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By submitting a response to the consultation, I agree that Aberdeenshire Council can use the information provided in this form, including my personal data, as part of the review of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan. This will include consultation on the Main Issues Report (including any subsequent Proposed Plan).

I also agree that following the end of the consultation, i.e. after 8 April 2019, my name and respondent identification number (provided to you by Aberdeenshire Council on receipt of your submission) can be published alongside a copy of my completed response on the Main Issues Report website (contact details and information that is deemed commercially sensitive will not be made available to the public).

The data controller for this information is Aberdeenshire Council. The data on the form will be used to inform a public debate of the issues and choices presented in the Main Issues Report of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2021. It will inform the content of the Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan.

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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 YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Draft Proposed Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Strategic Environmental Assessment Interim Environmental Assessment YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your comments

I would like to highlight a few comments about the information presented in the LDP and MIR for Newtonhill and surrounding areas.

1 – I note that Newtonhill is called a ‘town’ in the MIR, when we are a village. I would like to see this information amended in the formal LDP. Town classification might impact on planning regulations and be exploited by developers, so I would like the village to remain thusly named.

2 – I would like to register my strong opposition to any future development in the vicinity of Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore. I would like to see all areas indicated as being potentially zoned for housing to be removed from the housing allocation for this area and to for the formal boundaries around Newtonhill and Muchalls to be formally acknowledged by the council. I would like to see the land between Newtonhill and Muchalls, Newtonhill and East Cammachmore as well as all undeveloped (free of housing) land located between the train line and the coast be protected and demarcated as land that will not be zoned for housing in the next LDP (or ever).

I argue this for the following reasons:

1 – the housing market is severely depressed following the oil and gas decline. While new industries might emerge, this is far too speculative to warrant building hundreds or thousands of houses while so many lie empty. In the Newtonhill market, the number of houses for sale remains steady and larger houses in particular (of the size Barratt proposes we need lots of on the site OP1 where they are currently appealing) are simply not shifting.

2 – We need to preserve amenities at a level beneficial to the village. Presently, the village is already a little too big for the amenities present. Pressures on nursery education, primary and secondary schools, medical facilities, public transport, roads, etc are already causing a negative impact on our communities. Aberdeenshire Council has a poor record of planning appropriately for schooling. The schools factored in to Chapelton are linked to numbers of houses built and numbers which will take much longer to achieve. Given the proposal to reduce the amount of houses in Chapelton by chopping it in to stages (another factor which reflects the severe downturn in demand) is particularly worrisome given the capacity issues at primary and secondary levels. Additionally, as Stonehaven has another several hundred houses in the pipeline and proposals for hundreds more and Hillside is being threatened with hundreds more houses, not only will Portlethen Academy be quickly overwhelmed (and with no possibility of extending that building) and re-zoning to Mackie Academy will not be possible because of the pressures on Mackie Academy from local houses. Further growth in Newtonhill and surroundings means that our secondary school pupils will be waiting a very long time for the promised academy at Chapelton which is scheduled for the very end of the development and will be extremely harmful for students dealing with overcrowding and scarcity in their secondary education. There is already a teacher shortage at all levels. And we have been promised that the roll out of 1140 hours of early years provision will be dealt with by private providers locally when we asked about how Education Services would cope with double the number of nursery pupils in Newtonhill Nursery. Except the only private providers locally are in Chapelton, Porthlethen and beyond, all of which place lots more cars on the road and fragment communities. A boom birth year under the present scheme has caused children to be placed in nurseries as far away as Kincorth, so the capacity issues for all schooling levels are of significant concern. I fear that we are heading for another debacle like that seen at Portlethen before Hillside primary was open and that school is now already far too small!

3 – Traffic congestion and safety in the village is already a key concern. There have been two



dangerous crashes in the village this week – one nearly knocking in the wall of a house and the other ploughing through the fence by the trainline. Although speeding and parking are police matters, the simple volume of traffic in the village is incredibly high and will be made significantly worse by any additional development in the village. The main arterial routes through our village were intended for a village of much smaller capacity than this. There are dangerous tailbacks on to and off the dual carriageway at rush hour and even something as simple as a bus can cause significant congestion in the village.

4 – Environmental concerns/green space

The MIR notes how little green space we have in Newtonhill. It also notes that Muchalls is a conservation zone. I would like to see the council preserve existing peripheral green space, rather than convert this to housing. There is a significant impact on local biodiversity caused by house building. I would like to see the council prioritise accelerating the implementation of new park equipment for the village. We have been fundraising in good faith for a couple of years now and the delays caused by a new tendering system means that some of the kids who fundraised have since left the village or will be too old to benefit from it. I would like to see more protection for the Muchalls conservation zone – a tree preservation order for the tall old trees by the village hall, for example. I would like to see the council preserving the coastal views in our area because there is a strong potential for local tourism and heritage in this area. There is an additional problem with green space in our communities. The Cairnhill area is under the “care” of a factor, rather than being adopted by the council. The numerous small park areas in this development have been left to decay and become unsafe, depriving local children of valuable space for exercise and entertainment. This is a terrible system. The proposal for the moor area doesn’t even have any park areas for the children, which compounds the loss of green space. Additionally, the council needs to undertake a stronger survey of species living in or using the green spaces by our communities. The survey undertaken by the developer for OP1 was incredibly limited and omitted protected and endangered species. We need a better understanding of what lives here and work on protecting and enhancing this.

Overall, there are numerous convincing reasons why no further land should be allocated for housing in the vicinity of Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore. For the avoidance of doubt, KN059 in Muchalls should not be zoned for housing because it screens the village from the road. A large number of houses here would alter the character of the village and place heavy burdens on the infrastructure. The junction with the A92 is insufficient for a larger volume of traffic. As this land floods, I would like to see this designated as permanently unsuitable for housing and for measures to be taken to improve the capacity in this area for keeping water away from the houses in the village. Perhaps planting some trees or creating a small area of woodland here would be beneficial to buffer the community from the sound of the A92 as well as adding habitat to the area?

In Newtonhill, I would like to see KN133 and KN101 removed from the allocation. These areas have similar issues with flooding and with the water table. Again, perhaps there is potential here to plant more trees/gorse etc to benefit the local bioversity, to provide much needed amenities and access to green space and to help protect the area from the threats caused by flooding which will only increase via climate change. Adding these areas to the housing allocation will place heavy burdens on schooling, medicine and road infrastructure. Please remove these and confirm the village boundary.

Additionally, if the appeal by Barratt to the Scottish ministers about KN100 is unsuccessful, I would like the council to remove this area from the housing allocation for Newtonhill please and protect this area from development. If the Barratt appeal is successful, perhaps the area marked OP1 only (the paddock) might be protected from further development?

While it would be nice to see more employment opportunities locally, we need to consider heritage and tourism. As such, connectivity between communities via established walking and cycling routes would be beneficial and development should be undertaken only with this in mind. As such, our communities need to be prevented from coalescing as they are distinct, but we really like being able to walk between them!

As coastal routes are being developed between Johnshaven and St Cyrus, it would be good to see a full route from Aberden to Dundee.

Additionally, public transport is poor. I would like to see the station reopen and train services to be regular between Newtonhill north and south. I would like to see more buses too as Chapelton seems to already have better service than us with a fraction of the houses. Additionally, I would like to see buses in operation which allow people to get to work in town by bus and not by car. Presently, even a trip to the health centre in Portlethen by bus takes hours.

Finally, I am concerned by the level of development at Portlethen and Stonehaven also. Stonehaven has significant pressures on infrastructure and I am astonished that large scale developments keep being passed without considering the impact of them on schooling, healthcare and infrastructure.

Given the planning permission for Chapelton, and the fact that so few houses have actually been built there so far, I wonder why the priority isn't to focus as much development as possible in Chapelton for the area between Stonehaven and Hillside? This is especially important considering how amenities like schools and doctors are tied to levels of housing there?

Your comments (continued)

In conclusion. I am strongly opposed to any further housing allocations in and around Newtonhill, Muchalls and Cammachmore. I believe that all development should focus on Chapelton, so that we can have the successful new town that we were promised. Adding hundreds of houses to already busy small communities is damaging in every possible way.

