

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL

BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE

BUCHAN HOUSE, PETERHEAD, 13TH MARCH 2018

Present: Councillors N Smith (Chair), D Beagrie (Vice Chair), A Allan, A Buchan, M Buchan, S Calder, A Fakley, J Ingram, A Simpson, S Smith and I Sutherland

Officers: Chris White, Buchan Area Manager (Business Services); Iain Meredith, Solicitor – Governance (Business Services); Sally Wood, Senior Planner (Infrastructure Services); David Naismith, Principal Engineer (Infrastructure Services); Philip Leiper, Roads and Landscape Manager (Infrastructure Services); Brian Shand, Principal Landscape Officer (Infrastructure Services); Jack Grant, Landscape Officer (Infrastructure Services); Viki Cameron, Head Teacher, Port Erroll Primary School (Education and Children’s Services); Gaynor Steel, Head Teacher, Maud Primary School (Education and Children’s Services); and Theresa Wood, Area Committee Officer (Business Services)

1. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS’ INTERESTS

In terms of the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, the following Declarations of Interest were put forward –

- (1) Councillor I Sutherland for Item 5c – Planning Application No APP/2018/0040 – Full Planning Permission for Alterations and Extension to Dental Surgery at 93 Queen Street, Peterhead – given his role as BID Manager for Rediscover Peterhead. In confirming that his interest was clear and substantial, Councillor Sutherland left The Chamber for this discussion,
- (2) Councillor I Sutherland for Item 7 – Landscape Services Revenue and Capital Work Programme 2018/2019 - given his role as BID Manager for Rediscover Peterhead. In confirming that his interest was clear and substantial, Councillor Sutherland left The Chamber for this discussion,
- (3) Councillor S Calder for Item 5c - Planning Application No APP/2018/0040 – Full Planning Permission for Alterations and Extension to Dental Surgery at 93 Queen Street, Peterhead – given he has been a patient at the Dental Surgery. In confirming that his interest was not substantive, Councillor Calder took part in the discussion of this item,
- (4) Councillor J Ingram for Item 4a – Planning Application No APP/2017/2723-2731 – Planning Permission in Principle for Erection of Dwellinghouse(s) at Plots 1-9 at Land at Toux, Fetterangus – given the applicant is known to him. In confirming that he had no pecuniary interest, Councillor Ingram took part in the discussion of this item,
- (5) Councillor A Buchan for Item 5a – Planning Application No APP/2017/2625 – Full Planning Permission for Erection of Garage (Part Retrospective) and Use of Site for Sale of Motor Vehicles at Scotston Villa, St Fergus – given that the applicant is a customer of Councillor Buchan’s. In confirming that he had no financial interest, Councillor Buchan took part in the discussion of this item,

- (6) Councillor D Beagrie for Item 7 – Landscape Services Revenue and Capital Work Programme 2018/2019 – given her role as a Feuar Manager within Peterhead. In confirming that her interest was remote and insignificant, Councillor Beagrie took part in the discussion of this item,
- (7) Councillor A Simpson for Item 11 – Community Council Funding 2018/2019 – given that her husband is Vice Chair for Mintlaw Community Council. In confirming that her interest was remote and insignificant, Councillor Simpson took part in the discussion of this item,
- (8) Councillor A Simpson for Item 12 – Area Committee Budget 2018/2019 – given that she participates on the Aden Working Group. In confirming that her interest was remote and insignificant, Councillor Simpson took part in the discussion of this item,
- (9) Councillor N Smith for Item 4a - Planning Application No APP/2017/2723-2731 – Planning Permission in Principle for Erection of Dwellinghouse(s) at Plots 1-9 at Land at Toux, Fetterangus – given that Mr H Watson, who had submitted a request to address Committee on behalf of the Applicant, is a Director of MACBI. In confirming that this interest was significant as Chairperson of MACBI, Councillor Smith left the Chamber for this discussion,
- (10) Councillor N Smith for Item 5b – Planning Application No APP/2017/2801 – Full Planning Permission for Erection of Dwellinghouse at Site at Nether Auchoch Caravan, Maud – given that he knows the partner of the applicant as an employee at MACBI. In confirming that his interest was not significant as Chairperson of MACBI, Councillor Smith took part in the discussion of this item, and
- (11) Councillor N Smith for Item 12 – Area Committee Budget 2018/2019 - given that he participates on the Aden Working Group. In confirming that his interest was remote and insignificant, Councillor Smith took part in the discussion of this item

2(a) STATEMENT ON EQUALITIES

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Committee **noted** the requirement, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010 –

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision

2(b) RESOLUTION

The Committee **agreed** in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the items specified below so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the undernoted paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Item No	Paragraph No of Schedule 7A
13	8

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF 20TH FEBRUARY 2018

The Minute of the Meeting of 20th February 2018 had been circulated and was **approved**.

4. DEFERRED PLANNING APPLICATION

With regard to the deferred planning application, the Committee had before them a report by the Director of Infrastructure Services on a planning application for determination in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts 1972 and 1997 and **agreed** to dispose of the application as detailed in Appendix A attached to this Minute.

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|-----|---------------------------------|---|
| (a) | APP/2017/2723-
APP/2017/2731 | Planning Permission in Principle for Erection of Dwellinghouse(s) at Plots 1-9 at Land at Toux, Fetterangus |
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5. NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Committee had before them reports by the Director of Infrastructure Services on planning applications for determination in terms of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts 1972 and 1997 and **agreed** to dispose of the applications as detailed in Appendix B attached to this Minute.

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| (a) | APP/2017/2625 | Full Planning Permission for Erection of Garage (Part Retrospective) and Use of Site for Sale of Motor Vehicles at Scotston Villa, St Fergus |
| (b) | APP/2017/2801 | Full Planning Permission for Erection of Dwellinghouse at Site at Nether Auchechoch Caravan, Maud |
| (c) | APP/2018/0040 | Full Planning Permission for Alterations and Extension to Dental Surgery at 93 Queen Street, Peterhead |

6. REVIEW DECISION NOTICE

The Committee **noted** the Review Decision Notice, from Aberdeenshire Council Local Review Body, Reference LRB 401 APP/2017/1400, to agree with the determination reviewed by it and Refuse Full Planning Permission for the Change of House Type at Plot 176, Phase 5, Greenacres, Wester Clerkhill, Kinmundy Road, Peterhead.

7. LANDSCAPE SERVICES REVENUE AND CAPITAL WORK PROGRAMME 2018/2019

A report by the Director of Infrastructure Services had been circulated providing the Committee with an outline works programme detailing Essential Routine Maintenance, the Essential Non Routine Maintenance and any Capital works for the various budget headings; having been developed throughout the year to reflect the requirements of the Buchan area.

Following a detailed discussion, the Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to approve the Area Landscape Maintenance and Capital Programme as detailed in the appendix attached to the report,
- (2) to request that Officers give due consideration to finding a long-term solution to the flooding problems at Catto Park in Peterhead, and
- (3) to acknowledge and commend the work of the various Litter Pick-Up Groups and Beach Cleaning Groups operating within the Buchan area

8. EDUCATION SCOTLAND CONTINUING ENGAGEMENT INSPECTION, PETERHEAD ACADEMY

A report by the Director of Education and Children's Services had been circulated providing the Committee with detail from Peterhead Academy's Continuing Engagement Inspection in October 2017. This visit was to comment upon the progress made since the original inspection in March 2016.

The Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to congratulate and commend the Head Teacher, and her staff, on a good report,
- (2) having noted that the Inspectors highlighted the need to continue to improve attainment of young people in S5, to request that the Head Teacher progress this issue forward as a priority,
- (3) to endorse the Service's continuing efforts in support of its schools in the Education Scotland inspection process and in the raising of standards of attainment and achievement in all aspects of school life, and
- (4) to further reports on Education Scotland school inspections being presented

9. EDUCATION SCOTLAND SCHOOL FOLLOW-UP VISIT PORT ERROLL PRIMARY SCHOOL

A report by the Director of Education and Children's Services had been circulated advising the Committee that Port Erroll had received a follow-up visit by an inspection team week beginning 6th June 2017. This visit was to comment upon the progress made since the original inspection in April 2016.

Having noted the report, the Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to commend the Head Teacher, and her staff, in respect of the progress made within the school,
- (2) to endorse the Service's continuing efforts in support of its schools in the Education Scotland inspection process and in the raising of standards of attainment and achievement in all aspects of school life, and
- (3) to further reports on Education Scotland school inspections being presented

10. EDUCATION SCOTLAND INSPECTION MAUD PRIMARY SCHOOL

A report by the Director of Education and Children's Services had been circulated advising that Maud Primary School was inspected in November 2017 as part of a national sample of primary education.

Having noted the content of the report, the Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to congratulate the Head Teacher, and her staff, on a good report,
- (2) to endorse the Service's continuing efforts in support of its schools in the Education Scotland inspection process and in the raising of standards of attainment and achievement in all aspects of school life, and
- (3) to further reports on Education Scotland school inspections being presented

11. COMMUNITY COUNCIL FUNDING 2018/2019

A report by the Director of Business Services had been circulated advising that for 2018/2019 a budget of £62,000 has been agreed for Community Councils within Aberdeenshire, and that the total budget for the Buchan area is £7,605 (including the Data Protection element). The Committee was asked to consider the disbursement of this fund, having been derived following consultation with the Community Council Forum.

The Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to approve the allocation of grant money to Community Councils described in this report and make an Administration Grant payment of £425 per Community Council, on the proviso that the Community Council does not hold more than two years administration grant allocation,
- (2) to approve the payment of £35 per Community Council to meet the cost of registration under the Data Protection Act, and
- (3) to make the remaining sum of £3,465 available for Project Grant applications

12. AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2018/2019

A report by the Director of Business Services had been circulated advising that an Area Committee Budget allocation of £80,000 is available for 2018/2019. The Committee was asked to consider the disbursement of this fund as recommended by Officers, based on the success of previous years.

The Committee **agreed:-**

- (1) to make available a Brighter Buchan Villages Initiative in 2018/2019 at a cost of £16,000,
- (2) that an allowance of £500 is made to cover the cost of prizes for a Buchan in Bloom Competition,
- (3) that £32,000 is devoted to the Area Committee Grant Scheme to be publicised and developed in tandem with the Buchan Development Partnership,

- (4) to reserve £30,000 as part of the match funding requirement for the Aden Country Park Restoration and Redevelopment 'delivery phase' application to the Heritage Lottery Fund Parks for People programme; and should the application be unsuccessful that the £30,000 be used, along with other match funding secured, to deliver an aspect of the project to be agreed in consultation with Ward Members, and
- (5) that the remaining sum of £1,500 is retained as a contingency budget to cover hospitality and any unforeseen events

13. INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES KEY ACTIVITY, PROJECTS AND FORWARD PROCUREMENT PLAN FOR 2018/2019

A report by the Director of Infrastructure Services had been circulated advising that The Scheme of Governance implemented from 27th January 2017 introduced changes to the Council's financial management arrangements. As a result, the Committee was asked to approve the items on the Procurement Work Plan which have been identified as falling within the remit of this Committee.

Having considered the Directorate Procurement Work Plan as detailed in Appendix 1 attached to the report, the Committee **agreed** to approve the items on the Procurement Work Plan identified as falling within the remit of the Buchan Area Committee.

APPENDIX A

DEFERRED PLANNING APPLICATION

(a) **Planning Permission in Principle for Erection of Dwellinghouse(s)
at Plots 1-9 at Land at Toux, Fetterangus**

For: Mr J Western, The Kennels, Chapel Park, Mintlaw

Per: Arcus Design Ltd, Mavisbank, Old Deer

Reference No: APP/2017/2723-2731

In terms of Standing Order 6.5, the Area Manager had received a request to address Committee in relation to this application from a Mr Hamish Watson, on behalf of the Applicant.

The Committee was asked if they wished to hear the representation. The Committee unanimously **agreed**.

The Committee first heard from the Senior Planner who noted that she was aware that the agent had e-mailed all Buchan Councillors in connection with a preliminary wildlife assessment, conducted by Countrywise. The contents of the e-mail confirmed that Countrywise noted that the track is well used by wildlife, that it is possible that both otters and water voles use the pond and stream, and that consideration needs to be given to the removal of scrub which provides cover for wildlife. Furthermore, that a bat survey should be carried out before the Beech tree is removed. In conclusion more surveys need to be carried out, which is effectively in agreement with the Environmental Planners comments as contained within the report to Committee

The Committee then heard from Mr Watson as follows –

“I am one of the landowners, I applied for 6 sites and there are 3 next to the farm. There is a local demand for serviced sites for families at a decent price; Stewart and Watson previously sold 4 in 4 days.

The access at Duke Street is not deliverable, there is no clear title and the village doesn't want the traffic. Roads has advised that the road from the south can be delivered if phased in.

There is no sewage capacity within the village. The issue with water at Toux has now been resolved.

Re the wildlife issue – it is achievable to deliver a bat survey by May.

If we get planning approval, then 2 of the plots would be affordable plots.

With regard to the 200m rule, 36 houses could be built – there are 9 used, which means one is available for the next 4 years. There is a sewage embargo, and SEPA have no growth plans, which means it will be a minimum of 3 years before any more houses can be built. There is a local demand now and we can deliver on these sites.”

Having considered the detail of the representation, and having heard from the Senior Planner, the Committee **agreed**:-

(1) to Refuse Planning Permission in Principle for Applications –

APP/2017/2723; APP/2017/2724; APP/2017/2725; APP/2017/2726; APP/2017/2727 and APP/2017/2728

for the following reasons:-

- (1) There is only potential scope for 1 dwellinghouse to be approved from the 9 tandem applications at Toux. The proposals are not compliant with Policy R2 Housing and employment development elsewhere in the countryside from the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017,
- (2) There are unresolved issues with regards to the vehicle access for all plots. The proposals are not compliant with Policy RD1 Providing suitable services from the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017,
- (3) Developer Obligations have advised that no agreement has been reached with regards to the requested contributions to infrastructure and affordable housing. The applications are consequently not compliant with Policy RD2 Developer's obligations and Policy H2 Affordable housing

(2) to Refuse Planning Permission in Principle for Applications –

APP/2017/2729; APP/2017/2730 and APP/2017/2731

for the following reasons:-

- (1) There is only potential scope for 1 dwellinghouse to be approved from the 9 tandem applications at Toux. The proposals are not compliant with Policy R2 Housing and employment development elsewhere in the countryside from the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017,
- (2) There are unresolved issues with regards to the vehicle access for all plots. The proposals are not compliant with Policy RD1 Providing suitable services from the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017,
- (3) Developer Obligations have advised that no agreement has been reached with regards to the requested contributions to infrastructure and affordable housing. The applications are consequently not compliant with Policy RD2 Developer's obligations and Policy H2 Affordable housing,
- (4) There is a potential impact upon wildlife caused by the proposed new vehicle access. The applicant fails to demonstrate that there are no risks. The proposals are not currently compliant with Policy E1 Natural heritage from the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017.

APPENDIX B

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS

(a) **Full Planning Permission for Erection of Garage (Part Retrospective) and Use of Site for Sale of Motor Vehicles at Scotston Villa, St Fergus**

For: Mr Brian Henderson, Scotston Villa, St Fergus

Per: K L Reid Associates Limited, 4 Glebefield, Longside

Reference No: APP/2017/2625

The Senior Planner advised:-

“The Planning Service are satisfied beyond reasonable doubt with the evidence that has been exhibited by the applicant that a Certificate Lawful Use would be granted for the use already occurring at Scotstown on the western side of the house. This application for the buildings and use of the land to the east of the house therefore, whilst not requiring a coastal location, would be considered an extension to the existing enterprise. Given the location of the site, which is fairly remote lying within an agricultural setting, the proposal would not result in a detrimental impact to any coastal processes or natural habitats.”

Having heard from the Senior Planner, the Committee **agreed**:-

(1) to Grant Full Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:-

01. The development shall be served in accordance with the approved drawings and the following details. The following improvements shall be carried no later than 30th June 2018:

- (a) The maximum gradient of the first 5 metres of the new access must not exceed 1 in 20.
- (b) The first 5 metres of driveway (measured from the edge of the road or back of footway) to be fully paved.
- (c) Off-Street parking for 22 cars, surfaced in hard standing materials must be provided within the site.
- (d) A lay-by measuring 8.0 metres x 2.5 metres with 45 degree splays to be formed at the junction with the public road and the proposed vehicular access to be taken via this. Construction shall be to a standard appropriate to the location and must be agreed in writing in advance with the Roads Development Team.
- (e) Visibility splays, measuring 2.4m x 90 metres to be formed for the east approach and 2.4 metres by 120 metres for the west approach to be formed on either side of the junction of the vehicular access with the public road. The visibility splays so formed shall thereafter be kept free of all permanent obstructions above adjacent carriageway level.
- (f) A refuse bin uplift store area shall be constructed (behind any visibility splay) so as to be accessible for bin uplift & shall be secure enough to prevent empty bins from being wind-blown. Details must be submitted to Roads Development for approval in writing.
- (g) A suitable vehicle turning area, measuring not less than 7.6m x 7.6m, must be formed within the site to enable all vehicle movements onto or from the public road to be carried out in a forward gear.

Reason: In order to ensure that the development is served by an appropriate standard of access and associated servicing in the interests of road safety.

02. The wash bay hereby approved as part of this proposal shall not be brought into use until the interceptor identified in the stamped plans is implemented in its entirety and thereafter retained whilst the wash bay remains in situ.

Reason: To ensure the surface water run-off from the wash bay is adequately treated before discharging to the proposed drainage scheme in the interests of environmental protection.

- (2) the reason for departing from the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017 as follows –

A departure is considered reasonable in this instance on the basis that it has been reasonably demonstrated that the proposal would be for the extension of what is likely an established business that has operated on the adjacent site for a period in excess of 10 years. Had that site already possessed planning permission, then it could reasonably have been argued that the proposal required a coastal location by virtue of being an expansion to an existing enterprise that was already located within the coastal zone. There is a benefit to the community in retaining an existing business, and it would not result in a detrimental impact to any coastal processes or natural habitats in the coastal zone. The proposal is therefore considered to not be in conflict with the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017.

- (b) **Full Planning Permission for Erection of Dwellinghouse at Site at Nether Auchechoch Caravan, Maud**

For: Mr J Stables, Nether Auchechoch Caravan, Maud

Per: RJM Architectural Design, Bottom Shed, North Road Industrial Estate, North Road, Inch

Reference No: APP/2017/2801

In terms of Standing Order 6.5, the Area Manager had received a request to address Committee in relation to this application from Mr Ross McWilliam, the Agent.

The Committee was asked if they wished to hear the representation. The Committee unanimously **agreed**.

The Committee first heard from the Senior Planner then heard from Mr McWilliam as follows:-

“There have been no representations to the application. There were 2 applications approved, as part of the cohesive group, but have not been built. These should be included giving a total of 6 houses. The cohesive group issue is material, as outlined in paragraph 2.1 of the report. If the two houses are not built, there are two others that can be considered to be part of the group.

In terms of being brownfield, there is evidence of a quarry on site

With regard to the red line boundary, there is no intention of developing further. The applicant presently lives in a caravan on site. The proposed house is of a modest scale, and fits in with the rural location. There are no trees being felled, the site is within an ancient woodland.

The caravan has been in place in excess of 3 years, it is the applicant’s registered address. The intention is to replace the caravan, and tidy up the site.

If there is a need to reduce the garden space then the applicant is happy to do that.”

Having considered the detail of the representation, Councillor Ingram moved as a motion, seconded by Councillor Fakley, that the application be deferred to allow the Committee to undertake a site visit to consider the size of the site and relationship of the proposed site in context to the quarry and surrounding properties.

As an amendment, Councillor A Buchan, seconded by Councillor Calder, moved that the application be refused for the reasons detailed in the report.

The Members of the Committee voted:-

for the motion (8) Councillors N Smith, Beagrie, M Buchan, Fakley, Ingram, Simpson, S Smith and Sutherland

for the amendment (3) Councillors Allan, A Buchan and Calder

The motion being carried the Committee **agreed** that the application be deferred to allow the Committee to undertake a site visit to consider the size of the site and relationship of the proposed site in context to the quarry and surrounding properties.

(c) **Full Planning Permission for Alterations and Extension to Dental Surgery at 93 Queen Street, Peterhead**

For: Balmoor Dental Centre, 95 Queen Street, Peterhead

Per: CM Design, 69 South Guildry Street, Elgin

Reference No: APP/2018/0040

In terms of Standing Order 6.5, the Area Manager had received three requests to address Committee in relation to this application from objectors – (1) Mr Mark Swanston, (2) Mr Mitchell Bain, and (3) Mr John Stuart.

The Committee was asked if they wished to hear the representations. The Committee unanimously **agreed**.

The Committee first heard from the Senior Planner then heard from Mr Swanston as follows:-

“I have lived at 89 Queen Street for over 20 years and previously at 116 Queen Street for 10 years, and in those 30 years I have never seen the like. This picture of Queen Street, taken in the 1880s, you may want to keep as a memento as very shortly you will never see the like again as two of our Councillors voted to allow the applicant to extend his practise at the front of his new development totally destroying the character of the building and the street.

Just to be clear, I happened to vote for the two Councillors who passed this and frankly I am disappointed and disheartened as to how the residents of Queen Street have been represented.

Why are there so many complaints? In my opinion, when the practice started approximately 20 years ago the small scale practice didn't initially cause too many parking conflicts. However, as the years rolled on the practice has grown and grown and the number of patients and staff have greatly increased to the point that parking in the residential area is impossible throughout the day. A conservative estimate – approximately 80/100 patients per day - will visit the new dental practise.

I believe the Roads department have had a look at the parking concerns, but in my opinion it was not a true reflection of the situation as the applicant's staff have been told to park in other surrounding streets for the time being. Sadly, trying to pull the wool over your eyes.

I think it might be useful if we take a moment to look at what has been passed by council planning departments in the past.

Please see the photos of the Mintlaw Dental practice which has 2 treatment rooms but has 6 parking spaces for patients and 2 spaces for staff.

I would like to commend the vision of planners involved with this dental practise as they have provided a safe manageable solution and alleviated any potential parking issues on a busy road.

This is how it should be, everyone gets what they want – staff, patients, local residents and visitors can all park safely free from unnecessary risk.

The applicant is a businessman first and foremost with practices in Aberdeen, Ellon, Elgin and Peterhead. Some would say this further Peterhead development is progress – but I ask you at what cost? This new practice will continue to get bigger and bigger and bigger – the roads are not going to cope – my fear is that someone is going to get hurt due to the incredible level of congestion caused by this dental practice.

Let's not forget – he still has his original dental practice at 95 Queen Street. He claims he is going to turn this into 2 flats. But does he have to? No!

Will this remain as another commercial business for him?

I would like to leave you with a couple of points –

- Why is the applicant being allowed to develop such a substantial dental practice in this residential area without having to provide one parking space?
- Having looked at the plans the amount of non-surgical rooms is ringing alarm bells for me. I wouldn't be surprised if after a couple of years some of these 'areas' are turned into additional treatment rooms which will further compound the parking problem.
- My last point is – the applicant must be spending a considerable amount of money in this project. Why is it he is so determined to create his flagship dental practice in such a congested area? Why did he not focus on a more suitable location with some adjacent land for parking?

In my opinion this planning application should be rejected based on the points I have just highlighted."

The Committee then heard from Mr Mitchell Bain –

"I'm here today to speak against the proposed re-development of Number 93 Queen Street, Peterhead, by the Dental Practice currently housed at 95 Queen Street, Peterhead.

Many of the people who currently live on Queen Street are strongly opposed to the proposed building development plans and I support their view.

The issue here is far more complex than the Dental Practice and, unfortunately, our own Councillors and Planning and Roads Department seem to realise.

The Queen Street, Prince Street, St Mary Street and York Street buildings situated to the North of King Street in Peterhead are all part of a long-established residential area comprising classic granite buildings never intended for use as business premises.

In addition to the business premises unsuitability, it is also the case that the changes proposed for 93 Queen Street would alter the entire character of Queen Street with a front porch extending from the building to the pavement and a huge construction to roof-height at the rear.

The plans are simply not in keeping with the traditional design and appearance of the street and its immediate area.

A construction of that nature and size would surely also have an additional negative impact on property values.

The original Planning Application appears to date back to April 2017.

That prompts the question – why were all the Queen Street residents not informed of the proposed/potential changes by letter at that time? It is clear from discussions with residents that not everyone was provided with details.

Popular hearsay would have you believe that the existing Dental Practice at 95 Queen Street is to be converted to accommodation but, unless I have missed something, there does not appear to be a corresponding Planning Application to support that suggestion.

This has, quite naturally, led Queen Street residents to believe that 95 Queen Street may never be converted. This would mean that, after a prescribed period, the Applicant could then legally operate his business from two properties, which would, of course represent expansion.

That situation begs another question – why were two applications not submitted at the same time, and out the outset, both requesting Change of Use – one to develop 93 and a corresponding one to convert 95?

I have stayed in Peterhead all my life and I lived on Queen Street for several years so I am well aware of the parking and traffic problems there.

As things stand, the Dental Practise is already responsible for creating traffic and parking problems which would be much reduced were it located somewhere other than Queen Street.

Aside from that, the age of the buildings on Queen Street pre-dates the popularity and volume of present day vehicles and the majority of Queen Street buildings do not have the garage facilities enjoyed by the owners of more modern homes. Because of those simple facts, resident car parking in Queen Street, Prince Street, St Mary Street and York Street has always been at a premium.

Queen Street obviously suffers more than any of the other streets mentioned because it is the main street and it is continually congested with all types of traffic; from buses to HGVs to routine car and van traffic.

That congestion is exacerbated by the daily presence of vehicles belonging to Dental Surgery staff and patients. I feel sure that any other business venture of that type or scale would have been forced to provide private parking for at least all staff and 50% of clients, in order to keep them off the main street.

I also feel sure that a more imaginative council would have long since introduced a 'Resident Parking Only' permit system similar to those visible in many areas of Aberdeen and ensured they properly represented and protected their constituents.

In summary, the proposed development of 93 Queen Street – of which some work has already been carried out by the way – is an example of inconsiderate and selfish business interest being put before the interests of long-term residents in a residential area.

It is an example of disinformation and misinformation which has left residents confused and with little time or opportunity to intervene.

Sadly, it is also an example of Aberdeenshire Council's Planning and Roads Department showing little or no interest in how their constituents might feel about a large business development project being carried out in the middle of a prime residential area on the main street of the town, or to the attendant safety and increased congestion implications.

On the basis of the points I have just made, fairly reasoned, I would request that the plans for the re-development of 93 Queen Street, Peterhead be rejected as being unsuitable for the environment for which they are intended.”

The Committee then heard from Mr John Stuart –

“I stay at 103 Queen Street and can hardly get a parking space outside my door. I have medical problems and have been offered a blue badge but have refused this as it would tie-up a parking space as I work 6 days.

I don't expect the applicant to provide parking for his clients, but he should provide parking for his staff. A nearby B&B had to purchase two spaces to provide parking, and the Council had to purchase derelict buildings to provide parking for their staff.

I say this application should be rejected.”

Before considering the application, the Monitoring Officer reminded the Members of the Committee that they must consider this planning application on its own merits, and that comments in relation to other applications – at Mintlaw or a nearby B&B – should not be taken into consideration in the determination of this application.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Committee **agreed** to Refuse Full Planning Permission as the proposal will have a negative impact on the amenity of the neighbouring dwellings and character of the area.