

Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2008

Proposal for a site to be included in the Main Issues Report

Please use this form to provide details of the site that you would wish to have included in the Main Issues Report for consideration as a proposal for the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

One of the purposes of this form is to inform a public debate on the merits of the different sites being proposed. All information submitted will therefore be made available to the public to promote a transparent and open process.

Please feel free to provide any further information you feel appropriate to support your submission. Please ensure your proposal is with us by 6 November 2008.

N1

Name of proposer: Stewart Milne Homes North Scotland
Date: 28/10/08

Postal Address:
Osprey House
Mosscroft Avenue
Westhill Business Park
Westhill
Aberdeen
AB32 6JQ

N2

Name of landowner (if known) [REDACTED]

Postal address of landowner

To comply with the data protection Act 1998 this information will not be made public

The site and your proposals

S1

Under what name would you like the site to be identified?

Land NW of Pitmedden, Aberdeenshire

Have you any information on the internet which promotes your aspirations for the site? If so please provide the URL :

The site name could be descriptive ("Site north of") or an address (Site at Westburn Road , Aberdeen)

S2 Have you provided a map showing the exact boundaries of the site you would like considered?
 S3 Yes No

Please provide the National Grid reference of the site
 NJ 940 155

S4 What is the current use of the site? Agricultural

Has the land been built upon before (Brownfield Land)? Yes No

Is there any suspicion that the land is contaminated? Yes No

If yes Please provide a statement of the nature and extent of the contamination suspected
 Statement attached

S5 What use(s) do you propose for your site?

Residential. There is scope for community uses on site should this be deemed necessary

If you are proposing a mix of uses on your site please ensure that the area of each is noted on the site plan

S6 Are you proposing to phase your development? Yes No

If you are proposing phasing your development please provide additional details of what is anticipated to be built, and when.

A phasing plan will be developed as the next revision of the masterplan. This will be prepared following dialogue with the local community and officers at Aberdeenshire Council.

S7 If you are proposing housing on the site please provide us with details of what you think would be appropriate, both in terms of the number of dwellings, and their form (Flats, detached houses etc).

A range of terraced, semi-detached, detached and affordable housing will be provided. Indicatively 150 houses will be provided over at least 2 phases.

If you have a design statement or other details about what you would like to see on the site, please include it.

S8 If you are proposing business land please provide us with details of what you would market the land for?

Businesses and offices (Use class 4)

General industrial land (Use Class 5)

Storage and distribution (Use Class 6)

Do you have a specific occupier in mind for the site? Yes No

Please make sure the area of land proposed for business use shown on the site plan.

S9 If you are proposing uses other than housing or business please provide us with as much detail as possible on what you propose.

Please continue on additional sheets as required.

The wider area

A1 Please provide a statement on the siting and design of your proposal (how will the development fit in with the wider landscape, or complement the urban design of the area?)

The site wraps around the north – western periphery of Pitmedden gradually rising upwards towards the South –western corner. Land to the north of the site is allocated for employment purposes in the Aberdeenshire local plan 2006. The B999 Tarves road bounds the site along its north –eastern boundary. The site is located in an excellent position to naturally accommodate residential development. The site has the ideal topography to accommodate a development with respect for the local environment and landscape setting. The site has the capacity to accommodate development with the ability to provide strategic landscaping to enhance the visual impact of the settlement providing organic linkages though to the existing residential areas.

If you have a landscape statement, a design statement or other details about what you would like to see on the site, please include it. *Statement attached*

If you have prepared any frameworks or masterplans showing a possible layout for the site, please include it with this form. *Framework attached*

Have you applied principles of sustainable siting and design to your site? Yes
 No

If you have undertaken a site assessment please provide details
Statement attached

The Code for Sustainable homes or WWW.index21.org.uk provides guidance on this issue

Effect on the community

Has there been any opportunity for local people to influence what you propose through local engagement? Yes
 No
 Not Yet

If you have undertaken any community consultation please provide details of the ways in which engagement was conducted, its effectiveness and the way in which it has influenced your proposals. Please provide details of any engagement you may propose to undertake.

C2 At least 25% of all housing is likely to be required to be affordable. If applicable, are you considering providing more or less than this? More
25% or Less

C3 What community benefits arise from your proposals? What would the nature of these be, and how would they be delivered?

Housing will support local facilities including the primary school. Land can be provided for community uses should there be an identified need arising from the discussion with Aberdeenshire Council and the Local Community.

Community benefits may be material, such as community facilities, or intangible, such as affordable housing or the ability to live locally. Include elements which you anticipate may be required as developer contributions from the development (although specifics will have to be negotiated with the Council on the basis of the development proposed)

C4 How easy is it for people using or living in the development you propose to access services? Are the following facilities within:

	400m	400m-1k	>1km
Local Shops	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community facilities (eg Hall)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports facilities (eg playing fields)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Residential areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public Transport networks	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please specify)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Medical Centre			

Please tick appropriate box

If you propose to provide any of these as a component of the development itself then please answer "yes". NA=Not Applicable

Servicing the site

C5 Have you undertaken any of the following studies to determine whether your site is capable of being developed, or what might be required by you to make it developable?

Flood Risk Assessment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic Impact Assessment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Drainage Impact Assessment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Habitat / biodiversity Assessment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Other as applicable (eg noise, dust, smell Retail impact etc)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	NA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Rather than full studies it may be appropriate to undertake initial assessments to identify the scale of any works that might be required, as this will impact on the deliverability of the proposal. This assessment may be no more than an exchange of letters with appropriate

agencies. Information on water and sewage capacity is available online at :
http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/portal/page/portal/SWE_PGP_CONNECTIONS/SWE_CORP_CONNECTIONS/ASSET_CAPACITY_SEARCH

- C6 What are the access arrangements you propose for the site. Does your site plan clearly show where you propose to access the road network? Yes No

Other information

- O1 What other information would you like to be considered in support of your proposal? In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 please do not include any personal information

Our client Stewart Milne Homes are seeking the allocation of their site for residential development in the emerging Aberdeenshire Local Plan.

The site is located in an excellent position to naturally accommodate residential development. The site is in a position to take access from the B999 Tarves Road at its eastern edge. Moreover the site is also able to provide pedestrian and subsequent access to the existing road network and amenity areas. The site sits comfortably within walking distances to public transport halts, employment land and amenity areas as specified in SPP 17 Planning for Transport and as discussed in PAN 67 Housing Quality and PAN 76 New Residential Streets. There is scope to divert a bus service into the site in the future.

The Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Housing Land Audit reports that capacity for Pitmedden will be met in 2011 with no further growth proposed after the completion of Plot B site (site reference F/PM/H/010). We firmly believe that our clients site could provide further growth and contribute to the five year housing land supply.

The location of the site sits comfortably within the context of PAN 74 Fitting Development into the Landscape. The site has the natural topography to accommodate residential development whilst having respect for the local environment and the landscape setting. The size and positioning of the site lends itself to a well laid out development incorporating a mixture of high quality house types and tenures. Furthermore the site is able to provide carbon reduction measures on a larger scale including the potential for sustainable onsite heat and power provision.

The allocation of this 6.5 hectare site for residential use would represent a sustainable and organic approach to the growth of the village with convenient pedestrian and vehicular linkages to the existing settlement. Post 2011 Pitmedden is vulnerable to unplanned approaches for development and this site represents a natural direction for the managed future expansion of the settlement.

This is expanded upon further in our development bid statement.

Please return the completed form to the Policy Planning Team, Planning Policy and Environment Service , Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB or e-mail to ldp@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

Fair Processing Notice

- The Data Controller for this information is Aberdeenshire Council.
 - The data will be used for the following purposes:
 - 1) to inform a public debate on the merits of the different sites being proposed,
 - 2) to evaluate submitted bids
 - This data will potentially be disclosed worldwide (via publication on Internet)
- By completing and submitting this form, you are consenting to the above processing.

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01 Introduction

- 1.1 This development bid is submitted on behalf of Stewart Milne Homes North Scotland. It concerns a proposed site for residential development which is suitable for inclusion in the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The structure of the bid shall firstly describe the site and proposed development. The relevant national and regional policies which provide the background for the proposal shall then be analysed, before a reasoned justification for the allocation of the site is made in section 08.

02 Site Description

- 2.1 The village of Pitmedden lies 16 miles north west of Aberdeen and has a population of over 1436 people (2006 statistics). The village is served by local shops, public transport facilities, medical centre, nursery, primary school and recreational facilities. It is well connected to the transportation network lying on the B999 Aberdeen to Tarves route; and is within 6km of the A90 Trunk Road. Transportation connections in the vicinity will be further improved through the development of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, which is planned to be constructed 7km to the south.
- 2.2 The proposed site wraps around the north-western periphery of Pitmedden, gradually rising upwards towards the south-western corner and measuring approximately 6.5 hectares in area. It is currently in agricultural use falling within Class 3(1) of the Macaulay Classification for agricultural capability, meaning that it is not prime agricultural land. The area to the north of the site is allocated for employment purposes in the Aberdeenshire Local Plan (2006), with the B999 Tarves road defining the north-eastern boundary. Pitmedden House exists to the north-west, and this is set within the extensive wooded

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grounds. The land to the south and west of the development is currently used for arable farming.

03 Proposal

3.1 The bid proposal comprises a residential development which would include a range of house types and densities. The proposed layout is illustrated in the location map which is appended to this report. Vehicular access would be taken from 2 points, both along the eastern boundary. The more northerly of these would connect to the B999 Tarves Road, with the southern access forming an extension of Keithleigh Gardens. These vehicular connections would be accompanied by a permeable network of footpaths, with a further dedicated footpath link being formed on the southern boundary of the site, also connecting to Keithleigh Gardens. A central area of public open space would be provided as part of the development, and this would be augmented by strategic planting belts around the perimeter of the site. There is also scope to accommodate identified community facilities, potentially including local retail, recreation or sports facilities. The masterplan will be amended to reflect this following discussions with Aberdeenshire Council Officers and the Local Community should they be required.

04 National Planning Policy

4.1 Local authorities must take account of Scottish Government planning policies on a range of matters in the preparation of local development plans. The following policy and advice documents are considered to be relevant to this development bid.

4.2 ***SPP1: The Planning System*** at paragraph 4 outlines the primary objectives of the planning system as being:

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- To set the land use framework for sustainable economic development;
 - To encourage and support regeneration; and
 - To maintain and enhance the quality of the natural heritage and built environment.
- 4.2 Paragraph 7 of SPP1 states that planning should encourage sustainable development by "**...promoting regeneration and the full and appropriate use of land, buildings and infrastructure**".
- 4.3 Scottish Planning Policy on housing is provided by **SPP3 – Planning for Homes** (revised 2008). The key objectives of this SPP include:
- Allocation of a generous supply of land to meet identified housing requirements across all tenures, including affordable housing, and related policy objectives.
 - The creation of high quality places, which support the development of sustainable communities.
- 4.4 Further more detailed guidance is provided in relation to the allocation of housing land within development plans. In relation to expansion to existing settlements paragraph 68 states "**where brownfield and infill sites cannot meet the full range of housing requirements, it may be necessary to release greenfield land next to built up areas. Meeting housing requirements through extensions to existing towns and villages can have a number of advantages. Servicing costs can be reduced and new housing may benefit existing communities by helping to sustain local schools shops and services.**"

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- 4.5 In terms of the accessibility of new housing land, SPP3 gives strong encouragement to ensuring that it is well integrated with existing and proposed public transport, walking and cycling networks.
- 4.6 The importance of landscaping and open space is also stressed within SPP3. Paragraph 77 states that "***proposals should be considered in the context of their landscape setting and developers should consider creating a landscaping framework within which development can take place...mature trees should be retained where possible and replaced when they are lost.***"
- 4.7 ***SPP17 – Planning for Transport*** recommends that the process of preparing local plans should relate the land use development pattern to the capacity of the transport network. Paragraph 32 states that new local plan land allocations should be considered in relation to transport opportunities and constraints. Specific policy guidance is given in paragraph 51 of this document. This states that travel generating uses such as the type proposed should be located within 400 metres of the public transport network.
- 4.8 ***SPPG 6 – Renewable Energy and PAN 84 – Reducing Carbon Emissions in New Development*** both place great importance on the energy efficiency of new housing developments, giving encouragement to the use of measures to reduce carbon emissions from new housing.
- 4.9 ***PAN 44 – Fitting Development Into the Landscape*** is also of relevance and developers are encouraged to address a number of landscape issues when bringing forward new sites for development. These include:
- ***Respect for the local environment and landscape setting***

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- ***Improvement of visual impact of the development as seen from any road and rail routes – and also public open spaces***
- ***Measures to retain and create important views through the site***
- ***Measures to integrate the development within the existing townscape and landscape***

4.10 The Scottish Government have published a range of documents specifically targeted at ensuring high standards of urban design in the residential sector. Both ***PAN 67 – Housing Quality*** and ***PAN 76 – New Residential Streets*** have this aim, and they seek to do this by ensuring that new developments are well integrated with the movement and settlement patterns of the area, to take account of the context and be integrated with the wider neighbourhood. Further advice is given in the Scottish Government's urban design policy statement – ***Designing Places*** which identifies the qualities which are integral to a successful place, to ensure future streets are conspicuously distinctive; safe and pleasant; easy to get to, and get around; welcoming; adaptable; and resource efficient.

05 Draft Structure Plan – Aberdeen City and Shire

5.1 The Aberdeen City and Shire Draft Structure Plan was published in June 2008, and it is therefore the strategic document which will inform the content of the next Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. The draft structure plan contains a number of objectives including an increase in the population of the city region by 9% to 480 000 by 2030. To achieve this, the following targets have been identified:

- ***To build at least 2500 new homes each year by 2014 through the development plan.***
- ***To build at least 3000 new homes each year by 2020.***

These targets are to be achieved through the spatial strategy which has been identified in the plan. This includes three Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) and a Local Growth and Diversification Area (LGA). The LGA is split between the Aberdeen and Rural Housing Market Areas. 4700 units have been allocated within the Schedule 1: Housing Allowance of the draft structure plan for the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, within which Pitmedden is located.

06 Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Housing Land Audit 2008

6.1 The Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Housing Land Audit 2008 reports that capacity for residential development at Pitmedden is due to run out in 2011, with 50% of the residential units proposed for Plot B to be developed in 2010, with the remaining 50% scheduled for development in 2011. In any case the allocation for site B is limited to only 14 units. Such a small allocation would contribute little to the future development of the village; providing insignificant support for existing and new local services.

07 Formartine Area Plan 2007 - 2010

7.1 The Formartine Area Plan aims to strategically manage the development and growth of the Formartine area, streamlining priority objectives across the Council's Services. Future Challenges identified in the Formartine Area Plan include:

- the requirement to accommodate continuing high population and household growth while protecting the Area's unique built and natural heritage;
- the need to sustain the more fragile rural communities in the Area.

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08 Justification

8.1 The preceding sections have described the site and proposed development; also identifying the relevant policy guidance at a national and regional level which will require to be taken into consideration in the drafting of the new local development plan for Aberdeenshire. This section shall provide a reasoned justification for the allocation of the site at Pitmedden based upon the relevant policy framework.

Housing Land Supply

8.2 The requirements of **SPP3 – Land for Housing** are clear, in that they encourage the allocation of generous amount of land, to meet identified housing requirements. These aims are echoed by the objectives which are included in the draft structure plan to significantly increase the population of the region. A contribution to this increase will be made through the allocation of 4200 units within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, within which Pitmedden lies and the proposed site is ideal to contribute towards this total through its allocation in the next Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

8.3 A clear need has been identified for housing within Pitmedden with the **Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Housing Land Audit 2008** identifying that limited growth has taken place in recent years. Other than site B (**Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2006**), which is restricted to 14 units, no other sites have been identified within Pitmedden for residential development purposes. The proposed site would overcome this capacity shortfall and would help to achieve the aims of the draft structure plan to increase the population of the area.

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8.4 The suitability of this allocation within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area is reinforced due to the site's proximity to the Aberdeen to Peterhead SGA. Pitmedden is within close proximity of this growth corridor and is therefore well placed to accommodate the demand for additional housing which will be stimulated by the economic development which is planned as part of the Energetica concept.

Support for Local Services

8.5 **SPP3 – Planning for Homes** clearly explains that in cases where brownfield development is not possible, expansion to settlements offers a number of advantages including reduced servicing costs and support for local services. Both of these features apply to the proposed site. Firstly in recent years there has been significant investment in infrastructure in support of residential development and at present spare capacity exists for both sewage treatment and water supply. Secondly Pitmedden Primary School has benefited from expansion in recent years, with capacity for 175 pupils. The primary school is currently operating below this capacity, with the latest school role forecasts predicting a further decline of 10% between 2008 and 2016, to 155 pupils. Given these circumstances, the allocation of further residential development to the village will enable the existing school to operate to its full potential, and provide the additional services that are currently lacking in the village which would be supported by an increased population.

8.6 EMP C was identified in ALP and has yet to be taken up for employment purposes. The development of further housing land and the subsequent increase in population may act as a catalyst for bringing this land forward for employment uses.

Accessibility

8.7 The site offers a number of advantages in terms of its accessibility to a range of facilities. **SPP17 – Planning for Transport** indicates that residential proposals should ideally be located within 400metres (a 5 minute walk) of a range of services. The following facilities fall within this threshold:

- Public transport – a regular bus service runs along the B999 which lies immediately adjacent to the site.
- Site EMPC (**Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2006**) lies immediately to the north and in time when this is developed offers a considerable potential to encourage sustainable travel to work patterns.
- Football ground – 322 metres
- Recreation ground – 250 metres
- Primary School – 330 metres

8.8 The position of the site encloses the north west corner of the village, providing easy linkages with the existing pedestrian routes, promoting safe and easy access to the facilities listed above, a key feature of successful places as discussed in PAN 67 and **76 New Residential Streets**.

8.9 Furthermore there is scope to form a range of local facilities on site, such as retail and community facilities. An area of open space of a size comparable to a community play area within the heart of the development would be formed with neighbourhood green space and strategic planting provision incorporating pedestrian linkages to neighbouring amenity areas and the adjoining existing streets. All of these measures would combined to reduce reliance upon the private car and enhance the sustainability of the site.

Landscape Setting

- 8.10 Examination of the location map which is appended to this report highlights the suitability of the site for development within the context of its landscape setting. It is adjoined on its northern and western boundaries by mature structure planting which would ensure that the proposal fitted naturally into the landscape, causing no adverse impact. This approach accords with the requirements of both SPP3 and PAN44 which stipulate that development proposals should be considered in the context of their landscape setting retaining mature trees where possible. Both of these criteria would be met by the site, thus enhancing its suitability for allocation.

Housing Layout & Urban Design

- 8.11 The draft structure plan has identified that future housing developments within the SGAs should achieve a housing density of generally no less than 30 units to the hectare. Moreover PANs 67 and 76 seek to ensure that a range of house types and sizes are provided to enhance the urban design qualities of new developments and promote distinctiveness. Our client is fully signed up to these principles and the proposed site would incorporate these characteristics.

Sustainability

- 8.12 The growing importance of carbon emission reduction is embodied in SPP6 and PAN 84 which both support policies aimed at a 15% reduction in emissions beyond the 2007 Building Regulations. The site shall be assessed using the Index 21 methodology at an early stage to ensure maximum efficiency levels are achieved.

09 Conclusion

- 9.1 The draft structure plan and government policy on planning for housing are both supportive of generous housing allocations where demand exists. Pitmedden's location within the Aberdeen housing market area, in close proximity to the Aberdeen Peterhead SGA makes it an ideal location for the proposed residential allocation.
- 9.2 Beyond 2011 there is no planned growth to Pitmedden. The population profile for Aberdeenshire as a whole is set to age and this is reflected in the diminishing school roll forecast for Pitmedden Primary School. In order to retain the sustainable growth and viability of the village, the allocation of future housing land, of a size to provide a variety and mix of housing types and tenures within the village is necessary.
- 9.3 The village has a strong sense of community and recent infrastructure upgrades provide an excellent foundation for future development; an increased population will enable the local primary school to operate at an effective capacity, providing an excellent base for strong growth and additional services.
- 9.4 The site enjoys an attractive setting formed by a backdrop of mature trees thus ensuring it would be not at all prominent in the landscape.
- 9.5 The site itself is of a scale suitable for the accommodation of a high quality community play area, neighbourhood green space and structure planting, with natural topography that would shield the development from the prevailing wind chill. The size and positioning of the site lends itself to a well laid-out development, incorporating a mixture of high quality house types and tenures; based upon the principles of carbon-reduction, as set out in the recent Government guidance. Furthermore, this particular site lends itself to the



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provision of carbon reduction measures on a larger scale, including the potential for sustainable on site heat and power provision.

- 9.6 The allocation of this 6.5ha site for residential use would represent a sustainable and organic approach to the growth of the village, with convenient pedestrian and vehicular linkages to the existing settlement. Post 2011 Pitmedden is vulnerable to unplanned approaches for development and this site represents a natural direction for the managed future expansion of the village.