

# CULTER COMMUNITY COUNCIL



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31st May 2015

The Local Development Plan Team  
Planning and Sustainable Development  
Aberdeen City Council  
Business Hub 4, Ground Floor North  
Marischal College  
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Dear Local Development Plan Team

## **Consultation on Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2015**

The members of Culter Community Council (CCC), and particularly of the CCC Planning Sub-group, have discussed the strategies, policies and issues within the Proposed Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2015 in conjunction with the **Planning Framework for Culter 2013** (copied to you in June 2013 – receipt acknowledged 18 June 2013) and also recent representations from local residents. As a result, the members of CCC have asked me to forward their support, objections, comments and concerns as follows:

### **1. Spatial Strategy**

#### **a) Support for Brownfield Development Opportunity within Peterculter (Page 77 Appendix 1, Table 1 and Page 84 Appendix 2)**

- OP 42 Kennerty Meal Mill

The members of CCC support the redevelopment of this site, which has become something of a local eyesore, - as long as all the criteria required can be, and are, fulfilled.

#### **b) Support for Greenfield Developments in Deeside – Peterculter (Page 15, Table 8 and pp 84-86 Appendix 2)**

- |          |                     |                              |
|----------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| • OP 44  | North Lasts Quarry; | Continued Mineral Extraction |
| • OP 45  | Peterculter East;   | 33 homes; 2017 - 2026        |
| • OP 51  | Peterculter Burn;   | 19 homes; 2017 - 2026        |
| • OP 52  | Malcolm Road;       | 71 homes; 2017 - 2026        |
| • OP 109 | Woodend Farm        | 19 homes 2017 - 2026         |

The members of CCC support the housing opportunities because:

- They can be developed in the first phase
- Extra families in suitable homes should increase the population of our local primary school.
- They should encourage retailers and small local businesses into our District Centre as well as sustaining the existing ones
- They will help to sustain the viability and amenity of our community as described on Page 46 , para 3.74 – “Our vision.....requires us to create sustainable communities in which amenity is maintained to a high level and for a wide choice of housing styles and types to be made available to everyone”.
- The developers, in their discussion with CCC during the consultations for the Extant 2012 Local Development Plan (LDP), had outlined how they would comply with this “vision” e.g. by;
  - providing affordable housing (OP 45; OP 52).
  - or giving developer contributions (OP 51).
  - include leisure and play areas (OP 51; OP 52; OP109)
  - ensure there will be no vehicle access from OP 52 on to Bucklerburn Road – one of the city’s Core Paths (Page 62 Policy NE 9)
  - providing a paved path through the trees (mature Scots pine) in lieu of a pavement on Malcolm Road (OP 52).

The developers have not informed CCC of any changes to the above points since giving them during the preparation of the extant 2012 LDP.

The present members of CCC however strongly recommend that developers be obliged to build affordable homes on their sites instead of giving **monetary** contributions as ‘planning gain’ since CCC desperately needs starter family homes as soon as possible to keep our community viable and sustainable and not be reduced to a ‘dormitory suburb’ of Aberdeen. This has happened through previous Local Plans permitting an over provision of (1 and 2 bedroom) flats in Peterculter (see Planning Framework for Culter).

**c) Conditional Support for Greenfield Developments in Deeside – Peterculter/Milltimber Area (Page15 Table 8; Page 85 Appendix 2; Pages 91-93 Appendix 3)**

- OP 48                      Oldfold Farm, Milltimber                      550 homes

Two CCC members were involved in the pre-planning consultations and stakeholder meetings for this development (OP 48) largely because of serious concerns, particularly traffic and transport issues, which will have ‘knock on’ effects on our community’s connectivity with other parts of Aberdeen accessed via the A93 (North Deeside Road). This is the only trunk road connecting Culter to the city centre for work or to shop in the large retail centres or to visit theatres, cinemas, art galleries and museums, pubs, clubs or other centres of entertainment.

The members of CCC are not aware if the Framework/Masterplan for Oldfold has been completed but the understanding they took from the outcomes of the preplanning/preapplication consultation process was:

- The main junction of the Oldfold development with the A93 would be the existing junction from Bingham Road with improvement of that Tornadee Junction and traffic lights already in place there, c.f. p 93 Appendix 3 Infrastructure.
- Roads within the Oldfold development would access Bingham Road as do the roads do within the existing developments in Milltimber.
- The new primary school to service the whole of Milltimber will be within the Oldfold development but close to Bingham Road, just north of Tornadee. That is, fairly central within the whole of Milltimber

- This would help to merge 'old' and 'new' Milltimber and allow residents to move around and access facilities within the whole of the community without using North Deeside Road (A93)

**If these points are, or will be, incorporated into the Oldfold Masterplan/Framework and the subsequent application and delivery stages of the OP 48 development then the members of CCC will be happy to support this development.**

**d) Objection to Greenfield Development in Deeside – Peterculter Area (Page 15 Table 8; Page 86 Appendix 2**

- OP108                      Mid Anguston                      6 or 8 homes                      2017-2026

In the consultations for the extant Local Plan 2012 the then members of CCC gave reluctant support for the addition of this site for development despite the fact that it was against Green Belt and Landscape Policies, it lies on an unclassified road and is remote from public transport. This was due to deep concern then at the falling rolls in Culter Primary School which had resulted from a disproportionately high number of one and two bedroom flats having been built in Peterculter in the past at the expense of starter and affordable family homes (Planning Framework for Culter).

Since then the decline in school rolls seems to have halted. Therefore in response to the Main Issues Report (Jan. 2014) the present members of CCC said that the Mid Anguston Development OP 108 should **not** be included in the new LDP (2017) because it was against Green Belt and Landscape Policies. The site is also some 2km distance from public transport. It is accessed from the A93 by a narrow unclassified road (Anguston Road) on which two cars can pass only with care or by encroaching on grass verges. It has high roadside banks in places, deep ditches in others and bends where visibility is limited. There are no vehicle passing places, no pavements and only a few places where pedestrians can step off the carriageway. It is also used by heavy agricultural vehicles which can disrupt access.

With the Salmon Ladder (as part of OP 51) now in place and operational this gives added concern on the potential for any pollution from the Anguston area reaching the Gormack Burn. CCC is given to understand that the River Dee Board has already started preparing a case to have the Gormack and the Leuchar Burns (which join to become the Leuchar Dam and then the Culter Burn) to be protected by the River Dee (and its Tributaries) Special Area of Conservation (SAC), just as the River Dee and the Culter Burn already are.

Although all of the residential developments listed above which the present members of CCC are supporting also lie in the Green Belt they are adjacent or close to the urban part of Peterculter, they will not be prominent in the landscape, they will have much better access by road (and to public transport) and will supply much needed affordable housing.

**e) Business and Industrial Land**

As stated above the members of CCC continue to support OP 44, North Lasts Quarry but were again disappointed that a small Business Park had not been proposed for Peterculter. The members would not oppose one if a suitable and agreeable site was proposed adjacent to the urban part of Peterculter (planning Framework for Culter). Several have been proposed in the past to compensate for the loss of business sites in Culter to housing (mainly small flats) over the past decades but none have been accepted into the Local or Local Development Plans. A small business park would contribute greatly to the sustainability of our community.

## **2. Delivering Sustainable Communities**

- The members of CCC found they were in agreement with most of the various Policies in the Proposed Plan and used them as ‘evidence’ in our Spatial Strategy comments above. They highlighted how they could deter the erosion of Peterculter as a sustainable community with new family housing encouraging the expansion in the numbers of local businesses within the area. We do not wish to see our community reduced to being a dormitory suburb of the city.
- CCC was pleased to see the prominence given to ‘Quality Placemaking by Design’ and the policies in it.
- It was also pleasing to see ‘Delivering Infrastructure and Accessibility’ being addressed. As always there are continuous concerns on traffic and transport infrastructure in our community with the dangerous junction of North Deeside Road (A93) and Malcolm Road (B979); the lack of parking within our District Centre and regular drainage and flooding problems (see Planning Framework for Culter). In light of these the members of CCC would appreciate that whatever Opportunities in the Peterculter area are included in the finalised New Local Development Plan (2017?) that developers’ contributions are maximised to ease traffic and transport problems as much as possible.

## **3. Monitoring and Review**

The members of CCC agree that reviewing the Plan is crucial to see if the policies and strategies are working as proposed and to make any changes if proved necessary. CCC members, however, consider that it is equally vital to collect and collate data on ‘planning gain/developers’ contributions’ to ensure that are not only funded but delivered (e.g. affordable housing, road improvements etc) within the required time frame.

## **4. Supplementary Guidance**

Unfortunately the members of CCC had no time to study the Supplementary Guidance issued with the Proposed Local Development Plan (2015) and therefore cannot comment on it within the consultation period.

Yours sincerely,

Lavina C Massie (Vice Chair and Acting Planning Liaison Officer)  
Culter Community Council

CC: Cllrs Boulton, Malone and Malik