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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 commenting on?	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

Site BB002 – Land to the North of Memsie – 40 homes

On behalf of JNF Developments, objection is made to the failure of Aberdeenshire Council to identify site BB002 as an Officers preference for the provision on 40 homes in the Main Issues Report. Objection is also made to the failure of the Draft Proposed Local Development Plan to identify this site for housing.

This objection should be read in conjunction with the support given to the identification of BB003 as an Officers' preference for the provision of 20 homes and also with the development bid submitted at the pre-MIR stage. Together, these confirm that the entire site is suitable for the delivery of 40 homes, supported by a developer who is already active in the area.

The Main Issues Report raises a number of issues to which we wish to respond.

“The proposed site is a significant extension into the open flat countryside in comparison to the scale of the village. This would have a detrimental impact on the landscape and the character and visual setting of Memsie, elongating the settlement further along the A981 which is already characterised by ribbon development”

The principle of development in this area is already accepted through the development of historic site H1, which is now built. Half of the site (to the south) which is considered under bid reference BB003 is identified as an Officers preference for 20 units in the MIR and as OP2 in the DPLDP. The identification of the entire BB002 site for an additional 20 units is not considered to be a significant extension to the settlement.

Any development is screened by existing development when viewed from the south, east and west. From the north, it would be seen in the context of existing and proposed development and any housing would extend no further than the existing Lothlorien residential property to the east.

This site has no natural landscape elements and the identification of the entire site provides an opportunity to introduce attractive, open space and landscaping which would be contained by the Doolie Burn to the north, thereby containing development within this natural, defensible boundary. The DPLDP identifies strategic landscaping to the north of the BB003 site. This could be moved to the north of the BB002 site to protect the landscape and visual setting of the settlement.

It is therefore not accepted that there would be any detrimental impact on the landscape and the character and visual setting of Memsie. The ribbon development stated by Aberdeenshire Council is more prevalent along the B9032, with development along the A981 more condensed and rounded in this direction. The identification of the entire site would therefore not exacerbate ribbon development and would instead focus new housing where improvements in infrastructure have taken place.

“Memsie also has no services and no school capacity”

Officers consider that a reserved site for 15 units and OP1 site for 15 houses, in addition to the Phase 1 bid (BB003) for 20 units are appropriate in Memsie. The 2018 Housing Land Audit confirms that the OP1 site is constrained due to ownership and marketability issues. It is therefore questionable whether it will ever be developed. Bid site BB002 should be identified in its place as it is under the control of a developer that is willing and able to develop it in early course. This will make efficient use of infrastructure that is already in place on the site to the south, in the form of the treatment plant.

Aberdeenshire Council accept in the comments to bid BB003 that it is expected that Rathen Primary School would be able to accommodate a small increase in numbers over a period of years. The identification of the

entire site would only increase housing numbers by 20 units and It is understood that the school would already have considered the potential pupils generated from the OP1 site in the school roll forecasts. Therefore the allocation of the BB002 site would result in no significant additional capacity needs. Any developer contributions would be agreed to mitigate any additional impact on the school and this is not considered to be an impediment to development of the entire site.

“This proposal could also prevent existing properties from connecting to a communal drainage system located on this site as only a limited number of existing properties can connect to it. This treatment works was originally provided as part of a previous housing allocation on adjacent land (now Westcroft Close/Cairn Close) in order to resolve sewage problems affecting the settlement”

Scottish Planning Policy states that **“decisions should be guided by optimising the use of existing resource capacities, particularly by co-ordinating housing with infrastructure investment, for example water and drainage”** (paragraph 40).

As part of the development to the south, the developer of this bid site implemented the communal drainage system, comprising communal treatment tank, with partial soakaway and discharge to the watercourse. At that time, SEPA, Scottish Water and the Council’s Flood Prevention Unit confirmed that there were no drainage issues in Memsie. It is understood that this system has capacity to accommodate the development of the entire bid site for 40 units and Scottish Water would initiate a growth project at Cairn Stone Septic Tank if demand exceeds available capacity. Therefore, there is no impediment to the identification of the entire site for development.

Identifying the entire BB002 site for 40 houses would make efficient use of this investment and it seems unfair that the developer, who funded and provided the infrastructure would be restricted from making maximum use of it. If additional sites are to be identified in Memsie, priority should be given to sites which can connect to this infrastructure.

The text for the OP1 site within the DPLDP states that as part of a recent housing development at Westcroft/Cairn Close, a communal treatment tank was provided and that **“If it is possible to connect to this system it should be a conditional requirement for this development that new home owners must connect to that communal drainage system”**. There is no possibility of site OP1 connecting to the communal drainage system, due to ground levels. There are also no guarantees that BB009 (FOP1) can connect to the communal drainage system either. As such, site BB002 should be given priority as that site is the only one that can connect and therefore satisfy the requirements of SEPA which seeks to avoid further private septic tanks.

The text for the BB003 bid stated that that site would be a logical extension of the settlement given that the site has potential to connect to the communal drainage system located on the site. It is argued that the BB002 site would similarly be a logical extension and the proposed allocation should be increased to cover the entire site.

“Given the infrastructure constraints and lack of services, this location is unsustainable and will encourage car dependency”

As addressed above, it is not accepted that there are any infrastructure constraints within Memsie and the lack of services applies to all allocations.

Within the settlement, the most sustainable location should be prioritised for development and consideration should be given to the identification of the entire BB002 site for 40 houses, given that it lies immediately adjacent to the preferred BB003 site and the built H1 site. This ensures that efficient use can be made of the roads, footpaths and drainage infrastructure that has been put in place on these sites.

The inclusion of the entire BB002 allocation would not encourage car dependency any more than the development of any other site in Memsie. There are bus stops located within 400m of the site, therefore there are opportunities for public transport use within walking distance of the site. Although Memsie does not benefit from many services, it is not accepted that the location is unsustainable, given the opportunities for travel by sustainable means.

Conclusion

In summary, it is argued that the OP1 site should be removed from the Local Development Plan due to the constraints that exist over its delivery. To ensure the delivery of adequate levels of housing in the settlement, the entire BB002 bid site should be identified for 40 units. This would include the BB003 allocation to the south for 20 units which is already identified as an Officer's preference.

Site BB002 and BB003 are the only sites that can connect to the communal drainage system and the identification of the entire site would ensure that SEPA's requirements, to avoid further private septic tanks, is satisfied. It would also ensure that efficient use is made of the investment in the communal drainage system.

In addition to this, the strategic landscaping identified in the DPLDP should be moved to the north of the BB002 site to protect the landscape setting of Memsie and form a defensible boundary.