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- Mr Andrew Lawson, Data Protection Officer, Aberdeenshire Council, Business Services, Town House, 34 Low Street, Banff, AB45 1AY

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Which document(s) are you committing on?	Main Issues Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Draft Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Strategic Environmental Assessment Interim Environmental Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your comments

1. Colaren Homes support the identification of site BU006 in Stuartfield as a non-preferred option for development.
2. Colaren Homes do not support the identification of site BU007 in Stuartfield as a preferred option for development.
3. Colaren Homes do not support the identification of site BU008 in Stuartfield as a non-preferred option for development.

There has been a fundamental misinterpretation of the "call for sites" submission in March 2018 in relation to BU008. The proposal sought to increase the allocation for site OP1 from 75 to around 100 - 125 houses. This would be an increase of 25 - 50 houses on the OP1 site and not an increase of 80 houses as the Main Issues Report (MIR) suggests. The proposed +25 houses represents a much more efficient use of the land (relative to the current OP1 allocation of 75 houses) which is consistent with the Strategic Development Plan aim to provide close to 30 dwellings per hectare on allocated sites.

The MIR states that there are constraints associated with adding a further 80 units to the OP1 site. This level of increase in the number of units for site OP1 is not being sought. Therefore the proposal BU008 should not be deemed as over-development. This proposal for BU008 must be reassessed accordingly.

Colaren Homes tried to draw this matter to Aberdeenshire Council's attention in November 2018, however we were told verbally by the planning officer that it was too late to change the reports being presented to Area Committee and the proper procedure should be to make a representation as part of the MIR consultation (hence this submission).

Colaren Homes have built a very popular residential development in Stuartfield. There has been a huge amount of investment on infrastructure associated with this development such as roads, street lighting, foul water drainage, surface water drainage, open space and landscaping in order to make this an attractive place to live. The various phases of the development can be summarised as follows:

- Phase 1 of the development comprised 39 houses on site EH1 in the 2012 local development plan.
- Phase 2 of the development comprised 11 houses and has been completed since 2017 as per APP/2013/1320. This must be removed from extents of site OP1 in the next local development plan to reflect the current position on the ground.
- Phase 3 of the development is completed and Phase 4 is under construction. In these two phases 22 houses have been completed, and a further 9 houses have planning permission but are currently unbuilt.

Therefore site OP1 as shown in the MIR has 11 + 22 + 9 houses completed or unbuilt but with planning permission. This leaves only 33 houses remaining from the 75 houses allocated for the site. There will result in an absolutely enormous area of land leftover for this number of houses which is a very inefficient use of the land at site OP1.

Colaren Homes are seeking to increase the number of units on this site by around 25 houses in order to provide a better and more resourceful use of the area of land that is allocated. This increase from 75 units to 100 units is most definitely not over-development.

The masterplan for site OP1 in Stuartfield which was approved by Aberdeenshire Council in May 2013 states that the site can accommodate more than 75 houses and such an increase may actually create a better layout overall: <https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/8737/stuartfieldmasterplanreportapril2013.pdf>

The MIR is inconsistent in its scoring of BU008 and BU007. It states that education provision and waste water drainage capacity are the biggest constraints for BU008, however in relation to BU007 it states that education may be a constraint if the site is delivered in the near future. This is not a fair comparison to suggest that education is an absolute constraint for BU008 but only a potential constraint for BU007 given BU008 seeks an additional 25 houses to an existing and successful and BU007 seeks 20 houses on a completely new site.

There has recently been an extension built at Stuartfield Primary School which will provide additional capacity in the next few years. Therefore education provision will not be a constraint to BU006 being identified for an additional 25 houses.

The site OP1 is “shovel ready” and already has a proven track record of delivering a wide range of housing to meet local needs including an element of affordable housing. The BU007 site is not able to contribute to the effective housing land supply and will require infrastructure to be built in order to get this development out the ground. There should be greater emphasis on ensuring the continued success and deliverability of the OP1 site (as per the BU008 proposal) and not jeopardise its viability through the allocation of the BU007 for development.

The MIR states that a sharp focus on housing delivery is required. However, this is contradicted by BU007 being identified as a preferred site for 20 houses. By introducing another housing development at BU007 to compete with site OP1 it is not likely to increase the number of houses built in the settlement. It is more likely to split the house completions over these two sites making each development less viable and there is a danger the OP1 site could be mothballed halfway through its lifetime if the sales dry up as a result of competing development on site BU007.

The identification of BU007 as a preferred option in the MIR for 20 houses is frustrating given that Colaren Homes have already provided an enormous amount of infrastructure to service site OP1 and are approximately half-way through a residential development which has been masterplanned since 2012.

In summary, there is an existing development at site OP1 in Stuartfield which has a large area of surplus land which can comfortably accommodate an additional 25 houses post 2021. It would be illogical to introduce a competing site for 20 houses to the west of Stuartfield halfway through the OP1 development.

Therefore the preferred option to identify BU007 for 20 houses should be rejected, and instead the proposal BU008 to increase site OP1 from 75 to 100 houses should be taken forward to the Proposed Plan stage.