

ANGUS COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS COMMITTEE – 15 JUNE 2021

**PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE
LETHAM GRANGE DEVELOPMENT COTTON'S CORNER
LETHAM GRANGE ARBROATH**

GRID REF: 362564 : 745709

REPORT BY SERVICE LEADER – PLANNING & COMMUNITIES

Abstract:

This report advises committee that a Proposal of Application Notice (ref. [21/00360/PAN](#)) has been submitted in respect of a major development comprising a residential led development with hotel and commercial facilities and the reconfiguration of existing golf courses at Letham Grange Development, Letham Grange, Arbroath for Smartwill Investment Limited. Committee is invited to identify issues which it would like to see addressed in the planning application.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that committee notes the key issues identified at this stage and advises of any other issues it considers should be addressed in any planning application that is subsequently submitted.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS LOCAL OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT PLAN/CORPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the following local outcome(s) contained within the Angus Local Outcomes Improvement Plan and Locality Plans:

- Safe, secure, vibrant and sustainable communities
- A reduced carbon footprint
- An enhanced, protected and enjoyed natural and built environment

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 At its meeting on 19 June 2014, council approved a guidance note on the role of Councillors in pre-application procedures in respect of national and major planning applications (Report 275/14 refers). A key element of that guidance requires officers to present a report to committee when a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) is submitted. Such a report will identify the anticipated key considerations in the determination of any subsequent planning application and will allow Members opportunity to identify any additional issues that should be addressed when a planning application is submitted.

3.2 A PAN (ref. [21/00360/PAN](#)) has been received. It indicates that an application for planning permission is to be submitted for a residential led development with hotel and commercial facilities and the reconfiguration of existing golf courses at Letham Grange, Arbroath. The proposed development site measures around 49ha and comprises four development areas located within the extent of the existing Letham Grange estate. Indicative information suggests a development that would include around 258 dwellings. A plan showing the location of the site has been submitted and is attached at Appendix 1.

3.3 The submitted PAN sets out the proposed consultation that the applicant intends to undertake with the local community and the applicant has indicated that a copy of the PAN was served on local councillors as well as Arbroath Community Council. Due to the COVID-19 emergency it is not currently possible to hold public meetings and the submitted PAN indicates that all documents pertaining to the development will be published on a publicly accessible website and a live and interactive web-based consultation event comprising a web chat will be undertaken between 1600 and 2000 during the week commencing 28 June 2021.

- 3.4 The applicant's agent has been advised that a planning application cannot be submitted within the period of 12 weeks from the submission of a valid PAN.
- 3.5 Members are advised that the Scottish Government has put in place legislation to temporarily suspend the requirement for a public event in relation to Pre-Application Consultation (PAC). The Scottish Government has also published guidance on how pre-application consultation should be undertaken without the need for public gatherings. The proposed consultation arrangements are considered to meet with the requirements of the temporary legislation. It is however recommended that the live and interactive web-based consultation event comprises a live video webinar with associated chat functionality, and a copy of the PAN should be sent to all properties within Letham Grange. The results of the community consultation will be submitted with any subsequent major planning application in the form of a PAC Report as required by Development Management Regulations.

4. DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Committee will be aware that planning legislation requires decisions in respect of planning applications to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Therefore, compatibility with the development plan will be a key issue in relation to any planning application that is submitted for the development of this land.
- 4.2 The [Angus Local Development Plan](#) (ALDP) identifies the council's development strategy. It seeks to: -
- guide the majority of development, including local housing and employment opportunities, to locations within the towns that have the capacity to accommodate new development well integrated with existing infrastructure, and which serve as locally accessible centres serving a diverse rural hinterland;
 - maintain and protect the diversity and quality of the rural area and encourage local development which supports the population and services of local communities;
 - provide opportunities for appropriate diversification of the rural economy; and
 - maintain the quality of valued landscapes, the natural, built and historic environment, and biodiversity.
- 4.3 The ALDP also indicates that development in the rural area will be focused on the rural service centres (Edzell, Friockheim, Letham and Newtyle) which have the most significant number and range of services. It indicates that provision is made for small-scale residential development of around 50 dwellings at each location over the period of the plan. The plan recognises that there are several locations in Angus where residential development has taken place in association with golf course, leisure and tourist based activity. It indicates that these stand-alone developments include no community infrastructure (e.g. shops, primary school, health care facilities) requiring residents to travel for virtually all their needs. At Letham Grange it is indicated that additional housing development will only be considered where it is required to cross-subsidise tourism and recreation development.
- 4.4 The land subject of the PAN is located within the Letham Grange estate which is identified in the ALDP as an existing settlement. The Development Strategy for Letham Grange indicates support for proposals which provide for the long-term viability of the tourism and recreation facilities; protecting and enhancing existing residential amenity and environmental quality of the area; supporting proposals to reuse the listed buildings and associated buildings; and additional housing development only being considered where it is required to cross subsidise tourism and recreation development. The ALDP states proposals that support or enhance the recreational potential of Letham Grange will be supported where they are compatible with existing uses and do not adversely impact on the amenity and environment of the area. Development proposals at Letham Grange require to be assessed in the context of Policy LG1 in the ALDP which states: -

LG1: Letham Grange

Proposals which enhance or expand the tourism and recreation potential of the Letham Grange complex will be supported where:

- *they are compatible with the existing land uses/activities and are not detrimental to the*

- *area's unique environment;*
- *they are compatible with the protection of the amenity of existing residential areas;*
- *they support the restoration of Listed Buildings and their setting;*
- *any reduction of the existing golf course provision is demonstrated to be necessary and that the remaining provision is viable; and*
- *links are made to the existing path/cycle network.*

Limited housing development outwith the existing residential areas will only be considered where it is necessary to cross-subsidise development of tourism and recreation facilities within the complex.

Development proposals must be accompanied by supporting information including a Drainage Impact Assessment, Sustainable Drainage and Surface Water Management Plan, Flood Risk Assessment, Conservation Plan for the Listed Buildings and Transport Assessment as appropriate.

A TPO applies to part of the site and Tree and Bat surveys may be required to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the site and its contribution to the green network.

- 4.5 Other policies in TAYplan and the ALDP will be relevant, including those that deal specifically with residential development and design quality; protection of amenity; safeguarding and provision of open space; natural and built environment; access; infrastructure and developer contributions.
- 4.6 Letham Grange was developed over a number of years as a recreational and residential area comprising a hotel and leisure complex, two golf courses and sites for 140 houses located in dispersed groups throughout the estate. It operated successfully for several years, but the hotel and golf courses subsequently closed. The listed building that accommodated the hotel is now in a deteriorating condition and the golf courses have not been maintained for some time.
- 4.7 In these circumstances it is considered that the key issues in relation to the determination of a subsequent planning application will be whether the proposal complies with development plan policy or whether there are other material considerations that justify a departure from that policy. In this respect key issues in the determination of any subsequent planning application are likely to be: -
- Acceptability of the mix of land uses and location of development taking account of relevant development plan policies, in particular issues related to the tourism and recreation potential of the area, and impact on its character and amenity.
 - Acceptability of the proposed and resultant scale of development at this location having regard to the strategy of the ALDP to guide the majority of residential development to locations within towns that have the capacity to accommodate new development well integrated with existing infrastructure, and which serve as locally accessible centres serving a diverse rural hinterland.
 - Impact of additional large-scale residential development on the wider housing market area, housing land requirements, and the development plan strategy.
 - Suitability of the residential environment that would be created for occupants of the proposed residential units.
 - The acceptability of impacts on occupants of existing properties and neighbouring land uses.
 - Built environment considerations, including the acceptability of the proposed layout and design of buildings and open space as assessed in the context of the council's approved [Supplementary Guidance on design quality and placemaking](#), and impact of development on built heritage interests, in particular listed buildings.
 - Natural environment considerations, including the impact on habitats and species, protected trees, and existing open space areas, and the acceptability of open space and landscaping provision, including subsequent maintenance.
 - Acceptability of the proposed access arrangements for pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles, and the suitability of access and transportation provision in the area generally.
 - Impact of development on existing infrastructure, in particular impacts on the roads and drainage networks and the education estate having regard to the council's approved [Supplementary Guidance on developer contributions and affordable housing](#).
 - Provision of affordable housing having regard to the council's approved [Supplementary](#)

[Guidance on developer contributions and affordable housing](#) and whether this is a good location for a sizeable affordable housing development having regard to issues of accessibility.

- Justification to support the nature and scale of development proposed, in particular issues regarding economic impact, and the provision of residential development to enable repair and reuse of listed buildings and to facilitate golf course works, and whether those benefits outweigh any conflict with development plan policy.
- Financial viability having regard to matters including the planning history and previous development approved to support the leisure and tourism operation.
- Any opinions expressed on the proposal by statutory and non-statutory consultation bodies; and
- Any third-party representations that raise material planning issues.

4.8 Other issues may emerge through publicity of the proposal and through the pre application consultation process associated with any resulting planning application. The above matters are considered to represent the key issues at this pre-application stage that are likely to be determining factors for any subsequent planning application. However, Committee is invited to identify any additional material planning considerations that it would wish to see addressed in a planning application for residential development at the site.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The human rights implications associated with the proposal will be considered in the determination of any subsequent application for planning permission.

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

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DATE: 8 JUNE 2021

APPENDIX 1: LOCATION PLAN

APPENDIX 2: PLANNING SERVICE PRESENTATION