy. As a result infill and organic small-scale development appropriate to the settlement regularly occurred and in both Plan periods the organic growth allowance was used, proving Montgarrie's popularity as a residential location. Policy R2 of the 2017 LDP 'Housing and employment development elsewhere in the countryside' permits small-scale growth of settlements where a particular need for development has been identified. Under this policy during the plan period no more than an additional 20% growth of the settlement, up to a maximum of 10 new homes, was permitted. In Montgarrie this policy allowance has been utilised to its full capacity. 18 houses have been approved and built over two Plan periods demonstrating the desirability of Montgarrie as a residential location. This confirms the demand for housing that a measured residential allocation in Montgarrie could continue to service in a planned rather than piecemeal manner. The land subject to MR032 bid was identified as an 'area of search 'fh1*' in the Draft 2006 Local Plan for housing. It has therefore historically been considered suitable for housing.



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Figure 2 – Montgarrie in 2006 Local Plan – fh1* on Bid Site

- 2.2. We consider that given the scale of housing development which has taken place in Montgarrie there is now more adequate justification than at any previous point to identify Montgarrie as a defined settlement in the forthcoming LDP. There are smaller, more remote places in the area such as Cairnie classified as settlements in the LDP. Cairnie has circa 25 properties, compared to around **70** in Montgarrie.
- 2.3. We consider the right future development strategy for Montgarrie is a measured, mixed use allocation such as that proposed at MR032 and identify Montgarrie as a settlement.



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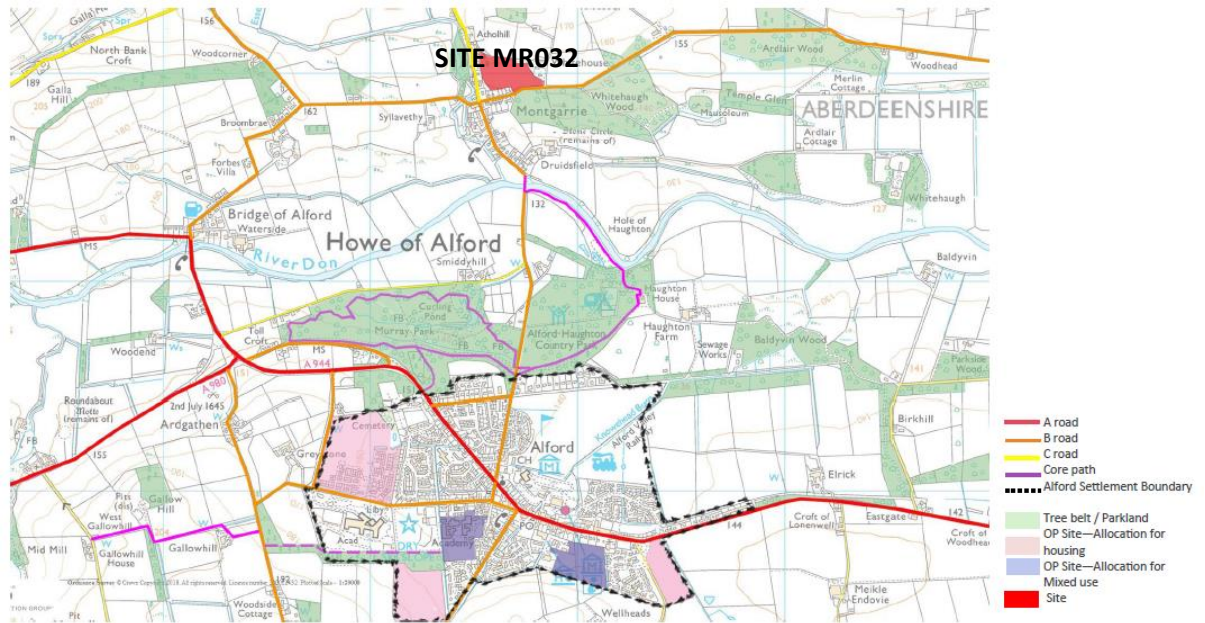


Figure 3: Site in Local Context

3. Main Issues Report Comments

- 3.1. In this section we will review and comment on the Officer's views on bid Site MR032.
- 3.2. ***'The village has seen substantial development over recent years, formerly as an identified settlement for organic growth. The proposed site would be overdevelopment and excessive when compared with the size of the existing village, affecting the village character. The location also encourages car dependency as the village lacks basic local facilities and amenities within walking distance'.***
- 3.3. The submitted bid [MG1] carefully considered the character of the village and the level of development that has taken place in recent years and we consider 30 homes an appropriate extension to Montgarrie. The development is located close to the crossroads in keeping with the village core and integrating with existing properties to the west, south and east.
- 3.4. Montgarrie is 1.9km from Alford so whilst it does not contain local facilities residents can access shops, schools, sports facilities and other services there. Montgarrie and Alford are linked by a core path network making active travel between the two possible and attractive.



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There is also a bus route serving Montgarrie linking the village with Alford. We do not consider, therefore, that those residing in Montgarrie would be dependent on cars for all journeys.

- 3.5. At the MIR stage it was also proposed that site MR032 could be diversified to accommodate small scale retail provision, leisure or community uses, increasing the provision of facilities for the village of Montgarrie and helping to sustain it and make the settlement even more attractive and convenient (Document **MG2** MIR Response).

4. Proposed Local Development Plan

- 4.1. The Shaping Development in the Countryside section (PLDP p.31) and associated policies of the PLDP is of most relevance to Montgarrie and site MR032. It sets out that the Council “*want to create a welcoming approach to development in the countryside that meets local needs and encourages prosperous, sustainable communities and businesses*”. We support this approach, however the policies related to that aim do the opposite for Montgarrie by restricting growth and opportunity to provide additional local services.
- 4.2. The Organic Growth policy in the PLDP sets out that “*Small-scale growth of identified settlements may be permitted where a particular need for development has been established by the Planning Authority*”, Montgarrie is not an identified settlement in the PLDP and therefore this policy does not apply either.
- 4.3. Montgarrie is classified as Remote Rural according to the Scottish Government 6-Fold Urban Rural Classification which Aberdeenshire Council has adopted and is using to guide development in ‘clusters’ and ‘housing groups’. They state, “*In Remote Rural Areas only we will also allow the extension of existing clusters or housing groups consisting of between 5-14 separate habitable or occupied homes on the date the Plan is adopted*”. Montgarrie has approximately 70 homes and therefore is not eligible for development through this policy. The current LDP (2017) does not set an upper limit on the number of homes in a cluster or housing group and provides a more supportive and achievable approach to rural development.
- 4.4. As Montgarrie is not an identified settlement in the PLDP and is classified as ‘Remote Rural’ with more than 14 occupied homes it is not considered to be a ‘cluster’ or ‘housing group’. This leaves no scope for housing development. We consider that this restrictive approach is detrimental to the sustainability of rural communities and request that Montgarrie be an identified settlement in the forthcoming LDP allowing development to take place.



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- 4.5. The allocations presented in the PLDP appear to favour a strategy of centralisation. In the Marr area the majority of development has taken place in the larger settlements of Alford, Banchory, Huntly and Aboyne. This trend is set to continue between 2018 to 2022 with new house building projected to increase slightly across Marr mostly in Alford, Banchory and Huntly.
- 4.6. The PLDP goes against Marr's current pattern of development and does not allow for measured growth for villages such as Montgarrie which are not identified settlements and have more than 14 homes. These settlements have essentially been left in limbo between policies. Not allowing for this growth risks the sustainability of these settlements which may suffer from an ageing population and lack of diversity. Marr's population is proportionately older than Aberdeenshire's with a greater proportion of people aged over 50 and a smaller proportion of people aged between 23 and 43 (Marr Area Profile May 2016). A variety of locations and housing options need to be provided throughout the whole of Marr to ensure its countryside locations are sustainable. Montgarrie is ideally placed to deliver this in line with requirements of the Strategic Development Plan and Scottish Planning Policy.
- 4.7. The Rural Housing Market Area (RHMA) has a large percentage of sites constrained by marketability. Montgarrie doesn't suffer from this constraint and has proven itself to be a successful location for rural housing development through the uptake of the allowances and the organic growth policies in the 2012 and 2017 LDPs. We consider a wider choice of sites should be made available into the future to ensure that the effective land supply is met and that Montgarrie's future growth can be identified and secured by the potential developer as a result of allocation as a settlement and delivered in a planned manner.
- 4.8. The Council's own MIR reported that Montgarrie lacks facilities and services. We consider it unlikely that these will be delivered unless as part of a mixed residential development. Leaving no scope for future development in Montgarrie means that it will continue to lack facilities and services. We consider this goes against the principles of sustainability the PLDP seeks to achieve.

5. Housing Land

- 5.1. The PLDP housing strategy is not fully aligned with the new Strategic Development Plan's ambitions or requirements. The 939-unit increase required by the SDP examination outcomes should be adopted and additional land allocated to meet that specific requirement.



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5.2. A review of housing trends across the last five HLAs in Aberdeenshire identified evidence of:

- Housing delivery on currently allocated sites is falling below HLA predictions;
- Over-optimism on housing delivery that becomes less accurate the further in the future it predicts. If the actual delivery rates from the last 3 year's HLAs (2017-19) are applied to the anticipated future housing delivery (agreed 2019 HLA) then, by 2025, this part of the AHMA could be up to 1,700 homes short;
- A need for a greater supply and range of housing allocations to supplement existing allocated sites and help deliver more housing over the life of the Plan.

Aberdeenshire Part of AHMA	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Totals 2020 to 2024	
2020 HLA (draft)												
Units delivered/units estimated					623	419	731	918	1,061	905		
2019 HLA												
Units delivered/units estimated	779	565	436	506	496	665	847	1,044	958	795	4805	anticipated
2018 HLA												
Units estimated				509	933	1,045	965	889	839	687		
2017 HLA												
Units estimated			459									
2016 HLA												
Units estimated		598										
2015 HLA												
Units estimated	904											
Difference between predicted & actual housing delivery	-125	-33	-23	-3	127							
	-14%	-6%	-5%	-1%	26%							
5 year Average difference (-2%) applied 2019-2022						657	831	1,024	940	780	4,231	with average lower delivery
No. of Housing Units anticipated less than predicted						-8	-16	-20	-18	-15	-78	no of units theoretically missing

Figure 4: Analysis of data from the Aberdeen City and Shire Housing Land Audits

5.3. Sites are under-delivering over a long period and there is an over-reliance on existing strategic sites as the main housing delivery mechanism. By not allocating enough “deliverable” land the PLDP does not fulfil national or local planning requirements.

5.4. Officers also had a different recommended strategy at the MIR stage. That involved a greater set of housing land allocations in relation to SDP requirements than presently the case. SDP requirements have increased but housing land supply has now decreased. That is not a valid approach and will lead to an under supply of housing land over time. When sites were removed during the MIR process the minimum required should be that these are replaced by more suitable sites and the headroom above housing requirements maintained.

5.5. Sites were removed during the MIR stages (min. 400), these should be replaced with new allocations. The Council should allocate additional housing sites to make up the expected shortfall or include strategic reserve housing land and a draw-down mechanism as a backstop in case of under-delivery. A combination of both may be the best means to help avoid that scenario. Officers supported strategic reserve at the MIR stage of the Plan.



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- 5.6. Not allocating enough deliverable land does not fulfil national or local planning requirements and will be a serious issue for a plan-based system. Allocating more and delivering more is a positive in many respects – meeting housing requirements, delivering more affordable homes, improving infrastructure and contributing to the economy and economic recovery. 4.10 of the 5th March PLDP Committee Report **[MG3]** supports that approach stating, “*The overprovision of housing land as proposed is considered to be acceptable as it builds in flexibility ... as well as continuing to promote Aberdeenshire as an area open for business*”.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. There are no negative issues associated with the site itself, Site MR032 has only been ruled out because there is no planned future growth for Montgarrie in the PLDP.
- 6.2. The proposed development of Site MR032 could provide a mixed use development of circa 30 homes accompanied by small scale retail and community or leisure uses and their inclusion could deliver services and facilities currently missing from the village.
- 6.3. Montgarrie has proven it is a popular and successful location for housing demonstrated by the uptake in sites under the organic growth policy. It therefore will not suffer from marketability constraints experienced by other sites in the Rural Housing Market Area.
- 6.4. A range of small scale and deliverable sites needs to be available across Aberdeenshire to provide a range of options to developers. MR032 Montgarrie East helps delivers this and would be more suitable to local builders or potentially offer a self-build option.
- 6.5. In summary we request that Montgarrie is designated as a settlement in the Proposed LDP with Site MR032 at Montgarrie East allocated for up to 30 houses, small scale commercial (including retail) and community or leisure uses.



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List of Supporting Documents Referred to:

MG1 – Bid Document

MG2 – MIR Response

MG3 – Proposed Plan Committee Report 5th March

A winter landscape featuring a river in the foreground, bare trees on the left and right, and snow-covered hills in the background under a clear blue sky.

LAND AT MONTGARRIE EAST, ALFORD

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN BID
MARCH 2018

PREPARED BY HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO FOR W & W MACKIE



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this document is to support the Local Development Plan bid submission which has been prepared on behalf of W&W Mackie by Halliday Fraser Munro Architects and Planning Consultants.

Land at Whitehouse Farm, Montgarrie East is put forward as a suitable residential development allocation of circa 30 houses in the forthcoming Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021.

The proposals presented in this document have developed following a description of the site, review of planning context, an analysis of the opportunities and constraints of the site including existing landscape, infrastructure and topography.



“The vision for Montgarrie East is to create a sensitive and measured extension to the established village settlement of Montgarrie, respecting the setting and landscape character of the area”

SITE DESCRIPTION

Montgarrie

Montgarrie as a settlement has grown around the crossroads of the Bridge of Alford / Alford / Keig Roads and occupies an attractive rural location in the Bennachie Special Landscape Area, south of the Suie Hill.

Montgarrie is located to the north of Alford. The proposed development bid site is arable agricultural land and it is located on the east side of Montgarrie, extending to Whitehouse Farm.

The site at Montgarrie East surrounded by groups of existing properties. The site is bounded at the south by a number of ex-council semi-detached houses and also partially covered by overgrown scrub, by a field to the north, by dwellinghouses laid out along the road heading north of the settlement to the west, to the east by some trees and a cluster of seven dwellinghouses at Whitehouse Farm. Access to the site is taken from the existing road that leads to Keig.

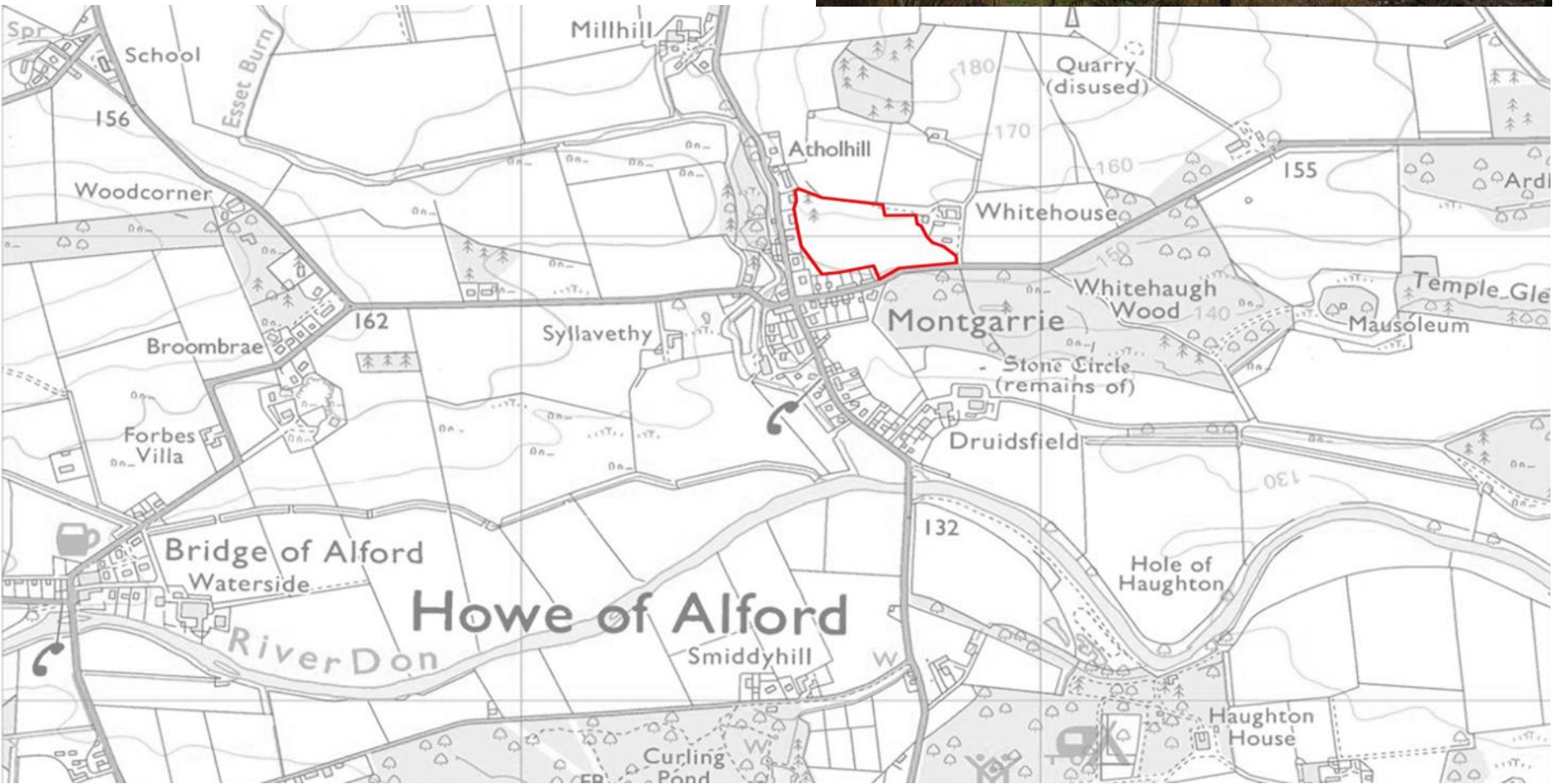
Slope

The plot slopes upwards to the north of the site from the Keig road to the rear of the housing on the east side of Montgarrie. The gradients of the site places the area in a higher level than the road. The land continues to rise to the rear (north) of the site providing a backdrop and landscape setting with tree copses.

Area Characteristics

The area is characterised by fields, woodland and a mix of modern and traditional dwelling houses. This comprises of single storey, one and half storey and two storey dwelling houses.

South of the site, there is an established woodland of Whitehaugh Wood covered by mature trees providing a setting for Whitehaugh House. The modern dwelling houses around the site are constructed of a variety of materials which includes granite wall, render and tile roofs. The modern dwelling houses reflect the traditional style and finish (granite, slate and timber).





Whitehouse Farm Entrance



Site slopes upward to the north



Semi-detached houses adjacent to the site



Entrance to Montgarrie From East

PLANNING CONTEXT

Introduction

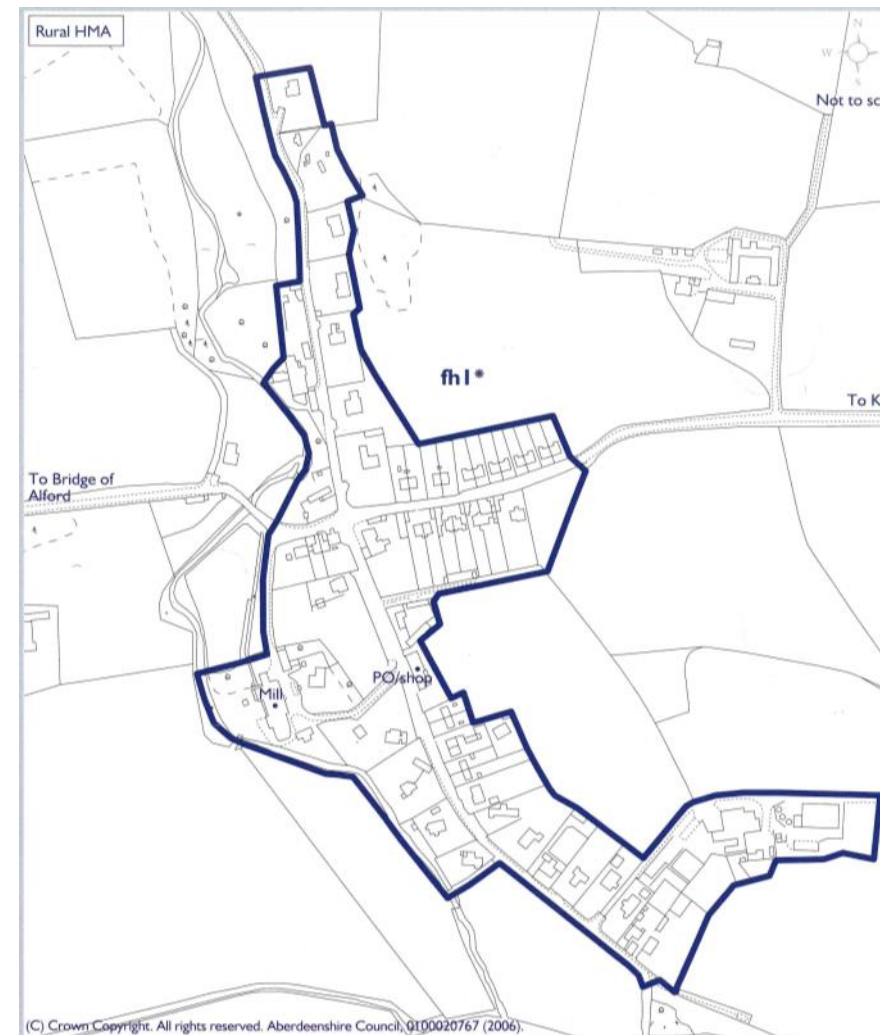
Although a future development allocation has not been forthcoming in recent years, the bid site at Montgarrie East was previously highlighted by Aberdeenshire Council as a suitable area for a residential allocation. Since 2012, the 'Organic Growth' planning policy has allowed for limited small-scale housing around the village. This has now been utilised to full capacity, expanding the settlement by 20%. This background now presents the ideal opportunity to make a formal residential development allocation at Montgarrie East. Planning permission exists for a single dwellinghouse at the eastern edge of the bid site.

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2006

The site was previously highlighted as Site fh1* with potential for future housing in the Local Development Plan 2006. At this time, Montgarrie was a defined settlement prior to it being taken out through the Local Development Plan 2012. The designation fh* indicates an area of search for the period beyond 2010. fh* allocations are shown outside settlement envelopes, suggesting the future direction of growth. This confirms Montgarrie East was also previously considered as a suitable residential allocation.

Aberdeenshire Local Development plan 2012

Aberdeenshire Council under Policy 3 Development in the Countryside and SG Rural Development1: Housing and business development in the countryside will support development in the countryside where it meets the needs of a rural community by contributing to its overall social and economic wellbeing, and by promoting prosperous settlements.



Montgarrie in 2006 Local Plan— fh1* on bid site

'Organic Growth'

Montgarrie is an identified village in the Appendix 1 of supplementary guidance Rural Development1 therefore it was eligible under the organic growth policy. Organic Growth permits developments that contribute to the organic growth of a settlement, of no more than 3 houses on a site within approximately 400m of the edge of the built up area.

Those developments which are granted as part of organic growth should not exceed 20% of the existing size of the settlement within the 5 year plan period (i.e. five year period from January 1st 2012). The 20% applies to the plan period from 2012-2017.

Aberdeenshire Local Development plan 2017

The 'organic growth' policy has continued into the 2017 LDP, with the reduction in the area range. Under both LDPs, brownfield, infill and organic growth small-scale development opportunities have regularly occurred in Montgarrie.

Policy of R2 'Housing and employment development elsewhere in the countryside' permits small-scale growth of settlements where a particular need for development has been identified, by the addition of groups of no more than 3 houses within 200m of the settlement boundary. Under this policy during the plan period, no more than an additional 20% growth of the settlement, up to a maximum of 10 new homes, will be permitted. This policy allowance has been utilised to its full capacity.

PLANNING CONTEXT: SETTLEMENT GROWTH

Development of Montgarrie

19th Century

In 19th century, Montgarrie comprised of a group of dwelling houses mainly to the south, in between the crossroads and the bridge that connects the settlement to Alford.

Early 20th Century

In early 20th century, a small number of dwellinghouses grew along the northern “leg” of Montgarrie, adjacent to the west of the road heading north from the crossroads. A woollen mill was also established in this location.

Late 20th Century

In late 20th century, a number of semi-detached council houses were built to the east of the village and then afterwards further dwellinghouses stretched along the eastern edge of the road heading north of the village.

Wider Connectivity

The settlement is well connected to the neighbouring settlements of Alford, where principal services and facilities are found and Bridge of Alford.

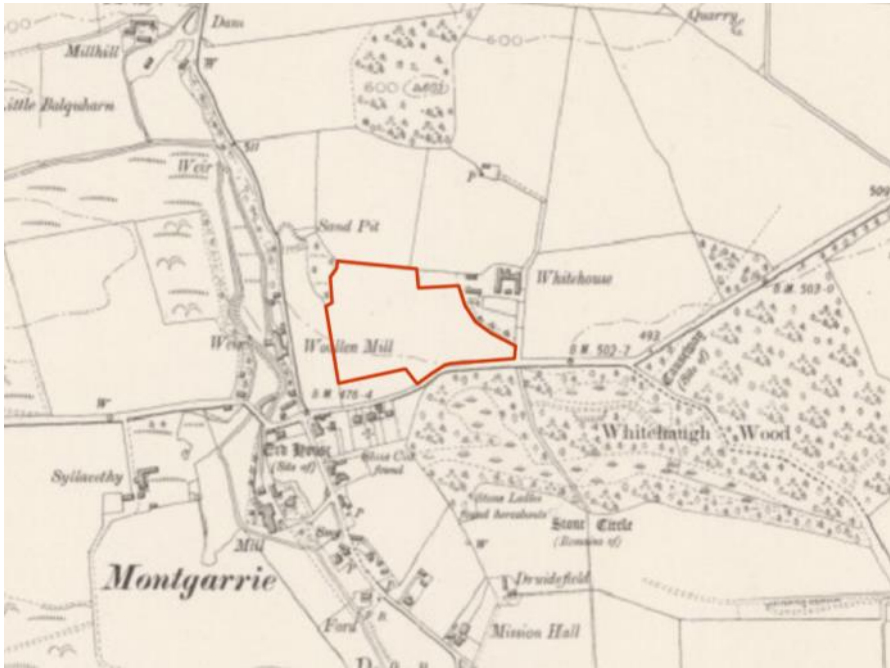
Wider Landscape

Montgarrie lies at the western edge of the Bennachie Special Landscape Area. Montgarrie is nestled around the crossroads, with development extending northwards up the hill. The river to the south and rising land farm to the north provides a strong landscape setting for the village.

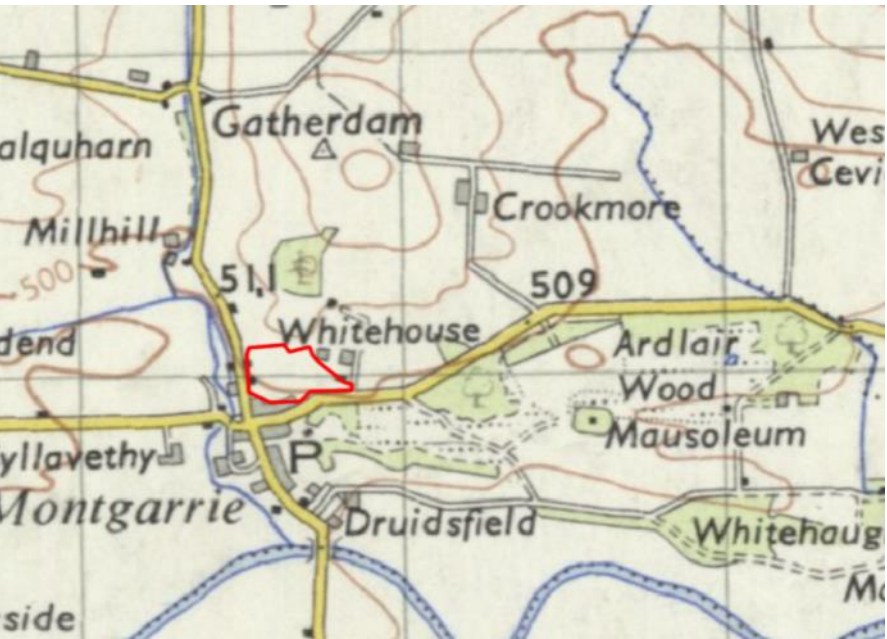


Montgarrie 1885-1900 [Source:NLS,2018]

NLS



Montgarrie 1888-1913 [Source:NLS,2018]

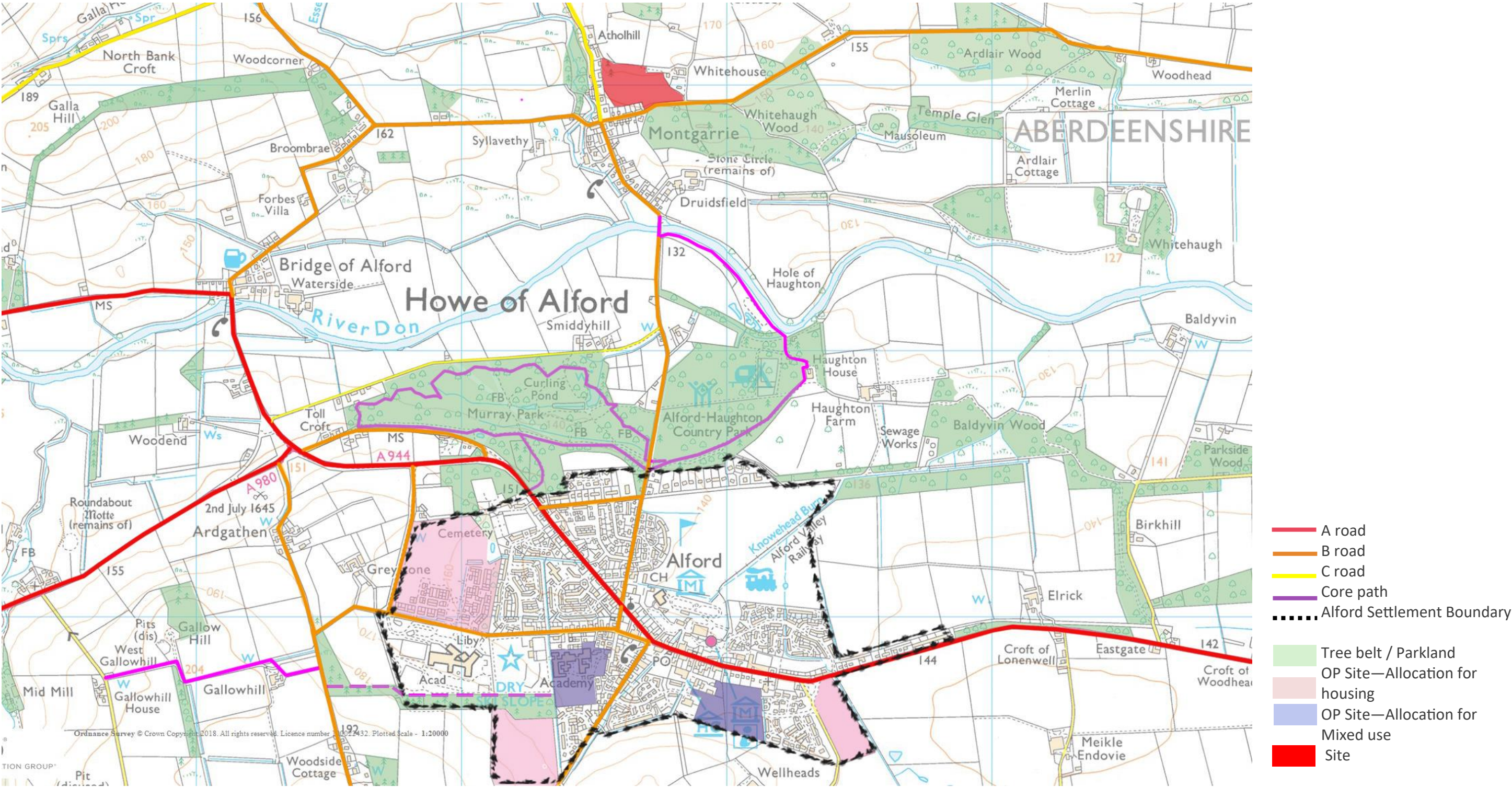


Montgarrie 1955-1961 [Source:NLS,2018]



Montgarrie today [Source:Promap, 2018]

PLANNING CONTEXT: SETTLEMENT ANALYSIS



PLANNING CONTEXT: SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Recent Developments

Since 2012, Montgarrie has not been a ‘defined’ settlement within the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. Subsequently, new planning applications have been assessed against ‘organic growth’ policy and ‘brownfield’ redevelopment opportunities. A total of 18 planning applications have been approved for small-scale residential development inside and outside of Montgarrie’s settlement boundary that was defined in the 2006 and 2012 Local Development Plan, 5 of these (APP/2014/2594, APP/2016/2533 and APP/2015/1036) have been as “brownfield” redevelopment opportunities rather than organic growth. Thirteen new houses therefore have already been consented at Montgarrie under the ‘organic growth’ provision of Policy 3 and SG Rural Development1 in the local development plan.

Montgarrie comprised of 71 dwellinghouses at the start of the local development plan period in January 2012, therefore 20% of that figure gave rise to the opportunity to develop up to a further 14 houses within the lifetime of the Plan under the organic growth part of SG Rural Development1. The number of consented applications at Montgarrie clearly demonstrates demand for new housing development. Now is the right time for a shift in development strategy of Montgarrie through allocation of new land at Montgarrie East for circa 30 houses within the forthcoming Local Development Plan.

- Developments Under Organic Growth Policy
- Development Under Infill/Brownfield Policy



SITE ANALYSIS: OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities Key

- 1. **Settlement** The pattern of development within the settlement provides a strong context and character
- 2. **Existing Road and Path Network**
- 3. **Existing Tree Planting** To the north, trees and planting to be protected and improved providing context for future development
- 4. **Existing Woodland** Whitehaugh Wood located to the south opposite of the site is a strong element contributing to the area character.
- 5. **Approach from Bridge of Alford**
- 6. **Approach from Alford** The bridge of Montgarrie has connected Montgarrie to Alford over the years. The approach from Alford is particularly important because Alford as a larger settlement located in the vicinity of Montgarrie can support locals of the settlement. Linear form of the developments in Montgarrie is associated with the approach from Alford.
- 7. **Topography and Solar Gain** The site slopes down to the south providing opportunities for passive solar gain to living spaces.
- 8. **Views to South** The sloping terrain provides opportunities for expansive views over the countryside to the south.

- Existing Road and Path Network
- Existing tree planting
- Existing Woodland
- Approach from Bridge of Alford
- Approach from Alford
- Topography and Solar Gain
- Views to South



SITE ANALYSIS: CONSTRAINTS

Constraint Key

- 1. **Scheduled Monument** Stone Circle south of the settlement
- 2. **Special Landscape Area (Bennachie)** Montgarrie is characterised under Bennachie special landscape area.
- 3. **Existing settlement edge**
- 4. **Existing Dwellinghouses**
- 5. **Sloping Topography**

The proposed site

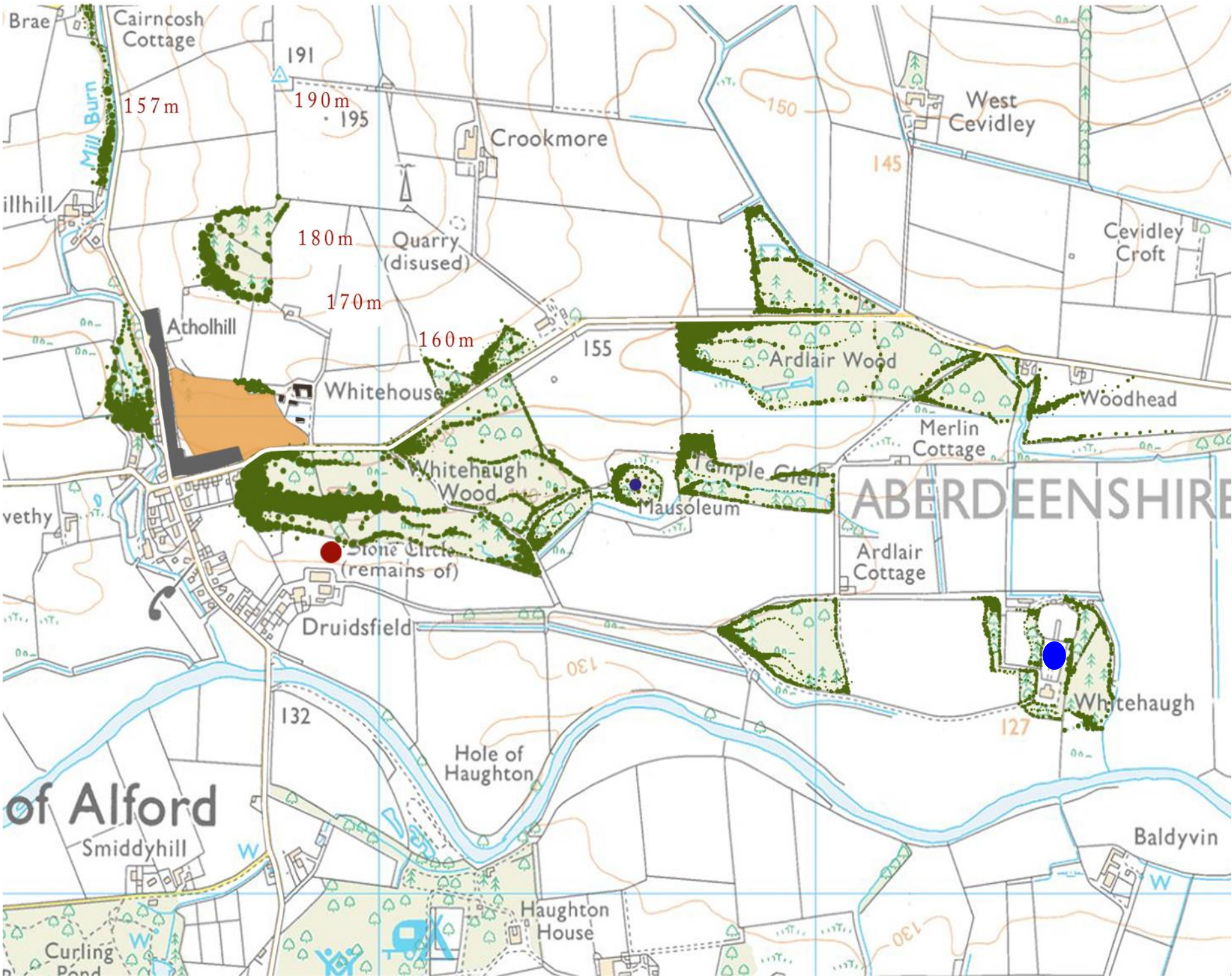
Housing cluster at Whitehouse farm

Existing settlement edge

Woodland and trees

Scheduled Monument

Category 'B' Listed building



THE VILLAGE



- Linear growth along roads;
- Strong established woodland features;
- South facing slopes;
- Esset Burn;
- Whitehouse cluster to east.

LANDSCAPE PATTERN



- Continuation of sporadic pockets of woodland;
- Provide shelter and setting context;
- Define development pattern.

DEVELOPMENT POCKETS



- Development pockets defined by topography and landscape planting;
- Southern area of site landscaped to provide setting and gateway feature to village from east.

MOVEMENT



- Principal access taken from Keig Road to south;
- Circular road layout;
- Footpath connections through site;
- Woodland retained and enhanced to north;
- Scope for circa 30 houses at an appropriate density.

INDICATIVE LAYOUT PLAN

The land at Montgarrie East represents a deliverable, measured extension of the established village of Montgarrie.

We consider that the 2021 LDP is the appropriate time for a formal residential development allocation to be made, following the success of the small-scale settlement growth achieved under the organic growth policy allowance.

The site is well related to the existing Montgarrie development pattern, adjacent to existing housing to the south and west, and also 'framed' by the existing woodland and rising landform to the north, and the established cluster of dwellinghouses at Whitehouse Farm to the east.

The scale of development proposed and its location near Alford will ensure that the site is attractive to a range of developers. There are no constraints to delivery, the land is within single ownership and is available.

In summary we would request that the land at Mongarrie East is allocated in the forthcoming Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021 for circa 30 houses.







HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS & PLANNING CONSULTANTS

ABERDEENSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

RESPONSE TO THE MAIN ISSUES REPORT

LAND AT MONTGARRIE EAST, ALFORD

MR032

APRIL 2019

On behalf of
W&W Mackie



HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO

CHARTERED ARCHITECTS & PLANNING CONSULTANTS



HALLIDAY FRASER MUNRO

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1. Introduction
2. Montgarrie Summary
3. Bid and MIR Summary
4. Main Issues Report Comments
5. Housing Strategy
6. Conclusion



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report has been prepared by Halliday Fraser Munro, Chartered Architects and Town Planning Consultants, on behalf of W&W Mackie Ltd. It is written in response to the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan Main Issues Report 2019 (MIR).
- 1.2. At the 'Call for Sites' stage in March 2018 a development bid was submitted for the land at Montgarrie East, Alford:
 - MR032 – Residential allocation for circa 30 homes
- 1.3. The vision for Montgarrie East is to create a sensitive and measured extension to the established village settlement of Montgarrie, reflecting the setting and landscape character of the area.
- 1.4. Since 2012 Montgarrie has not been a 'defined' settlement within the Aberdeenshire LDP and subsequently new planning applications have been assessed against 'organic growth' policy and 'brownfield' redevelopment opportunities.
- 1.5. Montgarrie is a proven, popular and successful location for housing in the Alford area. In the 2012 and 2017 Aberdeenshire Local Development Plans Montgarrie was subject to the 'organic growth' policy. Under both LDPs brownfield, infill and organic growth small-scale development have regularly occurred in Montgarrie. Policy R2 of the 2017 LDP 'Housing and employment development elsewhere in the countryside' permits small-scale growth of settlements where a particular need for development has been identified. Under this policy during the plan period no more than an additional 20% growth of the settlement, up to a maximum of 10 new homes, was permitted. In Montgarrie this policy allowance has been utilised to its full capacity in Plan periods relevant to both the 2012 and 2017 Local Development Plans resulting in 18 houses approved and built demonstrating the desirability of Montgarrie as a residential location.
- 1.6. This situation confirms the demand for a measured residential allocation in Montgarrie. The land subject to MR032 bid was identified as an 'area of search 'fh1*' in the Draft 2006 Local Plan for housing.
- 1.7. The MIR assessment has not identified any constraints to development on this site. The lack of facilities and services in Montgarrie has been raised and this can be addressed through opportunities for small scale commercial and community facilities as part of the MR032 allocation, along with Montgarrie being designated as a settlement within the forthcoming PLDP.



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2. Montgarrie Summary

- 2.1. Montgarrie is in Marr where the economy is largely based around tourism and agriculture. There needs to be flexibility in housing allocations allowing for provision of housing for those who work in these industries. Employment in these sectors will not necessarily be in town centres, rather job opportunities will be spread across the rural area and may well be remote from the largest settlements, therefore the LDP needs to take this into consideration and identify deliverable small-scale allocations in appropriate locations.
- 2.2. Montgarrie should be a defined settlement as per the 2006 Plan and would benefit from a future housing allocation. In the 2006 Local Plan Montgarrie was a designated settlement. We consider that given the scale of housing development which has taken place since then there is now more adequate justification than at any previous point to identify Montgarrie as a defined settlement in the forthcoming PLDP. There are smaller, more remote places in the area such as Cairnie for example classified as settlements in the LDP. Cairnie has circa 25 properties, compared to around **70** in Montgarrie.
- 2.3. Montgarrie and the surrounding area is classified as an *accessible rural area* as per the Scottish Government Urban/Rural Classification meaning Montgarrie is in an area with a population of less than 3000 people and is within a 30 minute drive time of a settlement of 10,000 or more. 36.8% of Aberdeenshire's population live in accessible rural areas which reflects the way in which Aberdeenshire has developed over time. Small villages and settlements are distributed across the countryside to serve the needs of those living in rural areas.
- 2.4. The allocations presented in the MIR appear to favour a strategy of centralisation. In Marr the majority of development has taken place in the larger settlements of Alford, Banchory, Huntly and Aboyne. This trend is set to continue between 2018 to 2022 with new house building projected to increase slightly across Marr mostly in Alford, Banchory and Huntly reflecting the services and facilities found there. Although most of the new development is being directed to the larger settlements, only 32% of Marr's population live in communities of over 3000 people.
- 2.5. The centralisation strategy apparent in the MIR goes against Marr's current pattern of development and does not allow measured growth for the smaller settlements such as Montgarrie. Not allowing for this growth risks the sustainability of the smaller settlements that will suffer from an ageing population and lack of diversity. Marr's population is proportionately older than Aberdeenshire's with a greater proportion of people aged over 50 and a smaller proportion of people aged between 23 and 43. A variety of locations and housing options need to be provided throughout the whole of Marr to ensure its countryside locations are sustainable. Montgarrie is ideally placed to deliver this.



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- 2.6. The Organic Growth policy has previously been relevant to Montgarrie but is no longer as the permitted percentage of development has been delivered, thus restricting any development without policy change.
- 2.7. We consider the right future development strategy for Montgarrie is a measured, mixed use allocation such as that proposed at MR032.
- 2.8. The Organic Growth policy was designed to meet 'need' for housing in such locations and support school rolls in particular. The 'need' for Montgarrie was falling capacity at Tullynessle Primary School. The school's current percentage capacity is 42%, forecast to drop to 34% in 2023. Without planned future housing allocations in places like Montgarrie the sustainability of the school will be at risk. The delivery of 30 homes on site MR032 would support Tullynessle Primary School.
- 2.9. It should be noted that the distance to the school at Tullynessle from Montgarrie is similar to the distance to the primary school in Cluny and Sauchen where there are existing allocations, preferred housing sites and similar facilities available.

3. Bid and MIR Summary

- 3.1. The proposed development is closely related to existing housing and has clearly defined boundaries to the south, west and east. The northern boundary has been kept below the ridge line to ensure there is no landscape impact from the south.
- 3.2. At present there are seven properties at Whitehouse Farm that are remote from Montgarrie. The proposed development on Site MR032 represents infill development between Montgarrie and Whitehouse Farm encompassing the farm development and 'rounding off' the settlement.
- 3.3. Bid MR032 is not currently a 'preferred' development option. The Main Issues Report (officers summary and assessment of bid) states:

'30 Homes. The village has seen substantial development over recent years, formerly as an identified settlement for organic growth. The proposed site would be overdevelopment and excessive when compared with the size of the existing village, affecting the village character. The location also encourages car dependency as the village lacks basic local facilities and amenities within walking distance'.
- 3.4. The Officers' view and associated issues will be examined in more detail below, however as neither bid site, MR032 or MR006, submitted are preferred by officers it is clear that there is a reluctance to allow for future development in Montgarrie, despite there being clear



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demand for new housing development demonstrated by the number of consented developments.

- 3.5. The MIR did not identify any negative issues relating to the site itself and there are no constraints to development. This would suggest that the site is not an officer's preference solely on the grounds of there being no future allocations in Montgarrie. Conversely, the alternative bid MR006 was criticised for representing 'ribbon development'.

4. Main Issues Report Comments

- 4.1. In this section we will review and comment on the Officer's views on bid Site MR032.
- 4.2. ***'The village has seen substantial development over recent years, formerly as an identified settlement for organic growth. The proposed site would be overdevelopment and excessive when compared with the size of the existing village, affecting the village character. The location also encourages car dependency as the village lacks basic local facilities and amenities within walking distance'.***
- 4.3. The submitted bid carefully considered the character of the village and the level of development that has taken place in recent years and we consider 30 homes an appropriate extension to Montgarrie. The development is located close to the crossroads in keeping with the village core and integrating with existing properties to the west, south and east.
- 4.4. The character of the village is defined as a range and mix of house styles and types fanning out from the crossroads core. This provides flexibility for the integration of new housing.
- 4.5. Montgarrie is 1.9km from Alford so whilst Montgarrie itself does not contain local facilities residents can access shops, schools, sports facilities and other services in nearby Alford. 1.9km is a reasonable walking distance and Montgarrie and Alford are linked by a core path network with a range of options available. Additionally, there is a bus route serving Montgarrie linking the village with Alford. We do not consider, therefore, that those residing in Montgarrie would be dependent on cars for all journeys.
- 4.6. The bid proposed on Site MR032 could be diversified to accommodate small scale retail provision, leisure or community uses. This would ensure adequate provision of facilities for the village of Montgarrie. Incorporating this into the development would help to sustain Montgarrie and make the settlement even more attractive.
- 4.7. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) reports that the "development could have a long term negative impact due to the potential for increased travel requirements (the need to travel long distances to key services)" however the SEA goes on to note that this is likely to have only a minor negative effect. Again, as discussed above Alford, 1.9km from



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Montgarrie, provides a wide range of services and is not considered to be a long distance away.

- 4.8. The SEA reports that the development is in an area “identified at risk from surface water flooding and is likely to have long term effect on climate and the water environment”. However, the risk of surface water flooding is not identified on the SEPA flood map so we are unsure what this comment refers to.
- 4.9. Bid Site MR006 is also not an Officer’s Preference with comments stating that the development “would not be desirable to reinforce the ribbon development pattern of the village”. MR032 offers opportunity to extend the village without reinforcing the ribbon development pattern that is clearly not preferred by Officers.

5. Housing Strategy

- 5.1. It is reported in the MIR that Alford is being given time to recover from recent growth therefore alternative nearby settlements can be looked upon to provide residential allocations. Montgarrie is a proven popular location near Alford that can accommodate growth in the form of new housing development.
- 5.2. The housing strategy contained within the Main Issues Report relies heavily on existing allocated sites, a generic densification across sites within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, and some limited small-scale allocations across the area to meet Strategic Development Plan (SDP) housing requirement. This approach raises serious concerns on the range and scale of housing that can be delivered on the back of that do-minimum strategy, the practicality of delivering significantly increased density on certain sites, and the relationship between that strategy, the SDP in its final form when approved later in 2019 and national policy on delivering more housing and a range of housing more effectively.
- 5.3. Additional allocations, in appropriate locations, particularly in established locations within the RHMA such as Montgarrie are required to deliver the SDP’s housing requirement. Bid site MR032 at Montgarrie East presents such a deliverable opportunity.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. There are no negative issues associated with the site itself, Site MR032 is not preferred only for the reason that there is no planned future growth for Montgarrie.
- 6.2. The development would support Tullynessle Primary School which has a falling school roll.



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- 6.3. The proposed development of Site MR032 could provide a mixed use development of circa 30 homes accompanied by small scale retail and community or leisure uses delivering services and facilities currently missing from the village.
- 6.4. Montgarrie has proven it is a popular and successful location for housing demonstrated by the uptake in sites under the organic growth policy.
- 6.5. Development at Site MR032 would have minimal visual impact on Montgarrie.
- 6.6. To encourage development a range of small scale and deliverable sites needs to be available across Aberdeenshire to provide a range of options to developers, MR032 Montgarrie East delivers this.
- 6.7. In summary we would respectfully request that Montgarrie is designated as a settlement in the Proposed LDP with Site MR032 at Montgarrie East allocated for up to 30 houses, small scale commercial (including retail) and community or leisure uses.

overprovision of marketable land for housing does not prejudice the delivery of alternative viable sites already included in the Plan. Currently there is an overprovision of 80 houses in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area and 604 houses in the Rural Housing Market Area. Not all the sites which are identified as “marketable” will come forward at this time, and mechanisms such as promotion of self-build have been made to seek to address this issue. Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (paragraph 120) requires that Planning Authorities are obliged to allocate a range of sites which are effective or expected to become effective to meet the housing land requirement in the Strategic Development Plan and be confident that the land can be brought forward for development within the Plan period.

- 4.10 The overprovision of housing land as proposed is considered to be acceptable as it builds in flexibility, particularly in the Rural Housing Market Area, as well as continuing to promote Aberdeenshire as an area open for business. As such no changes require to be made to the Proposed Local Development Plan in respect of removing proposed allocations or introducing new sites at this stage of the plan making process.

Proposed Local Development Plan– Outstanding issues

Housing Land

Formartine

- 4.11 **Ellon – Site FR090 – Cromleybank.** Part of the bid to extend site FR090 to its south at Cromleybank, Ellon to include the southern bypass of Ellon is not supported in the format as submitted. It is considered more appropriate that this is instead marked as an indicative route on the proposals map as a proposed route has yet to be agreed with the developer. Such an action may be premature without the assessment of mitigation of impacts on the A90(T) from congestion. The Plan will still have a route marked, but not as an allocation.
- 4.12 **Ellon – Sites FR063 & FR064 – North of McDonald Golf Course.** Of the outstanding issues debated by Infrastructure Services Committee one related to the potential implications of identifying two sites north of the McDonald Golf Course, Ellon (FR063 and FR064) for development. These sites were initially considered by Formartine Area Committee on 10 September 2019, whereby Members expressed their support for the sites to be included in the Proposed Local Development Plan. Following transportation concerns being subsequently identified, based on Officer recommendation, the sites were agreed to be omitted from the Proposed Local Development Plan by Infrastructure Services Committee at their meeting on 3 October 2019. Further consideration of the sites was undertaken by Formartine Area Committee on 29 October 2019 allowing cognisance to the feedback from Transportation. Support for the sites was continued by the Formartine Area Committee, with the Infrastructure Services Committee of 28 November 2019 similarly continuing their view to omit the sites from the Proposed Local Development Plan. Any development on these sites is premature at this time in the absence of any