

**DRAFT  
DEVELOPMENT BRIEF  
FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF LADYSBRIDGE HOSPITAL**

This Development Brief was approved on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2005  
And up-dated on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2007 (to reflect the changes to ALP through the  
Local Plan Inquiry)

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this brief is to provide guidance for the redevelopment of the former hospital site at Ladysbridge. The brief will assist in guiding the redevelopment of the former hospital site which is sustainable, respects the setting of the listed building and is appropriate to this rural location. It proposes a mixed-use development to a high standard of design that will provide Ladysbridge with a sense of place and community.

### 1.2 The Development Plan

The site is designated as a Redevelopment Area within a designated Rural Service in the Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan (ALP). The site is described as being suitable for a mixed-use development including housing. The balance of the settlement envelope comprises Protected Areas, most of which relates to the Listed Building.

A number of development policies and appendices are relevant, namely:

#### **Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan (NEST)**

Policy 3	Other Employment Opportunities
Policy 11	General Housing Considerations
Policy 13	Developer Contributions
Policy 14	Affordable and Special Needs Housing
Policy 16	Sports and Recreation Facilities
Policy 20	Built Heritage and Archaeology
Policy 21	Design
Policy 25	Waste Management
Policy 29	Coastal Planning

#### **Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan**

Policy Gen\1	Sustainability Principles
Policy Gen\2	The layout, siting and design of new development
Policy Gen\3	Development Contributions
Policy Gen\5	Landscaping Standards
Policy Gen\11	Redevelopment and Mixed use Areas
Policy Hou\1	Housing Land Allocations 2000-2005
Policy Hou\8	Affordable Housing
Policy Emp\9	Tourist Facilities and Accommodation
Policy Emp\10	Sport, leisure and recreation
Policy Inf\1	Roads and Access
Policy Inf\2	Parking, Servicing and Accessibility
Policy Inf\4	Drainage and Water Standards
Policy Inf\5	Additional Drainage Standards: Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)
Policy Inf\6	Waste Management
Policy Inf\10	Community facilities.

Policy Env\17	Protected and other Open Areas in Settlements
Policy Env\18	Listed Buildings
Appendix 1	The Design of New Development in Aberdeenshire

## **2. Site analysis**

### **2.1 Setting/location**

Ladysbridge is a small settlement comprising some 25 houses and the redundant hospital, with a population of about 60. It is located 3 miles west of Banff on the A98 Banff to Portsoy road. The redevelopment site is about 18 hectares in area. NHS Grampian previously owned the site and all of the former hospital buildings including the Troup/Moor/Newton block, a large Listed Building, remain intact. The site includes large areas of open space between each hospital building, with a network of linking footpaths and roads. The trees around the perimeter of the site and around the listed building and its associated buildings visually separate the hospital grounds from the existing houses at Ladysbridge. This landscape feature together with the openness of the site gives it a character quite distinct from the existing housing.

### **2.2 Views**

The site benefits from extensive, attractive views to the south, and as the site slopes up to the north these views can be seen from almost anywhere on the site, except where obscured by the Troup/Moor/Newton block and associated buildings.

### **2.3 Contours/Landform**

The site slopes gradually up to the north and eventually levels off for the northernmost 15% of the site.

### **2.4 Natural Suntraps and Wind-Chill**

The site is south facing and south sloping and enjoys good sunshine. However, the site is bound by mature/semi mature tree belts on all sides that form a natural wind barrier.

### **2.5 Urban Form or "Grain"**

The main facility in Ladysbridge was the hospital. The hospital grounds comprise very low-density development. To the south east of the site is the extensive Listed range of the Troup/Moor/Newton block with a prospect over formal gardens to the A98 and rural views beyond. To the north of this range are low-density, relatively modern hospital buildings set within areas of open space. Most of these buildings are in need of repair and updating. To the west of the listed range are four, 1970's style dwellings, also in need of updating and repair. Ladysbridge village itself has a suburban form, with around 25 semi-detached bungalows. Ladybrae Farm is located on the edge of the settlement.

## 2.6 Listed Buildings

The site contains a category B listed building. The original Ladysbridge Hospital, Troup, Administration and Moor Newton block is listed (shown on plan 1). The original hospital building is dated 1864 and was listed in May 1990. The building is mainly two storeys, built in dark Rhynie stone and contrasting tooled sandstone ashlar dressing. The building looks over ornamental gardens, which are now overgrown. The setting of this listed building comprised the ornamental gardens, and tree belts of semi mature trees, which screen the building from the rest of the site.

There are also three category B listed buildings to the west, just outside the site boundary: the former Boyndie Parish Church (Church of Scotland) gutted by fire in 2000; the former Boyndie Church of Scotland Manse; St Brandons and Boyndie Parish Church (Church of Scotland), Beadles cottage and stead-ing (linked with St Brandons and now restored to provide two holiday letting units).

## 2.7 Local Services

Ladysbridge has very little in the way of local services, just a bus service and post box, and so relies on services from neighbouring settlements. The primary school is located in Whitehills, a village 1 mile north of Ladysbridge. The Secondary School is in Banff, 3 miles to the east. Shops and other services are in Whitehills and Banff. Boyndie, which is on the boundary of Ladysbridge hospital, has a small charity shop, The Old School, which contains a small shop (specialised foods, gifts and clothes) and a small garden centre.

## 2.8 Public Transport

The Stagecoach bus service, 305, operates from Elgin to Aberdeen, the bus stops at Ladysbridge every hour to an hour and a half. The bus stop is located at the entrance to Ladysbridge hospital. There is no local service other than the School bus.

## 2.9 Flooding

There is no history of or known potential for flooding on this site.

## 2.10 Nature Conservation

There are no nature conservation designations on the site. The ornamental gardens and other land to the north of the site are protected in the Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan.

## 2.11 Burns and Natural Drainage

There are large areas of open space in proximity of the mature trees on the site that offer some natural drainage. However in the open spaces where there are no trees there is evidence of poor drainage.

## 2.12 Existing Road Pattern

The site's main access is off the B9121 road through Ladysbridge. The road network within the site is fairly simple and loops the site. The southern boundary of the settlement runs parallel to and some 176 metres from the A98 Banff to Elgin road.

## 2.13 Trees/Hedging/Boundaries

The site is bound on four sides by mature trees. There is also a belt of mature tree that screens the listed building from the rest of the site.

## 2.14 Known Hazards

There are no known hazards

## 2.15 Rights of Way

The roads to and within the site are private roads but there is public right of way access through to Boyndie.

## 2.16 History of the site

Local history tells that Ladysbridge takes its name from a small bridge, no longer in existence, which crossed from the Burn of Boyndie a little to the east which was used by the Lady from Inchdrewer Castle when visiting the coast, the lady (ladies) being the wife of the Lords Banff of Inchdrewer.

Ladysbridge Hospital was built in 1864 as the Banff District Royal Mental Asylum under the 1857 Act "The Care and Treatment of Lunatics and for the Provision and Maintenance and Regulation of Lunatic Asylums in Scotland". In the 1970's the hospital was extended and 14 individual units, including a central hall and catering facilities were built in the grounds to the north of the original hospital, creating a community for people with learning difficulties. The hospital was closed in May 2003.

## 2.17 Land Ownership

Prior to the closure of the hospital NHS Grampian owned the site. The Ladysbridge hospital closed in May 2003. The site is now in the ownership of the company Ladysbridge Village Ltd.

## Plan 1

### Ladysbridge



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### **3. Site Requirements**

#### **3.1 General Approach**

The Council wishes to encourage all new development in Aberdeenshire to add to the quality of the built and natural environment, whilst providing economic and social benefits, wherever possible. The Council also wished to encourage innovative and high quality contemporary design

##### **3.1.1 Response to Climate**

Wind Considerations – The existing tree planting should provide a degree of shelter from wind and noise, in order to reduce the impact of wind chill. However, the exposed nature of the site will need to be addressed through careful layout design and the design of the buildings themselves. Any additional planting shall comprise a dominance of species native to the North East of Scotland.

Solar Considerations – Buildings shall be designed to take advantage of solar radiation and to maximise heating gain.

##### **3.1.2 Resource efficiency**

The site currently has a number of buildings on it. The majority, which are purpose built 1970's buildings. There are four vacant dwelling houses that are in need of renovation that could be retained. There is the opportunity to convert the listed property without detriment to its architectural character. Any development of this site shall fully integrated with the original building which are to be retained.

##### **3.1.3 Social sustainability**

The redevelopment of the former Ladysbridge hospital site gives the opportunity to provide Ladysbridge, as well as the wider area, with much needed community facilities. Within the settlement boundary of Ladysbridge there is, for example, no community centre, convenience shop, or children's play facilities. The balance of the mixed uses in the new development will need to take account of social sustainability.

##### **3.1.4 Biodiversity**

The site has large areas of semi-mature/ mature trees. These shall be retained and enhanced. The existing open space should be retained and enhanced as much as possible. There is a need to enhance and maintain the natural biodiversity within the site.

#### **3.2 Distribution of Land Uses**

### Housing

Since the existing development in Ladysbridge, comprising of around 25 dwellings, is reliant on services provided in neighbouring communities the development of this site should be in phased in such a manner as to make the development of local service facilities viable and sustainable. This site presents an opportunity to develop a special village environment, which benefits and draws inspiration from its settings. There shall be a mixture of housing types, including affordable, eco-housing and self-builds

Small clusters of housing are encouraged, reflecting the low-density development and large areas of open space that exist on the hospital site. Groupings of between 5 and 10 houses could be dispersed throughout the site, incorporating substantial areas of associated open space. These areas of open space, in part, shall be landscaped in a manner, which sustains the rural environment of the site. Play and leisure/sports facilities shall be developed in association with these areas. A footpath network that links will all the housing on site and through to the existing settlement and Boyndie should be integral to the development. This network should also be developed in a manner that is mindful of proposed new networks in the area.

There is also the opportunity here to provide some very low density, detached housing each with large gardens in amongst public open space, landscaping and tree plantations. This would create a layout of large, secluded, country homes, which are usually found in the countryside, but will benefit from being in a settlement.

The listed buildings shall be redeveloped in conjunction with the rest of the site. It could be partly redeveloped for residential use.

Any residential development on this site shall be connected to a biomass energy development, such as a combined heating and power plant, proposed to be located in the business park; or a district heating scheme, which can be sited within the residential development or in the business park

### Landscaping

The layout of the site shall incorporate appropriate landscaping. The site has a number of semi-mature and mature trees, which contribute to the site's character and should be retained and incorporated into any proposal. Planting on the site should be native and 25 – 30% should be evergreen to provide year round coverage. Woodland planting on the south side of gardens and public spaces should comprise of smaller growing trees, e.g. Rowan or Birch, to minimise shadows being cast over these areas. The existing sculpture currently situated in the centre of the site shall be retained and positively located in a new landscape structure.

The ornamental gardens to the south of the listed building should be restored and maintained. These garden needs to be specifically for long term, low maintenance design.



There is a right-of-way that exists between Ladysbridge and Boyndie. This route should be improved, with a better defined path and signposts. The right of way should be incorporated into any proposed development and new path network.

A qualified landscape designer shall be employed to produce a landscape masterplan for the site. The developer should prepare a short and long term finance and maintenance plan for the site.

#### Gateway feature

A gateway or small landmark is encouraged on the site. Any development on this site is required to link in with the existing village and a small gateway feature may be beneficially incorporated, at the link or at the new access, in the design and layout of the development, perhaps land marking the sites historic use.

A programme of art development for the site as a whole shall be encouraged.

#### Community facilities

Ladysbridge presently has no community facilities. This redevelopment presents the opportunity to provide the village with a hall and sports field, amongst others facilities. The area marked on plan 2 shall be developed for these community uses. The building, shown on Plan 1, has a large hall with high ceiling and stage, has the potential to be redeveloped into a multi-purpose facility, if required. This building has adequate open space around it to integrate other facilities and car parking. The community facilities could, if necessary, be community managed, with each household and particularly organisations contributing to the maintenance and running of the hall, through a Community Trust.

Child and toddler Play Park shall be incorporated into any proposal. An all weather bowling green is also encouraged on the site. Associated car parking will be required for any facility proposed.

#### Employment

Employment uses are required on this site, consistent with the creation of a sustainable development: the redevelopment on this site is effectively creating a new settlement. Business development would be more suitable for the site than industrial given the character of the redevelopment. Plan 2 shows a location for a small business park or starter units for small businesses. The Banff and Buchan area's employment land is mainly industrial based: the Area lacks in the provision of quality land for business parks. This site offers land for high quality business land in an ideal location close to Banff and with good access along the coast road. A secondary access to the site is required for the business uses, separating residential from employment traffic. This secondary access shall be taken off the B9121 as shown on Plan 2. As a minimum the developer shall be required to service the business site. A full appli-

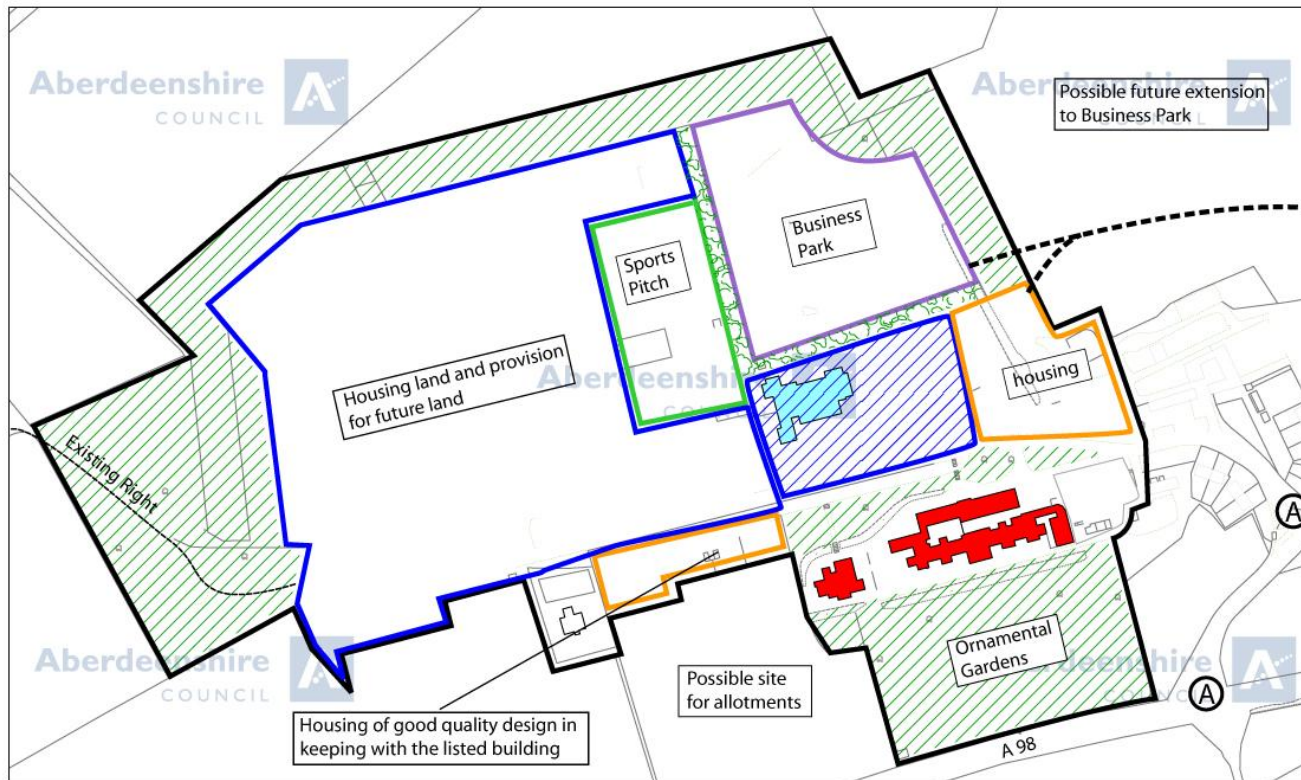
application for the whole site, detailing the siting of the business park shall be required.

The inclusion of a 'green' business use is encouraged on this site. A biomass-fuelled district heating system is encouraged within the business park and would be required to produce enough energy to serve the housing being proposed on the remainder of the site. The facility shall be required to be of high quality design that would be appropriate in a business park and shall require a large enough footprint for the facility itself, storage of fuel eg. a hopper, and turning area for a HGV.

There are other opportunities to incorporate employment on this site. The listed building has the potential to be redeveloped into office space, The building to the west of the listed building although not listed is in the same style of the listed building and has the potential to be developed into office space.

Plan 2

Ladysbridge



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### 3.3 Access

#### 3.3.1 Vehicle access

The main access is to be taken from the existing access point. The existing access and the sites road system will require upgrading to an adoptable standard. There is no advantage (in engineering and cost terms) to keeping the site's existing road layout. Any development on this site would create a greater number of traffic movements than what exists now. Crossroads are generally accident prone, and this particular stretch of road has a bad accident rate. Therefore the junction on the A98 onto the B9121 should be upgraded to comply with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) standards to mitigate the impacts on road safety. A second point of access, off the B9121, is required to access the business park. This access will serve also as the access to the community facilities and the emergency access to the main development.

#### 3.3.2 Footpaths and Cycleway

A footpath and cycle path network is required on this site. Connections to the existing settlement and improvement to the existing footpath to Boyndie to the west of the site are required. Off-road pedestrian and cycle links to Whitehills are required. Footpaths should be three meter wide with a tarmac surface. An improvement to the National Cycle Network is required with a link from Ladysbridge onto the National Cycle Network at Whitehills to allow safer, more sustainable access to Banff and Macduff.

#### 3.3.3 Traffic Calming and other standards

Traffic calming measures shall be integrated into any development on this site. Residential proposals on this site will be encouraged to provide 'Home Zones'.

#### 3.3.4 Public Transport Needs

Green transport is promoted throughout Aberdeenshire. Ladysbridge is on the main Elgin to Aberdeen bus route and there is a local town bus service. As Ladysbridge is a remote settlement, an extended, more regular bus service is required for any residential development on this site in order to reduce car dependency. The Scottish Executive draft guide to Transport Assessments in Scotland states that all parts of settlements should be no more than 400m from a bus stop (less distance for the less mobile). Therefore the road network within the site shall be designed to allow for a local bus service to loop the site, possibly via the business park/community facilities access. The developer will be required to finance establishing and maintenance of the extension of the existing local town bus service over the first few years.

#### 3.3.5 Emergency and Service Needs

All emergency and service access will be constructed to the requirements of Aberdeenshire Councils Transport and Infrastructure Service and the Fire Officer.

### 3.4 Infrastructure

#### 3.4.1 Drainage

Scottish Water has identified that there is public sewer capacity for foul waste only at Ladysbridge.

A sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) Scheme is required in the form of detention basins and filters in residential and business park areas. SUDS schemes should meet the requirements in the CIRA manual. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and maintenance of drains should be dealt with at an early stage. Early consultation of Sustainable urban Drainage Systems for this site is required with Aberdeenshire Council and SEPA.

#### 3.4.2 Supply and distribution of water

Water will be supplied from an extension to the existing water mains.

#### 3.4.3 Supply and distribution of Power/heating.

A District Heating System plant shall be included into this redevelopment site, this plant shall serve any development on this site.

#### 3.4.4 Waste management facilities

Space will be required for Community recycling facilities within this site. When designing the layout of residential development, adequate space will be required for Kerbside collection.

#### 3.5 Developer Contributions

The subject of developer contributions should be discussed with the Council's Planning Gain Co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity. An agreement may contain contributions in cash or kind in line with policy requirements.

#### 3.6 Design

This unique site offers the opportunity to create a special environment. As Ladysbridge is a very small village with no local services, development at Ladysbridge Hospital is effectively creating a new settlement. As a "new settlement" the Council wishes to see a mixture of uses including community facilities, employment and housing, rather than a one-dimensional suburban style extension to the small group of 25 houses that is Ladysbridge. Due to the site's character, rural location and listed building, every care should be taken to ensure that the sites special features are reflected in the layout and design of any proposal.

##### 3.6.1 Building Heights

As the site has semi mature/mature trees round the perimeter and within the site, housing development could be a mixture of single, 1.50 and 2 storey buildings. Employment development uses should be restricted to a maximum two storeys.

##### 3.6.2 Housing and Space standards

Housing development on the site must meet the current requirements and have regard to Appendices 1 (The design of new development in Aberdeenshire) and 6 (Provision of public open space).

