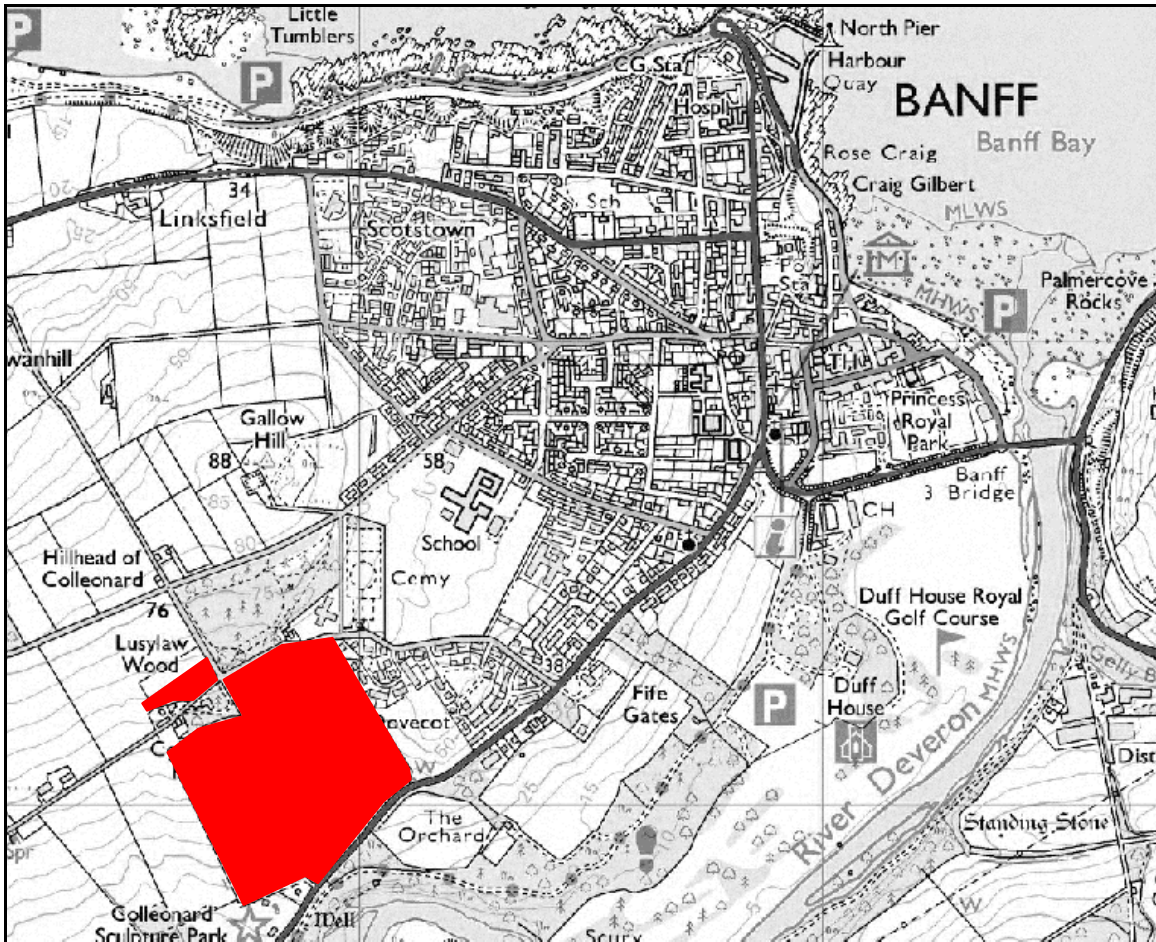


**DEVELOPMENT BRIEF
for
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
at
COLLEONARD (Sites B & fh1),
BANFF**



July 2008

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL



1. PURPOSE

1.1 *Type of development preferred*

This brief has been produced to ensure that residential developments on the sites at Colleonard are well integrated throughout, appropriate to their surroundings and make a positive contribution to the area.

1.2 *Constraints and limitations*

The landscape setting of the sites and the character of the existing settlement are important considerations and the development should respect the quality of the landscape whilst enhancing the quality of the environment in Banff. A desire line is shown for a footpath, cycleway and bridleway from the south to the north of the site. Vehicular access will require detailed consideration due to current road constraints outlined in the brief.

1.3 *Relevant Development Plan Policies*

The sites have been identified within the Aberdeenshire Local Plan as Site B, suitable for around 55 houses, site fh1, allocated for the period 2006-2010 and suitable for approximately 40 houses and finally site C, suitable for 5 houses. Both sites B and fh1 contain 'project areas' shown as P1 (strategic landscaping) on the southern boundaries of the sites. Site B also contains 'project area' P2 (footpath/cycleway/bridleway) on its western boundary.

A number of relevant development plans policies shall have to be satisfied (attention should be made to modified ALP policies), including:

NEST

Policy 8	Housing Allocations Jan 2000 – Dec 2005
Policy 9	Housing Allocations Jan 2006 – Dec 2010
Policy 11	General Housing Allocations
Policy 13	Developer Contributions
Policy 14	Affordable and Special Needs Housing
Policy 16	Sports and Recreation Facilities
Policy 17	Countryside & Open Space Access
Policy 21	Design

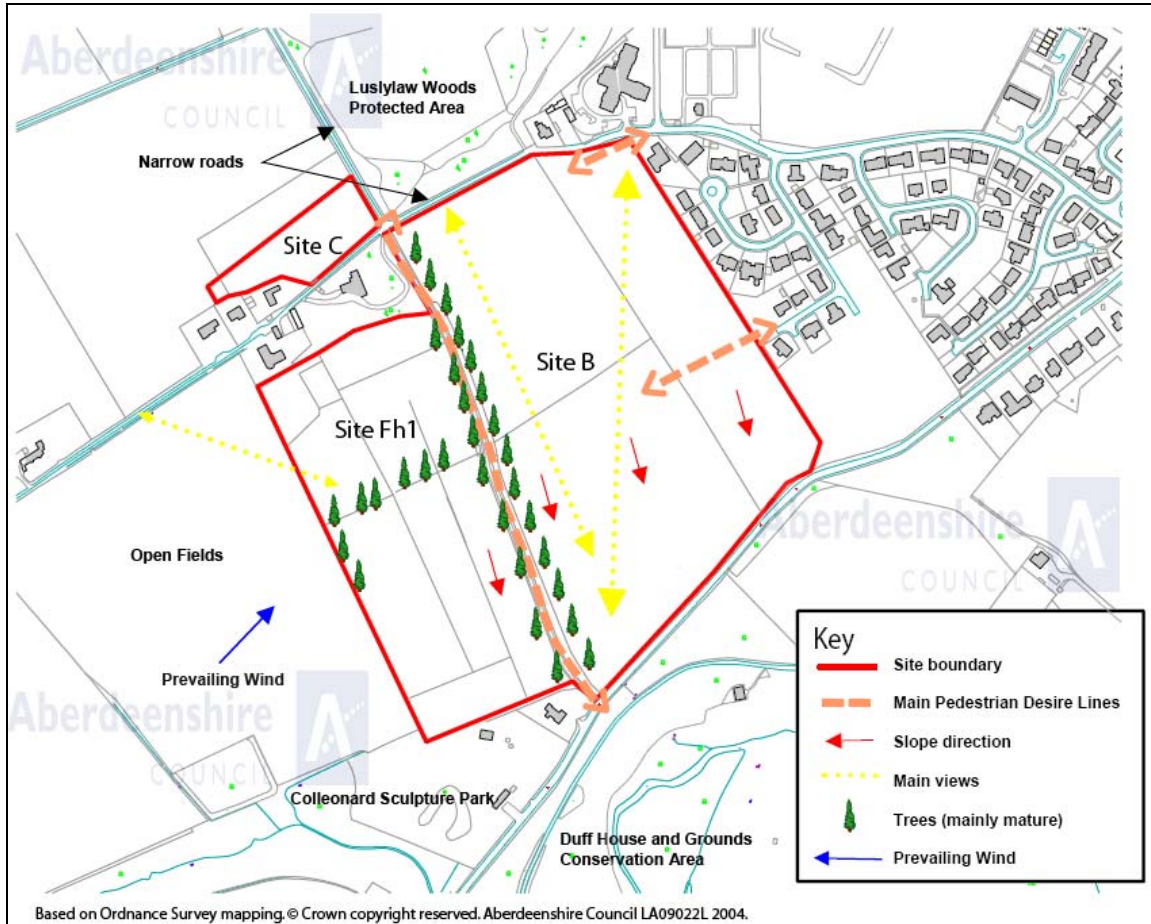
ALP

Policy Env\5A	Areas of Landscape Significance
Policy Env\22	Local Cultural Sites and Public Access
Policy Hou\1	Housing Land Allocations 2000-2005
Policy Hou\2	Future Housing Land Allocations 2006-2010
Policy Hou\8	Affordable Housing
Policy Hou\13	Public Open Space for Housing
Policy Inf\1	Roads and Access
Policy Inf\4a	Foul Drainage Standards
Policy Inf\4b	Surface Water Drainage Standards: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
Policy Inf\5	Water Supply
Policy Inf\6A	Waste Management Requirements for New Development
Policy Gen\1	Sustainability Principles
Policy Gen\2	The Layout, Sitting and Design of New Development in Aberdeenshire
Policy Gen\3	Developer Contributions
Policy Gen\5	Landscaping Standards
Policy Gen\12	Project Area

Associated Appendices

2.0 SITE ANALYSIS

Fig.01 Site Analysis



A site analysis has been undertaken to identify the site's main features and constraints. The following is not an exhaustive site description, but a list of the key issues that lead to the site requirements in the next section.

2.1 Locations and Landscape Context

- The site is located on the western edge of the town between Colleonard Road to the north and the A97 (Sandyhill Road), to the south. It occupies fields that contain the Local Plan sites, Site B and adjoining fh1 that together give a combined total area of 19 Hectares (17.4 hectares excluding existing buildings and associated grounds to the northwest). Site C is to the north of the extension to Colleonard Road and is roughly 0.75 hectares.

- The north of fh1 contains the clusters of buildings at the Mains of Colleonard. Open fields lie to the west of the site whilst to the east lies the detached dwelling houses of Colleonard Drive and the proposed southerly extension to this development.
- To the north of site B are Sandyhills Nursing Home and Luslylaw Wood. Both Sandyhills Nursing Home and Luslylaw Woods are designated in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan as protected areas.
- The site is close to an area of Landscape Significance that lies to the south and west.
- To the south are Colleonard Sculpture Park, the A97 and the Duff House Conservation Area.
- There are extensive and attractive views from the site across the Deveron valley to the south, southwest and southeast.
- The site slopes moderately in a southerly direction and is generally uniform in its fall. It falls from 65 metres at the northeast to 20 metres sits lowest point to the southwest.

2.2 Climatic Considerations

- The prevailing wind is from the southwest with the coldest winds coming from the northeast.
- Away from the tree belt the sites are, in places, relatively exposed to the southwest and hence are not well protected from the prevailing winds. Easterly winds are generally cold but the sites afford some cover from existing development. It is protected from the north by landforms.
- Due to its southerly aspect and location on a hill the site benefits from the sun both during the summer and winter. This aspect will afford the opportunity to capitalise on maximum sun exposure.

2.3 Potential Hazards

- The site has no history of flooding. There are no known contaminants or noise affecting the site.
- 11kv power lines cross the site from north to south at two points as shown on Figure 1.

2.4 Ecological Considerations

- In general, the fields designated as Site B in ALP have been farmed and therefore do not have great diversity. The fields to the west on site fh1 are a mixture of paddocks and small fields supporting a wider range of species. Pine Marten have been spotted in this area and existing trees provide habitat for a range of wildlife, otherwise there are of no outstanding ecological interest.
- Drystone dykes, in a generally poor state of disrepair, form many of the boundaries to the east of the site; wire fences are used in places.
- The track is lined by attractive and mature native tree species, as are some of the boundaries of the fields in Site fh1 (see figure 1). The house at Mains of Colleopard is also surrounded by a group of mature trees.

2.5 Urban Context

- The site is not noted of being of any archaeological interest other than the find site for a spearhead.
- The town of Banff itself has a distinct character as a historically important coastal town. The town centre consists of generally narrow streets with a traditional pattern with many impressive public and private buildings and a variety of shops. Duff house and its policies lie to the south and provide a dramatic entrance to the town.
- The site lies at the western edge of the existing town beyond the modern, low density, bungalow style housing at Colleopard Crescent. The area to the east of the site has been developed in an incremental

and piecemeal fashion. Several houses of older origin are to be found close to Colleonard Road, one of which is located in part of sit fh1. Fh1 also contains several new houses around the Mains of Colleonard.

- There are no conservation areas on the site. However to the south lies Banff Conservation Area. Duff House Mausoleum, a category A listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument, lies within 100m of the site in this Conservation Area but is not visible from the site.

2.6 **Access**

- There are no established rights of way across the site. ALP indicates a pedestrian desire line as Project Area P2 (footpath/cycleway/bridleway) that is likely to be included with in the Core Paths Plan. This follows a well-used track that runs through the sites (north/south) and forms the boundary between site fh1 and site B. This is an important link for the network of open and natural spaces.
- There are no existing roads on the sites apart from a small section to the extreme northeast of fh1 that forms the continuation of Colleonard Road. Colleonard Road provides access along the northern side, narrowing to single track at Sandyhills.
- A possible access point exists from the A97, which runs to the south, and Montcoffer Drive to the east.
- From the junction at Colleonard house, a minor road north connects with the continuation of Whinhill Road. A more direct route to the School, commonly known as Cemetery Lane, lies along a minor road next to the cemetery and connects with Whinhill Road. These roads are generally very narrow.

2.7 **Utilities**

- Connection to water mains and foul sewers is expected, new infrastructure may be required for the development of the area.

- Discharges from surface water sewage systems will require the consent of SEPA. Developers should contact SEPA to discuss their requirements.
- Broadband connection is available in Banff.

2.8 ***Other Considerations***

- There have been no previous applications on the majority of the site. Numerous applications have been made to the north west of site fh1 in the area around the Mains of Colleonard.
- The area known as site B was designated in the Consolidated Aberdeenshire Local Plan (1998) as an area for longer-term residential development. The Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan designated Site B for housing between 2000-2005 and the area to the west as a future housing site, fh1. A single objection to these sites was resolved through the Local Plan Inquiry.
- All three of these sites are separately owned.
- There is a shortage of affordable units in Banff and the surrounding area.
- There is currently capacity at Banff Academy. Primary capacity is more difficult to calculate as class sizes requirements may reduce overall capacity by 20%.

2.9 ***Conclusion***

- The area containing existing residential buildings should be excluded for the purposes of this brief. New development should not significantly affect the amenity of the current properties.
- Whilst the sites are designated for a total of 95 units it is likely that, with the exception of Site C, more units could be accommodated on the sites than indicated. For an increase in density to be acceptable developers must demonstrate they have fully considered the recommendations and constraints outline by the brief.

- The sloping open nature of this site and its important landscape setting provides much of the character and would be prominent from distant views to the west of Banff. Any development would be required to be of high quality design and provide coherent landscaping and strategic planting which is sympathetic to the surrounding features.
- As the site is on the western extremities of the town development will need to consider access to the countryside and between the important local features, especially along the required footpath, cycleway and bridleway.
- Improving local roads will be a key requirement if development is to proceed. Improvements to the roads north of the site to Whinhill will need to be considered by the Council in the longer term.
- To avoid a piecemeal-disjointed development and to overcome constraints on development all interested parties should consider the neighbouring development sites and come to agreement over provision of necessary infrastructure.

3.0 SITE REQUIREMENTS

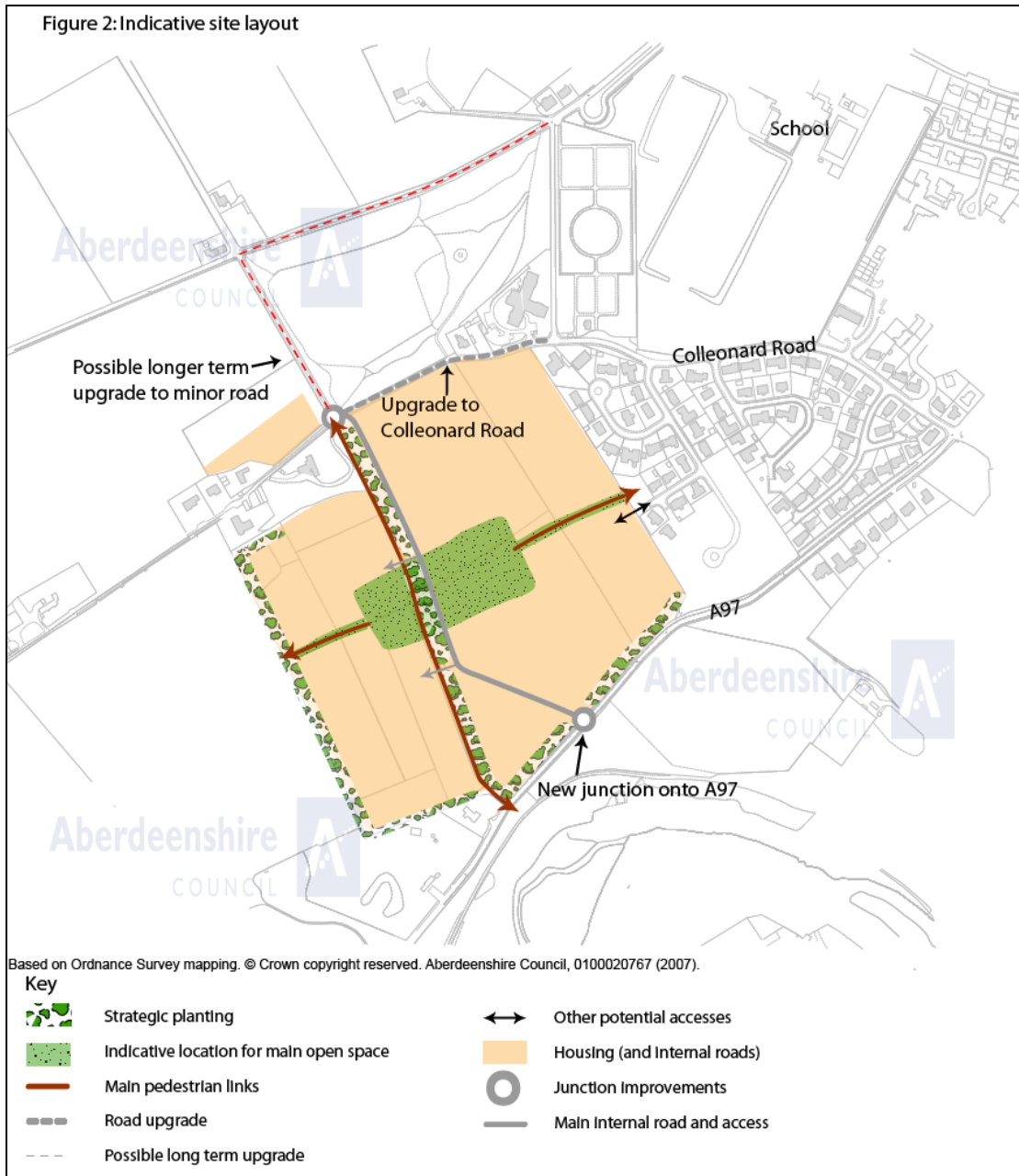


Fig. 02 Indicative site layout

The above map illustrates how the requirements of the brief may possibly be achieved. It is for illustration only and detailed consideration will have to be given to elements such as open spaces, junctions, internal roads building design.

3.1 **General**

3.1.1 **Index 21**

- Development of the site's layout should reflect the approach set out by the 5 Indicators listed in "Index 21" *

Note Index 21 is a method of assessment that essentially does two things: it identifies a set of key issues that affect the "environment-friendliness" of housing layouts; and integrates them in a framework that gives each element its proper status. It is based on the assessment of five Indicators: climate, energy, resources, biodiversity and social aspects. Crucially it has developed as a *process* by which the quality of layouts can be assessed rather than as a *prescriptive* guide to good and bad ones. However, this development brief also identifies some aspects from Index 21 that will be crucial for this particular site in any circumstances. For more detail see the website at www.index21.org.uk.

3.1.2 **On Site Renewable Provision**

- A substantial amount of everyday energy use should be derived from micro-renewables. The Scottish Ministers have set a target of generating 40% of Scotland's electricity from renewable sources by 2020 (SPP6) and a requirement to reduce CO2 emissions from new development by 15% beyond building regulations.
- A statement on the methods proposed to minimise energy use and on renewable energy technologies considered must be submitted with the proposals, and justified reasons given for any rejected. A series of flow-charts is attached to aid this consideration (Appendix 2). The advice of 'SCARF' may also be useful in this respect and any available grants can be discussed with them.

3.2 Layout

3.2.1 Response to Climate

- Solar orientation – the site is generally south facing with the potential to capitalise on solar radiation and maximize heating gain. The design and siting of the housing should therefore ensure this potential is fully exploited (i.e. south facing public rooms) and any south facing aspects are not overshadowed.
- Wind chill – the presence or absence of wind may have a greater impact than solar gain in the heating of buildings, particularly during colder months. Because of the exposed nature of the site, especially in regard to the cold wind, development should use shelterbelts where possible to mitigate against wind-chill. The retention of the existing trees to the west will be sought. Further suggested structure planting is shown on figure 2.

3.2.2 Energy Efficiency / Environmental Friendliness

- The highest insulation standards and energy conserving methods should be used in this development. This can help achieve sustainability aims. In addition see section 3.1.2 (On Site Renewable Provision).

3.2.3 Resource Efficiency

- All surface water will be required to be managed using an appropriate Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) (see 3.4.1).
- Drystone Dykes are an important part of our cultural heritage and can form interesting features; all such dykes should be maintained and incorporated where possible. If these features are not incorporated justification should be given.

3.2.4 Biodiversity, Open Space and Sense of Place

- There is an opportunity to promote biodiversity within this particular site through a network of green areas and shelterbelts. These can further encourage bio-diversity especially where a variety of native species are used. Extensive landscaping and structure planting belts to the south and west of the site will provide screening, shelter and habitat (see figure 2). Planting is recommended to take place prior to the development of other elements of site.
- A “sense of place” can be generated by good urban design but also by the creation of purposeful, accessible and well designed open spaces that complements the landscape setting. Given the scale of the site, future development has the potential to create purposeful and attractive open spaces. A concentration of centrally located, well-linked open space is suggested. The location of a landmark or higher density housing around the space will help to create a sense of place. With appropriate planting, spaces can help soften the impact arising from new development and help maintain the semi-rural characteristics of the area. A play area should be provided with a comprehensive range of play facilities in a safe and accessible location ideally within a central space to serve the development. All open spaces must have a clear purpose and where possible be multifunctional.
- Wherever possible housing should front areas of open space to promote safety and provide a street frontage to main spaces.
- Structure planting to the south and west should be of a type and density sufficient to provide habitat corridors for wildlife and create a visual screen from the A97 and the open countryside to the west. This should be a minimum of 10 metres wide at both locations. Additional landscaping/planting should be considered along the track that divides the site to create adequate green corridors. Planting throughout the

site should be considered to help mitigate any intrusive elements of housing developments on the landscape setting.

- Planting, landscaping and areas for open space should be considered before areas for housing. This means that a framework is established in which residential development can then be structured around.
- Appropriate planting should be considered at suitable locations throughout the site to help retain the character of the area.

3.2.5 Distribution of Land Uses

- The housing should provide open spaces that are both useful and when combined, provide a network of open space (see above).
- Though the area is designated for residential development, the consideration of a neighbourhood shop within the development, linked to areas of the development by pedestrian footpaths could help generate a feeling of community a focus and help achieve sustainable aims.

3.3 Access

3.3.1 Footpaths & Cycleways

- Pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian access will be provided along the line of the track as shown in figure 2. This represents a chance to link Lusylaw Wood with the Deveron Valley and to provide a main feature for the site. Development should help enhance the accessibility of these areas. The track and its immediate environs provide an attractive feature and any improvements should be in keeping with the character of the track in its present form and require a minimum of maintenance. Although the surface of the track may require upgrading to be suitable for cycling, the mature trees and drystone walls along this track should be retained.
- Open spaces should be linked to this route as to create a network of open spaces with pedestrian access to all parts of the site. This should

include pedestrian links through structure planting and to other important features out-with the site boundary. Good cycling and pedestrian links will reduce the need to use the private car.

- The secondary school is within easy walking distance if accessed from Colleopard Road and safe and attractive links through the development would encourage walking and cycling to school.

3.3.2 Road Access

- Road access solutions will require detailed consideration by the developer and the best solution will require a detailed assessment and liaison with the Roads Authority. However it is suggested that access should be provided to the north onto Colleopard Road and to the south onto the A97 (see figure 2).
- Colleopard Road will require upgrading (including the provision of a pavement) to allow for the increase in traffic and pedestrian usage. This road should be wide enough to accommodate buses in the future and incorporate a pavement.
- Measures would also be required on the A97 to ensure a safe access. This may require a junction or roundabout solution to ensure a safe access. The new junction with the A97 would form the new town boundary and will require the 30mph speed limit to be extended out to that point. The junction should be visually prominent and provide a positive speed-reducing feature. The location of this junction will also require careful consideration as approach speeds from southwest can be fairly high.
- A connection may be possible to Montcoffer Drive to the east and should be explored. This would promote connectivity and integration with neighbouring developments.
- At least one link to Colleopard Road will be required. The main link should preferably be made at the existing crossroads by Colleopard House. An improvement to the junction that will allow for future

upgrading of the minor road northwards as well as accommodating non motorized access to the bridleway will be required.

- Land should be reserved in Site C so as not to prejudice the future upgrading of the road to link with Whinhill Road.

3.3.3 Links to Undeveloped Land

- There is no foreseeable need for vehicular access to the undeveloped land to the west. However, pedestrian access should be considered.

3.3.4 General Road Layouts and Improvements

- All roads within the site shall be designed in accordance with the requirements of the Roads Authority. Roads should be design as to promote good street layouts; this can help contribute to a sense of place.
- A traditional grid pattern, adapted to suit the topography, could work well at this site and would promote connectivity through the site with housing facing onto roads wherever possible.
- A reasonably direct route between Colleopard Road and the A97 is required. This could be provided as a boulevard style route close to the existing track with the mature trees forming one side of the boulevard with a separate access for housing on the other.
- The use of Cul-de-Sacs is to be discouraged as disconnected street patterns reduce choice, interaction and activity. If required Cul-de-Sacs should be of a short linear form where topographical, natural landscape or historical elements make it undesirable to make through connections.
- It is likely that Whinhill Road and its connecting minor road between Collenard House and Firview Cottage would need upgraded to core road standard in the longer term. Cemetery Lane to the north would be difficult to upgrade as it is hemmed in by solid stonewalls. The

Councils Transport and Infrastructure service should be contacted as to the most effective solution to any roads issues.

- Roads will be required to cross the track to access site Fh1. At these points a pedestrian priority crossings system should be used. Points should be chosen where vehicular access would cause minimal damage to the track and its established features.
- A pavement should be required along the north side of the A97.
- A transport assessment is likely to be required.

3.3.5 Traffic Calming

- The development should be designed to encourage slower vehicle speeds. Using design concepts such as minimal signage, limited visibility, shared space, grid patterns and multiple junctions to naturally slow traffic within the development is strongly encouraged and supported.

3.3.6 Public Transport Needs

- There are currently no bus routes and the site is fairly distant from the town centre. A bus route that operated close to the site would be of benefit. Extending the local town service between Banff and Macduff might be a possibility. Contact with the provider (Deveron Coaches) as to the feasibility of rerouting this service is advised.

3.3.7 Emergency & Service Access

- All emergency and service accesses will be accommodated by the internal access roads to be constructed in accordance with the requirements of the Fire Officer and the Roads Authority.

3.3.8 Access for All

- Access for those with disabilities should be considered when designing all aspects of the development.

3.4 Infrastructure & Other Services

3.4.1 Drainage

- Scottish Water will advise on the most appropriate location for connection to foul sewers. All surface water drainage will be designed in accordance with a SUDS scheme and to the approval of SEPA and Scottish Water. When designing these schemes natural drainage patterns and topography should be considered at an initial design stage of the development. A SUDS scheme which is of amenity and biodiversity value is strongly encouraged.
- A drainage impact assessment will be required.

3.4.2 Supply & Distribution of Water

- All water will be supplied from a public water main. Scottish Water should be contacted for more information about the potential connection points. New infrastructure is likely to be required and it would be most appropriate to plan for the development of all sites to be accommodated by one upgrade to the systems rather than individual improvements

3.4.3 Supply & Distribution of Power/Heating

- Electricity can be supplied on-site; the developer should contact the service provider as to the prospect of rerouting or placing the existing power lines underground.

3.4.4 Education Facilities

- There is local primary school and secondary school provision in Banff. The development is likely to have a modest effect on these institutions. School rolls are generally falling but care must be taken, as primary school capacity is also likely to decrease and people are moving to the area. Given these factors, there is, at present, secondary capacity for

around 140 houses. A significant contribution may be required to facilitate provision at Banff Primary School.

3.4.5 Community Facilities

- A single, but comprehensive children's play area will be required at a suitable location on-site which can be accessed easily and safely by pedestrians. Links to surrounding development should be considered when providing this play provision.
- Recycling is strongly promoted by the Council; consideration should be given to how facilities to encourage recycling could be incorporated into developments at this location.

3.4.6 Way leaves

- Way leaves will be required around the power lines if they are placed underground or over ground.

3.4.7 Maintenance

- It is expected that the Local Authority will adopt landscaped areas and open spaces. Agreement will be required with the Council's Landscape Services Section of the T&I Service for the long-term maintenance of any paths, landscaped areas and open spaces. It is essential that the majority of open space is designed to be low maintenance.

3.5 Design

3.5.1 Building Heights

- As the site is located at the extremities of the town, building height should be fairly low. In general buildings of two stories and under would be suitable in the area with any two storey higher profile buildings being more suitable to the south of the site B. A maximum of

one and a half stories would be more appropriate towards the north of site B and in Site C and fh1.

3.5.2 Housing & Space Standards

- The houses on the site should have regard to the latest Council guidance on private space provision but shared spaces could be considered as an alternative in places.
- A mix of housing type is required as to provide for a variety of needs and circumstances. Developers should seriously consider looking towards a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached housing rather than predominately-detached housing.

3.5.3 Design Details

- In view of the location there is an opportunity to create a development that will provide an attractive entrance to west of Banff, with opportunities available for traditional and innovative design. Every care must be taken to ensure that both the layout and design are of a high standard and reflects the best local characteristics of the area.
- It would be preferable that the design and use of materials throughout the site displayed consistency, but in any case the approach laid down in the Scottish Executives Policy on architecture, '*Designing Places: A Policy Statement for Scotland*' and '*PAN 44: Fitting New Housing Development into the Landscape*' should be observed. As previously discussed, energy efficient, low maintenance and sustainable materials should be given priority and adopted wherever practical.
- Wherever possible housing should front onto main vehicular accesses, this helps prevent inward looking developments. This principle should be applied on the suggested link between the A97 and Colleonard Road.

- Site B, in particular, could support a greater number of houses than indicated by the Local Plan and a higher density of development should be considered for site B than sites Fh1 and C. Site fh1 has a particularly rural feel and design should be carefully considered to fit in with its surroundings and location at the west edge of Banff. To accommodate greater numbers, both the layout and design of the development must be of a high standard. Sites around Aberdeenshire where generally allocated at a density of around 20 dwellings per hectare. Many sites could support a higher density of development if incorporating a good mix of house types and careful design and this should be considered as a minimum density on Site B. On this basis the planning service will not object to a higher density of development than indicated in the Local Plan, provided that the layout and design of this development is of high quality and critically that services and facilities can accommodate any increase in numbers in the long term.

3.6 Other Considerations

3.6.1 Phasing

- Whilst it is anticipated that development may have to be considered over a period of time, it is of up most importance that the whole area is considered at the initial design stage. Early phase development would be most appropriate adjacent to existing development to the east of the areas further west being developed subsequently.
- Due to the need to make improvements that will benefit all the development potential, it is advisable that interested parties take a collaborative view from the outset. Developing a detailed Masterplan for the area, in line with the development brief, is seen as an essential method of preventing any phases of development from being detached and incoherent and ensuring infrastructure is provided as required. Developers are encouraged to work together to realise development of the three sites through a masterplan approach.

- Site fh1 will require development within site B to enable access unless other satisfactory solutions can be found. Connectivity between these two sites will be important and this can only be delivered through developers and landowner agreement.

3.6.2 Infrastructure and Service Contributions

- It is anticipated that the housing developer/s will make available a contribution to primary education provision.
- Developers will require to provide funding for any works to the track between sites B and fh1.
- Colleonard Road will require upgrading as part of significant development proposals. As such contributions to this will be required. The infrastructure constraints will need to be overcome for the volumes of housing deliverable from site fh1 and B and therefore it is expected that developers will need to come to agreement about contributions to enable this infrastructure.
- The Council's standard policies in respect of planning gain shall apply. Any additional contributions may be in kind or financial but will require to be agreed with the Local Authority prior to the granting of planning permission. Contributions to health care and sports facilities have been highlighted as possible requirements to be discussed with applicants.

3.6.3 Affordable Housing

- There will be a requirement for affordable houses to be provided. At present the Council would seek a provision of 25% of the total units. This will be subject of an agreement prior to the granting of planning permission for housing. Affordable housing will be required on site and should be consistent with that of surrounding housing and well distributed around the site. This will help avoid stigmatisation and improve social cohesion.

4.0 FURTHER ADVICE

Developers are urged to contact the Planning Service of Aberdeenshire Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss details of any submission before a formal application for planning consent is lodged. Any application will be dealt with primarily by the Banff and Buchan Area Development Control Team, based at the following address:

Planning & Building Standards

Town House,

Low Street,

Banff, AB51 1AY

Phone: 01261 813200

Fax: 01261 813281

E-mail: bb.planapps@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Other useful contacts:

Transportation & Infrastructure	01467 620981
Environment	01467 628254
Scottish Water	01224 675237
SEPA	01224 42460

Appendix 1

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. The flowchart below has been designed to lead you through various types of renewable energy technologies. By answering these questions, potentially suitable sources of renewable energy will be identified.
2. Start at the top left corner ('START') and answer the questions as 'yes' or 'no' and follow the appropriate arrow.
3. The columns on the right should be used for your reference to highlight technologies that should be examined further.
4. The first page highlights energy sources that are relevant to houses, flats and other developments, such as retail or industrial and should always be completed.
5. The second page is split between domestic and non-domestic i.e. houses/flats and other developments. You may need to consider the charts more than once depending on your proposal (e.g. a mixed-use development of houses, flats and retail will need to consider the charts for each use)
6. These energy sources should then be discussed in a statement submitted as part of the proposal outlining which sources are to be incorporated in a development, or why they have been rejected.

