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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.

Name of proposer: Bancon Developments Ltd.

Date: 4/11/08

Postal Address: Banchory Business Centre, Burn O' Bennie Road, Banchory AB31 5ZU

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

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

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)

Have you provided a map showing the exact boundaries of the site you would like considered?

Yes No

Please provide the National Grid reference of the site

NO854954

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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

What use(s) do you propose for your site? Residential with a small community core, with significant landscaping, open space and planting.

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

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.

The site is considered suitable for around 300 houses in total, split evenly into three phases of 100, proposed to fit into the five year local plan cycles.

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).

Bancon considers that the site can support around 300 units, ranging from 1-3 bedroom flats to 2-6 bedroomed terraced, semi-detached and detached houses. Provision of sheltered housing and a care home are also proposed.

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

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)

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General industrial land (Use Class 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Storage and distribution (Use Class 6)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a specific occupier in mind for the site?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please make sure the area of land proposed for business use shown on the site plan.	

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

Due to the location, and the proximity of the rural school, it is important that any development should have a community core, providing a mix of retail, professional and business uses, on a scale appropriate for a 300 house sized development.

Please continue on additional sheets as required.

The wider area

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 is reasonably well contained on all sides, and is generally seen against a backdrop of rising ground. Significant areas of strategic landscaping are proposed to soften the visual impact of the development.

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

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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.

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

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

The development would help to provide additional support for the new school, and provide facilities to compliment the school and the existng Inn. A range of house types and tenures would be available, as well as employment opportunities associated with the community core

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)

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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 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"/>
Primary School			

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

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Traffic Impact Assessment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Drainage Impact Assessment	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	NA <input type="checkbox"/>
Habitat / biodiversity Assessment	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input 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 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_SEARCH

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

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 see the supporting statement for further clarification and detail on the proposal

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.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN BID

FOR LAIRHILLOCK

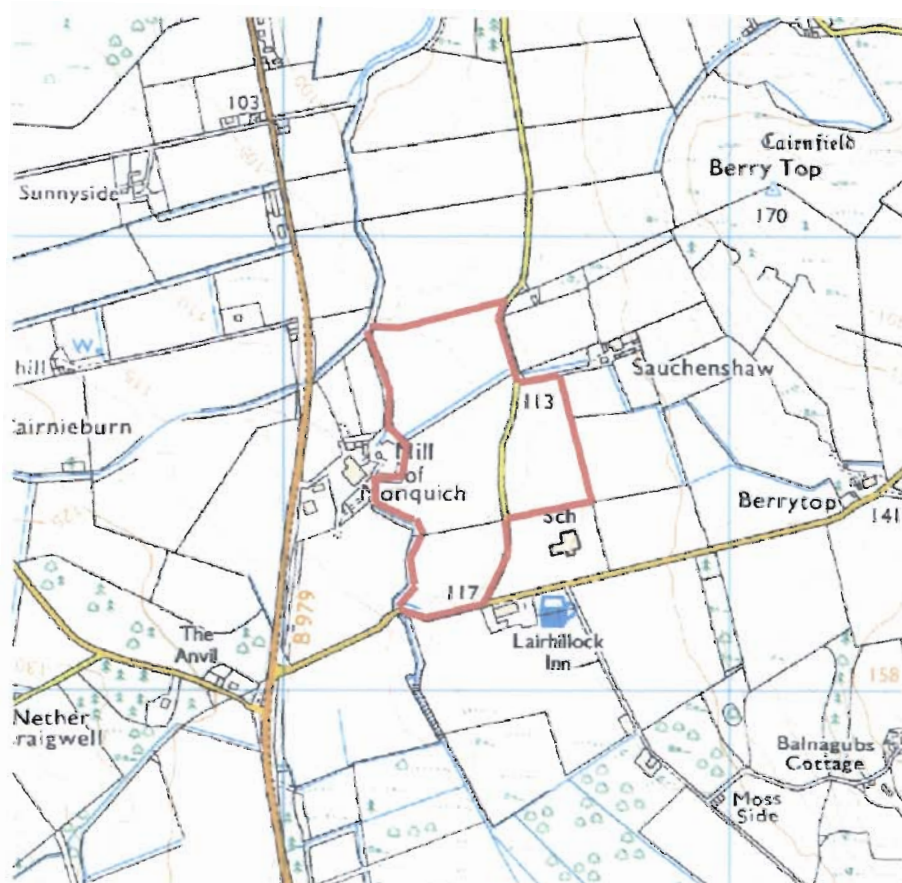
Planning Statement

1. Introduction

This is a LDP bid to request the inclusion of land at Sauchenshaw Farm (which surrounds the new primary school at Lairhillock as a residential development opportunity site in the forthcoming review of the Aberdeenshire Local Plan.

2. The Site

The site comprises 4 fields which are currently in use as grazing land and which extend to 18.7 Ha. (approx. 46 acres). The fields are situated on either side of the minor road which runs northwards from the Lairhillock Inn towards Sauchenshaw Farm and Stranog beyond. The map below shows the detailed location.



The fields slope down from Berry Top in the east towards the Crynoch Burn in the west. The highest land is at circa. 120m AOD while adjoining the burn, the land is at circa. 105m AOD. There is therefore a fall of some 15m evenly spread across the site.

The new Lairhillock Primary School sits to the south west of the site, there is agricultural land to the east and the access track to

Sauchenshaw Farm forms the boundary on the north east. On the west side of the Stranog road the site is currently bounded by a dry stane dyke on the north, by the Crynoch Burn on the west and by the road leading from the B979 to the Lairhillock Inn (and Portlethen beyond) on the south. A ditch runs across this part of the site, from Sauchenshaw Farm down to the Mill of Monquich. A tree belt is associated with this ditch and provides a strong feature in the landscape.

3. Surrounding Land Use

Surrounding land uses are almost exclusively agricultural, but notable exceptions are the new Primary School, the Lairhillock Inn – which is a restaurant and bar (but has consent to add a bedroom extension) – and the Mill of Monquich which sits to the west of the Crynoch Burn.

The former Mill of Monquich has been converted to a house, but adjoining it is an industrial undertaking and pipe yard.

The primary school is a modern building having only been completed in 2008. It is a two stream primary school understood to have a capacity of 210 and a current roll of 122 pupils.

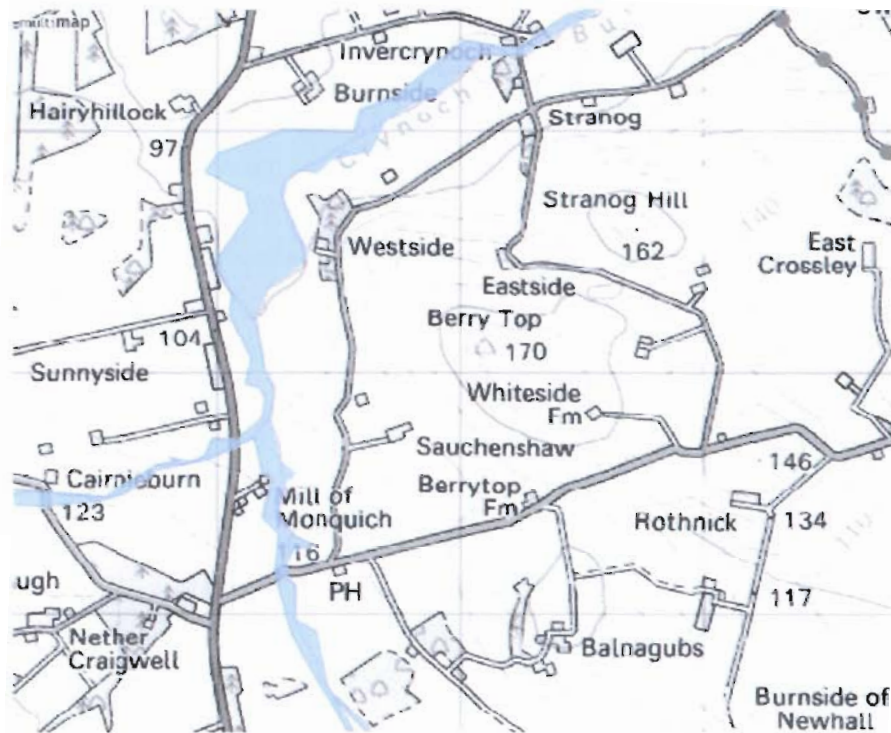
The Lairhillock Inn is a traditionally constructed steading building (with granite walls and a slated roof) which has been extended over the years. Its traditional vernacular style is typical of the other farm houses and steadings in the area.

4. Development Proposals

As the enclosed masterplan shows the proposal is to develop a village community around the new primary school. As the school and the restaurant/bar already exist, the focus for the master plan is in providing the community core (including small scale commercial development opportunities) and housing components.

The site extends to 19.4 Ha (47.85 acres) of which 15Ha would be developable. Taking an average density of 20 units/ha the development content could be 300 units. It is anticipated that this could be undertaken in 3 phases of 100 units, corresponding to the 5 year local plan cycles.

Apart from the housing, a main element of the masterplan will be the provision of significant areas of open space and strategic planting. The development will be shielded on all sides by 20m (minimum) wide strategic planting tree belts, and the area along the Crynoch Burn will also be developed as a linear park – allowing for burn-side footpaths linking all phases of the village to the community core. This accords with the flooding constraints identified in SEPA's flood map shown below.



5. Housing Mix

Throughout the development there will be a full range of house types and sizes, from 1 – 3 bedroom flats, to 2-6 bedroom terraced, semi and detached houses. In addition, provision will be made for sheltered housing and a care home. As regards affordability, Bancon are committed to providing at least 25% of the housing as affordable with a variety of tenures also anticipated.

6. Access

Access is currently available from 3 directions. From the B979 to the west, from Portlethen to the east, and from Maryculter to the north. It is anticipated that, depending on destination, traffic will mostly use the link to the B979 which leads northwards to the lower deside settlements (and a link to the AWPR) or southwards towards Netherley and Stonehaven beyond.

The road between the new primary school and the B979 was significantly upgraded to enable the development of the school. However the planned improvement to the bridge over the Crynoch Burn was not carried out, and this will require to be addressed in any new development.

Even when fully developed, no part of the village will be further away from the community core than 400 metres. The development will therefore be eminently walkable or cyclable.

7. Visual Impact

The bid site sits in the valley of the Crynoch Burn and is visually well contained on all sides. To the east there is higher ground at Balnagubs and Berry Top which provide containment. To the north the land rises up towards Altries, before descending into the Dee Valley. To the west the land rises towards Upper Craigwell, while to the south Mickle Carewe Hill screens the site. There are therefore few long views into the site.

Visual impact is accordingly currently restricted to a handful of houses and fleeting views from passing traffic. The main views are from the B979 but these are conditioned by the local topography, the buildings around the Mill of Monquich and the trees already on the site. As the planned strategic planting develops, it will be fair to say that the visual impact of development on the site will be reasonably limited – particularly since, in most views, the site will be seen against a backdrop of rising ground.

8. Justification

The LDP is being reviewed in the height of the emerging structure plan review. The draft SP promotes development in 3 main strategic development corridors. One of these is generally along the railway corridor between Laurencekirk and Huntly. In the section of the corridor between Stonehaven and Portlethen, the Draft SP anticipates the location of 6,000 new homes and business land. As the Lairhillock Primary School was designed to serve some of the smaller communities in the corridor, it is arguable that the development proposed around the school could contribute to this housing target.

In addition however, the structure plan also supports significant residential and business growth outwith the strategic development corridors. The site also lies within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, where it is proposed that new 4,700 homes could be provided over the life of the Draft Structure Plan.

The LDP bid could therefore contribute to either of the allocations outlined above.

Although the masterplan does not incorporate class 5 & 6 business land, it does provide for a range of commercial development opportunities, which could provide for class 4 as well as class 1, 2 & 3 activities.

Having regard to the mix of uses proposed, it is suggested that the development proposed in the masterplan represents a sustainable new village settlement. It will add a comprehensive mix of housing to the established stock in the area, improving both choice and affordability. It will also bring a range of employment opportunities to the area increasing its internal sustainability.

As noted above, there is capacity in both Lairhillock Primary School (and Portlethen or Cults Secondary Schools) to absorb the children from the development.

Additionally it should be noted that the development can be readily serviced with water, gas & electricity, although a sewage upgrade will be required

The development will have good links to Portlethen, Stonehaven and lower deeside as well as to Aberdeen. In addition the presence of the school on site will help to encourage walking and cycling to school.

Finally it should be noted from Para 7 above that the development will have little visual impact in the wider landscape.