

ANGUS LOCAL PLAN : PROPOSAL F/EMP1 ORCHARDBANK, FORFAR

DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Land at Orchardbank, which is the subject of this Development Brief, lies on the west side of Forfar adjacent to the existing Orchardbank Industrial Estate. The A90(T) forms the western boundary, to the north lies Forfar Loch Country Park. The southern boundary is formed by the Glamis Road, and to the east Orchardbank Industrial estate and some residential properties. The site is highly visible from the A90 trunk road, is gently undulating with several significant landscape features including a drainage ditch, mature trees, drystone dykes and a wetland area in the north west corner.

The following policy statement is contained in the adopted Angus Local Plan:

Proposal F/EMP1: Orchardbank

29.6 ha of land to the west of Orchardbank adjacent to the A90(T) is allocated for a 'Gateway' development comprising business development (class 4), general industry (Class 5), storage or distribution (Class 6), major areas of open space and landscaping and roadside facilities. Development of this site must be guided by a development brief which will be prepared to further detail the following requirement: -

- (a) the main vehicular access must be taken from a new junction with Glamis Road and links through to the existing Orchardbank Industrial Estate should be incorporated;***
- (b) direct access from the A90(T) Forfar bypass will not be permitted;***
- (c) Land must be reserved within the site to accommodate necessary improvements associated with the provision of a grade separated junction at the Glamis Road junction of the A90(T);***
- (d) Substantial structural planting and landscaping will be required along the boundaries of the site, particularly along the northern boundary with Forfar Loch Country Park to protect the visual and physical amenity of the Loch;***
- (e) A landscaping scheme incorporating green corridors linking amenity space within the site and the Forfar Loch Country Park will be required;***
- (f) Only retailing to meet the reasonable needs of roads users will be permitted. Other retail uses on this site would be contrary to the retailing strategy of this Local Plan, and will not be permitted;***
- (g) The area and nature of surface water management.***

The key objectives for the development of this site are to:

- Establish a high quality, integrated business and industrial development, which has strong connections to the town and adopts sustainable principles.
- Create a 'gateway' development in a highly visible and accessible location.

- **Achieve effective road linkages to and from the A90(T) related to planned upgrading of the A94/A90(T) junction to grade – separated status.**
- **Provide a pedestrian and cyclist path as part of the developing Forfar Path Network**
- **Maintain and enhance the landscape framework, including suitable boundary planting taking account of the location of the site on the edge of town and in particular the sensitive relationship with the Forfar Loch Country Park and the high profile frontages along the Glamis Road and the A90(T).**

SITE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Land Uses

Orchardbank Business Park will be developed as a high quality, gateway site for Class 4 (Business), Class 5 (General Industry) and Class 6 (Storage and Distribution) uses. Class 1 (Shops) will not be permitted on the site. Builders/timber merchants will be considered as Sui Generis (outwith any Use Class), with their suitability being determined by their ability to meet the Development Brief.

Uses which have an adverse impact on the amenity of the local area and its environs for example, due to excessive noise, odour, dust or other emissions will not be permitted. In addition, businesses whose primary function requires large areas of open storage will not be encouraged. Where open storage is considered acceptable as ancillary to a manufacturing function, developers will be required to contain and landscape storage areas to the satisfaction of the Council.

There are three general zones within the site: important frontage sites which are highly visible from the road network; sites adjacent to the boundary with Forfar Loch Country Park, and sites within the central part of the development site. Each area will be suited to a different range of potential uses and development proposals should have regard to the following broad guidelines.

Prime Frontage Sites

Highly visible, gateway sites alongside the A90(T) and Glamis Road, including prime sites adjacent to the main entrance to the Business Park. This zone is suitable for Class 4 business uses requiring a high amenity location and uses which fall within Use Classes 5 and 6 where the overall high quality character and appearance of the site is not compromised. In line with Local Plan policy there may be scope for travel lodge type accommodation within this area. These sites will be expected to return a very high standard of building design in a quality setting. The close proximity of residential property at the south eastern corner, will require sensitive consideration in order not to introduce conflict.

Sites Adjacent Forfar Loch Country Park

It is essential that land uses on the northernmost sites do not have any adverse impact on the character or setting of the Forfar Loch Country Park. Careful consideration will be given to the precise nature of proposals for development of these areas, in order to ensure compatibility.

Central Area

Development areas internal to the site and adjacent to the existing Orchardbank Industrial Estate on the eastern boundary are most suitable to accommodate Class 5 and 6 uses.

Landscape

The development framework for the site is established by a landscape assessment which has considered the existing form and features of the site, and the scope for these to be enhanced. A comprehensive landscape plan will require to be submitted as part of any planning application.

The prominent location of the development site on the western edge of Forfar must be addressed in landscape terms. Specifically the close proximity of the Forfar Loch Country Park adjacent the northern boundary of the site requires detailed consideration in the design and development of the site. The landscape strategy seeks to maintain, reinforce and enhance the setting of the site, and this will be achieved by:-

- Extensive woodland planting around the western and northern site boundaries is required to be introduced at the beginning of site preparation/development. This planting, to a minimum depth of 10m to 20m as appropriate, must enhance local biodiversity and be of native deciduous and evergreen species.
- Mounding, reinforced by planting may be appropriate to minimise visual intrusion and assist in noise attenuation, particularly along the northern and western boundaries.
- Stone from existing dykes within the site should be reused where possible in the creation of new features within the site, eg stone boundary walls, entrance gateways or culverts.
- The main entrance to the site from the roundabout junction with the A90(T) will mark the 'gateway' to the Business Park. An attractive, quality entrance feature should be created. This could, for example, include the reuse of stone or appropriate ornamental planting.
- Creation of a central landscaped spine along the route of an existing burn which will include paths, planting and water management features.
- Existing mature trees on site to be retained where possible.
- Higher specification shrubs, trees and hedgerow planting in the vicinity of buildings and car parking areas where a more human scale of landscape design is appropriate.
- Opportunity to create and enhance wildlife habitats should be assessed and implemented.

The western boundary of the site lies alongside the A90(T). From here the site is highly visible and open. Woodland planting of a minimum of 10m to 20m depth is required along much of this boundary to assist in integration of the development site with the surrounding area, to soften the edge of development and to provide a visual screen. Views into the site will be permitted by areas of shrub planting within the woodland belt.

The boundary of the site with the Forfar Loch Country Park requires careful consideration. Woodland planting of a minimum of 20m depth is required to provide a visual screen, and where necessary earth mounding should be incorporated into the design in order to augment the screening effect of the planting and to assist with noise attenuation where appropriate.

In the south eastern corner, residential properties sit adjacent to the site. A minimum of 15m depth of screen planting should be planted along the eastern boundary alongside these residential properties to assist in protecting the amenity of occupiers of these houses.

A central landscaped spine will form a major new feature and will serve a range of functions. Physically it will incorporate a waterway with ponds, a pedestrian and cycle path and planting. It will be designed taking particular account of both the safety of users and security of adjacent premises. Visually it will form an additional layer of planting within the site which will serve to break longer distance views. This will contribute to creating a sense of smaller areas of development of a more intimate scale rather than a vast area of building.

Alongside the central spine, an existing wetland area in the north western corner of the site will be developed as a water feature. This provides opportunity for surface water management within a sustainable urban drainage system. These resulting pond features will also contribute to the overall attractive environment planned for the development.

Within individual plots, developers will be required to provide and maintain landscaped areas in keeping with the principles set out in an approved comprehensive landscape plan. This will ensure consistency across the development areas, and lead to a cohesive appearance.

Access

The Orchardbank Business Park will be served principally by a new access road to be taken from the new grade separated junction at the A94/A90(T). Work is expected to start on the junction improvements during 2002. A high quality entrance feature enhanced by planting will require to be created and could involve the reuse of stone materials existing on the site. A separate access to the south eastern part of the site may be permitted from the Glamis Road.

Within the Business Park access from Glamis Road should connect with Orchard Loan, the road serving the existing Orchardbank Industrial Estate. Provision for the extension of public transport services to the site will also be required. This may include bus stops, lay-bys and turning areas as appropriate. This will ensure ease of access to the site from the town and allow connection to the wider public transport network.

The central landscaped spine also incorporates provision of a path for pedestrians and cyclists forming part of the Forfar Path Network. Careful consideration should be given to the routing of this path, and it may be necessary to upgrade part of the existing footway along the Glamis Road to accommodate cyclists in order to achieve an effective link to other sections of the Path Network. The route should also provide a connection through to the Forfar Loch Country Park, and provision for access to the path from within development sites should also be included.

All matters relating to access, road design, car parking and provision for pedestrians and cyclists must be in accordance with Angus Council's Roads Standards. Where appropriate designs involving novel roads standards will be encouraged.

Design Principles

The overall aim is to achieve a high quality business park environment which is appropriate to this prominent gateway location at the edge of Forfar.

Alongside the strategic issues outlined above, detailed design considerations will be important in achieving the overall aim. To this end, the following matters will require to be addressed:

- Use of high quality design, including innovative architecture. Particular attention should be given to the highly visible public frontages of buildings along main roads and access routes.
- Buildings should be in scale with the surrounding landscape, and should not overdominate the skyline.
- Roof and external wall finishes should seek to assimilate the development into its setting through careful consideration of materials and colour.
- Layout and building design should incorporate energy conservation measures, and have regard to community safety issues referring to PAN 46 'Planning for Crime Prevention'.
- Car parking layouts should avoid single large expanses of hard surfacing. This can be minimised through effective use of surfacing materials, and areas of tree and shrub planting.
- Lighting of the site and individual buildings should be appropriately scaled and located so as not to cause a distraction to drivers travelling along the A90(T) and A94 Glamis Road. Also the impact of light pollution should be kept to a minimum.
- The design, location and scale of signage throughout the development site should be considered in an integrated manner in order to prevent a visual clutter.

Drainage and Water

Drainage of foul water from the site will be by connection to the public drainage system. This may be required to be pumped to a point in the north east of the site to connect into the existing sewer.

A surface water management plan will be required to be submitted which demonstrates how surface water will be disposed of in the context of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, and which considers appropriate maintenance arrangements for the scheme. Full details of foul water and surface water treatment, including road surface water, will require to be submitted as part of any planning application and be agreed by the North of Scotland Water Authority, Scottish Environment Protection Agency and Angus Council's Roads and Planning and Transport Departments. The developer is encouraged to facilitate early discussion with these agencies.

A water main traverses the site east/west, and this should be incorporated into an area alongside plot boundaries, internal access roads or landscaped areas to allow continued access for maintenance.

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