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## 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 Ltd

Date: 6 November 2008

Postal Address:

C/O Marianne McGowan

Osprey House

Mosscroft Avenue

Westhill Business Park

AB32 6TQ

N2 Name of landowner (if known) [REDACTED]

Postal address of landowner [REDACTED]

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?

Site lying immediately to the north east of settlement boundary at Newmachar.

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 890 197

S4 What is the current use of the site? Agricultural use (arable crops)

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 development, open space area, strategic landscaping and land set aside for community facilities (to accommodate potential relocation of primary school).

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.

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).

Approximately 11.2 hectares of the site is to be set aside for the residential development. It is thought that the site is capable of accommodating around 280 units. A mix of house types and sizes is foreseen.

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.

Community facilities are proposed for the site and land has been allocated on the site for the possible relocation of Newmachar Primary School. Please see the Master Plan at Appendix A of the Supporting Development Bid.

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 bid site and its boundaries are described at paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 of the Supporting Development Bid. These sections explain that only one part of the site is visible over any significant distance and how the remainder of the site is well contained by the existing development to the south and west, and also by the rising land to the north. The topography beyond the site and the existing landscape features help contain the proposed development and visual impacts arising from the development of the site will be minimal. Strategic landscaping proposed, particularly on the higher part of the site to the north east, as an integral part of the development, will further minimise any impact.

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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*

A2 If you have prepared any frameworks or masterplans showing a possible layout for the site, please include it with this form. *Framework attached*

A3 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](http://www.index21.org.uk) provides guidance on this issue

### **Effect on the community**

C1 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?

1. Development provides potential for relocation of the primary school which is currently over capacity. The new school could provide greater range of facilities for the community.
2. Help to meet the shortfall in housing numbers.
3. Provision of open space area.
4. Provision of footpath linked to the adjoining development and connect the village to the Formartine & Buchan Way.

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
	Please tick appropriate box		
Local Shops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community facilities (eg Hall)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports facilities (eg playing fields)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>

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)			

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Retail impact etc)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
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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\\_SE](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/portal/page/portal/SWE_PGP_CONNECTIONS/SWE_CORP_CONNECTIONS/ASSET_CAPACITY_SE)  
ARCH

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

Please refer to Supporting Development Bid.

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Figure 2: Local Plan Extract

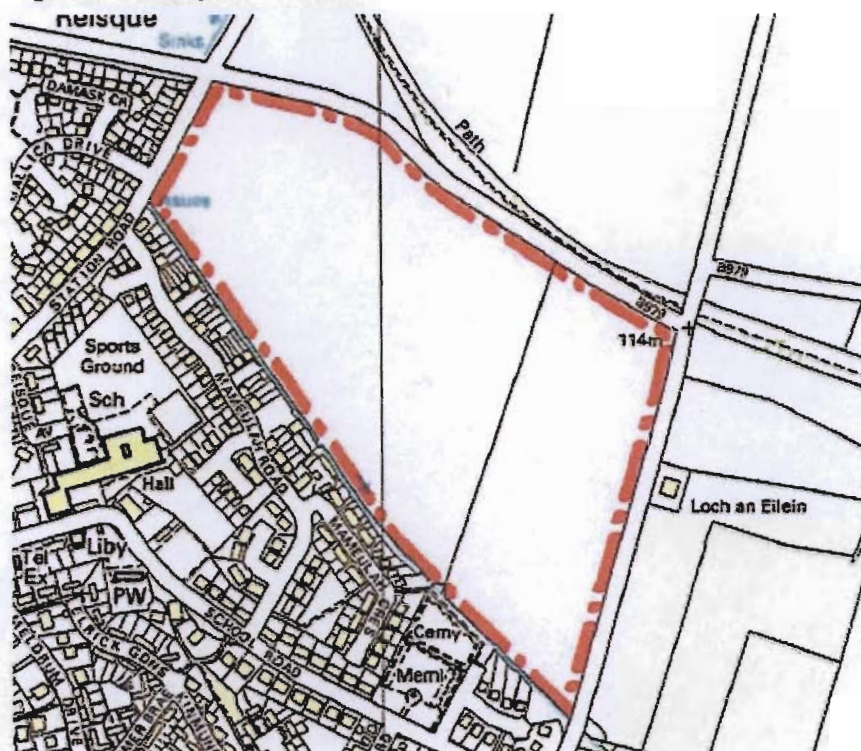


### 3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The land under option to Stewart Milne Homes extends to approximately 13.6 hectares (33.6 acres) or thereby. Currently in agricultural use, most recently for an arable crop, it comprises two large fields separated by a fence line running north/south.
- 3.2 The proposal site immediately abuts the settlement boundary of Newmachar on two sides. The southern boundary for much of its length is bound by residential development on Mameulah Road and Mameulah Crescent. A cemetery also lies adjacent to this boundary. A field drainage ditch runs from the north west to the south east along this boundary. The western boundary is formed by Station Road and the recent residential development beyond this. The northern boundary is formed by the B979, Kingseat Road, whilst the eastern boundary is formed by Hillbrae Road which runs northwards to link with the B979. A detached house, Loch an Ellein, lies to the east of the road.

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Figure 3: Development Bid Site



- 3.3 There is little vegetation within the site given the fact that it is in active agricultural use. There is some shrub cover along the southern and western boundaries. A partial hedgerow follows the B979 with some mature trees along that road. Hillbrae Road has been upgraded and widened along its entire length to an improved junction with the B979. Two, kerbed access points lead into the proposed site from Hillbrae Road, provided as a consequence of the upgrading. In topographic terms the land rises from a low point of 90m AOD to the south east of the site adjacent to Hillbrae Road to a high point of 110m at the north east of the site at the junction of Hillbrae Road with the B979. Only this point of the site is visible over any significant distance. Even then, it is seen in the context of rising land to the north. The remainder of the site is well contained by the existing development to the south and west and also by the rising land to the north.
- 3.4 There are no notable features within the site which warrant special protection. There is also no flood risk associated with the site given its topography and remoteness from a main water course. A power line crosses the southern portion of the site diagonally from the north east to around one third of the way along its southern boundary. The power line passes underground where it reaches the existing residential development and there would be no impediment to doing likewise across the site.

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3.5 The site was promoted as a future search area for residential development at the Aberdeenshire Local Plan Inquiry in 2004. The reporters to that Inquiry conceded in their conclusions that they could see no fundamental reason why the site would not be suitable to accommodate some of the development needs of the settlement in the future. However, they considered that it was not appropriate to identify the site as an area of search for future housing beyond 2010, due to the scale of the potential development. In effect, the Structure Plan to which the Local Plan required to conform provided little guidance in terms of the requirement beyond 2010 to justify a further substantial allocation.

#### 4.0 LOCAL SERVICE PROVISION

- 4.1 Newmachar Primary School is located within the heart of the village. Secondary school education is provided at Dyce Academy within the Aberdeen City Council administrative area. The primary school has a capacity of 335 pupils. At 2007 the school roll amounted to 313 pupils. Aberdeenshire Council's 2007 based School Roll Forecasts indicate that the roll will increase to 369 at 2010 before reducing to 309 pupils at 2016. Dyce Academy is identified as having an effective capacity of 620 pupils. The City Council's 2007 based School Roll Forecasts indicate that it had a school roll of 535 pupils in 2007. That roll was forecast to peak at 564 pupils in 2008 before falling to 454 pupils at 2016.
- 4.2 Reference to Scottish Water's 2007 Asset Capacity Maps indicates that the Waste Water Treatment Works serving Newmachar has very limited capacity. An upgrade of the WWTW will be necessary and this is currently being investigated with Scottish Water. Similar difficulties exist in terms of mains water supply and this is also being addressed. However, these are technical constraints and are capable of being overcome by the scale of development proposed.
- 4.3 Being located on a main public transport corridor between Aberdeen and Banff the village benefits from a number of public transport services providing access to communities along that route. There is also a school bus service between Newmachar and Dyce Academy. Aberdeen City Centre is a major transport hub providing connections to other bus services linking the wider area. Rail and airport connections are available nearby at Dyce. A dedicated footpath and cycle route runs from Newmachar to Dyce free of vehicular traffic.

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however, result in the loss of the existing hedgerow and a small number of mature trees. Whilst these could be replaced, this is an issue which would require to be addressed with the roads authority and through public consultation.

7.4 The land for community facilities would be located to the south east of the site where it would be relatively accessible both by car and public transport. The higher part of the site in the vicinity of the Hillbrae Road and B979 junction would be kept free of development and landscaped in order to contain the development in visual terms. Footpath links would be provided to the adjoining development and connect the village to the Formartine and Buchan Way.

7.5 Setting aside 2.43 hectares (6 acres) for a new primary school or community facilities would leave approximately 11.2 hectares for residential development, open space provision and strategic landscaping. At an average gross density of 25 houses per hectare the site would be capable of accommodating around 280 units.

## 8.0 JUSTIFICATION

8.1 Newmachar has grown significantly in the past 20 or so years. Its attractive rural location and range of facilities and services linked to its proximity to Aberdeen City with the benefit of good transport links has proved popular with house buyers. The effective sites at 2000 have all been built out and the minor site allocated through the 2001 Structure Plan is now under construction; all of which demonstrate the attractiveness of Newmachar to house buyers.

8.2 The village benefits from a wide range of facilities and services. Planning Policy seeks to maximise the use of existing facilities and infrastructure with a view to increasing the overall supply of new homes. SPP3 specifically recognises that where brownfield and infill sites cannot meet the full range of housing requirements, it will be necessary to release greenfield land next to built up areas. It further acknowledges that meeting housing requirements through extensions to existing towns and villages has a number of advantages, including the reduction in services costs. Also, as highlighted, new housing can benefit existing communities by helping to sustain local schools, shops and services.

8.3 Whilst the primary school at Newmachar is presently over capacity, there would be scope through further development to provide for the relocation of the school. This in turn would release a development site in the heart of the community.

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The new school would also be capable of performing a dual role by providing a greater range of facilities available for the community.

- 8.4 There is a recognised need for significant amounts of new housing. The Scottish Government has set a target of 35,000 houses per annum by 2015. The draft Structure Plan recognises this and highlights a requirement for 72,000 new homes in the period to 2030. To address this will require substantial land release and Newmachar is considered a sustainable and attractive location to contribute to this.
- 8.5 The most recent 2008 Housing Land Audit demonstrates a considerable shortfall in the 5 year housing land supply when that supply is measured against the three most recent relevant requirements including the 2007 Strategic Forecasts, comparison with Table 3 of NEST and past completion rates. When measured against Structure Plan Table 3, the maximum supply is 4.8 years whereas, if measured against the 2007 Strategic Forecasts the supply drops very significantly to 2.7 years. This, taken together with the Scottish Government's objective would dictate the need for a substantial and early release of land.
- 8.6 The scale of land release proposed would provide for a mix of house types and sizes. It would also include affordable housing to meet the requirements specified at the time by the Council's Housing Needs Assessment.
- 8.7 The availability of a range of services and facilities locally, and certainly within the threshold walking and cycling distance specified in PAN75, is a major factor in identifying sites for development. The land identified at Newmachar would meet that criteria and also that of SPP17 wherein public transport provision would be available within a 400m walk distance of the site.
- 8.8 In topographic terms, the site is capable of development. Being south facing it is well placed to maximise passive solar gain thereby enhancing the energy efficiency of potential housing. The site is not particularly visible from any distant vantage point. The topography beyond the site and the existing landscape features help contain the proposed development and visual impacts arising from the development of the site will be minimal. Strategic landscaping proposed, particularly on the higher part of the site to the north east, as an integral part of the development, will further minimise any impact.

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8.9 Development of the site will also provide improved connectivity between the existing housing areas and the Buchan and Formartine Way which provides pedestrian and cycle links to Aberdeen City and Ellon to the north east. This route can be used for both leisure and commuting purposes.

## 9.0 CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Newmachar has proved an attractive and popular village in which to live. It provides a wide range of services and facilities and lies on a public transport corridor with good connections to the road, rail and air network and to Aberdeen City.

9.2 The limited housing allocation through the 2001 Structure Plan has restricted the supply of land in the village. Sites that have come forward have been quickly taken up. There is a current shortfall in the 5 year housing land supply and the Government's commitment to provide increased housing numbers would dictate the need for an early and substantial release of land in Newmachar.

9.3 There are no physical constraints to the development of the site and it has minimal impact upon the landscape setting of Newmachar. It is bound on two sides by development and on the remaining two sides by public roads.

9.4 It is recognised that the school is over capacity and occupies a constrained site. Accordingly, land is set aside for the relocation of the school. This would enable longer term development of the land at Mameulah to the north.

9.5 Stewart Milne Homes Ltd are committed to the proper planned expansion of Newmachar with the provision of related services and facilities to match that growth. The masterplan proposals at this stage are entirely indicative and it is anticipated that these will evolve through detailed public involvement through the design process.

9.6 In light of all of the above, it is considered that the land at Newmachar has the capacity to sustain and easily accommodate the expansion of the village. It is respectfully requested, therefore, that this site be included in the emerging Local Development Plan for immediate development.