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Please tick to confirm your agreement to the following statements:

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.

Aberdeenshire Council will only keep your personal data for as long as is needed. Aberdeenshire Council will retain your response and personal data for a retention period of 5 years from the date upon which it was collected. After 5 years Aberdeenshire Council will review whether it is necessary to continue to retain your information for a longer period. A redacted copy of your submission will be retained for 5 years beyond the life of the Local Development Plan 2021, possibly until 2037

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If you are unhappy with the way that Aberdeenshire Council or the Joint Data Controllers have processed your personal data then you do have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Officer, but you should raise the issue with the Data Protection Officers first. The Data Protection Officers can be contacted by writing to:

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

If you have difficulty understanding this document and require a translation, or you need help reading this document (for example if you need it in a different format or in another language), please phone us on 01467 536230.

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

## Your comments

### KN129 Land at Durriss Forest, East of Darnford, Durriss, Sports/Adventure Centre

Our client supports the identification of this site as “*reserved land*” for a regional mountain bike centre with associated facilities, agrees that any sensitivities can be effectively managed through the planning process, and accepts the need for a Phase 1 Habitat Survey to be prepared in support of a future planning application.

The description of the site on the interactive map as a “*Sports/Adventure Centre*” and in the Draft Proposed Plan as being “*Safeguarded for outdoor recreation facilities associated with a sport/adventure centre*” is also welcomed. That wording provides flexibility to accommodate a range of adventure sports without restricting it to being a “*mountain bike centre*” only, as suggested in the overview of the Kincardine and Mearns Landward Sites, Durriss Forest section of the Kincardine and Mearns Appendix (Part 2) of the MIR. That description has the potential to limit the viability of the proposed development and, consequently also limit its potential both to deliver the associated economic, social and environmental benefits in full, and to contribute to meeting many of the LDP and other Council objectives.

At the same time, our client wishes to see the site specifically allocated for the proposed use, rather than being a reserved site. Officers have acknowledged that the site is suitable for this type of development and have recognised the significance of providing support for the principle of development in this location in terms of helping its delivery; that recognition is appreciated. However, whilst accepting that other sites exist that could provide similar opportunities, our client has carried out a robust assessment of alternative sites in the north east, with Durriss identified as the most suitable location for the following reasons:

- it includes a good mix of gradients and ability to provide longer cross-country routes, ensuring all levels of mountain bikers and skiers can enjoy the centre;
- ground conditions are generally good and the existence of a worked quarry on the site will facilitate construction;
- there is an obvious location for the hub facilities with stunning views which can be enjoyed by non-mountain bikers and skiers, and pick up passing trade from the Slug Road;
- there is easy access to the site for visitors from both the Slug Road and the South Deeside Road and its proximity to the Deeside Way provides potential to attract additional visitors;
- visual impact will be minimal given the current plantation forest use, surrounding hills and existing pylon line and masts at the summit of Cairn-mon-earn;
- the summits of Cair-mon-earn and Mundernal provide stunning views across Aberdeenshire, which will be a significant attraction to both mountain bikers/skiers and other visitors; and

## Your comments (continued)

- there are limited identified species of interest in the forest and limited existing use of the area for recreational purposes.

In addition, Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) highlights the need for local development plans to be informed by the Tourism Development Framework for Scotland, with planning authorities expected to consider the potential to promote opportunities for tourism and recreation facilities in development plans. The vision of the Proposed Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP) then includes a specific reference to a focus on tourism and, in setting out the SDP's objective for the economy, states that local development plans should *"...consider opportunities to ensure the importance of sustainable tourism to the regional economy is properly recognised and safeguarded."*

If the LDP is to comply with the aspirations of SPP and contribute to achieving the objectives of the SDP, then the specific allocation of a site for a use which will make a significant contribution to tourism would be entirely appropriate, rather than being considered only in a policy context as proposed in the MIR.

As such our client would wish to see the *"Reserved Land"* status of the site be amended to an allocation in the Proposed Plan.

Further details are provided in our client's response to the Call for Sites and the feasibility study submitted with that.