

#### 4. Site Details

Name of the site (Please use the LDP name if the site is already allocated)	Land Adjacent to Floras, Cullerlie
Site address	Cullerlie, Westhill, AB32 6XB
OS grid reference (if available)	E361331 N802623
Site area/size	1.5ha
Current land use	Greenfield- rough grazing
Brownfield/greenfield	Greenfield- rough grazing
Please include an Ordnance Survey map (1:1250 or 1:2500 base for larger sites, e.g. over 2ha) showing the location and extent of the site, points of access, means of drainage etc.	

#### 5. Ownership/Market Interest

Ownership (Please list the owners in question 3 above)	Sole owner
Is the site under option to a developer?	No
	If yes, please give details
Is the site being marketed?	No
	If yes, please give details

#### 6. Legal Issues

Are there any legal provisions in the title deeds that may prevent or restrict development? (e.g. way leave for utility providers, restriction on use of land, right of way etc.)	No
	If yes, please give details
Are there any other legal factors that might prevent or restrict development? (e.g. ransom strips/issues with accessing the site etc.)	No
	If yes, please give details

#### 7. Planning History

Have you had any formal/informal pre-application discussions with the Planning Service and what was the response?	No
	If yes, please give details
Previous planning applications	Please provide application reference number(s), description(s) of the development, and whether planning permission was approved or refused: N/A
Previous 'Call for sites' history. See Main Issues Report 2013 at <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp</a>	Please provide Previous 'Call for sites'/'Bid' reference number: N/A
Local Development Plan status <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp</a>	Is the site currently allocated for any specific use in the existing LDP? No
	If yes, do you wish to change the site description and or allocation?

## 8. Proposed Use

Proposed use		Mixed use
Housing	Approx. no of units	c. 8
	Proposed mix of house types	Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detached:</li> <li>• Semi-detached:</li> <li>• Flats:</li> <li>• Terrace:</li> <li>• Other (e.g. Bungalows):</li> </ul>
		Number of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 bedroom homes: N/A</li> <li>• 2 bedroom homes: N/A</li> <li>• 3 bedroom homes: N/A</li> <li>• 4 or more bedroom homes: N/A</li> </ul>
	Tenure (Delete as appropriate)	Private/Self-Build: please see Supporting Statement
Affordable housing proportion	25%	
Employment	Business and offices	Indicative floor space: c.250 m <sup>2</sup>
	General industrial	Indicative floor space: m <sup>2</sup>
	Storage and distribution	Indicative floor space: m <sup>2</sup>
	Do you have a specific occupier for the site?	No
Other	Proposed use (please specify) and floor space	c.250 m <sup>2</sup>
	Do you have a specific occupier for the site?	No
Is the area of each proposed use noted in the OS site plan?		No

## 9. Delivery Timescales

We expect to adopt the new LDP in 2021. How many years after this date would you expect development to begin? (please tick)	0-5 years	X
	6-10 years	
	10+ years	
When would you expect the development to be finished? (please tick)	0-5 years	
	6-10 years	X
	+ 10years	
Have discussions taken place with financiers? Will funding be in place to cover all the costs of development within these timescales	No- Please see supporting statement	
	If yes, please give details (e.g. bank facility, grant funding, secured loan etc.)	
Are there any other risk or threats (other than finance) to you delivering your proposed development	No- Subject to necessary site investigations.	
	If yes, please give details and indicate how you might overcome them:	

## 10. Natural Heritage

<p>Is the site located in or within 500m of a nature conservation site, or affect a protected species?</p> <p>Please tick any that apply and provide details.</p> <p>You can find details of these designations at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.environment.gov.scot/">https://www.environment.gov.scot/</a></li> <li>• EU priority habitats at <a href="http://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink/index.jsp">http://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink/index.jsp</a></li> <li>• UK or Local priority habitats at <a href="http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/advice-and-resources/habitat-definitions/priority/">http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/advice-and-resources/habitat-definitions/priority/</a></li> <li>• Local Nature Conservation Sites in the LDP's Supplementary Guidance No. 5 at <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp</a></li> </ul>	RAMSAR Site	
	Special Area of Conservation	
	Special Protection Area	
	Priority habitat (Annex I)	?
	European Protected Species	?
	Other protected species	?
	Site of Special Scientific Interest	
	National Nature Reserve	
	Ancient Woodland	
	Trees, hedgerows and woodland (including trees with a Tree Preservation Order)	
	Priority habitat (UK or Local Biodiversity Action Plan)	?
	Local Nature Conservation Site	
	Local Nature Reserve	
If yes, please give details of how you plan to mitigate the impact of the proposed development:		

### Biodiversity enhancement

<p>Please state what benefits for biodiversity this proposal will bring (as per paragraph 194 in Scottish Planning Policy), <a href="http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf">http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453827.pdf</a>) by ticking all that apply. Please provide details.</p> <p>See Planning Advice 5/2015 on Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement at: <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/19598/2015_05-opportunities-for-biodiversity-enhancement-in-new-development.pdf">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/19598/2015_05-opportunities-for-biodiversity-enhancement-in-new-development.pdf</a></p> <p>Advice is also available from Scottish Natural Heritage at: <a href="https://www.snh.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/natural-heritage-advice-planners-and-developers">https://www.snh.scot/professional-advice/planning-and-development/natural-heritage-advice-planners-and-developers</a> and <a href="http://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/">http://www.nesbiodiversity.org.uk/</a>.</p>	Restoration of habitats	
	Habitat creation in public open space	X
	Avoids fragmentation or isolation of habitats	X
	Provides bird/bat/insect boxes/Swift bricks (internal or external)	X
	Native tree planting	X
	Drystone wall	X
	Living roofs	
	Ponds and soakaways	X
	Habitat walls/fences	
	Wildflowers in verges	X
	Use of nectar rich plant species	X
	Buffer strips along watercourses	
	Show home demonstration area	
	Other (please state):	
	Please provide details: Please see supporting statement	

## 11. Historic environment

Historic environment enhancement	
Please state if there will be benefits for the historic environment.	No
	If yes, please give details: Please see supporting statement
Does the site contain/is within/can affect any of the following historic environment assets? Please tick any that apply and provide details. You can find details of these designations at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://historicscotland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=18d2608ac1284066ba3927312710d16d">http://historicscotland.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=18d2608ac1284066ba3927312710d16d</a></li> <li>• <a href="http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/">http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/master/default.aspx?Authority=Aberdeenshire">https://online.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/smrpub/master/default.aspx?Authority=Aberdeenshire</a></li> </ul>	Scheduled Monument or their setting
	Locally important archaeological site held on the Sites and Monuments Record
	Listed Building and/or their setting
	Conservation Area (e.g. will it result in the demolition of any buildings)
	Inventory Gardens and Designed Landscapes
	Inventory Historic Battlefields
	If yes, please give details of how you plan to mitigate the impact of the proposed development

## 12. Landscape Impact

Is the site within a Special Landscape Area (SLA)? (You can find details in Supplementary Guidance 9 at <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp</a> )	No <b>If yes</b> , please state which SLA your site is located within and provide details of how you plan to mitigate the impact of the proposed development:
SLAs include the consideration of landscape character elements/features. The characteristics of landscapes are defined in the Landscape Character Assessments produced by Scottish Natural Heritage (see below) or have been identified as Special Landscape Areas of local importance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SNH: Landscape Character Assessments <a href="https://www.snh.scot/professional-advice/landscape-change/landscape-character-assessment">https://www.snh.scot/professional-advice/landscape-change/landscape-character-assessment</a></li> <li>• SNH (1996) Cairngorms landscape assessment <a href="http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/075.pdf">http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/075.pdf</a></li> <li>• SNH (1997) National programme of landscape character assessment: Banff and Buchan <a href="http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/037.pdf">http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/037.pdf</a></li> <li>• SNH (1998) South and Central Aberdeenshire landscape character assessment</li> </ul>	<b>If your site is not within an SLA</b> , please use this space to describe the effects of the site's scale, location or design on key natural landscape elements/features, historic features or the composition or quality of the landscape character: Please see supporting statement

<a href="http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/102.pdf">http://www.snh.org.uk/pdfs/publications/review/102.pdf</a>	
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### 13. Flood Risk

Is any part of the site identified as being at risk of river or surface water flooding within SEPA flood maps, and/or has any part of the site previously flooded?  (You can view the SEPA flood maps at <a href="http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm">http://map.sepa.org.uk/floodmap/map.htm</a> )	Yes If yes, please specify and explain how you intend to mitigate this risk:  There is a very small area of surface water flood risk identified. We are confident that consideration of drainage/SUDS on the site would establish a suitable design to avoid any flood risk.
Could development on the site result in additional flood risk elsewhere?	No If yes, please specify and explain how you intend to mitigate or avoid this risk:
Could development of the site help alleviate any existing flooding problems in the area?	No If yes, please provide details:

### 14. Infrastructure

<b>a. Water / Drainage</b>		
Is there water/waste water capacity for the proposed development (based on Scottish Water asset capacity search tool <a href="http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/Connections/Connecting-your-property/Asset-Capacity-Search">http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/Connections/Connecting-your-property/Asset-Capacity-Search</a> )?	Water	Yes
	Waste water	Yes
Has contact been made with Scottish Water?	No If yes, please give details of outcome:	
Will your SUDS scheme include rain gardens? <a href="http://www.centralscotlandgreennetwork.org/campaigns/greener-gardens">http://www.centralscotlandgreennetwork.org/campaigns/greener-gardens</a>	Yes Please specify: Please see supporting statement	
<b>b. Education – housing proposals only</b>		
Education capacity/constraints <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/parents-carers/school-info/school-roll-forecasts/">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/parents-carers/school-info/school-roll-forecasts/</a>	Please provide details of any known education constraints. Is additional capacity needed to serve the development? Please see supporting statement	
Has contact been made with the Local Authority's Education Department?	No If yes, please give details of outcome:	
<b>c. Transport</b>		
If direct access is required onto a Trunk Road (A90 and A96), or the proposal will impact on traffic on a Trunk Road, has contact been made with Transport Scotland?	N/A If yes, please give details of outcome:	
Has contact been made with the Local Authority's Transportation Service?	No If yes, please give details of outcome:	

They can be contacted at <a href="mailto:transportation.consultation@aberdeenshire.gov.uk">transportation.consultation@aberdeenshire.gov.uk</a>	
Public transport	Please provide details of how the site is or could be served by public transport: Please see supporting statement
Active travel (i.e. internal connectivity and links externally)	Please provide details of how the site can or could be accessed by walking and cycling: Please see supporting statement
<b>d. Gas/Electricity/Heat/Broadband</b>	
Has contact been made with the relevant utilities providers?	Gas: No If yes, please give details of outcome(s): Please see supporting statement
	Electricity: No If yes, please give details of outcome(s): Please see supporting statement
	Heat: No If yes, please give details of outcome(s): Please see supporting statement
	Broadband: Yes If yes, please give details of outcome(s): Fibre optic broadband is available (between 2-80mb speed)
Have any feasibility studies been undertaken to understand and inform capacity issues?	No Please specify:
Is there capacity within the existing network(s) and a viable connection to the network(s)?	N/A Please specify:
Will renewable energy be installed and used on the site? For example, heat pump (air, ground or water), biomass, hydro, solar (photovoltaic (electricity) or thermal), or a wind turbine (freestanding/integrated into the building)	Yes  If yes, please specify the type of renewable energy technology(s), if it is to provide electricity and/or heating (i.e. space heating and/or hot water), and the scale of provision (To supplement off-site connection all the way to 100% energy provision (off-grid)):  Please see supporting statement.
<b>e. Public open space</b>	
Will the site provide the opportunity to <b>enhance the green network?</b> (These are the linked areas of open space in settlements,	No Please specify:

which can be enhanced through amalgamating existing green networks or providing onsite green infrastructure)	
You can find the boundary of existing green networks in the settlement profiles in the LDP	
Will the site meet the open space standards, as set out in Appendix 2 in the <b>Aberdeenshire Parks and Open Spaces Strategy?</b> <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/6077/approvedpandospacesstrategy.pdf">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/6077/approvedpandospacesstrategy.pdf</a>	Yes Please specify: Please see supporting statement.
Will the site deliver any of the shortfalls identified in the <b>Open Space Audit</b> for specific settlements? <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces/open-space-strategy-audit/">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/communities-and-events/parks-and-open-spaces/open-space-strategy-audit/</a>	N/A Please specify:
<b>f. Resource use</b>	
Will the site re-use existing structure(s) or recycle or recover existing on-site materials/resources?	N/A If yes, please specify:
Will the site have a direct impact on the water environment and result in the need for watercourse crossings, large scale abstraction and/or culverting of a watercourse?	No If yes, please provide details:

## 15. Other potential constraints

Please identify whether the site is affected by any of the following potential constraints:

Aberdeen Green Belt <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/20555/appendix-3-boundaries-of-the-greenbelt.pdf">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/20555/appendix-3-boundaries-of-the-greenbelt.pdf</a>	No
Carbon-rich soils and peatland <a href="http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/soils-and-development/cpp/">http://www.snh.gov.uk/planning-and-development/advice-for-planners-and-developers/soils-and-development/cpp/</a>	No
Coastal Zone <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/20176/4-the-coastal-zone.pdf">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/20176/4-the-coastal-zone.pdf</a>	No
Contaminated land	Unknown
Ground instability	Unknown
Hazardous site/HSE exclusion zone (You can find the boundary of these zones in Planning Advice 1/2017 Pipeline and Hazardous Development Consultation Zones at <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans-and-policies/planning-advice/">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning/plans-and-policies/planning-advice/</a> and advice at <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/landuseplanning/developers.htm">http://www.hse.gov.uk/landuseplanning/developers.htm</a> )	No
Minerals – safeguarded or area of search <a href="https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/6_Area_of_search_and_safeguard_for_minerals.pdf">https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldpmedia/6_Area_of_search_and_safeguard_for_minerals.pdf</a>	No
Overhead lines or underground cables	No
Physical access into the site due to topography or geography	No

Prime agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3.1) on all or part of the site. <a href="http://map.environment.gov.scot/Soil_maps/?layer=6">http://map.environment.gov.scot/Soil_maps/?layer=6</a>	No
'Protected' open space in the LDP (i.e. P sites) <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp">www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/ldp</a> and choose from Appendix 8a to 8f	No
Rights of way/core paths/recreation uses	No
Topography (e.g. steep slopes)	No
Other	No
If you have identified any of the potential constraints above, please use this space to identify how you will mitigate this in order to achieve a viable development:	

### 16. Proximity to facilities

How close is the site to a range of facilities? *Delete as appropriate	Local shops	400m
	Community facilities (e.g. school, public hall)	> 1 km
	Sports facilities (e.g. playing fields)	> 1 km
	Employment areas	> 1 km
	Residential areas	> 1 km
	Bus stop or bus route	> 1 km
	Train station	> 1 km
	Other, e.g. dentist, pub (please specify)	400m    400m-1km    > 1 km

### 17. Community engagement

Has the local community been given the opportunity to influence/partake in the design and specification of the development proposal?	Not yet
	If yes, please specify the way it was carried out and how it influenced your proposals:
	If not yet, please detail how you will do so in the future: Please see supporting statement

### 18. Residual value and deliverability

Please confirm that you have considered the 'residual value' of your site and you are confident that the site is viable when infrastructure and all other costs, such as constraints and mitigation are taken into account.	I have considered the likely 'residual value' of the site, as described above, and fully expect the site to be viable:  Please tick: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If you have any further information to help demonstrate the deliverability of your proposal, please provide details: Please see supporting statement	



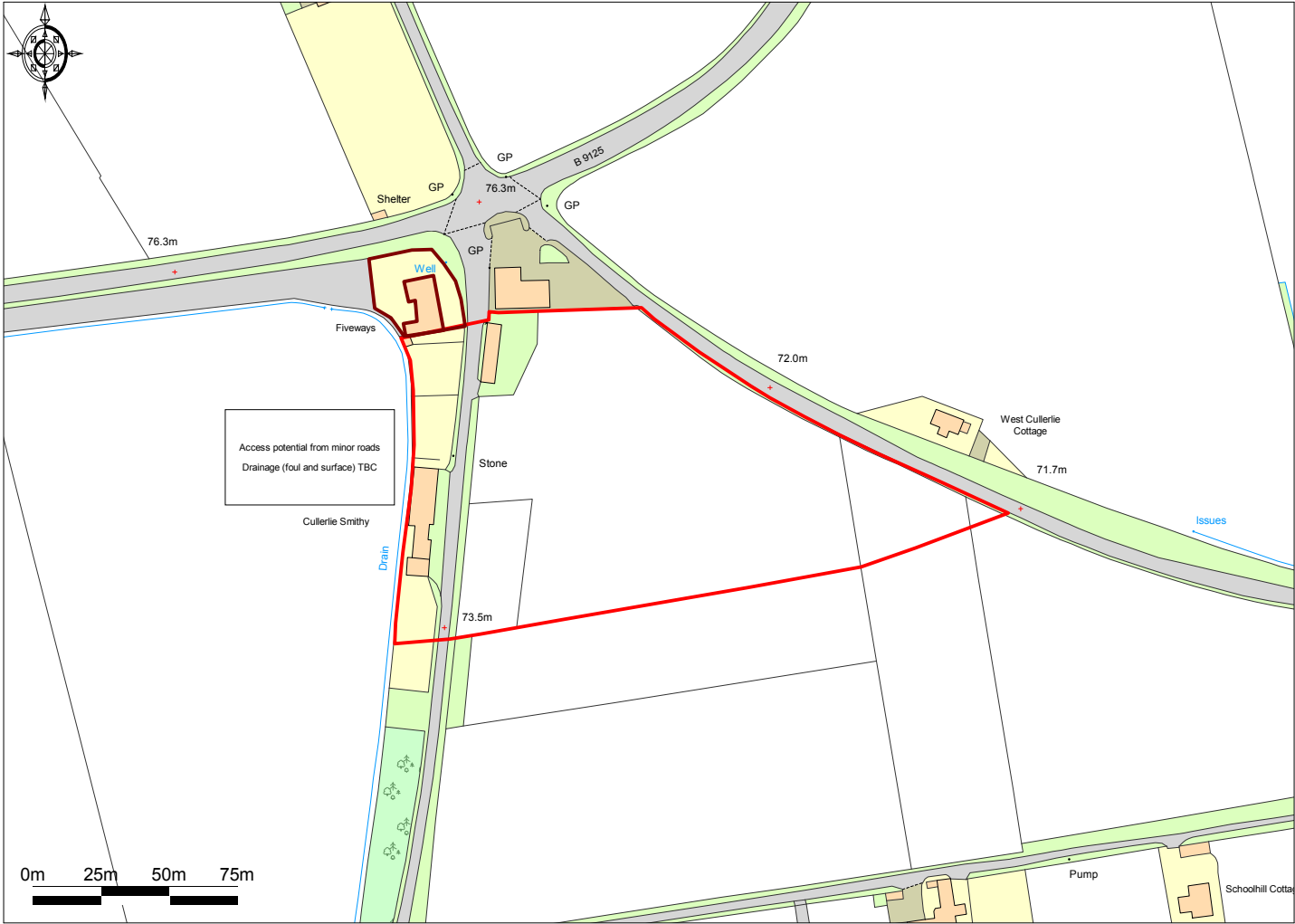
### 19. Other information

Please provide any other information that you would like us to consider in support of your proposed development (please include details of any up-to-date supporting studies that have been undertaken and attach copies e.g. Transport Appraisal, Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage Impact Assessment, Peat/Soil Survey, Habitat/Biodiversity Assessment etc.)

Please tick to confirm your agreement to the following statement:

By completing this form I agree that Aberdeenshire Council can use the information provided in this form for the purposes of identifying possible land for allocation in the next Local Development Plan. I also agree that the information provided, other than contact details and information that is deemed commercially sensitive (questions 1 to 3), can be made available to the public.

Land adjacent to Flora's Cullerie



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## **Supporting Statement: Land adjacent to Floras, Cullerlie**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This supporting statement provides further detail for a proposed small-scale, low density mixed-use site at Land adjacent to Flora's Restaurant, Cullerlie. This statement should be read in conjunction with the Call for Sites form.
- 1.2. Cullerlie Estate are interested in facilitating a small mixed-use site to promote sustainable rural development. The site will primarily provide self-build housing plots (with live-work units a potential) with small-scale retail or employment use as ancillary uses. The development will hopefully build on the existing service that Flora's Restaurant provides. The ultimate aim is to provide a rural hub which can provide a mix of affordable and market value housing, alongside work opportunities and the potential for increased local services. Associated open space and biodiversity enhancements are also considered important elements of the prospective site.
- 1.3. The Birchmoss Depot provides a significant level of employment in close proximity to the proposal site. Cullerlie have also submitted a proposal for an extension of this employment area (an additional 4ha). It is envisaged that the two proposal sites will complement each other, consolidating a hub of activity in this part of Aberdeenshire.
- 1.4. The proposal site has recently become vacant, and so Cullerlie Estate are interested in trying to spark redevelopment. An allocation within the next LDP will give the Estate the opportunity to move the site forward, and when revenues are generated, these can be reinvested on the Estate boosting the rural economy of Aberdeenshire.

### **2. Site Context**

- 2.1. The proposal site is primarily agricultural land, used for rough grazing and/or livestock. It comprises a relatively flat, triangle of land, with the Smithy buildings located on the land to the west of the road. There are other small-scale agricultural buildings on the site, and pigs have been kept on the land. Currently the visual appearance is untidy and unattractive.
- 2.2. There is a number of detached housing units located around the site (c.8) with shelter planting and garden planting evident. To the north of the site is Flora's Restaurant, which sits on a minor junction on the B9125 (running east-west) and two minor roads that run south-west and south-east respectively.
- 2.3. More widely the site is surrounded by agricultural land. The Birchmoss Depot is 1.5km to the west. Skene is 7km to the north-east and Peterculter the same distance to the south-east. Banchory is 8.km to the south-west. The new AWPR will be in close proximity to the site to the east.

### 3. **Planning Policy Context**

- 3.1. At the Council's Rural Seminar on March 22 it was discussed that rural areas require a flexible approach to development, with weight on facilitating business space and housing. Mixed use allocations were discussed as a potential solution given the diversity of use that such allocations allow.
- 3.2. Cullerlie Estate consider that this site has good potential because of the existing business which is adjacent, and the Birchmoss Depot nearby (which has the potential to extend). As a result there is an opportunity to build a critical mass through small scale development appropriate to the site context.
  - *Countryside Development*
- 3.3. The 'Shaping Development in the Countryside' section of the Aberdeenshire Local Development Plan 2017 (LDP) states that the Council want to promote a "welcoming approach...that meets needs and encourages prosperous, sustainable communities and businesses while protecting and improving the quality of the environment". Cullerlie Estate are supportive of this overarching policy aim and consider it sits well with the aims of the proposals for the site.
- 3.4. To be clear the site is not within the green belt.
- 3.5. Under Policy R2 it is considered that a limited level of development/re-development is acceptable, for example redevelopment of the Smithy and its outhouses. However, with regards to flexibility, our opinion is that a Call for Sites submission provides the best forum for discussion of the site. In due course, an allocation then provides the best framework to develop/re-develop the site. It is also our opinion that the level of land required for the development/re-development merits an allocation over a planning application.
- 3.6. We have provided our initial thoughts on site delivery below, it is considered that precise uses will be driven by marketing/Council opinion/potential site investigations, however it is considered that the site is suitable for:
  - Visitor accommodation (glamping etc.),
  - Housing (with potential for ancillary work units)
  - Small scale Class 1
  - Small scale Class 4
  - Small scale Class 10
- 3.7. We do consider that the provision of visitor accommodation could be implemented without the accommodation having to be considered as housing, as per our understanding of the current policy position in the 'Shaping Development in the Countryside'. For example, if specific holiday accommodation such as teepees, glamping pods etc. were built. However, an allocation would mean that this potential debate would be avoided.
- 3.8. It is possible that the agricultural use will mean that contamination has occurred on part of the site. Cullerlie Estate consider that remediation may be required, and the expense of this will be a viability consideration.

○ *Placemaking*

3.9. The 2017 Aberdeenshire LDP states that designs have to demonstrate the six qualities of successful places. As a result we have considered the site in this context below.

- We consider that a sense of place can be created given the attractive views the site has, stretching over the countryside to the east, south and west. The site already has a focal point in Flora's Restaurant and the locale has attractive planting and features such as drystone walls. Redevelopment of the site will therefore positively develop the sense of place.
- Development/redevelopment of the site will make it safer and more pleasant. The purpose of the rural hub proposal is to increase activity and this brings an associated benefit to security for the locale. The redevelopment will also make the site more pleasant i.e. through removal of the agricultural clutter, redevelopment of buildings and enhancement of positive features of the locale such as drystone walls and planting.
- Dependent on the ultimate development approach, there is potential for architectural expression through provision of self-build plots. In addition, potential communal open space and green infrastructure will help improve visual appeal. Links through the site will also make the site more welcoming. One idea is potential outdoor seating for Flora's restaurant and associated play space etc.
- The development could be flexible through provision of sizeable plots to allow adaptation of houses in response to circumstances such as climate change and old age. There will be a mix of housing to provide accommodation for people on a range of incomes. Provision of uses such as an extension to the restaurant or glamping pods would be easily removable with low land impact if future needs changed. It is considered that live-work units could allow a range of employment uses complimentary to leisure/business use etc.
- Development will be south facing to take advantage of solar orientation and other renewable energy provision is also possible (see below). There is also green infrastructure potential on the site.
- The site is in close proximity to settlements to the west of Aberdeen. In addition, the Birchmoss Depot is close by and it is possible that housing could serve this employment area.

3.10. We have also completed a Place Standard assessment to help engender discussion of the site. We have shown the matrix at Figure 1:

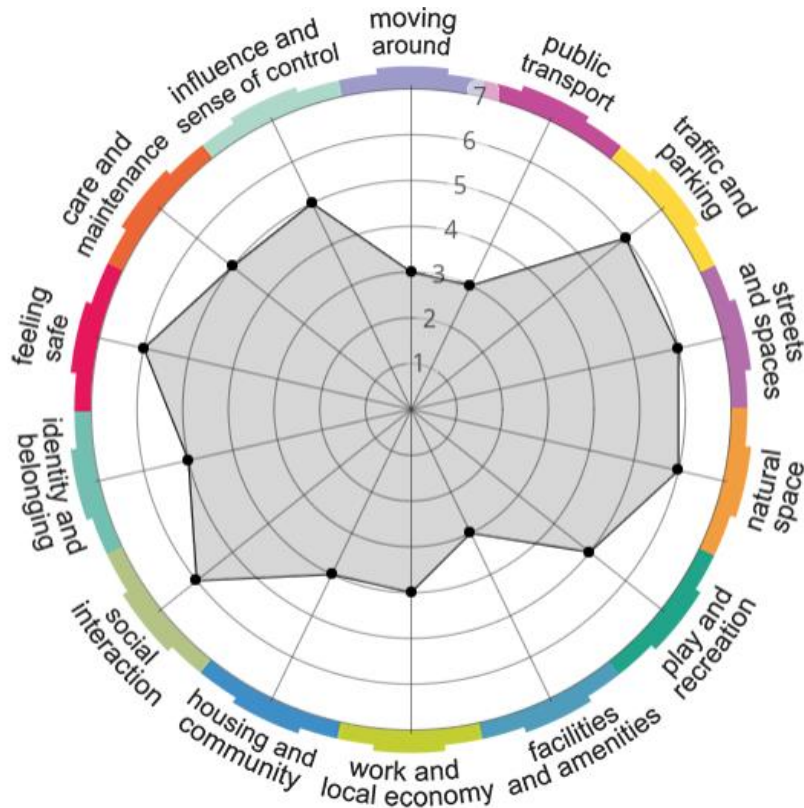


Figure 1: Place Standard Assessment Matrix, Land adjacent to Floras

- 3.11. The matrix shows that there is limited sustainable transport and/or public transport links to/from the site. However, it is a short drive to bus services to Aberdeen (i.e. from Banchory or Peterculter) and the surrounding roads are quiet and suitable to walk/cycle on.
- 3.12. Cullerlie is a rural area and car use is to be expected. However, the potential of live-work units and electric vehicle charging counter unsustainable travel risks. In due course it would be hoped that development could spark provision of such links directly from the site.
- 3.13. As the site has room to provide a range of development and it is surrounded by open fields there is good potential for high quality development in terms of layout. It is noted that a need for engagement and consultation with surrounding users leading to defined uses for the site would improve the scoring for economy, facilities, care, housing and sense of control. The LDP review process helps to start these discussions.

#### **4. Site Delivery**

- 4.1. Cullerlie Estate do not envisage this allocation to be solely for residential use in the countryside, instead the Estate are keen to develop a mixed use “rural hub” as outlined.
- 4.2. The land is available and so development can commence on adoption of the new LDP. A reasonable timescale for development to be completed is 6-10 years from a site start. However, this can only be an estimate at this time.
- 4.3. The density of the site will be significantly lower than a settlement or edge of settlement location. It is considered that c. 8 residential units and c.500m<sup>2</sup> of business and office or other floor space will bring an appropriate level of development that will not detract from the character of the site or its rural location.
- 4.4. To be clear, the Estate expect at least 25% of the development to be affordable housing.
- 4.5. The Estate will not be reliant on external finance to bring the site forward. There is an option to consider servicing of the site which would bring additional up front cost, however this would require to be full investigated before any firm commitment could be given. Cullerlie Estate would prefer to have the Council's opinion on the site at the Main Issues Report stage before consideration of servicing. At the current time there are no issues evident that would preclude development.

#### **5. Natural Heritage and Biodiversity enhancement**

- 5.1. We do not expect any natural heritage impacts as a result of development. If necessary, a Phase 1 habitat survey could be undertaken.
- 5.2. At this stage, we are only aware that the SPP paragraph 194 points: connected with benefits for biodiversity, and to support opportunities for enjoying the natural environment, are relevant. In particular, site assembly could allow for habitat creation in public open space, native tree planting, ponds and soakaways, and wildflowers etc. There is land ownership within and surrounding the Estate to allow this to occur.

#### **6. Historic Environment**

- 6.1. Pastmap shows that the Smithy has an historic environment record detailing the former use of the building. Overall it is not considered that the proposals bring any adverse impact on the historic environment.

## **7. Landscape Impact**

- 7.1. The site is not within a Special Landscape Area.
- 7.2. Development of the site will not bring any particular landscape impacts. We envisage a low density development and this would likely mean either one storey or one-and-a-half storey buildings (in line with those within the locale). The land is flat and we consider that new planting and use of landscape features such as drystone walls etc. would lead to a successful landscape fit.
- 7.3. Prospective properties would be able to take advantage of fine panoramic views.

## **8. Infrastructure**

- 8.1. Cullerlie Estate have reviewed the potential for green gardens and are supportive of their integration into the site in principle. In addition, we also consider that the site could incorporate open space and green infrastructure such as swales and seasonal wetland etc.
- 8.2. Dependent on the method of site assembly, plot specific features (green roofs, window boxes, green walls etc.) would be down to individual plot owners or the developer. However, the development management system could pick up on this and encourage positive placemaking.
- 8.3. The 2016 school roll forecasts show that there are no capacity issues to 2022 with regards to Echt Primary School. However, it is accepted that an agreed contribution may be required to allow an extension at Alford Academy, due to expected capacity constraints at this school in due course.
- 8.4. In terms of utilities connections, mains gas is not available. However, there is capacity available for water and waste water connections. Electricity is available at the site.
- 8.5. We do not consider that there will be any issues with achieving vehicular access. The site is served by two minor roads and there is ample land ownership to achieve visibility splays and parking requirements.
- 8.6. We have outlined that the site can contribute open space and green infrastructure. This will be in line with the standards in the Aberdeenshire Parks and Open Spaces Strategy. However, we would welcome dialogue on this issue once there is more information on potential uses.
- 8.7. Savills Energy team have assessed the site in terms of possible renewable energy. Their opinion is that the proposal provides good potential for a small district heating scheme that could be operated by Cullerlie Estate. Cullerlie Estate owns local commercial forestry which could provide fuel for a biomass scheme, or part of the site could potentially be used for a ground source heat pump. The site is south facing and so there is roof top solar potential for prospective buildings.



## **9. Other Constraints**

- 9.1. The ground conditions are unknown at this time, we have stated that the agricultural use may mean that contaminated land should be investigated.

## **10. Conclusions**

- 10.1. Cullerlie Estate would like to work with Aberdeenshire Council to explore the potential for a rural hub at the proposal site. In particular, the Estate would like to secure an allocation to give greater certainty to further investigations on the site and work to establish an appropriate mix of development uses.
- 10.2. We consider that the site brings potential to build on sense of place in terms of existing amenity and housing. In addition, the redevelopment of the agricultural use will bring a significant improvement to the amenity of the site. There is also open space and green infrastructure benefits possible from redevelopment of the site.