



REPORT TO FORMARTINE AREA COMMITTEE – 12 February 2019

Reference No: ENQ/2018/1189

MASTERPLAN for OP2 Site at Bonnyton Farm, Pitmedden

1. Recommendations

1.1 The Committee is recommended to:

Agree the Masterplan for the Pitmedden OP2 site to be used as a material consideration in the determination of any subsequent planning applications.

2. Background

2.1 Introduction/Purpose

- 2.1.1 The report outlines the Masterplan for the OP2 site in Pitmedden. The purpose of this document is to set out the overall principles for the site in terms of design, layout, phasing and infrastructure. The Masterplan site plan is appended to this report and the whole document has been circulated via Members' Ward Pages.
- 2.1.2 The requirement for preparing a Masterplan for this site is set out in the Pitmedden Settlement Statement and Policy P1 Layout, siting and design within the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017 (LDP). Scottish Government Planning Advice Note 83 states that a Masterplan comprises images and text which describes how an area will be developed. It includes a plan which describes and maps an overall development concept. It is based on an understanding of place and is intended to provide a structured approach to creating a framework for development. A Masterplan is required for this site as there is a requirement for reinstated access to the B999 and a requirement for open space provision to be concentrated to the south of the site adjacent to the burn.
- 2.1.3 Site OP2 is allocated within the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017 for 64 houses. The Masterplan sets out how the 64 houses could be delivered, including associated infrastructure and open space provision. The 64 houses should be delivered by a variety of house styles including 1, 1½ and 2 storey dwellings. These will range from 1-4 bedroom detached, semi-detached, terraced and flatted properties with 25% of the development being affordable houses.
- 2.1.4 A phasing plan is to be submitted with the subsequent planning application for the site. The exact infrastructure requirements to deliver

each phase will be determined through the Transport Assessment, Drainage Impact Assessment and through discussions with Aberdeenshire Council's Developer Obligations team. A desktop survey and site investigation is required to determine the extent and nature of any land contamination and to identify necessary mitigation measures.

2.2 Approach

- 2.2.1 The Masterplan is designed to set out key strategic issues, context, delivery and design principles for the proposed development of the OP2 Site in Pitmedden. Subsequent planning applications can then be submitted in line with the agreed principles.
- 2.2.2 The Masterplan has been subject to 2 community consultation events to which local ward members, Ythan Community Council, Udney Community Council and Udney Community Trust were invited. Public exhibitions were held for both events at the Linsmohr Hotel and adverts taken out in the Ellon Advertiser.
- 2.2.3 The first community consultation event took place on 24 January 2018. After this event, significant changes to the proposed layout were undertaken due to the difficulty in delivering the original layout, due to the topography of the site. Furthermore a great deal of feedback was received regarding the means of accessing the site. For these reasons a second event took place on 18 April 2018 which included the amended layout and displayed a range of possible access options. This process is highlighted in Section 4 of the Masterplan document.

2.3 Masterplan Content

- 2.3.1 The Masterplan provides an overview of the steps undertaken to set out a broad design concept for the site. This has been informed by a detailed site analysis to consider the site context, key characteristics, constraints and opportunities. The document demonstrates how the design has evolved throughout the process.
- 2.3.2 The Scottish Government's Planning Advice Note 83 states that 'although a masterplan may specify more detailed governing principles such as building heights, spaces, movement, landscape type and predominant uses it does not necessarily preclude a degree of flexibility in designs within the plan.'
- 2.3.3 In this instance the submitted design concept contains a fine grain of detail including a range of specific house types, driveways and footpaths. It should be borne in mind that these finer details are currently irrelevant. A Masterplan should be considered a general spatial concept only. The details are malleable and the subsequent full application need only correspond broadly with an agreed Masterplan. While it can be argued that unnecessary detail has been provided, the proposed concept layout has omitted certain features such as traffic

calming measures while there is also uncertainty regarding the functioning of some built spaces. However it is acceptable for these details to be developed and resolved at full planning stage.

- 2.3.4 The Planning Service are minded to support Masterplan concepts which demonstrate a successful sense of place which is not compromised by the prioritising of vehicular movements. This core principle is supported within the national policy document 'Designing Streets'. While a Masterplan with a more conventional suburban layout can be agreed, it will need to be justified at full planning stage. The site is notably constrained due to its shape, the sloping topography and the limited scope for access. A justified and functional development can potentially be developed from the current Masterplan layout concept and therefore the Masterplan is deemed acceptable.
- 2.3.5 Whilst the design concept is considered acceptable for the purposes of a Masterplan there are 2 aspects which require further in depth discussion. Firstly the means of access to the site and secondly the proposed road layout. These elements are to be justified and developed at full planning stage.

Access

- 2.3.6 The settlement statement for Pitmedden OP2 states that 2 vehicular access points should be provided including the reinstatement of the junction between the B999 and Ingleside. The reinstated access should ensure the continued safe and convenient use of the Council car park.
- 2.3.7 The proposed layout takes 2 points of access from the existing built environment to the west, 1 access from Ingleside to the south west corner and 1 access from Breckview to the north east corner. These points of access adjoin with the B999 either directly or indirectly at 2 separate points.
- 2.3.8 The Masterplan sets out 6 potential options for the reinstatement of the junction between the B999 and Ingleside. Option 6 was deemed to be the most favourable by Roads Development. This option involves either signalling the junction or a mini-roundabout. A range of other possible mitigation controls are set out including a 20mph restriction on this section of the B999, removal of the parking/loading bay and/or provision of signalised pedestrian crossing to replace existing zebra crossing. A possible visibility constraint has been identified (Ingleside House) due to where a signal stop line on Ingleside would need to be. The stop line would need to be set back to allow traffic signals to incorporate crossing provision and allow right turn manoeuvres.
- 2.3.9 Alternative points of access have been considered and ruled out. There are issues with regards the width and visibility of Bonnyton Road to the north. Improvements to this road would be necessary to encourage active travel. Access to be taken over the burn to the south has been

considered and is a potential long term option however there are currently issues relating to landownership at the present time.

- 2.3.10 Roads Development have commented that a mini-roundabout or traffic signals could be installed on the existing public road but that it may not be possible to demonstrate adequate inter-visibility requirements in either case. The other point of concern relates to the presence of the nearby loading bay. If the junction were to be opened up this bay would need to be removed otherwise the developer must demonstrate that HGV vehicles can utilise the bay safely by submitting a Road Safety Audit.
- 2.3.11 The developer has stated that they are currently unable to demonstrate to Roads Development that the access can be safely delivered. They have stated that this justification can be provided prior to determination of any subsequent planning application. Roads Development have agreed that the acceptability of this point of access can be settled at full planning stage. It is considered that, for the purposes of considering the Masterplan, the junction will be opened albeit the details of how this is to be achieved have not been put forward and considered.

Road Design Layout

- 2.3.12 The layout of the site includes a straight 200m north to south road which connects the 2 points of access to the west of the site. There are 2 road branches which extend perpendicular to this road and which curve around the site level with the landform. The plan shows that these roads are connected with what may be a road and/or a pedestrian link. These roads terminate with turning areas should the roads be cul de sacs. These areas may otherwise function as shared private access/shared surfaces should the connecting link be vehicular.
- 2.3.13 The preference of the Planning Service would be for the connecting link to be vehicular however the developer has raised concerns that this may not be viable due to the 1:15 change in landform between the 2 roads (see cross section B-B). Roads Development have indicated that they believe the vehicular link to be viable. They have agreed that the nature of this link can be determined at any subsequent application stage.
- 2.3.14 Other traffic calming measures such as build outs will be necessary. Again, the exact location of these details does not need to be pinned down at Masterplan stage and can instead be determined if, and when, a planning application is put forward.

Other Elements

- 2.3.15 The Masterplan includes 41% open space which is compliant with policy. The principle area of open space is focused to the south of the site as is required from the Settlement Statement. This open space covers the area of the site which slopes steeply down to Bronie Burn. A

SUDs basin has been included to the lowest corner of the site to the south east however the final location will be determined through a Drainage Impact Assessment. There are smaller areas of space to the north. It is proposed that the house types which sit adjacent to the principal open space will be arranged in a manner in which provides better overlooking and interaction. The widened hard surfaced spaces at the end of the 2 curving roads may also be developed in a manner which links the built environment with the main open space.

- 2.3.16 A phase 1 report was submitted for the consideration of the Contaminated Land Unit and deemed satisfactory. The report identifies a number of potentially contaminative site uses/activities that may have an impact on the proposed use of the site. An intrusive investigation is recommended prior to the granting of full planning permission.
- 2.3.17 The Masterplan provides a general layout for the site and demonstrates two linkages in to the village, including the one from Ingleside. The open space is located to the south and incorporates the SUDs basin, all required by the LDP. While the exact details are yet to be fully established. Much of this will be finalised at the planning application stage. It is considered that the submitted Masterplan provides sufficient clarity to allow the site to come forward.

Formartine Area Committee 30th of October 2018

- 2.3.18 The Masterplan was considered at the Formartine Area Committee on the 30th of October 2018. The committee did not agree the masterplan and requested further information in relation to the use of open spaces within the site. They also requested further information relating to the second point of access onto the B999.
- 2.3.19 The applicant has confirmed that the linked section (as discussed in paragraphs 2.3.11 & 2.3.12) will be for vehicular use. This means that the 2 courtyards would not need to be used as turning areas for service vehicles. The courtyards could potentially operate as a shared surface for both vehicles and pedestrians. This confirmation provides the clarity which the committee were seeking in relation to the use of open spaces within the site. Further to this the plan includes more detail in terms of traffic calming including raised tables at the junctions and build outs.
- 2.3.20 The applicant has provided details with regards a further 4 potential options for opening up the second point of access onto the B999. All these options involve the re-opening of the junction at Ingleside.
- 2.3.21 The first option involves the installation of a signalised junction with pedestrian crossing facilities and the removal of the existing zebra crossing. Access to the car park would be 5.5m wide. This option would involve the reconfiguration of the Council car park which would result in 4 fewer spaces (27 spaces to 23 spaces). The second option involves the installation of a signalised junction with pedestrian

crossing facilities. Access to the car park would be 7.5m wide. This option would involve the reconfiguration of the Council car park which would result in 3 fewer spaces (27 spaces to 24 spaces).

- 2.3.22 Neither of these options are viable due to the loss of parking spaces needed to achieve the required junction geometry to allow entry/exit to and from the car park. Land ownership constraints, the legality of using this land to deliver private housing and the impact upon the community raises the issue of viability for these options. These options would also be a departure from Roads Design standards as the intervisibility from the Ingleside stop line is constrained by properties facing the B999.
- 2.3.23 The third option proposes the removal of the shop service bay to provide the required visibility at the junction and the installation of a Puffin Crossing to replace the existing Zebra crossing. The crossing would be moved opposite the shop and closer to the car park. Deliveries can still take place on the B999 outwith any parking restriction areas around the junction and pedestrian crossing, with smaller deliveries utilising the car park or Ingleside. This option has been assessed via a stage 1 Safety Audit with no road safety issues identified. It complies with Roads Standards and can be delivered in early course.
- 2.3.24 The fourth option is similar to the third, with the addition of raised table cross roads at Ingleside and a raised table at the B999/Croftland junction, 110m north of Ingleside. An interactive speed sign in advance of the Croftlands junction and a 20 mph zone covering the area of the B999 passing the park, shop and school. This option has also been assessed via a stage 1 Safety Audit with no road safety issues identified. Roads Development do not consider the use of raised tables on A and B class roads as acceptable. The applicant proposes this option as a 'pilot' scheme. Should it be determined that this option is still unworkable after implementation then the raised tables could be removed and the arrangement would revert to option 3.
- 2.3.25 Roads Development have commented that options 3/4 are only potentially deliverable if the loading bay adjacent to the shop can be removed. The removal of the loading bay would need to be undertaken through a formal Traffic Order which would require the consent of the shop owner. If consent for the removal of the loading bay is not forthcoming then any subsequent application would not be supported by Roads Development or the Planning Service.
- 2.3.26 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

3. Scheme of Governance

- 3.1 The Committee are able to consider this matter in terms of B8.1 of the Committee Powers in Part 2 A of the Scheme of Governance which allows the Committee to exercise their powers as outlined at Part 2C – List of Planning Conditions. At Full Council on 22nd November 2018 it was agreed that Part 2C be updated to include to allow all Development Frameworks and Masterplans to be agreed by the Area Committee relevant to where the development/site is located.

4. Implications and Risk

- 4.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. The Masterplan is simply setting out the context for future development proposals on this site and will not itself have a differential impact on those with protected characteristics.
- 4.2 There are no staffing or financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.3 There are no Risks identified in respect of this matter in terms of the Corporate and Directorate Risk Registers as the Committee is considering the application as the Planning Authority in a quasi-judicial role and must determine the application on its own merits in accordance with the Local Development Plan unless material considerations justify a departure.

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Appendix 1

